

Personal Safety Covenant

(While all constituents of St. Sanctuary are invited to sign the Personal Safety Covenant, we will only recruit volunteers to work with the children, youth or vulnerable adults of this parish from among those who have signed it and who have been properly screened.)

When I am working as part of a St. Sanctuary program, I agree to provide a safe and supportive environment for children and all persons who come together in this place and will do everything within my power to minimize the possibilities of any kind of personal abuse here.

Therefore, in all of my church relationships I will seek to:

- Treat *all* children, youth, and adults with respect and consideration.
- Respect children's, youths' and adults' rights to decline being touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable.
- Maintain an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, appropriate dress and language, tact, and maturity as a positive role model for children, youth and adults.

In situations in which I relate with children and youth, I will seek to:

- Use positive techniques of guidance, such as redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison, and criticism.
- To have age-appropriate expectations and establish guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline.
- Refrain from any behavior that could be considered abusive to children, youth or adults, including:
 1. **Physical abuse:** This is abuse in which a person deliberately and intentionally causes bodily harm to a minor or vulnerable adult.
 2. **Emotional abuse:** This is abuse in which a person exposes another to spoken and/or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty, including threats and humiliation. Emotional abuse sends a message to the receiver that he or she is worthless, bad, unloved, and undeserving of love and care.
 3. **Neglect:** This is abuse in which a person endangers another's health, welfare, and safety through negligence.
 4. **Sexual abuse:** This type of abuse occurs when sexual contact, exploitation, or inappropriate romanticized relationship between a youth and an adult (or older, more powerful youth) happens.
 5. **Spiritual abuse:** This is abuse in which any action or inaction endangers another's spiritual development or prevents an environment where all can grow in faith and spiritual wisdom.
- Release a child under the age of 8 only to his or her parent/s or guardians, unless specifically instructed otherwise by the authorized parent/s or guardians.

- Remain in view of others at all times whenever I am working with a minor or vulnerable adult.
- Be sure the children for whom I am responsible are always well supervised during church activities, including my own children at coffee hour and other church-wide events. I will monitor their behavior and help them act with consideration towards community members.
- Not use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during the times I am working with minors or vulnerable adults. Anytime that I am scheduled to work with minors or vulnerable adults but I am under the influence of alcohol, any illegal substance or prescription drug which impairs my ability to work safely with minors or vulnerable adults, I will call and inform the staff that I cannot work and no questions will be asked.
- Inform the staff if I believe there is any other reason I should not be responsible for the care of minors or vulnerable adults, including any medical or emotional condition.
- Refrain from using profanity, telling inappropriate jokes or sharing unsuitable details of my personal life in the presence of children, youth or vulnerable adults.
- Refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others in the presence of children and youth.
- Assure that only assigned workers are in the nursery/preschool, unless a nursing mother or parent called in to calm an upset child.
- Speak with the Pastor or program director if I have any concerns about the health, wellbeing, or suspected abuse of minors or vulnerable adults under my care.
- Attend training sessions or adult forums offered by _____ Church dealing with abuse prevention, relevant policies and procedures, and appropriate boundaries.
- Take seriously this personal safety covenant I am making with my brothers and sisters in this congregation.

I understand that abiding by these promises and policy guidelines is important and necessary to my participation with minors or vulnerable adults as part of _____ (the church's) programs. If I fail to abide by them, I realize that I may be reassigned or relieved from my church-related duties at the discretion of church leadership.

Signed by

Date signed

Please print your name