

## **Guidelines for Safeguarding Missional Communities**

*Missional communities exist when we participate in God's mission of reconciliation beyond the walls of the church through relationship and worship.* --Mission Amplification Team, October 2016.

By definition, Missional Communities function in unique, non-traditional ways. Therefore, safeguarding these communities to ensure healthy, safe environments for all participants will require unique approaches.

These guidelines supplement the Episcopal Diocese of Texas' *Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse; Policies Prohibiting Sexual Exploitation; and Policies Preventing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace*. Nothing in these guidelines should be interpreted as overriding or negating established policies. Rather, the intention here is to offer contextual clarification for Missional Communities.

### **Leadership:**

Designated leaders of Missional Communities, whether lay or ordained, are responsible for establishing and nurturing environments of health, safety, and mutual care in their Missional Community. This responsibility includes ensuring that all leaders are appropriately screened and trained, by obtaining Certification in SGC, SGP-E, and for employees, SGP-H. As in traditional settings, all certification is accomplished through SRS (Safeguarding Records System). This includes all members of established leadership teams and small group leaders. The certification process should be accomplished through the Safeguarding Records Administrator (SRA) of the "home parish," until such time as a missional community acquires its own SRA. A minimum of two leaders in each community must be certified in SGP and SGC.

### **Children and Youth:**

Children and Youth are typically active participants in Missional Communities, present with adults for gatherings, meals, etc. To ensure safe environments for them, adult leaders need to be certified in SGC. When particular people (paid nursery workers or volunteers) are given designated responsibility for children and youth, those people must be at least 21 years old and certified in SGC. The two-adult rule must be followed.

### **Variations:**

Due to the uniqueness of Missional Communities, leaders must communicate with The Rev. Canon Carol Petty to determine best practices in a particular context.