

## **Safety Covenant**

*Open Table Mennonite Fellowship covenants to be a safe space for all.*

We acknowledge our responsibility to protect children, to create safe environments in church activities, and to respond if they are being hurt. We make this covenant for the safety and full participation of children in our community. Over time we may modify or add to this covenant.

We covenant to:

1. Provide a six-month period in which we commit to getting to know new church participants and attendees before asking them to teach children; to supervise childcare; to be a mentor; or to be a youth sponsor or any similar role.
2. Provide spaces for children that are easily observable and within close proximity of other adults (i.e. doors with windows, keep door open, etc).
3. Ensure that any person under 18 who works with children and/or youth is paired with or supervised by someone older than 21 within hearing distance and/or with an easy line of sight.
4. Cultivate an “open door” culture in which parents are encouraged at any time to drop in and observe or participate in activities.
5. Provide counseling and office space that has windows in the doors.
6. Provide at least two adults to attend activities for youths or children conducted outside of the church schedule. This is especially important for overnight activities.
7. Report incidents of abuse or criminal neglect to the state authorities, such as police and/or children’s services. The number for the Child Protective Services hotline is 1-800-800-5556. If you are unsure or have questions, Leadership group can provide additional support.
8. Require a background check on final candidates for all church employees who will have contact with children.
9. Monitor our implementation of this covenant by annual review of this policy in a discernment meeting prior to our November membership signing.

(adapted from Faith Mennonite Church safety covenant)

*Approved October 2017*

