

exception, suspend the person from Sugar River.

23. Suspension of the staff member or volunteer will end only after all allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of SPRT. Reinstatement is at their discretion.
24. Sugar River will promptly notify a parent or legal guardian of the child involved in the alleged incident as specified by the State or local agency.
25. Discrete and confidential reporting of suspected abuse is expected in all cases. Sugar River staff members and volunteers will be sensitive to this need, and therefore, should only discuss the suspected abuse with the Lead Pastor, the SPRT Chair or Council Chair.

Responding to Allegations of Abuse

- 26.. All allegations will be taken seriously, but will not be pre-judged.
27. Situations will be handled forth-rightly, with due respect for privacy and confidentiality.
28. Sugar River's insurance carrier will be notified promptly.
- 29.. Civil authorities will be given full cooperation within the guidance of DUMC's attorney.
30. The victim's well being will be respected and protected. The victim should not be held in any way responsible. Pastoral resources available will be extended. The care and safety of the victim is the first priority.
31. Guideline of the Wisconsin Annual Conference will be followed if an allegation is reported involving a staff member.

Sugar River United Methodist

Safe Sanctuary Policy

**Jesus said,
“Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.” Luke 18:16**

**Jesus also taught us...
not to put a stumbling block before
one of these little ones. (Matthew 18:6)**

Our Covenant

As a Christian Community the Sugar River United Methodist Church pledges to conduct the children and youth ministry in a way pleasing to God. We will do this in ways that will assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of our children, youth, and servant volunteers. We will follow reasonable guidelines; we will educate our children and youth servants regarding the guidelines; and we will follow our clearly defined procedures for reporting any suspected incidents of abuse that conforms to the requirements of State law.

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Staff and Servant Volunteer Selection

1. All compensated persons, non-members, and volunteers who are regularly involved with supervision or custody of minors will complete a Primary Screening Form prior to working with minors.
2. The following information shall be obtained for Church members who volunteer on an occasional basis (a few hours each year): name, address, a description of church membership (regular or occasional). This information will be collected and filed prior to serving.
3. Persons new to the Congregation who wish to work with children and youth will be permitted to do so after they have been in worship regularly for six months or submit two references and have a background check. This requirement can be waived if a new member is transferring from another church within which he or she engaged in volunteer ministry under a comparable child abuse policy.
4. Reference checks will be conducted and documented prior to prospective employees and lead program volunteers begin duties.
5. Personal interviews will be conducted for higher risk positions e.g., youth groups, overnight trips, mission trips or largely unsupervised activities involving children or adolescents.
6. Criminal record checks of adults who work in programs where authorized or required by State law are conducted prior to prospective employees and program volunteers beginning duties.

7. Volunteers with criminal abuse violations will not be accepted. Adults who have been convicted of or plead guilty to either child sexual or physical abuse (if known to the Church administration) will not be allowed to volunteer in an area involving the supervision of youth or children.
8. An orientation program including written materials explaining Sugar River policies, procedures, and regulations will be conducted for all new staff and volunteers. Upon completion, a signature will be required acknowledging having received and read appropriate policies and standards.
9. Sugar River congregation and families participating in children and youth activities will be made aware of our policy through an annual awareness teaching.
10. Staff and volunteers who are working directly with children will be provided with information regarding the signs of possible abuse. Training will provide information on procedures for responding to any suspicion of abuse.

Guidelines for Staff and Servant Volunteers in Supervising Relationships with Children

11. In order to protect all Sugar River staff, volunteers, and minors, more than one adult supervisor will be present during any church activity. At no time during Sugar River programs may an adult staff member or volunteer be alone with a single child unobserved by another staff.
12. Children or youth will never be allowed to be in the building alone or unsupervised by adults.

13. Children five and younger will never be unsupervised in bathrooms. (Door to bathroom can be left open or bathroom can be checked to make certain no one else is in the bathroom.)
14. All Sugar River staff working with children and youth will be 18 or older.
15. Sugar River will assure that staff and volunteers working with children and youth are at least five years older than the oldest youth attending the activity or program.
16. Sugar River staff and volunteers will not discipline children by use of physical punishment.
17. Sugar River staff and volunteers will not verbally or emotionally abuse children.
18. Children in nursery care will only be released to a properly identified and preauthorized adult.
19. Staff and volunteers should be alert to the physical and emotional state of all children each time they are present for a program and indicate, in writing (submitting to the Lead Pastor) any suspicions of possible abusive or unhealthy activities.

Reporting Obligations

20. At the first report of suspected abuse, the staff member or volunteer receiving the information will take immediate action by notifying the Lead Pastor or the Staff Parish Relations Team the incident within these guidelines and the law.
21. Sugar River leadership will meet relevant State or local child abuse reporting requirements and will cooperate to the extent of the law with authorities involved.
22. If a reported incidence involves a staff member or a volunteer, SPRC will, without