

PARKWAY UMC
SAFE SANCTUARY
-STUDENT MINISTRY -



PARKWAY
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Let the journey begin.

Why Safe Sanctuary?

- Our calling and our mandate is to ensure safe sanctuary for God's people
- Scriptures provide examples of how sanctuary is to be a community of protective nurture and harmony (Psalms 20:1-2, 27:4-5)
- This church recognizes the need to have a formal, written policy with procedures in place...
 - Not because of lack of trust, but to ensure safety of youth
 - Helps us protect our youth workers, volunteers, employees, and church body
 - Help prevent opportunity or appearance for abuse of youth
 - Help protect workers from suspicions or accusations



Churches are Easy Targets

- Community of trust**
- New people readily welcomed in**
- Easy access**
- Volunteer intensive**
- Ignorance to risks**
- Lack of safeguards**



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At Parkway . . .

- The adult to youth ratio is 1:5
- Only adults may be scheduled to supervise youth
- Adults are
 - 23 or older
 - member/attender for 6+ months
 - Screened and approved



At Parkway . . .

- Young Adults: May be scheduled to assist in supervising youth
- Young Adults are
 - 18-23 years old
 - approved by the ministry leader
 - Will not be put in position of decision maker
 - Will not be put solely in charge of a group
- All adults and young adults who work with youth must
 - Be trained in our safe sanctuary procedure
 - Participate in annual reviews of procedures



At Parkway..

-All adults will undergo a screening

- Anyone who applies must first fill out the application (should be completed prior to taking Safe Sanctuary)**
- Character References will be requested for all adults (at least two)**
- Anyone who applies to serve will be screened, including background checks, before being approved**
- Results of screens shall be kept confidential**



Parkway's Policy

- There must be at least one additional adult besides the Ministry Leader at all events
- In a classroom/group, there must be at least two adults present at all times
- At least one adult present must be First Aid/CPR certified
- An adult can NEVER be alone with a youth
- Always ensure you are visible by another adult
- All adults must wear a name badge
- Everyone (youth and adults) must sign in when arriving to an event



Parkway's Policy

– Physical Boundaries

- **Touching to Comfort or Affirm:** appropriate touching to hand, arm, shoulder, back, head are okay in public view
- **Hugs:** side-by-side is best (avoid full body contact)
- **Always be aware of how it looks:**
 - **To the person being contacted**
 - **To onlookers**



Parkway's Policy

– Emotional Boundaries

- Beware of allowing youth to become too attached to a leader
- Steer clear of inappropriate discussions and/or content
- Direct youth to Ministry Leader when needed
- Notify Ministry Leader of questionable intel



Parkway's Policy

- Spiritual Boundaries

- Do not manipulate student's emotions
 - Be aware this is more likely at longer events
- Allow everyone to make their own decision without stigma, coercion, or pressure
- Present the faith with no strings attached
- If you do not know the answer, then do not make one up. Direct the student to the Ministry Leader



Parkway's Policy

– Abuse

- Verbal Abuse: any verbal act that humiliates, degrades, or threatens
- Physical Abuse: any act of omission that endangers a person's physical or mental health
- Sexual Abuse: exploitation of another person for satisfaction of sexual drives. This includes displaying suggestive visual materials, making comments or innuendoes about one's own or another person's body, touching another person's body, hair or clothing, touching or rubbing oneself in the presence of another person, kissing, and sexual intercourse.



Parkway's Policy

- Parkway Does Not Allow on Campus or Events...
 - Tobacco
 - Alcohol
 - Illegal Drugs
 - Firearms or other weapons
 - license to carry adults **MUST** communicate with Ministry Leader
 - Foul or offensive language



Parkway's Policy

– Discipline

- Never use physical discipline
- Involve Ministry Leader if gentle reminders have been used and additional steps need to be taken



Parkway's Policy

– Overnight/ Off Campus Activities

- Travel together when multiple cars are used
- Wear seat belts
- Age 12 and younger not permitted to ride in the front seat of a vehicle unless authorized by Ministry Leader
- If a youth needs to depart early, the adult driving must have permission from parent of youth and the Ministry Leader
- Two adults must be in each dorm room
- Dorms and/or sleeping accommodations will be split by gender
 - Preferably in separate areas of the building



Parkway's Policy

- **Communication with Youth Off Campus of Parkway**
 - **Avoid friending/following students on social media platforms**
 - **Encourage them to follow the Parkway Student accounts instead**
 - **Only communicate with students over text/phone message if necessary or approved by Ministry Leader**
 - **If messaging youth, ensure it is in a group message with two or more adults**
 - **Do not meet with youth outside of ministry setting unless approved by Ministry Leader**
 - **Be conscience of what you post on social media**



Decreasing Risk

– Avoid Isolation

- **Maintain open environment**
 - **Keep door open if there is not a large window**
 - **Do not cover windows**
 - **Do not lock doors**
- **Ensure adult to youth ratio is followed**
 - **Combine classes if needed due to too few adults**



Reporting

- **If first aid or emotional support must be administered...**
 - **Care first for the youth**
 - **Call 911 if warranted**
 - **Notify Ministry Leader**
 - **Assist Ministry Leader in informing parents**
 - **Complete Incident Report (will be provided by Ministry Leader)**
 - **Ensure it is completed completely**
 - **Turn it into Ministry Leader**



Reporting

- **If abuse or violation of TX Penal Code is suspected...**
 - **Address needs of child**
 - **Remove the person suspected of the abuse with dignity**
 - **Call 911 and/or Dept. of Protective and Regulatory Services**
 - **800-252-5400**
 - **Notify Ministry Leader**
 - **Assist Ministry Leader in informing parents**



Reporting

- **If leader misconduct is suspected . . .**
 - **Inform the Ministry Leader if you suspect misconduct**
 - **The leader who violates our policies and procedures will be removed from contact with youth and appropriate authorities will be notified if necessary**



Reporting

– Media

- If investigations or allegations of abuse should come to the attention of the media, a response shall come from a designated church spokesperson (Senior Pastor) or a spokesperson in the Conference Communications Office or as designated by the Bishop
- Refer all inquiries to the spokesperson
- Do NOT give out ANY information regarding incidents.
 - This is both for the protection of the accused and accuser



**YOU ARE
OFFICIALLY TRAINED!**



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