

Definitions: For purposes of this policy, the terms "child" or "children" include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years.

Selection of Workers

As of January 1, 2011 all employees, whether paid or volunteer, who desire to work with children participating in our programs and activities will be screened. This screening includes:

Six Month Rule

No volunteer will be permitted to work with adults or children until he/she has been a member and a regular attendee of the De Graff United Methodist Church for a minimum of six (6) months. This time of interaction between our leadership and the applicant allows for better evaluation and suitability of the applicant for working in our church programs.

Written Application

All persons seeking to work in the church must complete and sign a written application requesting basic information and previous experience related to previous educational and supervision experiences of children or youth, reference and employment information, as well as disclosure of any previous criminal convictions. The application form will be maintained in a secure location in our church office.

Personal Interview

Upon completion of the application, a face-to-face interview may be scheduled with the applicant to discuss his/her suitability for the position by the Safe Sanctuaries coordinator.

Reference Checks

Before an applicant is permitted to work within our child and youth ministry, references will be checked and documented.

Criminal Background Check

A criminal background check is required for all employees (regardless of position) and for the following categories of volunteers:

Those who will be involved in our Sunday school program, nurseries, children's church, Rainbow Bridges and Youth Fellowship.

Those who will be involved with overnight activities with minors.

Those counseling minors.

Those involved with one-on-one mentorship of minors.

Those having occasional one-on-one contact with minors, such as church sponsored athletic team coaches or vehicle drivers.

If an individual declines to undergo a background check, he/she will be unable to work with our children and youth. What may constitute a disqualifying offense that may keep an individual from having child/youth contact will be determined by the SPPRC. Generally, convictions for an offense involving children and/or for offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency or any conduct contrary to our mission will preclude a person from being permitted to work with children. Failure to disclose a criminal conviction on the application form will also be a disqualifying cause.

The background check will be maintained in a secure location in the church office.

Two Adult Rule

It is our goal that a minimum of two adult workers will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during our programs and activities. Some youth classes may have only one adult teacher in attendance during class session. In these instances, doors to the classroom should remain open. There should never be an instance where a minor is alone with one adult on the church premises or in any sponsored activity unless in a counseling situation with approved personnel.

Stephanie Knight will coordinate the Safe Sanctuaries Policy for the De Graff United Methodist Church.