



# Ooltewah United Methodist Church

## **Safe Sanctuaries Table of Content**

<b>Page 3</b>	<b>Safe Sanctuaries Child Abuse Prevention Policy</b>
<b>Page 4</b>	<b>Types of Abuse and How to Identify Abuse</b>
<b>Page 8</b>	<b>Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults Ministry Guidelines</b>
<b>Page 13</b>	<b>Responding to Allegations of Abuse</b>
<b>Page 15</b>	<b>Emergency Contact Information</b>
<b>Page 16</b>	<b>Forms</b>

# **Safe Sanctuaries Child Abuse Prevention Policy**

## **Purpose**

Establish a Child Abuse Prevention Policy to clearly define procedure to demonstrate our commitment to a physically safe environment that will foster spiritual growth of children and youth: to support ministries in their recruitment of the best possible volunteers and staff to serve with our children and youth; heighten awareness and understanding of child abuse but is not intended to cause undue suspicion; legal protection of victims and the church.

## **Statement of Covenant**

As a Christian community of faith and a United Methodist congregation, we pledge to conduct the ministry in ways that are committed to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all our children and youth, as well as all staff and volunteers that work with children and youth.

We will follow reasonable safety measures in the application and selection process of all paid staff and volunteers. We will implement prudent operational procedures at programs and events. We will educate all paid and volunteer workers regarding operational procedures, policies, and methods, including first aid and discipline. We will have a clearly defined procedure reporting any suspected incident of physical or sexual abuse that conforms to the requirements of the Tennessee law.

## **Conclusion**

In all our ministries with children and youth, this faith community is committed to demonstrating the love of Christ so that each child will be “surrounded by steadfast love,...established in the faith, confirmed and strengthened in a way that leads to life eternal” (Baptismal Covenant II, united Methodist Hymnal, p.44).

# **Types of Abuse and How to Identify Abuse**

## **Types of Abuse**

1. **Physical Abuse**-Abuse in which a person deliberately and intentionally causes bodily harm to a child. Examples may include violent battery with a weapon (knife, belt, strap, and so forth), burning, shaking, kicking, choking, fracturing bones, and a wide variety of non-accidental injuries to a child's body.
2. **Emotional Abuse**-Abuse in which a person exposes a child to spoken and/or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty. Emotional abuse sends a message to the child of worthlessness, badness, and being not only unloved but undeserving of love and care. Children exposed to emotional abuse may have experienced being locked in a closet, being deprived of any sign of parental affection, being constantly told they are bad or stupid, or being allowed or forced to abuse alcohol or drugs. Emotional abuse is often very difficult to prove and is devastating to the victim.
3. **Neglect**- Abuse in which a person endangers a child's health, safety, or welfare through negligence. Neglect may include withholding food, clothing, medical care, education, and even affection and affirmation of the child's self-worth. This is perhaps the most common form of abuse.
4. **Sexual Abuse**-Abuse in which sexual contact between a child and an adult (or another older and more powerful youth) occurs. The child is never truly capable of consenting to or resisting such contact and/or such sexual acts. Often, the child is physically and psychologically dependent upon the perpetrator of the abuse. Examples of sexual abuse may include fondling, intercourse, incest, and the exploitation of and exposure to child pornography or prostitution.
5. **Ritual Abuse**- Abuse in which physical, sexual, or psychological violations of a child are inflicted regularly, intentionally, and in a stylized way by a person or persons responsible for the child's welfare. The abuser may appeal to some higher authority or power to justify the abuse. The abuse may include cruel treatment of animals or repeated threats of harm to the child, other persons, and animals. Reports of ritual abuse are often extremely horrifying and may seem too grim to be true. Children making such reports must not be ignored.

## **Indicators of Child Abuse**

Children suffering abuse often will not tell anyone about it. Therefore, it is important to be able to recognize other signs of abuse. The following characteristics may be indicators of abuse, although they are not necessarily proof. Individually, any one of these indicators may be signs of a number of other more or less serious problems. When these indicators are observed in a child, they can be considered warnings and lead you to look into the situation further.

### **Possible Signs of Physical Abuse:**

1. Hostile and aggressive behavior toward others
2. Fearfulness of parent and/or adults
3. Destructive behavior toward self, others, and/or property
4. Inexplicable fractures or bruises inappropriate for child's developmental stage
5. Burns, facial injuries, pattern of repetitious bruises

#### Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse:

1. Exhibits severe depression and/or withdrawal
2. Exhibit severe lack of self-esteem
3. Failure to thrive
4. Threatens or attempts suicide
5. Speech and/or eating disorders
6. Goes to extremes to seek adult approval
7. Extreme passive/aggressive behavior patterns

#### Possible Signs of Neglect

1. Failure to thrive
2. Pattern of inappropriate dress for climate
3. Beggars or steals food; chronic hunger
4. Depression
5. Untreated medical conditions
6. Poor hygiene

#### Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse

1. Unusually advanced sexual knowledge and/or behavior for child's age and developmental stage
2. Depression-cries often for no apparent reason
3. Promiscuous behavior
4. Runs away from home and refuses to return
5. Difficulty walking or sitting
6. Bruised/Bleeding in vaginal or anal areas
7. Exhibits frequent headaches, stomachaches, extreme fatigue
8. Sexually transmitted diseases

#### Possible Signs of Ritual Abuse

1. Disruptions of memory or consciousness
2. Unexplained mistrust and mood swings
3. Flashbacks
4. Eating disorders
5. Fear of ministers, priests, or others wearing robes or uniforms
6. Agitation or despair that seems to occur in cycles
7. Fear of the dark, especially at sundown or full moon
8. Nightmares or sleep disorders

### **Know The Facts**

(Facts updated on 12/2019 dosomething.org)

1. 1 out of 3 girls and 1 out of 5 boys will be sexually abused before they reach age 18.
2. Approximately 5 children die every day because of child abuse.
3. 90% of child sexual abuse victims know the perpetrator in some way. 68% are abused by a family member.

4. Children who experience child abuse and neglect are 59% more likely to be arrested as a juvenile, 28% more likely to commit a violent crime.
5. About 80% of 21-year olds who were abused as children met criteria for at least one psychological disorder.

## **Who are Abusers**

Just as children from all segments of society are victims of child sexual abuse, it is also true that abusers come from all segments of society. Abusers can be found in every racial, ethnic, economic, and social group. When they are identified, they look very much like us. Some are charismatic leaders; some are very sociable; some are very sympathetic to children; some are young (even as young as 14 or 15) and some are older adults.

An abuser can be anyone.

## **Mandated Reporters**

Everyone in Tennessee is a mandated reporter under state law. Any person with reasonable cause to believe a child is being abused or neglected must, under the law, immediately report to the Tennessee Department of children's services or local law enforcement. It is not your job to prove the abuse but to alert the proper authorities so they may investigate. Please see the Allegation Response plan on Page 11. To report to the State of Tennessee call 1877-237-0004, if it is an emergency call 911.

## **Different Types of Abuse**

### **Hazing**

Hazing is any activity expected of someone joining a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers, regardless of the person's willingness to participate, **according to StopHazing.org**. initiation rites that are abusive in any manner fall under hazing, and these situations happen even in ministry settings. Some examples of hazing include whipping or beating, branding, forced exercise, exposure to weather extremes, or forced consumption of food or drink, alcohol, drugs, or other substances.

Hazing can involve seemingly harmless activities, but such activities often set the stage for riskier and potentially dangerous behaviors. The risk level of hazing can quickly escalate and take participants by surprise.

Hazing is different from bullying because activities considered hazing might not always involve repeated or aggressive behaviors and might be undertaken with positive intentions (such as fostering group unity) rather than to intentionally cause harm. Nevertheless, you should report hazing behaviors if you see or hear about them.

### **Bullying**

Bullying is another behavior that you may encounter in your service, and it is important to know the definition. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the core elements of bullying include unwanted aggressive behavior, observed or perceived power imbalance, and repetition of behaviors or high likelihood of repetition.

There are many different modes and types of bullying, but according to the CDC, the two modes of bullying include:

1. **Direct:** bullying that occurs in the presence of a targeted youth
2. **Indirect:** bullying not directly communicated to a targeted youth, such as spreading rumors

In addition to these two modes, the four types of bullying include broad categories of:

1. **Physical.** (Examples include punching, hitting, shoving, stealing or destroying property, or getting into someone's personal space.)
2. **Verbal.** (Examples include name calling, spreading rumors, teasing or taunting, using hurtful nicknames, and gossiping.)
3. **Relational.** This type of bullying aims to harm the reputation or relationships of the targeted youth. (Examples include excluding or isolating people, humiliation, blackmailing, using threatening body language, or manipulating friendships.)
4. **Damage to property.**

## **Cyberbullying**

Bullying that occurs using technology (including but not limited to phones, email, chat rooms, instant messaging, and online posts) is considered electronic bullying (or cyberbullying).

This type of bullying involves primarily verbal aggression (e.g., threatening or harassing electronic communications) and relational aggression (e.g., spreading rumors electronically). Electronic bullying or cyberbullying can also involve property damage resulting from electronic attacks that lead to the modification, dissemination, damage, or destruction of a youth's privately stored electronic information.

# **Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults Ministry Guidelines**

## **Training**

Prior to working with children or youth volunteers and paid workers must undergo Safe Sanctuaries Training, Criminal Background check, reference review, and an application. Safe Sanctuaries training, background checks, and criminal history reports will be renewed every three years through Safe Gatherings. Every year in January volunteers and paid workers will receive a new copy of Safe Sanctuaries, a refresher, and sign acknowledgement that they have received the refresher and agree to comply.

## **The “Two Adult Rule”**

An adult is anyone 18 years of age or older. Minimum of two, unrelated, adults at all time while children are present. In times when it is not possible to have two adults in each room the door must remain open and a hall monitor must be in place.

## **Floater Rule**

This rule allows for only one primary or secondary worker to be in a classroom when there is another approved primary floating through the hallway regularly. When using this rule, the classroom door must remain open at all times.

## **Five Year Older Rule**

Volunteers must be at least five years older than the group with which they are to work, except for workers with senior high youth who must be at least 22 years old.

## **Workers Under the Age of Eighteen**

Youth are wonderful help and have a lot to offer in the children’s area, however, youth under the age of 18 do not count as an adult leader being present. When using youth workers, the two adult rule still applies.

## **One on One Interactions**

One-on-one interactions are sometimes necessary and appropriate but care must be taken that they be conducted in an environment that provides visibility by other adults at all times. One-on-one interactions are never to take place in an empty building. Before meeting one-on-one inform another adult close by so they can keep an eye on the meeting.

## **Identification**

All leaders and volunteers in children/youth ministry area should wear lanyards, name tags (with first and last name), or other identifiers.

## **Private Childcare**

The church does not provide references or recommendations to parents who are seeking childcare outside of the church programs. Paid staff are not to provide care outside of the church programs.

## Offsite Contact

All children and youth participating in activities off church property must have consent by a parent /guardian.

<i>Appropriate Outside Contact</i>	<i>Inappropriate Outside Contact</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking child/youth on an outing</li> <li>• Attending sporting activities with child/youth</li> <li>• Attending functions child/youth, with parents/guardians' present</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking child/youth on an outing without the parents'/guardians' written permission</li> <li>• Visiting one child/youth in the home, without a parent/guardian present</li> <li>• Entertaining one member child/youth in the home of staff or volunteers</li> <li>• A lone child/youth spending the night with staff or volunteers</li> </ul>

For Overnight Events/Retreats: Each youth or child must have written parental/guardian consent and a medical release form. (Medical release forms may be completed for a one-year period and must be renewed annually). When transporting youth, children, or vulnerable adults in church buses, the driver must be approved and trained to drive the bus and there must be another Safe Sanctuaries trained non-related adult on the bus.

For overnight travel, it is important to communicate rules and behavior expectations before the trip. By establishing the right policies and communicating them to volunteers, staff, parents, and youth, everyone can work to keep young people safe.

There should be at least two Safe Sanctuaries-approved, unrelated, adults present for all trips and other events where the children and/or youth gather overnight away from the church facility or campus.

At single-gender overnight events, at least one of the two approved adults present shall be of the same gender as the child or youth.

In a hotel-type setting, best practices include:

- Youth and adults should sleep in separate rooms.
- Sleeping rooms must be separated by gender.
- Assign roommates based on similar age and maturity.
- At least two youth should be assigned per room.
- If possible, an adult room should be situated between two youth rooms and the adult room should contain to unrelated adults.
- Establish a curfew and conduct bed checks with adults visiting rooms in pairs. If possible, the adults should be of the same gender as the rooms being checked. Never enter the room alone where young people are assigned to sleep on overnight trips. If you must enter, make sure there is at least another adult present.
- Hotels should have interior door access only, i.e., avoid motels where rooms are open to an outdoor walkway.
- It is a good idea to have youth wear your church or organization's t-shirt or a similar color to ease monitoring.
- Schedule time for breakfasts, group meetings, and entertainment outings to maintain a predictable level of interaction with the group.

## **First Aid/CPR Training**

First Aid and CPR training is provided for church workers on an annual basis. Basic first aid and CPR kits should be available in all children and youth areas.

## **Windows in All Classroom Doors/Half Doors**

Each door set aside for children and youth should have a door with a window or a half-door.

## **Advance Notice to Parents**

Parents should receive advance notice and full information regarding the events in which their children will participate.

## **Accident Reporting**

If an accident or injury occurs during any children or youth activity/program, an adult volunteer or staff must complete an Incident Report within 24 hours. Please complete the attached accident form for each incident. It is better to over report than to fail to report at all.

## **Appropriate Equipment and Supervision**

All equipment with children should be maintained, be safe, and age appropriate. Children should be properly supervised in all settings. If children are outside or off campus, the "Two Adult Rule" still applies.

## **Photographing Children/Youth**

Parents may give permission for their children to be photographed or videotaped when they fill out annual Program Participation forms. No identifying names shall be displayed at the church, on the church website or other social media (this includes a "no tagging" rule for children or youth on church sites). Parents are not required to give permission for their children to be photographed or videotaped in order to participate in programs.

## **Physical Contact**

Appropriate physical contact is:

- Non-demanding, gentle touch of shoulders, hands, arms, head, or back
- Sitting a child on leg or lap is only appropriate for infant through Kindergarten age level.
- High fives, fist bumps, and shaking hands
- Child initiated hugs, side hugs

Inappropriate physical contact is:

- Kissing
- Asking/Demanding hugs and kisses
- Touching chest, genital region, upper legs, buttocks, waist, stomach, any area covered by swim suit
- Opposite sex piggy back rides
- Seductive or suggestive contact

- Physical contact of any kind which is done for the pleasure or satisfaction of care provider
- Any touching used to express power or control over a child

## **Bathroom Procedures**

- Infant, Toddlers, two's, and three's-Diapering should be done at a diaper station and in close proximity to other care providers. Gloves should always be used and child should never be left unattended in the changing area. The area should be sanitized after each use and hands should be washed.
- Two and three Year Olds who are potty trained should use the bathrooms with the ½ doors; child may require assistance. Make certain another adult can still see you while assisting the child.
- Four and five year old's who are potty trained should use the bathrooms with the ½ doors when available: child may require assistance. Make certain another adult can still see you while assisting the child. Pre-K children may use the main restroom when no one else is present and the door is left unlocked.
- First grade and older may use main restroom. Care provider should wait outside bathroom door after he/she has checked to see if any adults are already in the bathroom. If another adult is present he/she should be asked to leave as soon as possible so the child can use the bathroom in private. No adults should enter while the child is using the restroom. If the child requires assistance, a second adult should be called to assist the first adult.

## **Discipline**

The goal of discipline is to help children learn responsible behavior and to facilitate appropriate social interactions.

### Appropriate Discipline:

- Praising specific behaviors (i.e. “good listening”, “thank you for waiting”, “I like the way you shared”)
- A firm gentle voice addressing and redirecting behavior (“Use your walking feet please”, “let's keep our feet on the floor”)
- Age appropriate “time outs” or withdrawal from activity, no more than one minute for every year of age.
- Confidential parental discussion when necessary and should only be handled by Director of Children's ministry or Director of Youth ministry.

### Inappropriate Discipline:

- Corporal punishment of any kind.
- Any words or tone that would cause a child to think he/she is the “problem” rather than a specific behavior being addressed.
- Any words that cause condemnation or shame in a child about any aspect of their person, this includes any reference to anything physical, emotional, mental, or position in life, such as saying “are you a big boy? Big boys don't cry” or “Shame on you”

- A child's behavior should not be discussed with anyone other than the parent and/or Director of ministry and then should only be discussed to find a solution or help

## **Nursery/Children Check-in Procedures**

All children from birth to 5<sup>th</sup> grade must be checked in through the check-in system. The child should wear the name tag and the person who is picking up the child should keep the corresponding tag. Infants may have their nametags placed on their back or diaper bag. Only the person with the matching tag may pick up the child. Child must be taken to the classroom by the responsible adult.

Paperwork for each child (Birth to 5<sup>th</sup> Grade) should include:

- An information sheet/medical release form should be kept on file in the event of special needs or an emergency. This is particularly important for events when the parents may not be on-site.
- A form submitted by the parents should indicate the names of adults designated to pick up their child.
- An emergency contact form should indicate how and where the parents may be reached at all times, including cell phone numbers.
- If you will be taking photos of children for your website or other materials, you should have a signed photo release.

## **Internet Safety**

Church Sponsored Web Sites/Social Media/Texting

Church-authorized social networking, blogging and web sites are used to convey information about Ooltewah UMC, communicate with members, and fulfill the church's mission.

Each church site must have more than one staff member or designated volunteer serving as authorized administrators and who monitor the site regularly.

When communicating through social media, Ooltewah UMC should ensure that content is appropriate at all times, reflecting the church's Christian identity and values. The publication of confidential information is prohibited. Any content deemed inappropriate will be deleted.

## **Communication with Children/Youth**

No adult worker/leader should text, email, or message a child/youth one on one. In any message to child/youth another Safe Sanctuaries approved adult must be included so there are always two unrelated adults. Under no circumstances should workers/leaders use Snap Chat or any other form of communication that disappears and leaves zero trace. If you receive suggestive texts, emails, or other communication from a young person, notify your ministry supervisor immediately.

## **Addressing Bullying and Hazing Behavior**

As a volunteer or staff member, you need to be aware of children or youth who may be left out or have a difficult time fitting in or making friends, or are ostracized for their appearance, sexual orientation, or other issues.

Bullying should be a regular topic of discussion so children and youth know you take it seriously and that it won't be tolerated. You set the example. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem. For example, if kids are speaking aggressively toward one another, don't shout at them aggressively to try to resolve the situation. Be the calm in the storm. Do not play favorites, as that can encourage children or youth that it is acceptable to exclude others.

## Responding to Allegations of Abuse

As caring Christians, we are committed to protect and advocate for children/youth/vulnerable adults participating in the life of the church. The church is entrusted to provide an emotionally safe, spiritually grounded, healthy environment for children, youth, and adults in which they are protected from abuse. It is our legal and moral responsibility to report suspected abuse whenever it comes to our attention regardless of where that abuse takes place. We shall report suspected abuse to stop potentially existing abuse and to prevent further abuse. To report abuse is to witness to the world of the love and justice of God. Reporting abuse is a form of ministering to the needs of those crying out for help. If abuse occurs, it is our intention to act as an advocate for all affected persons, providing support, information, assistance and intervention. We seek to provide a supportive atmosphere, offering both objectivity and empathy as we seek to create a climate in which healing can take place.

If abuse is suspected by, observed by, or disclosed to a volunteer and/or paid staff member of the church, that person shall report the incident immediately to the church and to the state of Tennessee.

Tennessee law requires every person to make a report when they suspect sexual or physical abuse or neglect of a minor. Failure to report is a Class A misdemeanor. The required report may be made to the State of Tennessee Child Abuse Hotline at 1-877-237-0004, online at <https://apps.tn.gov/carat/> or to a Tennessee sheriff's office or police department. If the situation is a life threatening emergency, contact 911.

The First step is to ensure the protection of and tend to the immediate needs of the child, as the situation requires.

Once the child is safe IMMEDIATELY notify the proper authorities (immediate supervisor, designated church child protection representative or the adult in charge of the event.) This person will:

1. provide written documentation concerning the incident on the designated form (Page 16 and 17)
2. notify the County Office of DSS. This is a requirement of the law. (Note: Do not attempt an investigation. This should be left to professionals who are familiar with these cases.)
3. notify the pastor in charge. If the pastor is the accused party, the designee will notify the chair of the Staff Parish Relations Committee and the District Superintendent.
4. give written documentation to the pastor and/or Chair of the Staff Parish Committee. The pastor or designee will notify the parents of the victim and take whatever steps are necessary to assure the safety of the child/youth until the parent(s) arrive. ***It is important to emphasize that the proper authorities must be notified even if the parent(s) does not wish the incident to be reported.*** (Note: If one or both of the

- parents is the alleged abuser, contact the proper authorities listed above. Follow their advice about notification of the parents.)
5. After having reported the suspected abuse to the proper authorities, the incident is to be reported immediately to the church's attorney, the church's insurance company, and the district superintendent. The district superintendent will report the allegation to the bishop's office. Do not try to handle this without professional assistance. If the accused is a clergy member of an annual conference, local pastor, or diaconal minister, provisions of The 2016 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church must be followed.

A list of emergency numbers will be available to the staff at all times.

If the accused is working in a volunteer or paid position with children or youth in the church, immediately, yet with dignity and respect for the sacred worth of the person, remove the accused from further involvement with children and/or youth.

Once the proper authorities have been contacted and the safety of the child or youth is secured, the pastor or other designated person may tell the accused that a report has been made. If the accused is a volunteer or paid staff of the church, that person shall be relieved temporarily of his or her duties until the investigation is finished. If the accused is a paid staff person of the church, arrangements should be made to either maintain or suspend his or her income until the allegations are cleared or substantiated.

Any contact with the media should be handled by a pre-determined spokesperson. Care will be taken to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved. The spokesperson should generally convey that the matter is under investigation and any comments made prior to the conclusion of the investigation would be premature.

A written report of the basic information shall be kept to ensure on-going ministry to, and advocacy for, victims and others involved, please see attached form. The report shall be brief and contain only factual information relevant to the situation. It shall be filed securely in the business managers office. It shall be written in ink or typed to prevent it from being changed. The church must also file a copy of the report with the bishop's office of the Annual Conference where it shall remain confidential.

## **Emergency Contact Information**

Pastors: Dwight Kilbourne, 423-304-8276  
Amanda Dean, 423-718-4103

Chairperson of SPRC: Erik Ehinger, 423-238-9216

Director of Children's Ministries: Chrissy Gray, 423-238-9216

Director of Youth Ministries: Branden Jones, 423-238-9216

District Superintendent: Hugh Kilgore, 423-476-8221

Bishop: Mary Virginia Taylor, 865-690-4080

Police: Hamilton County Sheriff Department (423) 209-7000

Department of Children's Services: (423) 296-1234

State Abuse Hotline: 877-237-0004

## Safe Sanctuaries Participation Covenant Statement

The congregation of Ooltewah United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, at-risk adults, volunteers and staff who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The following policy statements reflect our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who would enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others.

- • No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual, physical, emotional, or ritual abuse or neglect) will be permitted to work or volunteer with either children or youth in any church-sponsored activity.
- • All staff and adult volunteers involved with children or youth of our church will obtain a background check to be kept in a confidential file at the church.
- • All adult volunteers involved with children or youth of our church will have attended OUMC for at least six months before being assigned to work with children or youth.
- • All staff and adult volunteers with children and youth shall observe the "Two Adult Rule" at all times so that no adult is left alone with children or youth on a routine basis.
- • All staff and adult volunteers with children and youth shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the church to keep them informed of church policies and state laws regarding child abuse.
- • All staff and adult volunteers shall immediately report to their supervisor or the nearest staff member any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate, while following all state guidelines.

**Please answer the following questions:**

1. As an employee/volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe and abide by all church policies regarding working in ministries with children, youth, and vulnerable adults?  Yes  No
2. As an employee/volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to obtain a background check and have it placed on file at the church?  Yes  No
3. As an employee/volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to participate in training and education events provided by the church related to your volunteer assignment?  Yes  No
4. As an employee/volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to the six month rule of church attendance before beginning a volunteer assignment?  Yes  No
5. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe the "Two Adult Rule" at all times?  Yes  No
6. As an employee/volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior to your supervisor while following all state rules?  Yes  No
7. As an employee/volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to inform a minister of this church if you have ever been convicted of child abuse?  Yes  No

I have read the Safe Sanctuaries Participation Covenant Statement of Ooltewah United Methodist Church, and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth within the Safe Sanctuaries Covenant Statement and policy of Ooltewah United Methodist Church.

Signature of Participant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

This is a confidential file

## **Covenant for Youth working with Children**

1. I understand that by serving I am doing work for the kingdom of God. I agree to conduct myself in a manner that would be pleasing to Jesus Christ.
2. I understand that as a youth volunteer, I am here to assist in carrying out the mission of the ministry that I have volunteered to serve. I understand that considerable responsibility comes with providing a safe and enjoyable time for children, as well as for people attending church-wide events or Ministry functions.
3. I understand that as a youth volunteer, I am a vital part of the team; therefore adult leaders must be able to count on me.
4. I understand that as I help in the children's ministry, I am to treat others as Jesus would treat them. This includes leaders, parents, children, and other youth volunteers.
5. I understand that the adults in the ministry are there to mentor me. If I need help discerning which is the appropriate way to proceed, I am committed to seeking assistance.
6. I understand the importance of being fed spiritually, emotionally, and relationally. I know that learning the principles of the Bible and growing more like Jesus is important.
7. I have received and read Ooltewah United Methodist churches safe sanctuary policy and I agree to abide by these policies.
8. I understand that my ministry leaders will provide me with additional training and coaching intended for growth of my abilities in service and relationships.
9. I understand that if it anytime my conduct becomes less than what is expected of me, correct steps will be taken. These steps may include verbal warning, parental notification, and if necessary, dismissal from the ministry.
10. I understand that it is my responsibility to report to my ministry leader any abusive or inappropriate behavior.
11. I understand that I could only work in a classroom where the children are a minimum of five years younger than me.

I understand the expectations of the Children's Ministry and the church, and I am committed to doing my best to fill these expectations.

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(Youth Signature and Date)

I understand the commitment that Children's Ministry and the church expects of my son/daughter. I accept responsibility for keeping him/her accountable in for filling these expectations.

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(Parent Signature and Date)

**Ooltewah United Methodist Church  
Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse**

Name of worker (paid or volunteer) observing or receiving disclosure of child abuse:

\_\_\_\_\_

Victim's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Victim's age/date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/place of initial observation/conversation with/report from the victim: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Observation/victim's statement (Give your detailed summary here)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person accused of Abuse: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship of accused to victim (paid staff, volunteer, family member, other): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Reported to Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Call to victim's parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Spoke with: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Call to local children and family service agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/time: \_\_\_\_\_

Spoke with: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Call to local law enforcement agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Spoke with: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have the following People been notified:

Pastor _____	Bishop's Office _____
Parent _____	Police _____
SPRC _____	Sheriff _____
District Superintendent _____	Other: _____

Signature of Person Completing Report: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Background Screening Consent**

*Applicant should complete all relevant information and sign and date the form*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby authorize Ooltewah United Methodist Church and/or Kid's Day Out (also known as OUMC/KDO) and/or its agents to make an independent investigation of my background that may include; reference, character, past employment, education, credit history (if applicable for position), adult criminal or police records, and moter vehicle records for the purpose of confirming the information contained on my Application and/or obtaining other information which may be material to my qualifications for service now and, if applicable, during the tenure of my employment or service with OUMC/KDO.

I release OUMC/KDO and its agents and any person or entity, which provides information pursuant to this authorization, from any and all liabilities, claims or law suits in regards to the information obtained from any and all of the above referenced sources used.

**The following is my true and complete legal name and all information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge:**

**Full Name (Printed):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Maiden Name or Other Names Used:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Social Security Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Present Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Former Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Driver's License Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State of License:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

***\*Note: The above information is required for identification purposes only, and is in no manner used as a qualification for employment, internship, or service as a volunteer. OUMC and/or KDO abides by all applicable state and federal employment laws.***

# Ooltewah UMC Accident Report Form

Date of Accident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Accident: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Child/Youth Injured: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Child/Youth: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Location of Accident: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Accident: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Outcome (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Persons Present: \_\_\_\_\_

Persons Notified: \_\_\_\_\_

Person Completing Report: \_\_\_\_\_

Name Parent/Guardian Notified: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Completing Report

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

# Ooltewah UMC

## Application for working with Children and Youth

This form is designed to help us provide a safe and secure environment for the children and youth who participate in our program and ministries. It is also designed to ensure the personal dignity of all who are involved in serving them. The information on this application will remain confidential, in keeping with the legal requirements of the church. This is not an application for employment.

**Which areas of ministry interest you** \_\_\_\_\_

**If interest is in children/youth ministries, which age group do you prefer to work with?**

### General Information:

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe your current relationship with God and a little about your faith:

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How long have you attended OUMC? \_\_\_\_\_

If less than 1 year what church did you previously attend? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a person from your former church that we may contact? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

*We are a church that promotes healing and growth if you have any problems answering these question please talk to a staff member to set up a confidential meeting to answer these questions.*

Do you have children of your own **Yes / No** Ages: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any physical, mental, or emotional conditions that would prevent you from performing certain types of activities related to working with children/youth?

**Yes / No** \_\_\_\_\_. If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been convicted of child abuse, molestation, or neglect? **Yes / No**

Have you ever been concerned that you may have an addiction to drugs, alcohol, pornography or any other addiction; or has anyone ever suggested that you may have a problem with any of the above? **Yes / No**

Have you ever been convicted of the possession, use, or sale of drugs within the last 7 years?  
**Yes / No**

Have you ever been convicted of a crime anywhere and/ or pending charge? **Yes / No** **If yes please provide explanation below:**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Charge: \_\_\_\_\_

Disposition \_\_\_\_\_

(Please use a separate page if more space is needed)

*\*Other than citations/convictions expunged, sealed, set aside by law, or otherwise protected by applicable law from disclosure on this employment application. A conviction includes a guilty verdict, guilty finding, guilty plea, or "no contest" plea, whether or not a sentence was imposed.*

I further understand that OUMC takes abuse very seriously and that abuse in any form will not be tolerated. I am aware that my participation in abuse of any form is cause for my removal from volunteer services.

Applicants Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please email completed forms to [cgray@oumclive.org](mailto:cgray@oumclive.org)**