

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF MESQUITE

1028 South Belt Line
Mesquite, Texas 75149
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Child Safety Policy

First Presbyterian Church of Mesquite provides a warm, safe, and nurturing place of fellowship and spiritual growth for all children and youth in our care. In an effort to insure their safety, the Christian Education Committee, with the approval of the Session, has adopted the following Child Safety Guidelines. For purposes of this document, the terms Children's and Youth Ministries pertain to those persons age 18 and younger and/or those who have not yet graduated from high school.

All staff must meet all of the following requirements:

- Submit to a criminal background check *
- Be at least 21 years of age
- Following approval, 16 year olds may work as Child Caregivers when supervised by an adult over 21**

All persons seeking to serve as a volunteer (teacher, sponsor, chaperone, or driver) for any children's or youth ministry program must meet all of the following requirements: ***

- Be a member of this congregation
- Submit to a criminal background check *
- Be at least 21 years of age, except for approved drivers who must be at least 25 years of age
- Possess a valid Texas driver's license
- Provide proof of insurance
- Following approval, senior high students may serve as Sunday School teachers when supervised by an adult over 21

When volunteering with any of our children's ministry programs (6th grade and under) it is our policy to:

1. Have 2 approved adults present in each room at all times, except in the nursery where at least 1 adult and 1 youth, at least 16 years old, will be present at all times.
2. Allow only children within the named appropriate age group for the class settings to be in attendance in that classroom. (*Exceptions may be approved by the C.E. Committee*)
3. Have 1 chaperone per 5 children for any program that takes children away from the church premises.
4. Attempt to provide at least one CPR Certified sponsor with any gathering of children, particularly if the event is off-site.
5. Prohibit use of tobacco products by all volunteers when serving with our children in any capacity.
6. Prohibit consumption of alcoholic beverages by all volunteers when serving with children in any capacity.

When volunteering with any of our youth (7th through 12th grade) ~ ministry programs, it is our policy to:

1. Have 2 approved adults present in each room at all times.
2. Allow only youth within the named appropriate age group for all class settings to be in attendance in that classroom. (Exceptions may be approved by the C.E. Committee)
3. Have 1 chaperone per 7 youth for any program that takes youth away from the church premises.
4. Attempt to provide at least one CPR Certified sponsor with any gathering of youth, particularly if the event is off-site.
5. Prohibit any youth from driving independently to any youth function that originates from the church without permission from a parent/guardian.
6. Have a signed permission slip for youth outings and a notarized medical emergency release form on file for each youth.
7. Separate males and females into separate sleeping quarters. When it is necessary for adults and youth to share a room for sleeping, allow youth to share a bed only with another youth and an adult share a bed only with another adult.
8. Prohibit any youth under 18 to possess or smoke cigarettes during any youth function.
9. Prohibit use of tobacco products by all volunteers when serving with our youth in any capacity.
10. Prohibit consumption of alcoholic beverages by all volunteers when serving with our youth in any capacity.

*****Also refer to Teen Covenant of Conduct***

*Criminal background checks require written authorization and are performed by various methods and agencies searching public records only. Results are strictly confidential and reported only to the DCE and destroyed as mandated. Should the DCE have any question concerning results of the background check the DCE and the Pastor *ONLY* will make the final determination as to disqualification.

Reasons for disqualification include, but are not limited to, allegations of the following:

Class A Assaults
Rape
Possession, use, or sale of controlled substances
Sexual Abuse
Injury to a child
Indecency – including sexual conduct or sexual performance with a child
Possession or promotion of child pornography
Employment harmful to a child
Domestic Abuse
Murder
Aggravated Assault
Sexual Assault
Aggravated Sexual Assault
Incest
Sale, distribution, or display of material harmful to a child
Abandonment or endangerment of a child