

First United Methodist Church  
216 West Third Street  
Elgin, TX 78621

### **Child, Youth, and Adult Safety Policy**

The First United Methodist Church of Elgin (FUMC-Elgin) adopted this policy at the Leadership Conference on March 25, 2001. (Revised May 2005) This policy is based on guidelines adopted by the 2000 General Conference of the Southwest Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church.

#### I. BIBLICAL REFERENCE

(Mark 10:13-16)

In so far as God has placed children, youth and adults in the care of our local churches and at the various District and Conference sponsored events, the purpose of this policy is to address their safety at all such church-sponsored events as well as at the First United Methodist Church of Elgin.

#### II. PURPOSE AND IMPLEMENTATION

This policy is intended to provide guidelines and resources for all churches of the Southwest Texas (SWTX) Conference of the United Methodist Church and for all sponsoring organizations of District and Conference events in order that each prepare a specific plan of implementation

FUMC-Elgin shall adhere to this plan.

#### III. TRAINING

FUMC-Elgin shall conduct an orientation and briefing of this Child, Youth, and Adult Safety Policy annually for all persons who have direct contact and/or supervision of children or youth.

#### IV. REQUISITES OF THE POLICY

##### A. Screening of workers who work with children and youth

1) General:

For the purposes of this policy, workers and children and youth are those person who have direct contact and/or supervision of children or youth. This does not include those persons who are employees of independent contractors who are involved in youth and child events, such as bus drivers of contracted bus lines and the like.

2) Background checks:

Background checks on paid staff members (full or part-time) shall be required. FUMC-Elgin reserves the right to conduct background checks on any volunteer keeping in mind the overriding concern for the safety of our children, youth and adults. However, background checks shall be done on all volunteers participating in over-night activities. The notification of these requirements are to be shared with both paid staff and volunteers including visitors, non-member parents of children attending events, members of other denominations, and the like.

All adults (volunteer and staff) should serve as a role model for children and youth and conduct themselves accordingly. All adults (volunteers and staff) shall provide a non-anxious leadership presence and live as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Access to the information received from background checks shall be limited; but

the information shall be held in confidence. The SWTX Conference will be the agency to obtain police or law enforcement background checks to the extent that any are requested. Only (a) the Episcopal Office, (b) District Superintendent in the appropriate District,

©) the pastor and the Staff Parish Relation Committee (SPRC) Chairperson or their designee, may request and be privy to the information described below or the background check results. The Conference office or local entity (FUMC-Elgin) will report only relevant information as it pertains to the safety of children, youth, and adults to the requesting party.

All persons required to have a background check may be asked to provide the minimum information at least once every five (5) years:

- (a) Identify area of work/service to be performed;
- (b) Full name including any previous names and nicknames;
- (c) Present address and former addresses for the past five (5) years;
- (d) Social Security number, Driver's license number, and Date of Birth;
- (e) Church membership;
- (f) Personal references (not related to the applicant) with complete addresses and telephone numbers and e-mail addresses, if available;
- (g) Statement as to whether the person has ever been convicted or arrested for a criminal sexual offence or a felony of any nature;
- (h) Consent to (I) verify all the information, and (II) to obtain a police background check, if lawfully available to the church or sponsored event;
- (i) Statement that the information provided is true and correct.

#### B. Responsible Adult Supervision

1) General:

It is the requirement of this policy that FUMC-Elgin and all sponsoring organizations of the District and Conference events provide adequate adult supervision.

- 2) The requirement of a minimum of one primary care giver 18 years of age or older and a secondary care-giver 16 years of age or older at all children and/or youth events. The ratio of care-giver to children or youth shall be one adult to eight children (or 1:8).
- 3) There shall be at least a five-year difference between the ages of the primary on-site supervisor and oldest age of the supervised. Persons being closer in age (but at least thirteen years of age) to those supervised will be acceptable in assisting the primary on-site supervisor.
- 4) All nursery paid staff are required to maintain CPR certification with a copy of the certification to be kept in the staff person's personnel file.

### C. Reporting Abuse

- 1) State Requirement:  
Comply with the reporting requirements of the State of Texas
  
- 2). Conference Requirement:
  - a) The procedure for reporting alleged abuse shall not negate the latest State of Texas reporting requirements of the "Fair Process in Judicial Proceedings" in accordance with the latest United Methodist Book of Discipline. The Chairperson of the Staff Parish Relations Committee shall receive all reports of alleged abuse of children/youth. This office holder shall maintain the confidentiality of the information.
  
  - b) The procedure for reporting alleged abuse shall include the following:
    - Who is making the report and relevant information about that person;
    - The person's responsibility and obligation to report;
    - A clearly written factual basis for making the report, specifically which provision was violated and how;
    - A description of the symptoms and behavior the reporter has observed in the child/youth (if any);
    - All report of alleged abuse shall be documented in writing and brought immediately to the attention of the persons designated by the church or sponsored event to receive such information;
    - No report will be considered trivial and not reported.

### D. Miscellaneous Provisions

- 1) All drivers of vehicles for church or other sponsored events described herein must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age and possess a current, valid driver's license, have proof of insurance at the State Minimum limits, and not be otherwise disqualified from driving (i.e., under medication and the like). When traveling in caravan style, the 2 adult rule shall be met as each driver will meet the FUMC-Elgin's definition of "adult". Copies of this documentation shall be kept in the FUMC-Elgin's offices.
  
- 2) Coed overnight activities require both male and female adult leaders without exception.
  
- 3) Prior written parental/guardian permission is required for events requiring transportation to and/or from the event location.

### E. Exception for child Care Facilities Subject to State Requirements

Nothing in this policy is meant to alter or change any requirements imposed by the State should FUMC-Elgin operate child care facilities that come within the purview of the State of Texas. This policy exempts those facilities from coverage understanding that the State requirements are sufficient.