



Sexual Abuse Prevention Policy

General Purpose Statement

Seven Acres Ministry seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for the children, youth and adults who participate in our programs and activities. By implementing the below practices, our goal is to protect each participant of Seven Acres Ministry from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our staff and volunteers (workers) from false accusations.

Activities Involving Children and Vulnerable Adults

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the terms “child” or “children” include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years. The term “worker” includes both paid and unpaid persons who work with children. The term “volunteer” means anyone involved in providing support for activities of Seven Acres Ministry. The term Vulnerable Adult refers to any adult who, due to mental or emotional state, is dependent upon care or direction of another individual.

Selection of Workers

All persons who work with Seven Acres Ministry will be screened. This screening includes:

- a) Six Month Rule - All workers will be known by existing staff for at least six months either through participation in Seven Acres Ministry, in the same church, or in another community involvement before working with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults.
- b) Written Application - All adult workers will complete a written application that asks if the applicant has ever participated in, been accused or convicted of, or pleaded guilty or no contest to any abuse or sexual misconduct.
- c) Reference Checks - All adult workers will complete and submit a criminal background checks as required by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Human Services.

Rule of Three

At least three individuals (at least one must be a screened adult and the remaining two no younger than 5 years of age) must be present at every function and in each classroom, vehicle, or enclosed area during all activities involving children, youth, or vulnerable adult.

Teenage Workers

Teenage workers under the age 18 must follow these guidelines in order to assist with children's activities:

- Must be at least 14 years of age.
- Must be known by existing staff for at least six months either through participation in Seven Acres Ministry, in the same church, or in another community involvement before working with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults.
- Must be under the supervision of an adult and must never be left alone with children.

Counseling Ministry to Adults

One-on-one counseling sessions will occur only in observable settings, such as:

- In a counseling room with a window or open door providing a passer-by visual access
- In a public room
- In a home where the counselor is accompanied by another screened adult