

# SAFETY/RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

## Does your church have a formal safety/risk management program in place?

A survey of pastors by the Barna Research Group revealed that just two out of every five churches has a formal risk management process in place. Of churches that do have a program in place, three out of ten pastors (30%) reported being less than fully satisfied with it. In today's environment, where research shows that one out of every five churches this year will experience a theft or act of vandalism and one out of every seven will experience an injury on site requiring medical attention, it's more important than ever that your church put a formal risk management program in place by starting a safety ministry.

### Recommendation(s)

Consider the following steps to start a safety ministry:

- Focus on value; that is, recognize the value of the people and facilities under your care and embrace their safety and security as a key value in your church;
- Bearing the following three values in mind may be of assistance to you or to others who are skeptical about safety/risk management at church: (i) shepherding: church leaders as shepherds of the flock should protect their congregation from wolves (hazards) that may threaten them; (ii) stewarding: church leaders should practice good stewardship of the people and resources that have been entrusted to them. Watching out for the safety of those resources is an example of good stewardship; and (iii) love: caring for the safety and security of the congregation is, at bottom, an expression of love toward one another.
- With these values in mind, begin to build a team: a dedicated Safety and Security Team whose mission is to help make your church a safer place. Detail on building this team and setting them to work is addressed in subsequent questions in this assessment and in other material on this Web site.
- Support from church leadership is critical to the success of safety ministry at your church. While the pastor's or board's participation in the Safety and Security Team is not essential, their support for the work of the team is necessary for success.

### Tasks:

1. Developing a safety/risk management program

A written safety/risk management program should be developed and implemented into the church's operating procedures.

2. Safety/risk management program training

Train all relevant employees and/or volunteers on any procedures outlined in this policy that would immediately impact their jobs.