

# Belin Memorial United Methodist Church

...creating a community of faith  
where children, youth and adults  
grow safe and strong

# Welcome to an Orientation to

## Policy & Guidelines



for the Safety of Children, Youth,  
and Vulnerable Adults

at

Belin Memorial United Methodist  
Church



# Thank you

....for your dedication  
and service to Belin  
and your love for  
our children, youth  
and vulnerable  
adults!



# We really appreciate

- your interest and willingness to serve in a capacity to assist with the programs and ministries of Belin;
- your commitment, with us, to create safe sanctuaries for children, youth, and vulnerable adults;
- and, the responsibility you have assumed to help make sure that our core beliefs and guidelines govern all activities and programs for children, youth, and vulnerable adults at Belin.

# Following this training session

- You will receive your own copy of the Safe Sanctuary Policy.
- You will be asked to give permission to BMUMC for any background checks appropriate for the scope of your engagement with our children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
- You will successfully pass the assessment of your knowledge of the Safe Sanctuary Policy.

# The guidelines here apply to

## ALL

church sponsored  
programs and ministries  
for children, youth, and  
vulnerable adults  
approved by the Church  
Council.



# Important Definitions

- Children= birth – 5<sup>th</sup> grade
- Youth= 6<sup>th</sup> grade–17 yrs old
- Young adult= 18-21 yrs old
- Staff= a paid employee cleared to work with all programs involving children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
- Program Director=BMUMC church staff Directors of Christian Education, Youth, Worship Arts, BCLC, and the Family Life Center
- Vulnerable Adult= a person 18 years of age or older who has a physical or mental condition which substantially impairs the person from adequately providing for his or her own care



# More “Important Definitions”

- Approved Adult Volunteer = an unpaid adult, 21 years old or older, who meets all of the required criteria to work with Belin’s programs serving children and youth.
- Floater= an adult cleared, trained and approved by a Program Director to meet the “two adult rule.”

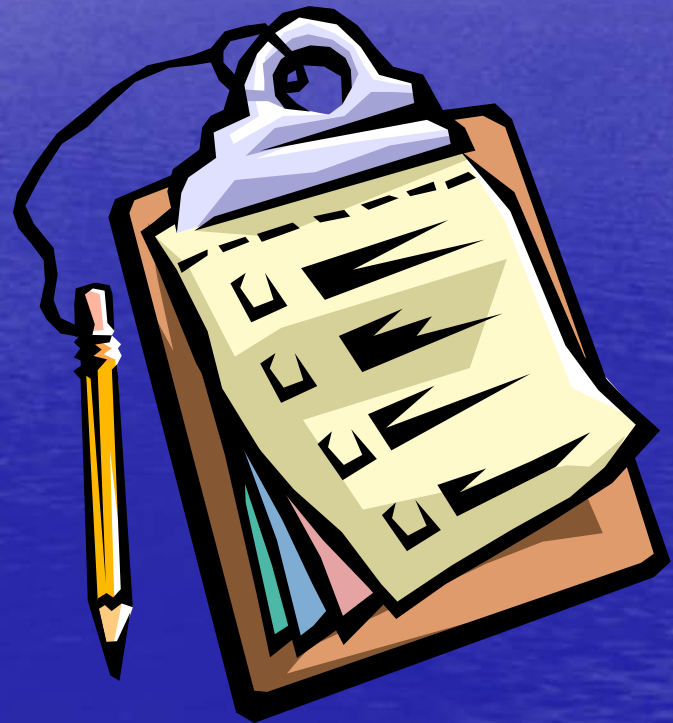


# Approved Adult Volunteers and Staff must:

- Complete the designated application form.
- Be 21 years of age or older and at least 5 years older than the age of the persons they are working to serve.
- Give authorization for background checks and meet clearance requirements.
- Either be a church member or regular attendee at Belin Memorial for a minimum of 6 months or cleared by a Program Director or Clergy.
- Complete the prescribed Safe Sanctuary Training and Assessment.
- Anyone having been convicted of sexual or physical abuse or with a history of inappropriate conduct involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults will not be allowed to serve as a volunteer.

# Here at Belin.....

We can reduce  
physical and  
emotional risk  
by following  
these Policies:



# Parents and Staff as Partners

## Parent Responsibilities:

- Encourage children to follow all posted and announced safety guidelines.
- In no case will children under 5<sup>th</sup> grade be allowed to leave activity locations unescorted or escorted by other children.
- Escort children 5<sup>th</sup> grade and under to and from planned activities.
- Keep young children with you at all times when not engaged in organized activities.
- Advise activity leaders immediately of any injuries, medical needs, or allergies.

# Parents and Staff as Partners-continued

- Children through Grade 5 must be presented to, and picked up from, activities by a parent or guardian, or another responsible adult appointed by the parent with notification to the leaders of an activity as to the identity of a secondary designated adult.

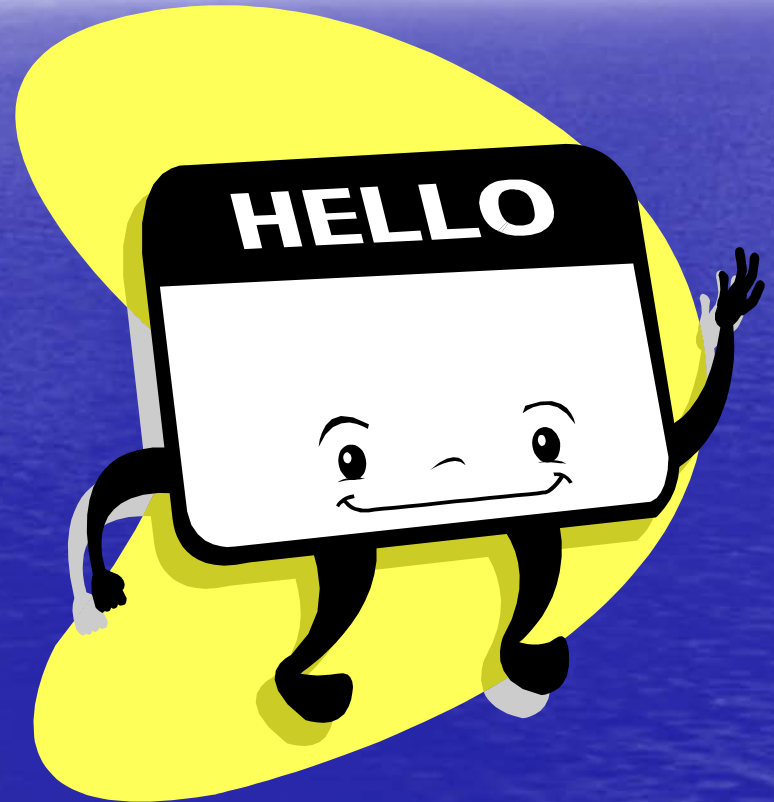


# It is the church's responsibility

- To assure the safety of equipment and facilities.
- To require and provide Safe Sanctuaries Training for all staff and volunteers working with children, youth and vulnerable adults.
- Provide training on the guidelines, reporting procedures, and indicators of abuse.
- To clearly identify approved adult volunteers by nametags or other easily identifiable ways
- To conduct background checks as necessary.
- To inform parents and the congregation of the policies and practices in place to protect children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
- Provide age-appropriate education and information to children and youth on ways to respond when they feel unsafe.

# Volunteer Name Tags/Other Identification Required

Approved (trained and cleared) staff and volunteers should always wear a church-provided name tag, or some other means of clear identification; so that parents, children, youth, and vulnerable adults can easily identify these responsible adults.



Age appropriate training and information will be provided and include but not be limited to:

- Understanding our rights to feel safe.
- Managing anger.
- Disciplining without violence.
- Definitions and Indicators of child abuse = (See additional handout).
- Developing skills to help us recognize, avoid, detect, and report unsafe conditions and abuse.

# Definitions of child abuse

- Neglect = failure to provide the basic emotional and physical needs of the child on an ongoing basis.
- Physical abuse = anything done that results in physical harm to a child.
- Sexual abuse = when a person uses power over a child and involves the child in any sexual act.
- Emotional abuse = continually uses the following when interacting or disciplining a child (rejection, criticizing, insulting, humiliating isolating, terrorizing, corrupting, not responding emotionally).



# Policy and abuse information will be made available through:

- Written policies and procedures.
- Orientation of children and youth participants at the beginning of activities.
- Training for staff and volunteers.
- Newsletter articles and general announcements.



# Children and youth responsibilities



- Youth under 18 may not be in the Family Life Center, Sanctuary or Education Building without approved adult supervision.
- Follow all posted and provided guidelines and instructions given by volunteer leaders and/or staff.

# “Two Adult” Rule



- Requires two adults present at all times during any church sponsored program, event, or ministry involving children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
- In certain circumstances, approved by the director, married couples or “floaters” may be used to meet this requirement.

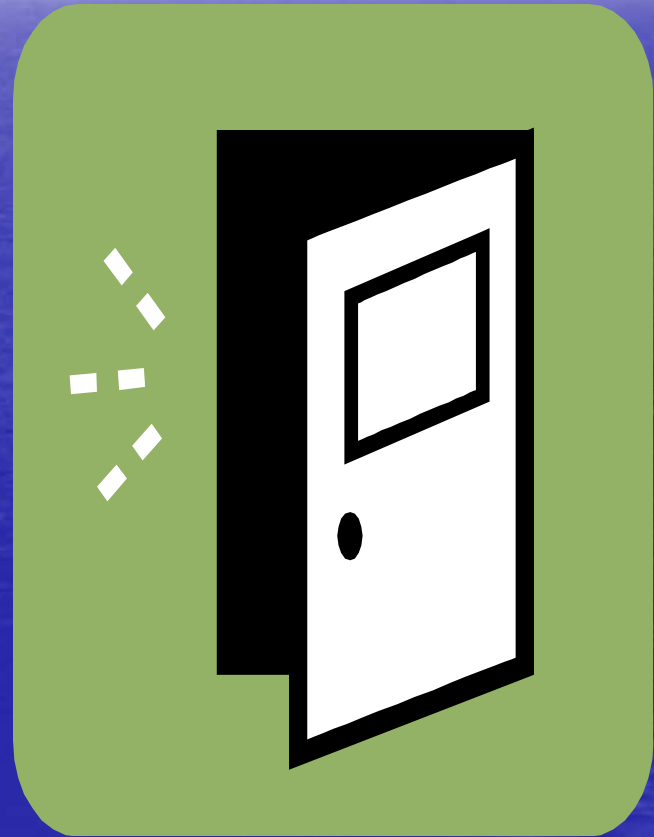
# When situations require physical intimacy or privacy .....

- Two adults must be present when situations require physical intimacy (changing diapers/examining a child for injury).
- Situations requiring privacy (counseling) should be conducted, whenever possible, during business hours and when other people are in the same building/general vicinity.
- A same gender counselor, or two counselors (one of which is same gender) is recommended whenever possible and appropriate.

# Open Hearts – Open Minds – OPEN DOORS

It is good practice to have OPEN DOORS whenever possible and reasonable.

Never be alone in a locked room or inaccessible area with a child, youth, or vulnerable adult.



Discipline Problems – when a child becomes a danger to themselves or others or disrupts the conduct of an activity:



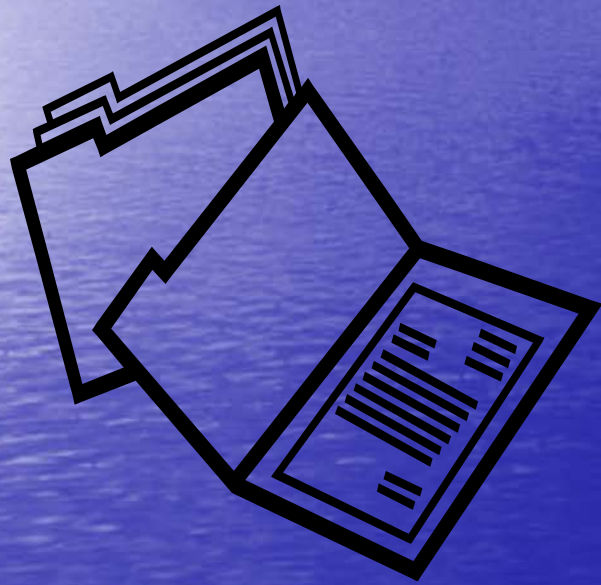
- The Parents will be contacted, and if necessary, be requested to pick up the child, youth, or vulnerable adult.
- Program director and/or one of the pastors will be notified and a report filed.

# Dealing with discipline problems

- Children or youth should never be removed or sent to an unsupervised area for time out.
- The two adult rule provides an adult to accompany any child, youth, or vulnerable adult who needs to leave the supervised activity for any reason.
- Corporal punishment is strictly forbidden.



# Required Reports and Records



- Attendance Reports
- Emergency Cards
- Accident Reports



# Attendance Records (church form)

- Rosters of those in attendance at any activity should be maintained and filed in the office of the program director.
- Adult names are to be recorded, also.
- Approved forms are to be used.



# Communications and Social Media Policy

- In order for a minor to receive a phone call, text message, email, or other form of communication from adult employees or volunteers, a message communication form should be on file.
- Communications should be done in group messages that include other adults.
- An individual digital communication should be avoided unless done in the context of being supportive and/or nurturing.

# Emergency Cards (church form)

- Are to be completed for children/youth participating in church sponsored activities detailing emergency contact and medical/allergy and insurance information.
- These cards must be readily accessible to activity leaders and program directors during the activity.



**Emergency**

# Accident Reports (church form)

- ...for any accident requiring more than minor treatment or that has potential for later complications.
- These forms are to be turned in to the Church Administrator's office for filing.



# In the event of suspected, or a complaint of, child abuse:

- Key REPORTING Policy # 1
  - The employee or volunteer will immediately report the incident to the Program Director of the activity who will report it directly to:
    - One of the Pastors, or
    - The Church Administrator

# In the event of suspected, or a complaint of, child abuse:

- Key REPORTING Policy # 2
  - These four people, the three Pastors and the Church Administrator, are the ONLY persons who are responsible to, and approved for, reporting the incident to:
    - Department of Social Services
    - Other appropriate legal entities
    - The district superintendent, if appropriate
    - Parents
    - The congregation
    - The news media

# In the event of suspected, or a complaint of, child abuse:

- Key REPORTING Policy # 3

- No other volunteer or staff member is authorized to discuss or make statements to the news media or others, unless required to do so by the force of a subpoena.

The purpose of this policy is to protect children, youth, vulnerable adults, families, workers, and limit damaging rumors and panic.

# Alcohol – Controlled Substances Policy



- No alcohol or non-prescribed controlled substances shall be consumed by any Belin participant (adult, young adult, youth, volunteer, or staff) at Belin church-sponsored events planned for children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults.



# Additional on-site activity guidelines

- Chaperones, teachers, and supervisor/leaders of activities must be at least 21 years of age.
- Persons under 21 may serve as assistants if two other adult supervisors are present in the area during the activity.
- Children and youth under 21 who wish to assist with activities shall be: approved by the activity director and assigned to work under the direct supervision of an approved adult volunteer.

# Off-site and Overnight Activities



- Adult chaperones are required to be housed in the immediate area with the children/youth under their supervision.
- Adult chaperones are required to be provided at a ratio of at least 1:10.
- Reminder: two adults supervisors are required for all program and ministry activities.
- The two adult chaperones will be of the same sex as the group they are supervising.

# When the church sponsors overnight activities or provides transportation to off-campus activities:

- Drivers must be at least 21 years of age, received Safe Sanctuary training, and have completed a background investigation to include driving record.
- Drivers of the church bus must be 25 years of age, received Safe Sanctuary training, and have completed a background investigation to include driving record
- A Safe Sanctuary committee-adopted parental permissions form is required for each participant for each trip.
- A list of cleared participants and chaperones must be left with the church upon departure to off site events.
- Approved restraints or seat belts must be used when available in vehicles.
- Two ministry approved workers, including the driver, and preferably of different genders and unrelated should be utilized unless the passengers are all of one gender.



# Direct responsibility for transportation is held by the parent:

- To and from church activities held on campus.
- When off-campus events are held within a 20-mile radius of the church and youth are not reporting to the church.
- Exceptions for the distance traveled addressed by this guideline must be requested to the Safe Sanctuary Committee.
- In an emergency, the attendee can be transported by two ministry approved workers preferably of different genders and unrelated.

# Special Guidelines for one-to-one counseling with children or youth

- Will be done in an area where private conversation are possible but occur in full view of others.
- Should occur during business hours or when others are in the building or immediate area.
- It is suggested that two adults and/or a same gender counselor be present during counseling whenever appropriate.

# Here at Belin

- We appreciate our staff and volunteer workers who make our many ministries possible for our children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
- We want to have a wholesome, positive, open, and trusting environment in all of our activities.
- We are proud of our commitment to being a haven and safe sanctuary for our children, young people, and vulnerable adults of our congregation and community.

# Thank you.....

- Please be sure to get your copy of the Safe Sanctuary Policy/Guidelines for Adult Leaders & Volunteers.
- Please be sure to complete the Safe Sanctuary Assessment at the following link:

[belinumc.org/training](http://belinumc.org/training)

- Successful completion of the Assessment is required prior to serving with children, youth and/or vulnerable adults.

