

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church Child Safe Church Policy

Approved by the Vestry

08/14 /2024

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the procedures to mitigate risks and protect children from deliberate or unintentional acts of physical and or emotional harm while participating in parish sponsored activities.

Objective

Child safeguarding is the act of making an environment safe for children. Our goal is to create and maintain a safe culture that is child focused and parish driven through meaningful engagement with children and their families.

Duties and Responsibilities

Vestry

The Vestry will consider the following when reviewing/approving parish programs or activities for children and youth:

- Physical location with considerations for visibility
- Minimizing unmonitored entry, and access to dangerous materials/equipment such as cleaning solutions, kitchen equipment, and power tools
- Adult supervision requirements
- Activities which may increase the risk for boundary violations and identify interventions to mitigate risks

Vestry members are required to complete and maintain Safe Church Training as determined by the Diocese of Ohio. Renewal of training is required every three years, or as otherwise required by the Diocese of Ohio.

The Senior Warden is responsible for reviewing compliance with training requirements for Vestry, staff, program leaders and volunteers working with children.

Report to Rector or Senior Warden suspicious/inappropriate interactions with children by staff, program leaders, and volunteers during parish sponsored activities and programs.

The Senior Warden is responsible for reporting to the Diocese of Ohio a situation in which clergy is suspected of abuse.

Rector

Complete and maintain Safe Church Training as determined by the Diocese of Ohio. Renewal of training is required every three years, or as otherwise required by the Diocese of Ohio.

Screen applicants for risk during the pre-employment process. Screening activities include but are not limited to:

- Conduct a face-to-face interview
- Contact references
- Complete criminal background check
- Check local, state and federal sex offender registries

Investigate claims of suspicious/inappropriate interactions with children by staff, program leaders and volunteers during parish sponsored activities and programs.

Report allegations or incidents of abuse to appropriate local law enforcement/government agencies and to the Diocese of Ohio.

Staff Members

Complete and maintain Safe Church Training as determined by the Diocese of Ohio. Renewal of training is required every three years, or as otherwise required by the Diocese of Ohio.

The staff member will consider the following when planning parish programs or activities for children and youth:

- Physical location with considerations for visibility
- Minimizing unmonitored entry, and access to dangerous materials such as cleaning solutions, kitchen equipment, and power tools
- Adult supervision requirements
- Activities which may increase the risk for boundary violations and identify interventions to mitigate risks

Report to Rector or Senior Warden suspicious/inappropriate interactions with children by staff, program leaders, and volunteers during parish sponsored activities and programs.

Program Leaders/ Volunteers working with Children

Program leaders and volunteers working with children are required to complete and maintain Safe Church Training as determined by the Diocese of Ohio. Renewal of training is required every three years, or as otherwise required by the Diocese of Ohio.

The program leader will consider the following when planning parish programs or activities for children and youth:

- Physical location with considerations for visibility
- Minimizing unmonitored entry, and access to dangerous materials/equipment such as cleaning solutions, kitchen equipment, and power tools
- Adult supervision requirements
- Activities which may increase the risk for boundary violations and identify interventions to mitigate risks

Report to Rector or Senior Warden suspicious/inappropriate interactions with children by employees, program leaders, and volunteers during parish sponsored activities and programs.

Off Site Programming for Parish Sponsored Events

The program leader for off-site events is required to ensure the following:

- Minimum of two unrelated adults for event supervision
- Completion of permission forms by parent/legal guardian for each child/youth participant
- Parent/guardian is responsible for transportation arrangements to off-site programs
- Prior notification to Clergy and/ or Vestry is required for off-site programs

Periodic Review

The Vestry shall review this policy annually.