

Is Your Spiritual Community Safe?

Making spiritual communities safe is everyone's responsibility not just the paid staff or leaders. Who will come if people of all ages don't feel safe? Below is a checklist to help create safe spiritual communities. For assistance contact us: Gabrielle Hamen at 651-330-7300, gabrielle@youhavethepower.org

Develop a Safe Spiritual Community Policy

- Definitions: children, youth, personnel, types of abuse and misconduct, spiritual leader services
- Safeguards: selecting and screening, training, monitoring programs, general conduct of personnel
- Responding and reporting to suspected abuse

Screen staff and volunteers

- Background checks: criminal, sex offender registry
- Application, include volunteer experience
- Interviews
- References
- Driving record

Train staff and volunteers

- Appropriate conduct and affection of personnel
- How to protect themselves, children and vulnerable adults
- Understand healthy sexual development in children
- Understand the different types of abuse
- What are the potential signs of abuse or misconduct
- What are the potential signs of someone who may abuse
- Mandatory reporting
- Policies and procedures if abuse is suspected
- Mandate training: certify personnel/volunteers to work with children, youth or vulnerable adults

Security systems

- Child check-in & out procedures
- Cameras
- ID cards for parents and children

Monitor programs

- Structural guidelines and procedures for activities
- Ratio of adults to children/youth
- Never being alone with a person under the age of 18
- Behavior of adults

Monitor those who have offended sexually

- Show grace to a person who has offended sexually while protecting everyone
- Take it case by case – not all offenders are the same