

WUMC's Safe Sanctuaries Policy

Weston United Methodist Church is a "Safe Sanctuaries" congregation. We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. Below are policies that assist to ensure we are doing our best to keep our children and those who work with them safe.

Background Checks

- ❑ All persons that come in contact with children and youth will have completed a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) background investigation. This includes Sunday school teachers, youth mentors, adult chaperones, Vacation Bible School volunteers and members of the Christian Education Commission.
- ❑ The Director of Christian Education will review CORI results and discuss information with the Senior Pastor, if needed. All information will be held in strict confidence and in accordance with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts laws.
- ❑ After review, all items will be kept in a secure location. CORI investigations are valid for three years. After three years a new CORI will be completed.

"The Rule of Three"

- ❑ Adults working with children and youth will adhere to the "Rule of Three." The rule ensures that an adult is not alone with a child or youth. When possible, the "Rule of Three" will include two adults. If this is not feasible, the adult must have more than one child present with them.

Mandatory Five Year Age Difference to Supervise

- ❑ A volunteer or paid staff person must be at least five years older than the children they are supervising.

Open Door Counseling

- ❑ Doors should be kept open at all times during "one-on-one" counseling or while advising any child or youth in the church. If personal privacy is a concern and the child or youth feels more comfortable with a closed door, the counseling session must be accessible to viewing at all times.

Attendance Requirement

- ❑ To assume the role of a teacher or mentor, adults must be a parishioner in excess of six months to allow time for the staff to become acquainted with the individual.

Photo Privacy and Protection

- ❑ Parents must indicate whether or not they give permission to have their child's photo displayed on-line, on bulletin boards within the Church facility or in the newspaper. Youth in grades six through twelve must also give their written permission to have photos displayed.
- ❑ Written permission is expressed through the registration paperwork associated with the child's Christian Education program.
- ❑ Written permission is valid from September through August of the program year but can be changed at anytime by notifying the Director of Christian Education. Permission must be given each year at the time of registration.
- ❑ Permission to have photos and personal information available in the Church directory will be obtained at the time photos are taken.
- ❑ Individuals over eighteen years of age who do not wish to have their photos displayed are encouraged to speak with the Director of Christian Education who will ensure the desires of the individual are communicated with those responsible for posting photos.