

## SAFE SANCTUARIES PRACTICES AND RESOURCES

**Safe Sanctuaries practices** ensure a higher level of safety for children and youth in our ministries and also protect the adults who work with young people. If your church or group has not yet begun to address these issues, we strongly urge you to bring this need and these resources to the attention of your leadership.

All adult workers with youth must have undergone a thorough criminal background check, done by the home group. No adult will be allowed to participate without a background check. ASP does the same on all of its employees and Helping Hands volunteers. Background checks are valid for 3 years, and then must be repeated.

### **ASP Background Check Policy is as follows\*:**

ASP operates under Safe Sanctuaries guidelines for our Summer Youth program. This means that all adults, age 18 or older, whether a group leader or not, are required to have undergone a background check before going on an ASP trip.

Adults and youth will have separate showering times, per Safe Sanctuary guidelines and direction of the staff. In each sleeping area, there must be at least 2 adults of the same gender as the youth. These adults will sleep in a separate corner from the youth if possible.

ASP will consult a national sex offender database to ensure we are not placing volunteers in homes of known sex offenders.

Appalachia Service Project does not condone or tolerate sexual harassment in any form.

### **General Resources:**

Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Abuse in Youth Ministries; by Joy Thornburg Melton. Discipleship Resources; [www.upperroom.org](http://www.upperroom.org).

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. <http://www.elca.org>: An ELCA Strategy for Responding to Sexual Abuse in the Church

Faith Trust Institute; [www.faithtrustinstitute.org](http://www.faithtrustinstitute.org)

Child Abuse Prevention Primer for Your Organization and No Surprises; Nonprofit Risk Management Center – (202) 785-3891.

Controlling Risks in Volunteer Programs; see #4.

VIRTUS Programs – from the National Catholic Risk Retention Group;  
[www.virtus.org/virtus/virtus\\_description.cfm](http://www.virtus.org/virtus/virtus_description.cfm)

Safe Environment Programs; United States Conference of Catholic Bishops;  
[www.usccb.org/ocyp/websafe.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/ocyp/websafe.shtml)

Making Our Churches Safe for All: An Introduction to Abuse Prevention for Local Churches;  
[www.insuranceboard.org](http://www.insuranceboard.org)

**For criminal background checks on adult volunteers with youth:**

[www.churchmutual.com](http://www.churchmutual.com) has screening tools available at discounts for Church Mutual insurance customers. Free booklet and video/DVD.

<http://www.lexisnexis.com/screening/express/> this is the screening tool that ASP primarily uses.  
[www.screennow.com](http://www.screennow.com)

Volunteers tell us that some local police, sheriff or state trooper units or local law enforcement agencies in their areas run the needed background checks also.

Denominational support connections/offices – synods, conferences, district

**\*This policy does not apply to the Adult/College program which is designed primarily for adults, age 18 or older. Background checks are not required for those participants. Any groups who participate in the Adult/College program with youth, age 14-18, should be aware that this is the case.**