



Safe Sanctuaries is a movement in the United Methodist Church to protect children and youth from sexual abuse in the local church. Our mandate to do this comes from scripture:

*And anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf is welcoming me. But if anyone causes one of these little ones who trust in me to lose faith, it would be better for that person to be thrown into the sea with a large millstone tied around the neck.*

**Matthew 18:5-6**



## Atlantic United Methodist Church

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## Atlantic United Methodist Church



*Reducing the Risk of Abuse in  
Children & Youth*

Atlantic United Methodist Church has formed a SAFE TEAM to oversee the church's SAFE SANCTUARY POLICY and procedures. SAFE TEAM members include: Pastor, Youth Coordinator and representatives from the following committees: Staff Parish Relations , Trustee, Administrative Council .

INTERPERSONAL BOUNDARY is the guidelines or limits a person creates to identify reasonable ways for interaction among people and possible responses when the bounds is breached. It is based on an individual's beliefs, opinions, attitudes, past experiences and social learning.

**IF A COMPLAINT IS MADE:**  
The SAFE TEAM ensures that it will be handled in a manner consistent with state laws governing the reporting of crimes of sexual abuse.

## SAFE SANCTUARIES POLICY

Atlantic United Methodist Church  
***The Two Adults Rule – Provides for two adults to be present at all times during activities with a group of children and allows for the second adult to be a “roamer” that moves in and out of locations with groups of children.***

***Age Requirements – All teachers and leaders of children/youth ministries will be over 18 years of age and will have completed the church's screening and hiring procedures.***

***The Five Years Older Rule - Ministry workers will be at least five years older than the oldest child served in the program.***

***A Window in Every Door – All rooms used for children's activities have windows that provide visual contact from public areas. These windows shall not be occluded allowing supervision of a “roamer”.***

**Children and youth will never be left unattended.**

## SAFE SANCTUARIES PROCEDURES

### Six Month Rule

Adult volunteers wishing to work with children/youth need to be in regular attendance at worship for at least six months.

### Application and Participation Covenant

Adults wishing to work with children/youth need to complete a written application, providing personal references. They also need to sign a participation covenant governing how they will relate to the children and church.

### Background Screening

All Adults, volunteer and paid, wishing to work with children/youth need to submit to a background check that includes a multi-state criminal check, a sex offender registries check, a social trace, which includes verification of name, birth date, SSN, and previous addresses.