

Safe Sanctuaries guidelines for mission projects

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. More than one adult with the children
 - a. 2 adults at all times and preferably a translator should be present
 - b. At least 5 years older than the age group with whom you are assisting
 - c. At least the age of 21 in order to be in charge of a group
 - d. Never be alone with a child
 - e. Wear your nametag
 - f. Background check on all volunteers participating with the team and safe sanctuary training
2. If you are staying in the same facility as the orphanage or child care facility, do not stay in the same space with the children
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
 - a. 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, and take translators with you who know the area if you so choose
6. Consider safety in your activities with games and equipment
7. Make sure your volunteer staff has a plan for emergency procedures
 - a. Take a first aid kit with you to leave at the orphanage
 - b. Have someone on your team who is CPR trained who is accessible to provide medical care for any child who might be in need of medical attention
 - c. There should be a plan set in place if a child is in need of medical attention. The CPR trained individual should remain in a central location where people have access to get to the medically trained person in case of emergency
8. Have a sign in and sign out system for the children participating in your group
9. Number count of children each time that you change positions
10. Gain permission to take pictures of the children, become pin pals, or communicate via the computer
11. Be aware of the signs of child abuse:

From Joy Thornberg Melton's book, *Safe Sanctuaries*, p. 37-38

Possible Signs of Physical Abuse

1. Hostile and aggressive behavior toward others
2. Fearful of parents and or other 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. Exhibits severe lack of self esteem
3. Failure to thrive
4. Threatens or attempts suicide
5. Speech and/or eating disorder
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 the dark, especially at sundown or a full moon
6. Agitation or despair that seems to occur in cycles

7. Fear of ministers, priests, or others wearing robes or uniforms
8. Nightmares or sleep disorders
9. Any of the symptoms of Sexual Abuse

12. Make sure you are aware of allergies when you provide snacks for the children
 - a. Serve healthy snacks (fruits or vegetables)
13. Bathroom
 - a. Give the children as much privacy as possible while using the Bathroom, only giving the child assistance if necessary
 - b. Have an extra change of clothes with you if the child soils himself
 - c. If you need to change a diaper or assist a child with the potty make sure that another adult is in sight of you as you aide the child
 - d. Elementary age children should have an adult accompany them as a group to the bathroom. The adult should stand at the bathroom entrance to supervise. This allows influence while monitoring.
14. If you must bathe a child make sure there is a second adult present, and the parent or guardian should be aware and present if possible to provide effective communication
15. Clean the toys after the children play with them with a mixture of water with a touch of Clorox, and let the toys dry before the children play with them again
16. You are unfamiliar to the children, and you should take the time to get to know the children and let them warm up to you
 - a. Only hand out hugs if the children reach out to hug you. This allows for sensitivity to the child's comfort level.
 1. Perfect the side hug and provide appropriate touch
 2. Do not carry the children unless necessary for medical purposes
17. Make sure that you interact with the children in age appropriate manner
 - a. 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 interaction for age – 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. Teenage volunteers should understand that they should wear appropriate clothing for the culture, climate, and Christian demeanor

20. Teenager volunteers should understand that public displays of affection should not take place in front of the children or on the mission trip
21. Crushes – if a volunteer finds that an older child has developed a crush on them, there should be an expectation that the volunteer deflect the affection in a kind manner. The leader of the group should be aware of the crush, 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.
 - a. The most desirable situation is a nurse who can translate
 - b. 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 a check up on the child
 - a. Explain everything that you are going to do to the parent before you do it to the child
6. If you are administering medicine explain to the parent how to treat the child
7. Be aware of the allergies that the child has or any prior medical conditions
8. Bring a first aid kit to leave at the facility
9. Teach hygiene and washing of hands to the children and adults
10. Have an adult sit with the child while they wait for the doctor
11. Keep the medicines away from the children
12. Make sure medical records are kept in a locked away space or given back to the proper person

Guidelines for Lodging

1. If you can find a hotel that has an entrance from the inside, it is safer for you to stay in that style facility rather than a motel style with outside access to the rooms
2. Adults should not stay in the room with the teenagers
 - a. The ideal situation is to have four teenagers in a room, then two adults in the adjoining room, and on the other side of the adults have four more teenagers
 - b. The adults can rotate turns staying up and monitoring the hallway for the safety of the teenagers
3. It is ideal to have security at the Hotel front desk as an extra precaution

4. Try to stay on the same floor
5. Have the hotel management know one person to contact in case of emergency
 - a. They should have information for the leaders. Room number, phone, etc. in order to get in touch with them so that they can be reached to help with an emergency situation
6. Set a curfew time for the group
7. Teenagers must not leave hotel room by themselves after curfew unless there is an emergency
8. For the students' safety, they should partner up with their roommates, and each time the group transitions, the teenagers should look for their roommates