

Youth Camp Recommendations

There are many areas in church life where children can be vulnerable to a sexual predator; Sunday meetings, care groups, church picnics, and other gatherings. In these recent years our churches have done well in providing a safety plan, however, there are some areas that are sometimes overlooked or inadequately covered in protecting our children from sexual misconduct. Events like youth camps, youth retreats, and VBS. These gatherings need our detailed oversight.

This document provides some recommendations from the RSCM committee to help you protect your church in these specific areas. As you think through how to best plan and organize these outside events we think these recommendations will also be helpful for all church gatherings that involve children. As with every policy designed to protect our children it's important to understand the laws of your state so you can have the appropriate policies in place when hosting children and youth.

Recommendations to consider:

- What is the state law related to youth camps/retreats for where you meet? For example, the state of Texas requires that all adults undergo awareness screening and background checks.
- All attending parents, leaders, and volunteers should be required to go through the MinistrySafe awareness training and peer sexual abuse training.
- All attending parents, leaders, and volunteers should be required to go through a criminal background check
- Prior to any youth or children's event: Provide to all attending, documentation that lists the specific supervision of each student and an additional document that clearly defines the responsibilities and expectations of supervision.

Be aware of the "Areas of High Risk" where policies are necessary:

It's important to have clear policies that address every area. While there are many "areas" to consider, the list below includes ones we consider of highest priority:

- Bathrooms
- Areas where clothing is changed
- Overnight/Sleeping arrangements
- Spaces that are off limits (behind buildings, extra meeting rooms, etc.)
- Water areas (where body parts and interaction aren't directly visible)

Here are links that take you to sample examples of policies from MinistrySafe that address these areas:

[Overnight Contexts Policies \(Sample\)](#)

[Student Ministry Policies \(Sample\)](#)

Please feel free to call any of the men on the Response Committee for Sexual Misconduct if you have any questions or if we can help you in any way.