



Safer Sanctuary-Child Protection Policy
Calvary United Methodist Church
Arlington, VA

Purpose

Our purpose for establishing this Child Protection Policy and accompanying procedures is to demonstrate our total and unwavering commitment to the physical, emotional and spiritual safety of all our children, youth and vulnerable adults.

Covenant Statement

The Calvary United Methodist Church hereby pledges to conduct the ministry of Jesus Christ in ways that assure the physical and emotional safety and spiritual growth of all of our children, youth and vulnerable adults as well as all our workers with children, youth and vulnerable adults. We will follow reasonable safety measures when selecting and recruiting workers; we will implement appropriate operational procedures in all areas of programming and care; we will train our workers with children and youth on our procedures and policies; and we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse consistent with the Commonwealth of Virginia law.

Supervision Guidelines

All meetings of children and/or youth affiliated with Calvary United Methodist Church will be governed by the following guidelines:

A. Two adult rule

Two unrelated adults must be present at all times. Church sponsored or community groups of children or youth who meet at the church must have two or more leaders present. When feasible, both male and female leaders would be present.

B. Open Door Policy

Further protection for the children requires that an open-door policy be followed. This policy shall state that the parents of the children served, the clergy, administrative and professional staff of the church have the right to visit and observe the children's/youth activity, classroom, or program at any time, unannounced.

C. Doors and Windows:

All classroom and office doors will have a window or visibility from hallway or remain open while occupied. Windows will be kept free from adornments.

D. Touch

Physical affection should be appropriate to the age of the child or youth. (For example, it is generally appropriate for a four-year-old to sit in a nursery worker's lap and give a kiss on the cheek, but it is not appropriate for a teenager and youth leader to behave this way.)

Touching should be initiated by the child or youth. It should be a response to the child's need for comfort, encouragement, or affection. It should not be based upon the adult's emotional need.

Ideally, touching and affection should only be given when in the presence of other adults. It is much less likely that touches will be inappropriate or misconstrued as such when two adult workers are present, and the touching is open to observation. This is especially important when diapering a baby or helping a young child change clothes or use the restroom.

Touching behavior should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. As people who work with children, our behavior must always foster trust; it should be above reproach.

A child's preference not to be touched should be respected. Do not force affection upon a reluctant child. Adults are responsible for protecting children under their supervision from inappropriate touching by others.

Adults must promptly discuss inappropriate touching or other questionable behavior by other workers with their leader, the Family Ministries Director, or Pastor.

E. Classroom Discipline

All teachers and workers will use the following discipline measures:

- (1) If a child is behaving inappropriately, the teacher or worker will tell the child specifically what he/she is doing that is not acceptable and state what the expected behavior is, e.g., "We do not throw the blocks. We use blocks for building."
- 2) If this measure is not effective, the child will be guided to another activity.
- 3) If inappropriate behavior continues, the child may be placed at a table to work alone away from the other students.
- 4) **No physical punishment or verbal abuse, e.g., ridicule, are to be used at any time.** If isolating the child within the classroom or removing the child from the room becomes necessary, the situation will be discussed with the child's parents or guardian as soon as possible. **Church Staff are mandated reporters upon suspicion of abuse or neglect under the Commonwealth of Virginia law.**

F. Gifts

Adults should inform parents/guardians of gifts given by him or her to individual children or young people. Secretive gift giving can be a form of buying loyalty or silence.

G. Verification of Receiving Training Handout and Policy Statement

Upon receipt of this policy statement and training handout, the volunteer or paid staff person will read and sign a statement that he/she has read Calvary United Methodist Church's Child Abuse Protection Policy.

H. Who to Contact

Any questions or concerns regarding this information or the adherence to the guidelines should be directed to Pastor Amy Beth Coleman, Lead Pastor pastor.amybeth@calmeth.org (202) 630-9547 or Beth Posey family@calmeth.org

I (print name) _____ have read and understand the SSCA Policy
and I will ensure that this policy is followed.

Signed: _____ Date: _____