

Safe Sanctuaries Guidelines for Mission Service

UMVIM, SEJ provides these general guidelines for your information. Your team is expected to follow your annual conference's Safe Sanctuaries policy.

Guidelines for Working with Children

1. Have more than one adult with the children.
 - Schedule 2 adults at all times, and preferably a translator should be present for international teams.
 - Should be at least 5 years older than the age group with whom you are assisting.
 - Should be at least the age of 21 in order to be in charge of a group.
 - Never be alone with a child.
 - Wear name tags.
 - Perform background checks on all volunteers participating with the team, and provide Safe Sanctuaries training.
2. Do not sleep in the same room with the children if you are staying in an orphanage or child-care facility.
3. Be aware of children's personalities, and show sensitivity to the way they would like to interact with you. Let the children warm up to you by engaging them in positive ways.
4. Follow the safety procedures and regulations of the orphanage or child care facility.
 - Obtain those regulations ahead of time and train your mission team on their expectations and yours.
5. Do not take children off site without permission.
6. Consider safety in your activities with games and equipment.
7. Make sure your volunteer staff has a plan for emergency procedures.
 - Take a first aid kit with you; be prepared to donate it to your host.
 - Have someone on your team who is CPR trained. Ensure they are accessible should a child need medical attention.
 - Have a plan set in place if a child is in need of medical attention.
8. Have a sign in/sign out system for the children participating in your group.
9. Count children each time there is a change in position.
10. Gain permission to take photos of the children, and also to continue any ongoing communication.
11. Be aware of the signs of child abuse (from pages 37-38 of *Safe Sanctuaries* by Joy Thornberg Melton):
 - Possible Signs of Physical Abuse
 - Hostile and aggressive behavior toward others
 - Fearful of parents and/or other adults
 - Destructive behavior toward self, others, and/or property
 - Inexplicable fractures or bruises inappropriate for child's developmental stage
 - Burns, facial injuries, pattern of repetitious bruises
 - Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse
 - Exhibits severe depression and/or withdrawal
 - Exhibits severe lack of self esteem
 - Failure to thrive

- Threatens or attempts suicide
- Speech and/or eating disorder
- Goes to extremes to seek adult approval
- Extreme passive/aggressive behavior patterns

Possible Signs of Neglect

- Failure to thrive
- Pattern of inappropriate dress for climate
- Begs for or steals food; chronic hunger
- Depression
- Untreated medical conditions
- Poor hygiene

Possible signs of Sexual Abuse

- Unusually advanced sexual knowledge and/or behavior for child's age and developmental stage
- Depression—cries often for no apparent reason
- Promiscuous behavior
- Runs away from home and refuses to return
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Bruised/bleeding in vaginal or anal areas
- Exhibits frequent headaches, stomach aches, extreme fatigue
- Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)

Possible signs of Ritual Abuse

- Disruptions of memory or consciousness
- Unexplained mistrust and mood swings
- Flashbacks
- Eating disorders
- Fear of the dark, especially at sundown or a full moon
- Agitation or despair that seems to occur in cycles
- Fear of ministers, priests, or others wearing robes or uniforms
- Nightmares or sleep disorders
- Any of the symptoms of sexual abuse

12. Make sure you are aware of allergies when you provide snacks for the children.
 - Serve healthy snacks (fruits or vegetables)
13. Bathroom
 - Give the children as much privacy as possible while using the bathroom, only giving the child assistance if necessary.
 - Have an extra change of clothes with you if the child soils himself.
 - Make sure that another adult is in sight if you are changing a diaper or assisting a child in the restroom.
 - Have an adult accompany elementary-aged children in groups to the restroom; have the adult stand at the entrance to provide supervision.
14. Make sure there is another adult present if you must bathe a child. If possible, the parent or guardian should be aware and present to provide effective communication.
15. Clean the toys after the children play with them with a mixture of water and small amount of bleach, and let the toys dry before the children play with them again.

16. Take the time to get to know the children and let them warm up to you.
 - Hug the children only if they reach out to hug you first. This allows for sensitivity to the child's comfort level.
 - Perfect the side hug and provide appropriate touch
 - Do not carry the children unless necessary for medical purposes
17. Make sure that you interact with the children in an age-appropriate manner.
 - Let the children come to you

Appropriate example: a two year old coming to sit in your lap is appropriate, but you should let the child come to you on his or her own and sit in your lap instead of taking the action to sit them there.

Inappropriate example: a twelve-year-old sitting in your lap.

18. Let the host or administrators of the facility pass out any gifts to the children.
19. Wear clothing appropriate for the culture, climate, and Christian demeanor.
20. Understand that public displays of affection should not take place in front of the children or during the mission.
21. Deflect any affection of someone who may have developed a "crush" on you in a kind manner. The leader of the group should be aware of the situation and take action if necessary.

Guidelines for Medical Teams

1. Take your procedures slower with children to make them feel more comfortable. Introduce yourself to the child and give them your name.
2. Always have a second person in the room when performing a medical exam or any procedure on a child. The most desirable situation is a nurse who can translate.
 - ***Never be alone with a child***
3. Help make the child feel comfortable by distracting them or providing a toy to hold onto while you examine them or perform a procedure.
4. Explain to the parents and the child what procedure you are performing and keep the child aware of what is happening.
5. Encourage the parent to stay with the child while you perform the check-up.
 - Explain everything that you are going to do to the parent before you do it to the child.
6. Explain and demonstrate to the parent how to administer any medicines.
7. Be aware of the child's allergies or any prior medical conditions.
8. Bring a first aid kit to leave at the facility.
9. Teach hygiene and proper hand-washing to the children and adults.
10. Have an adult sit with the child while they wait for the doctor.
11. Keep medicines away from the children.
12. Make sure medical records are kept in a secure space or given back to the proper person.

Guidelines for Team Lodging

1. Stay in a hotel-style facility where you can enter your room from the inside rather than a motel-style with outside room access. This is usually safer.
2. Do not allow adults to stay in the room with minors.
 - Ideally, there should be two rooms of four teenagers each separated by a room with two adults.

- The adults can rotate turns staying up and monitoring the hallway for the safety of the teenagers.
3. Ask the front desk to provide extra security as an added precaution.
 4. Stay on the same floor whenever possible.
 5. Have the hotel management know which adult(s) to contact in case of emergency; provide room number and phone number.
 6. Set a curfew time for the group.
 7. Do not leave the hotel room alone after curfew unless there is an emergency.
 8. Partner up roommates; each time the group transitions, have team members look for their roommate(s).