

# **Sun Prairie United Methodist Church**



## **Safe Sanctuaries Manual**

*January 2008  
(Revised)*



*For more information please contact:*

Sun Prairie United Methodist Church  
702 North St.  
Sun Prairie, WI 53590  
(608) 837-5554



**Rev. Scott Carlson - Senior Pastor**



**Rev. Susan Bresser - Associate Pastor**

**Introduction:** Some people brought their children to Jesus so that he could bless them by placing his hands on them. But his disciples told the people to stop bothering him. When Jesus saw this, he became angry and said, "Let the children come to me! Don't try to stop them. People who are like these little children belong to the kingdom of God. I promise you that you cannot get into God's kingdom, unless you accept it the way a child does." Then Jesus took the children in his arms and blessed them by placing his hands on them. (Mark 10:13-16, CEV)

This scripture reference speaks of the value our Lord placed on children and the example of faith that they provide for the rest of us. As followers of Jesus, we understand that children/youth are inherently valuable members of Christ's community.

An individual's vulnerability places us closer to God but also can put us at risk. Jesus was teaching that, within the community of believers, there must be protection for each of us in our dependence upon God and each other. As followers of Christ, we resolve to protect all individuals in their vulnerability and also learn from each other as we all grow in faith.

Our culture appears to be experiencing an increase in the incidence of abuse and neglect. As much as we do not like to think about abusive and hurtful things happening in the church, it is clear that it is our duty as the church to guard and protect the children and other vulnerable individuals, including church staff and volunteers who participate in our ministries.

The General Conference of the United Methodist Church in April 1996 adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of child sexual abuse in the church. The adopted resolution includes the following statement:

Our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to the little ones, the children. The social Principles of the United Methodist Church state, "...children must be protected from economic, physical and sexual exploitation and abuse."

Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, exploitation and ritual abuse occur in churches, large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural and racial lines. It is real, and it appears to be increasing. Most annual conferences can cite specific incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation in their churches. Virtually every congregation has among its members adult survivors of early sexual trauma.

Such incidents are devastating to all who are involved: the child, the family, the local church and its leaders. Increasingly, churches are torn apart by the legal, emotional, and monetary consequences of litigation following allegations of abuse.

God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong. (From the Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church-2000 pg.180-182)

Since the time of the resolution, Bishop Sharon Rader strongly encouraged all United Methodist Churches to develop and implement a Safe Sanctuary program.

The following guidelines, procedures and documents have been developed in response to this resolution and the Bishop's recommendations.

**Vision Statement:** Our vision is to join together as a family of Christians at the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church for the purpose of providing a nurturing environment that promotes the physical safety and the emotional and spiritual well-being of all of God's children.

**Volunteer Guidelines:** The congregation of the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The following 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 abuse and neglect, physical abuse or mental abuse) will be placed as a volunteer to work with children or youth in any church sponsored activity.

All volunteers must be at least 18 years of age with the exception of the 2<sup>nd</sup> volunteer must be at least 14 and 3 years older than the individuals they are working with. This standard allows for persons to be separated by enough years so as to better have perspective and recognition as an authority figure with the group they are serving.

Anyone who has not been involved with the congregation for at least 6 months will not work alone with any child or youth. They may be utilized as assistants.

Each volunteer working in a contained environment not under the supervision of a paid staff person must have completed and signed a Volunteer Application form and a completed Background check t least every five years.

All volunteers will be required to attend training and sign a form stating they have done such every three years.

Any background check that is returned with a state number will be referred to the Senior Pastor to determine when and how they can be utilized as volunteers.

**SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN/YOUTH:** Please observe the following procedures in your work with children and youth:

Treat all supervisors, co-workers, parents, members of the congregation, children and youth with respect and consideration.

Treat all children and youth fairly regardless of race, color, religious beliefs, gender, disability, creed, national origin, and sexual orientation.

Never engage in the following conduct in your work as an employee or volunteer for the church:

- Strike, spank, shake, slap, or otherwise physically discipline a child or youth
- Humiliate, degrade, or threaten a child or youth
- Touch a child or youth inappropriately
- Flirt with a youth or other adults in the presence of youth
- Shame, withhold love, or speak or act with cruelty
- Withhold food, water, or other basic cares as punishment
- Use profanity, tell inappropriate jokes, share intimate details of your own life.

It is preferable that at least two adults be present for all activities involving youth and children. When two adults are not available, a designated person will periodically check the room where the activity is to take place. While recognizing the important role of youth volunteers in children/youth ministries, in an effort to assure a safe environment, all activities involving children/youth will be supervised by at least one adult. In this document "adult" is defined as a person at least 18 years of age with the exception of the 2<sup>nd</sup> volunteer must be at least 14 and 3 years older than those supervised. We will make every effort to have a CPR/First Aid trained individual available for large group activities. The recommended ratio of children/youth per adult will be: children ages 2-6 years—1 adult per 7 children and children/youth ages 7 and up 1 adult per 12 children.

As you supervise children, be aware that the space you are using is as visible as possible to other staff and volunteers. Whenever possible, leave doors open when working with youth/children. Never cover the windows of an area, so as to block the view. When working with groups of children or youth, have another adult working with you in your area and if the second adult needs to leave for a short time, leave the classroom door open during that time. If you need to have a private conference with a young person, ask another adult to be present or in an adjacent area with any doors open throughout your meeting with the young person.

Appropriate confidentiality as well as appropriate safety procedures need to be maintained to protect the child or youth.

If you need to assist younger children in the restroom at the church, have another adult go with you. If another adult is not readily available, prop the main door of the restroom open. If you are on a field trip away from the church, always have an adult check out a single restroom before a child or youth enters and have an adult present in a multiple-booth restroom. Never allow a child or youth to enter a public bathroom alone. Two children/youth may enter a restroom alone if there is an adult at the door.

With the exception of the circumstances identified under "Special Rules for Supervision" of specific activities, at least two adults will be present for all non-classroom activities involving children/youth.

If children or youth are behaving inappropriately, use positive techniques of guidance, redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement; do not foster competition, comparison, or criticism among youth or children. Work with your co-volunteer or co-worker to set up guidelines and an environment that minimizes the need to discipline youth or children.

If you must use physical restraint on a youth or child because that child or youth is in imminent danger to the health and safety of another person or themselves, take the minimum steps necessary to carry out the restraint. If possible, remove the youth or child to another environment. Be sure there is another adult with you and the child. If removing the child is not possible, take reasonable precautions to remove the rest of the class, or whatever measures are safe, reasonable, and appropriate. Report any such action to the staff person in charge of your program or directly to the pastor as soon as possible.

Parents, volunteers, and staff of the church may visit and observe the program at any time. They must check in with the program supervisor and wear a name tag.

All children birth through grade 3 will be signed in and out by an authorized person. Authorized individuals will be listed on the program registration form. These individuals will be authorized by the parent/guardian. All participants of a program must be picked up by an authorized person before a volunteer or staff leaves the immediate area they are working in.

All children/youth activities will have a written record of the names of participants and supervisors. Records will be kept for at least three years by the person responsible for the group having the activity.

**Response Plan for Unknown Persons on Premises:** As we seek to provide a safe space for children and youth, we acknowledge that some precautions need to be made in order to do so. If during a regularly scheduled program for children/youth, a person enters the area (including but not limited to the entire building/property) certain responses should be followed.

\*If an adult identifies a person who is either unknown to them or not clearly identified with a name badge, the adult should:

Approach the individual with care and concern inquiring about their needs.

After the individual has stated their concern/needs, escort them to the program director/pastor and allow them to help them meet their needs/concern

If the person states that they are just waiting for someone, escort them to the program director/pastor who will then have them wait in an "identified area."

The person who is not with the program should not be allowed to wander around the area when children/youth are present. They should be supervised at all times until they leave the premises. Any adult who is not with the program, including parents, should have a defined area to meet their children/youth during or after the program. This area should be an area where the supervisor is able to monitor their activities.

**First Responders, First Aid Kits and Evacuation Routes:** A first responder is an individual who has been trained in First Aid procedures and is able to respond to a crisis situation. There are several members of the congregation who are trained as first responders and will respond to emergencies as appropriate. Please remember to dial 911 in the event of an emergency.



First Aid kits are stocked with the following items:

Scissors – Gauze – Tape - Band-Aids - Antiseptic Wipes - First Aid Cream

First Aid kits are found in the following locations:

Program staffs work area  
Kitchen (near sink)  
Nursery  
Room 144/145  
Information Counter  
Field Trip Backpack (in closet off fellowship hall)

***Implementation plan for background checks:*** All background checks will be performed through the Wisconsin Department of Justice.

The Safe Sanctuaries Committee is charged with establishing an account with the Wisconsin Department of Justice and with instructing the Background Check Volunteer (BCV) in the use of the account. The account will be password protected.

It is the recommendation of the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) that all program staff, all non-program staff, and all clergy staff have a background check performed yearly. A statement to this effect should be included in the Employee Guidebook.

The BCV will have a written background check performed, which will be requested by the Senior Pastor.

It is the understanding of the SPRC that the Safe Sanctuaries Manual is aimed at volunteers working with youth and children, and that as the program is expanded, it will need to be revised.

The responsibilities of the BCV are: to perform the background check, forward information on any background check record with a State Identification Number to the appropriate person(s), approve an applicant whose background check is returned as "No Record", and to notify the supervisor or SPRC of acceptance or non-acceptance of an applicant. Clergy applicants with a State Identification Number will be forwarded to the chair(s) of the SPRC. All other applicants with a State Identification Number will be forwarded to the Senior Pastor (or Associate Pastor if so designated by the Senior Pastor).

The BCV is not charged with evaluating reference checks or the background check information on any record with a State Identification Number.

It is the responsibility of the Senior Pastor (or Associate Pastor if so designated by the Senior Pastor), or in the case of a clergy background check, the chair(s) of the SPRC, to review the information on any background check returned with a State Identification Number. The BCV will be notified of acceptance or non-acceptance of the individual for volunteer work or a job applicant for employment, as far as the background check information is concerned.

The BCV will develop a secure (only accessible to the BCV and the Senior Pastor) filing system. The locked filing cabinet will be kept in the work room under the alarm system. In the case of a clergy background check, the chair(s) of the SPRC will have access rather than the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor will review the plan for the filing system, and consult persons deemed appropriate by the Senior Pastor for implementation. The

It is recommended that background checks be performed at the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church. However, with prior approval of the Senior Pastor, they may be performed at another location that has internet security access. All information will be held in a secure file at the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church.

No one may work as a volunteer with children/youth aged 0 – 17, senior citizens aged 65+, the disabled, or other vulnerable people without a completed background check.

A written recommendation from an attorney should be obtained regarding the length of retention of background check information and the proper disposal of background check information.

**Step by step plan to obtain background check information:** The supervisor of the activity will distribute the Volunteer Application Form to the applicant. The SPRC will distribute the Volunteer Application Form to the job applicant.

The applicant will return all forms to the supervisor of the activity or to the chair of the SPRC.

The supervisor of the activity or the chair of the SPRC will submit the Volunteer Application Form to the BCV. The supervisor or chair of the SPRC will sign the form so the BCV will know whom to notify of acceptance or non-acceptance of the applicant.

The BCV will submit the applicant's name to the Department of Justice within 7 – 10 working days of receipt. The BCV will not update the supervisor of the status of the application process. The supervisor will be notified of the final decision.

The BCV will forward the information on any background check returned with a State Identification Number to the Senior Pastor (or the Associate Pastor if so designated by the Senior Pastor). In the case of a clergy background check, the information on a background check returned with a State Identification Number will be forwarded to the chair(s) of the SPRC.

The Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor if so designated, (or in the case of a clergy background check, the chair(s) of the SPRC) will review the information in a background check returned with a State Identification Number and make the final determination of acceptance or non-acceptance of the candidate as a volunteer/program staff/non-program staff/clergy staff. The BCV will be notified of the final decision.

The BCV will approve an applicant whose background check is returned as "No Record".

The BCV will notify the supervisor of the activity of acceptance or non-acceptance of the volunteer/program staff/non-program staff /clergy applicant. The signed Volunteer Application Form will be filed with the background check information.

## Volunteer Application for Sun Prairie United Methodist Church

This application is to be completed by all persons who desire to work on a regular basis with children or youth in our church's ministries. This application form is being used to help the church provide a safe and secure environment for the protection of the church and all the children and youth under the care of the church. \* Indicates mandatory fields.

\*FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ \*MIDDLE NAME \_\_\_\_\_ \*LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

\*SEX \_\_\_\_\_ \*RACE \_\_\_\_\_ \*DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_ \*SOCIAL SECURITY NO. \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

HOW LONG AT PRESENT ADDRESS? \_\_\_\_\_ HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

PREVIOUS ADDRESS (IF AT PRESENT ADDRESS LESS THAN 2 YEARS)

I AM ( ) ADULT OCCUPATION \_\_\_\_\_

PRESENT EMPLOYER \_\_\_\_\_ MAY WE INQUIRE OF YOUR EMPLOYER? \_\_\_\_\_

( ) STUDENT AGE \_\_\_\_\_ CURRENT GRADE \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF CHURCH OF WHICH YOU ARE A MEMBER OR ATTENDING: \_\_\_\_\_

HOW LONG? \_\_\_\_\_ IF LESS THAN 1 YEAR, LIST THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE PREVIOUS CHURCH YOU

REGULARLY ATTENDED: \_\_\_\_\_

IF NOT, SPUMC, THEN PLEASE GIVE YOUR CHURCH'S PHONE NUMBER AND PASTOR'S NAME:

EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

VOLUNTEER POSITION DESIRED: \_\_\_\_\_

HAVE YOU EVER FILLED OUT AN APPLICATION TO VOLUNTEER HERE BEFORE? \_\_\_\_\_ IF SO, WHEN? \_\_\_\_\_

POSITION REQUESTED ON FORMER APPLICATION \_\_\_\_\_

OUR CHURCH HAS AN OPEN DOOR POLICY, WHICH MEANS THAT A PARENT, VOLUNTEER OR CHURCH STAFF MAY VISIT/OBSERVE AT ANYTIME. ARE YOU COMFORTABLE WITH THIS ATMOSPHERE? \_\_\_\_\_

IN MOST INSTANCES OUR CHURCH REQUIRES TWO TEACHERS/LEADERS FOR ALL CHILDREN/YOUTH ACTIVITIES. ARE YOU COMFORTABLE WITH TEAM TEACHING? \_\_\_\_\_

DO YOU HAVE A VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE? \_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO DRIVER'S LICENSE # \_\_\_\_\_

DO YOU HAVE DRIVER'S LIABILITY INSURANCE? \_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

CARRIER NAME \_\_\_\_\_

HAVE YOU HAD A TRAFFIC VIOLATION WITHIN THE PAST 5 YEARS? IF YES, SPECIFY FOR WHAT AND THE DATE(S) OF THE TICKET(S). \_\_\_\_\_

SUN PRAIRIE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DENY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES TO ANYONE IN ITS SOLE DISCRETION.

BY SIGNING THIS FORM, I AM AFFIRMING THAT THE ABOVE STATEMENTS I HAVE MADE ARE TRUE AND FACTUAL TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE. I AM GRANTING PERMISSION FOR ALL PERSONS, ORGANIZATIONS, OR AGENCIES, SUCH AS THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES OR STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT, BE CONTACTED FOR A CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK FOR THE EXPRESSED PURPOSE OF VOLUNTEER SCREENING.

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
PARENT'S SIGNATURE IF UNDER 18

## **Sun Prairie United Methodist Church Accident/Injury Report Form**

This form is to be completed by the adult supervisor whenever an accident/injury occurs (for example: injury, accident or emergency). Copies are then to be given to the child's parent/guardian and the staff person responsible for the program on the day of the incident.

Name of class or activity: \_\_\_\_\_ Adult Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Name of injured child/youth: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Legal Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the incident (use the back of this page if necessary):

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Where did the incident happen? \_\_\_\_\_

What area of the child/youth's body was injured? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the child/youth doing when the incident occurred?

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Give the names of adults supervising the child/youth at the time of the incident or any other witnesses to the incident:

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How did the child/youth respond after the incident?

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List the type of First Aid given or other actions taken-List names of persons administering aid:

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Who notified the parent/guardian and when? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of person completing form: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of program supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Parent Notification:

This is to confirm that I received a copy of this report on \_\_\_\_\_

( date and parent signature)

# **Sun Prairie United Methodist Church Behavior Report**

*(Top portion to be completed by Person reporting incident.)*

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reporting Person's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Location of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

**Church Rules:**

- Participant will use appropriate language
- Participant will follow directions
- Participant will refrain from teasing or name-calling
- Participant will keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves
- Participant will use proper manners
- Participant will treat all people and property with respect

**Description of Incident:**

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

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***(Items below will be completed by staff member in charge of program)***

**Consequence of Options:**

- Conference with participant and adult supervisor  
Name of Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_
- Parent phone contact  
Name of parent/guardian \_\_\_\_\_  
Date and time of Phone Call \_\_\_\_\_
- Conference with Pastor  
Name of Pastor \_\_\_\_\_
- Other  
\_\_\_\_\_

Adult Supervisor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***Parents/Guardians are asked to discuss this behavior with their child. Please sign and return this behavior report to the staff member's name that appears above. If you have any questions pertaining to this matter, please contact the church at 837-5554. Thank you for your support.***

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***\*\*\*This form is to be routed in a clasp envelope. Specific names of other children should be omitted. Reference should be made to "the other child" if another child or children are involved.***

## Suspicion/Allegation of Abuse Report Form

This form is to be completed by the volunteer or paid staff member whenever abuse is suspected. If a volunteer fills out this form, this form will go to the program supervisor. The program supervisor will then route form onto the pastor. All information on this form is extremely confidential.

Name of class or activity: \_\_\_\_\_ Adult Supervisor : \_\_\_\_\_

Name of child/youth \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time of abuse (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

State what was observed or reported:

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Was the program supervisor notified? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ (state reason) \_\_\_\_\_

If Yes-Name of Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Time supervisor was contacted: \_\_\_\_\_

Date supervisor was contacted: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Signature of person filling out the above information:** \_\_\_\_\_

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*(Information below will be filled out by the Program Supervisor)*

When was pastor contacted: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Supervisor's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **NURSERY REGISTRATION SHEET**

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **FAMILY**

Parents/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Services usually attended: \_\_\_\_\_

Where you usually sit in worship: \_\_\_\_\_

Siblings Names & Ages: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Individuals Authorized to pick my child up from the nursery:

Name	Age	Relationship to Child
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

### **MY FAVORITE THINGS**

Blanket: \_\_\_\_\_

Pacifier: \_\_\_\_\_

Toy: \_\_\_\_\_

Game/Song: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **FOOD ALLERGIES**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(snacks are not encouraged  
and will only be shared if we  
have parental approval)

\*Snacks will not be allowed during worship services.

**SPECIAL CONCERNS** (i.e. other allergies, special needs, helpful hints)

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

## **Permission Slip Form**

\_\_\_\_\_ (Youth's name) has my permission to attend \_\_\_\_\_ (what event) at \_\_\_\_\_ (where) with \_\_\_\_\_ (what group) on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

In case of an emergency, I, who by law may do so, authorize the administration of emergency medical treatment to s/he who is subject of this form. I understand all reasonable safety precautions will be taken at all times by the appointed adult leaders of the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church. I understand that in the event that medical intervention is needed, every attempt will be made to contact the person(s) listed below.

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**Signature of Parent(s)** \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Home Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_ Work Telephone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Mom's cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ Dad's cell phone \_\_\_\_\_

Youth's Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_

Policy Number \_\_\_\_\_

Family Physician's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital Preference \_\_\_\_\_

Permission slip will be accompanied by cover letter stating: who is going, where they are going, times they will be gone, who will be chaperoning, means of transportation, cost, how to return the permission slip and deadline for returning it and who to contact with questions. Indicate that any youth who do not have signed permission slips returned will not be able to go.

If you are attending a program outside of the Church, as a participant, you must complete this form regardless of your age.