



ABUSE PREVENTION PLAN

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

*That a child would be spared abuse . . .
That a worker would be cleared of false allegations . . .
-- this is why this Prevention Plan exists.*



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Introduction

The four critical areas addressed within the Prevention Plan are:

- (i) screening and selection of paid and volunteer workers
- (ii) supervision of paid and volunteer workers
- (iii) legal obligations and procedures for reporting abusive, unhealthy, or inappropriate behavior
- (iv) legal obligations and procedures for responding to allegations.

The main objective of the Prevention Plan is to provide a safe and secure environment for the children (newborn through age eighteen) entrusted to the Church. In seeking to accomplish this objective, two other important objectives are being accomplished: the protection of the Church's workers from false allegations, as well as the reduction of the Church's legal risk and liability exposure.

To accomplish the above objectives, the Church must implement the Prevention Plan and then proceed to monitor its effectiveness. Accordingly, those in leadership within the Church must regularly, consistently and without exception, ask the following questions.

- 1) Has every paid and volunteer worker involved in any manner within nursery/ children/youth ministry on behalf of this Church been trained regarding these policies and has each such worker fulfilled the corresponding requirements? If not, immediate steps need to be taken to remedy the situation.
- 2) Are all workers, without exception, following the required policies and procedures? If not, what obstacles still exist which are holding back the level of cooperation? How can full cooperation from each and every worker be achieved?
- 3) Is every new Member to the Church being introduced to the policies and procedures contained within the Prevention Plan? If not, copies of the Prevention Plan must be distributed and its contents communicated accordingly.
- 4) Is the Church regularly monitoring the Prevention Plan so that its policies are continually being adhered to? The Prevention Plan, once implemented, must always be monitored. If not, the Church can still be legally liable for an incident.

I: SCREENING AND SELECTION OF WORKERS

1.0 Introduction

- 1.01 During the screening process, the Church shall use its best efforts to maintain confidentiality. This should include security of all information.
- 1.02 The Screening and Selection Policies contained herein shall be applied to all paid and volunteer workers involved in any manner with nursery/children/youth ministry on behalf of this Church. All such policies and procedures shall apply to new applicants once the plan has been approved by the Board. A child/youth/minor is defined as any child under the age of eighteen (18) years old.
- 1.03 Before a person can be approved to serve in any such ministry involving minors, the following steps are required:
- (i) the Applicant must complete the formal application;
 - (ii) the Screening Team will complete the required interview;
 - (iii) the Applicant must submit a Police Records Check;
 - (iv) the Screening Team will complete a reference check(s); and
 - (v) the Screening Team will complete any additional safeguards as are deemed necessary by the Board;
 - (vi) the Applicant must complete training (within a six month window)
- 1.04 The specific requirements of the screening procedure contained herein shall be carried out by the Personnel Committee¹, or such other committee to whom the responsibilities are assigned by the Church Board, under the authority of the Church Board. The Personnel Committee may, with the prior approval of the Church Board, amend the screening procedure.
- 1.05 Any individual involved with nursery/children/youth ministry is encouraged to make recommendations to the Church Board concerning the screening procedure
- 1.06 Deemed to be a part of this screening and selection process are any additional requirements as approved and directed, from time to time, by the Church Board

¹ See: Appendix 1 - ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A CHURCH POLICY ESTABLISHING A PERSONNEL

2.0 Formal Application

- 2.01 Every Person who is to be involved in any form of ministry with those under the age of eighteen (18) shall fill out a formal application² and submit it to the Church Office where it will be kept on file in a locked filing cabinet.
- 2.02 One of the requirements within the formal application is that such Person agrees to come under the authority of the Church, its Constitution, and all policies and procedures implemented from time to time by the Church. Applicants should be Members or Adherents who attended regularly. In all cases the applicant should have been attending for a period of at least SIX months (an exception may be granted at the discretion of the Personnel Committee - with approval from the Church Board. The minimum period of attendance for an applicant to be considered is THREE months).

3.0 Required Interview

- 3.01 An interview is required for every Person who is to be involved in any form of ministry with those under the age of eighteen (18). The interview will only be carried out AFTER such Person has filled out the formal application and submitted it to the Church Office.
- 3.02 The interview will focus on the qualifications of the Applicant and such other matters as deemed appropriate.
- 3.03 All interviews must be carried out in the Church Building. A minimum of two members of the Screening Team must be present and be of no immediate relation to the Applicant or to each other, with the term “related” being defined as any of the following: spouse, parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sibling or spouse of such.
- 3.04 At the expense of the church, any Applicant over the age of sixteen (16) must submit a Police Records Check to the Office before he/she is approved to serve.
- 3.05 The date and time of the interview, the names of interviewers and any memos made during the interviews must be recorded and made part of the Applicant's file.

4.0 Reference Checks Made

- 4.01 A member of the Screening Team will contact a minimum of ONE reference for each Applicant.
- 4.02 For each reference that is contacted³, the date of the inquiry, the name of person contacted, the name of the organization with whom the individual is affiliated, the name of the personnel committee member making the inquiry, and the method of inquiry and the results of the inquiry must be recorded and made part of the Applicant's file.

² See: Appendix 2 - RECOMMENDED APPLICATION FORM FOR SERVING IN NURSERY/CHILDREN/YOUTH MINISTRY.

³ See: Appendix 3 - RECOMMENDED FOLLOW-UP FORM FOR NURSERY/CHILDREN/YOUTH MINISTRY APPLICANTS.

5.0 Additional Safeguards

- 5.01 An applicant shall be required to provide photographic identification (i.e. driver's license). The identification shall be photocopied and made part of the Applicant's file.
- 5.02 No Person who has been previously convicted of child abuse as demonstrated by the Police Records Check will be approved to serve in any such ministry involving minors even though such Person has since become a Christian.
- 5.03 At the expense of the church, approved workers over the age of sixteen (16) must submit a Police Records Check to the Office every three years.

6.0 Selection of Workers

- 6.01 After the completion of the screening process, the Personnel Committee shall decide on the acceptability of such Applicant.
- 6.02 The Personnel Committee shall maintain a list of all Persons who have completed the application process. The status of such Applicants shall be one of three categories: (i) awaiting decision, (ii) approved or (iii) not approved .
- 6.03 Those in leadership roles over the nursery/children/youth ministries of the Church shall only recruit workers from the approved volunteer list as managed by the prevention plan committee.
- 6.04 Additional qualifications set out by the Church Board must be met by the Applicant. The Applicant (i) must be a Member in good standing of the Church or the Applicant is an Adherent who has attended regularly for a minimum of six months; (ii) must be at least twelve (12) years of age to work in ministry to infants and toddlers (i.e. for all ministries involving newborns through age five) must be at least fourteen (14) years of age to work in ministry to primary children (i.e. for all ministries involving grades one and two) must be at least sixteen (16) years of age to work in ministry to elementary children (i.e. for all ministries involving grades three to five) and must be at least eighteen (18) years of age to work in ministry to junior high children (i.e. for all ministries involving grades six to eight) and at least twenty-one (21) years of age to work in ministry to highschool students (i.e. for all ministries involving children grade nine through age seventeen (17)). Ministry personnel between the ages of 12 and 16 must be assigned to work alongside another ministry personnel over the age of 16. Ministry personnel must be 17 years of age or older to work alone in a classroom.; and (iii) must be willing to attend leadership orientation and leadership training programs as required by the Church from time to time.
- 6.05 All workers are required to attend a training session within six months from their first day of serving. Training sessions will be held a minimum of three times a year or as necessary.

6.06 All workers will be provided with a copy of the Abuse Prevention Plan Policy and must sign a form indicating their awareness of the Policy and desire to adhere to all policy guidelines. This original document will be kept on record in the Office.

II: SUPERVISION OF WORKERS

7.0 Introduction

- 7.01 The Supervision Policy contained herein shall be applied to all paid and volunteer workers involved in any manner with nursery/children/youth ministry on behalf of this Church. A child/youth/minor is defined as any child under the age of eighteen (18) years old.
- 7.02 The Supervision Policy described herein, together with any additional safeguards as approved and directed from time to time by the Church Board, will be overseen and enforced by those in leadership.
- 7.03 The Church shall use its best efforts to ensure that all workers comply with the Prevention Plan, and breaches will be dealt with in the manner hereinafter set out.

8.0 Supervision Requirements

- 8.01 The "Two Approved Workers Rule" shall be followed. The "Two Approved Workers Rule" requires that a minimum of two workers (i.e. leaders, teachers, sponsors, etc.) be present for all programs or events for babies/children/youth (i.e. Sunday service child care, Kids Time, VBC, etc.). The "Two Approved Workers Rule" offers protection to both the child and the worker. If only one worker (i.e. leader, teacher, sponsor, etc.) can be present at any given gathering or meeting, then that gathering or meeting shall be cancelled.
- 8.02 All programs, events, and classroom settings must comply with established ratios for workers to children at all times. Established ratios are: birth to age 17 months, 1:3; ages 2 to 5, 1:5; ages 6 to 13, 1:7, ages 14 to 17, 1:10.
- 8.03 All classroom or confined meeting rooms should contain windows in each door. Alternatively, the door should be left open to insure visibility. In the following cases a Hall Monitor should be designated (i) only one approved worker in a classroom; (ii) only related workers in a classroom
- 8.04 Supervision shall be maintained before and after an event until all children are in the custody of their parents or legal guardians. This is to protect against abuse of younger children by older children.
- 8.05 When transportation to or from an event is required the following will be observed (i) all drivers will be pre-approved by the ministry leader and have a copy of a valid driver's license on file at the church as well as a copy of up to date automobile insurance on file at the church with a class "G" driver's license; (ii) parent(s) or guardians(s) will have signed consent on file at the church (iii) whenever possible there will be two approved workers in the vehicle with students.
- 8.06 A church nursery identification procedure shall be implemented which clearly identifies the child and the child's parent(s) or guardian(s). Children shall only be released to a properly identified and pre-authorized adult.

- 8.07 No worker should counsel a child/youth alone. However, if one-to-one counselling is requested, then a member of the pastoral staff shall first be advised. There shall be no one-to-one counselling without prior parental/guardian consent obtained in writing. There shall be no one-to-one counselling with children/youth in secluded areas as the line of sight must be maintained at all times. “Counseling” will be defined, for the purpose of this document, as ongoing conversation dealing with one or more personal issues. In other words a brief **one-time** discussion (e.g. listening to a problem) is not included.
- 8.08 Each person who works with children/youth (i.e. teachers, sponsors, etc.) should direct counseling opportunities to Pastoral Staff, Elders or their designates.
- 8.09 The qualified counselor must keep records of all counselling appointments together with a summary of each such counselling appointment.
- 8.10 During each weekend or overnight retreat, there must be at least one (1) female worker and at least one (1) male worker unless the retreat is either an all male or all female retreat, in which case there should be 2 males or 2 females accordingly. A leader-to-child/youth ratio of 1:7 shall be maintained for all such events.
- 8.11 Every weekend and overnight retreat, together with all chaperones, workers, and supervisors for such events, must be cleared in advance with the Church Board.
- 8.12 If a Person observes a co-worker violating any of the above supervision requirements and/or demonstrating inappropriate behavior, then the Person shall first take steps to ensure the safety of the baby/child/youth. by removing them from the supervision of the worker. If this is not immediately possible, then steps should be taken to ensure that there is no one-to-one contact. The Person must then confront and discuss the behavior immediately with the co-worker in question, making sure to also alert the person in leadership over the respective area of ministry as to the incident. Inappropriate behavior **will not be tolerated**. The appointed leader shall ensure appropriate action is taken in accordance with the Prevention Plan. All incidents will be documented and signed by (i) the person reporting the offense; (ii) a Board Member or member of the Pastoral Staff. The original document will be kept on file and a copy will be given to the person who has been accused within three days.

III: LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING

9.0 Introduction

- 9.01 The Reporting Policy contained herein identifies the "why", "when", and "how" of reporting abusive, unhealthy, or inappropriate behavior according to Ontario law⁴. The obligations and procedures set out herein should be the responsibility of every person within the Church.
- 9.02 The Prevention Plan should be reviewed on a regular basis to reflect any changes in the law, together with any additional safeguards as approved and directed by the Church Board.

10.0 Why Should A Report Be Made?

- 10.01 Our Corporate Obligation: Workers must be trained to identify inappropriate behavior with babies/children/youth. If a Worker sees such inappropriate behavior the Worker shall first take steps to ensure the safety of the baby/child/youth by removing them from the supervision of the offending worker. The Worker shall confront and discuss such behavior immediately with the co-worker in question, making sure to also alert the person in leadership over the respective area of ministry as to the incident. Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. The appointed leaders of that ministry shall ensure appropriate action is taken in accordance with the Prevention Plan and applicable legislation.
- 10.02 Our Legal Obligation: Every person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child *is* or *may be* in need of protection must report promptly the belief *and* the information upon which it is based to the local Family and Children's Services⁵.
- 10.03 Our Spiritual Obligation: God has given to everyone the responsibility to care for children and, therefore, the personal responsibility to develop and maintain a safe church environment for all babies/children/youth and those who minister to them. Reporting is a demonstration of this care and concern.

11.0 When Should a Report be Made?

- 11.01 What Constitutes Abuse for the Purpose of Professional Reporting? There is a duty to report if a child suffers abuse⁶ in any of the following circumstances:
- (a) the child has suffered physical harm either inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by that person's failure to care and provide for or supervise and protect the child adequately⁷;

⁴ See also: Appendix 7 - LEGAL REPORTING OBLIGATIONS UNDER ONTARIO LAW.

⁵ See: *Child and Family Services Act*, RES. 1990, c. C.11, s. 72 (2).

⁶ To 'suffer abuse', when used in reference to a child, means to be in need of protection within the meaning of clause 37 (2) (a), (c), (e), (f) or (h) of the *Child and Family Services Act*, *supra* as per s. 72 (1) of this same *Act*.

⁷ *Child and Family Services Act*, *supra* s. 37 (2) (a).

- (b) the child has been sexually molested or sexually exploited, by the person having charge of the child or by another person where the person having charge of the child knows or should know of the possibility of sexual molestation or sexual exploitation and fails to protect the child⁸;
- (c) the child requires medical treatment to cure, prevent or alleviate physical harm or suffering and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, the treatment⁹;
- (d) the child has suffered emotional harm, demonstrated by severe,
 - (i) anxiety,
 - (ii) depression,
 - (iii) withdrawal, or
 - (iv) self-destructive or aggressive behavior
 and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, services or treatment to remedy or alleviate the harm¹⁰; or
- (e) the child suffers from a mental, emotional or developmental condition that, if not remedied, could seriously impair the child's development and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, treatment to remedy or alleviate the condition¹¹.

11.02 Potential Indicators of Abuse: Church workers should be aware that certain signs or behaviors by children/youth may be indicators of molestation and/or abuse. Examples of such potential indicators include cuts, bruises, and other physical injuries; anxious, nervous or hostile behavior when approaching certain areas or persons within the Church; withdrawal from church activities and friends, inappropriate sexual behavior; and verbal warning signs.

12.0 How Should the Reporting be Done?¹²

- 12.01 Each person who believes or suspects on reasonable grounds that a child is or may be in need of protection has the legal obligation to report the suspicion **directly to Children and Family Services**. It is the sole responsibility of the individual making the report to do so immediately.
- 12.02 Prior to reporting the occurrence, if necessary, and pursuant to the *Child and Family Services Act*, no personnel, employees or volunteers, shall, apart from complying with paragraphs **12.01** above, conduct any investigation or question any individual(s) unless specifically authorized by the Church Board. The Church shall use its best efforts to maintain confidentiality regarding any information obtained and any report pursuant to paragraphs **12.01** above.
- 12.03 No investigation or inquiry shall be conducted where a report has been made to Family and Children's Services until the Family and Children's Services or the police investigation has been completed unless otherwise authorized by the appropriate civil authorities.

⁸ *Child and Family Services Act*, supra s. 37 (2) (c).

⁹ *Child and Family Services Act*, supra s. 37 (2) (e) .

¹⁰ *Child and Family Services Act*, supra s. 37 (2) (f).

¹¹ *Child and Family Services Act*, supra s. 37 (2) (h).

¹² See: David G. Thwaites, LL.B., "How to Avoid Claims for Sexual Abuse and Harassment" *CCCC Bulletin No. 2* (March 31, 1995) at 9.

12.04 Should civil action be brought against a person who made a report, he or she will be protected unless he or she acted maliciously or without reasonable grounds for his/her belief or suspicion¹³.

¹³ See: *Children and Family Services Act, supra* s. 72 (7).

IV: LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING

13.0 Introduction¹⁶

- 13.01 The Response Policy contained herein identifies the necessity of advanced preparation regardless of an allegation, as well as the procedure if an abuse allegation is made. The obligations and procedures set out herein should be the responsibility of every person within the Church.
- 13.02 It is important that the Prevention Plan be amended to reflect any changes in the law, together with any additional safeguards as approved and directed from time to time by the Church Board.

14.0 Be Prepared in Advance¹⁷

- 14.01 The Church shall conduct periodic training with all workers and staff regarding (i) what constitutes abuse, (ii) the reporting obligations under Ontario law, (iii) the required reporting procedure, and (iv) the required procedure for responding to allegations.
- 14.02 Rather than issuing a “no comment” statement, a prepared position advising the public of the existence of the Prevention Plan clearly demonstrates the church’s concern and commitment in establishing a safe environment for children. A sample statement appears in Appendix 6.
- 14.03 The Board of Deacons appoints the Board of Deacons Chair or designate to speak to the media and the congregation regarding such a matter in a discrete, informed, and diplomatic way. In some cases, the media interviews several church leaders who have never given any consideration to responding to such inquiries. In such cases, conflicting and contradictory statements can abound, and the public will develop a negative impression of the Church. To avoid this, all requests for information, interviews or statements will be forwarded directly to the Board of Deacons Chair.
- 14.04 The Church must ensure that complete records are on file regarding the screening process for each and every volunteer and paid worker involved in any manner in nursery/children/youth ministry on behalf of this Church. This includes, but is not limited to, the application form, references, interview notes and status of such worker.
- 14.05 Each year the Church Board should also review the adequacy of its liability coverage so that proper coverage is in force should an abuse claim ever occur.

¹⁶ **The Church must** be careful in what it communicates publicly (i.e. to the church membership) in the event of an abuse allegation. For example, s.45 (8) of the *Children and Family Services Act, supra* states that “No person shall publish or make public information that has the effect of identifying a child who is a witness at or a participant in a hearing or the subject of a proceeding, or the child’s parent or foster parent or a member of the child’s family”. Section 85 of this same Act also states that if there is a contravention of s.45 (8) and a director, officer or employee of a corporation [i.e. of an incorporated church] authorizes, permits or concurs in such a contravention by the corporation, such director, officer or employee is guilty of an offense and on conviction is liable to a fine of up to \$10,000 or to imprisonment for a term of up to three years, or to both!

¹⁷ See *e.g.*: David G. Thwaites, LL.B., “How to Avoid Claims for Sexual Abuse and Harassment” *CCCC Bulletin No. 2* (March 31, 1995) at 6-7.

15.0 Responding to an Abuse Allegation¹⁸

15.01 Should any Person report to the Senior Pastor (or to such other Member as directed in writing by the Church Board) a belief or suspicion, based on **reasonable grounds**, that a child has suffered abuse, the Church leadership shall respond accordingly. The allegation needs to be reported to the Children's Aid Society in terms of the Family and Children's Services Act.

In responding, the Church shall use its best efforts to comply with the following guidelines:

- (a) All allegations must be taken seriously and each must be handled promptly with due respect for the privacy and confidentiality of all persons involved. Do not engage in denial, minimization, or blame. Do not be accusatory.
- (b) Document all your efforts at handling the allegation and ensure that these records are kept up to date.
- (c) Do **not** try to handle the allegation without professional outside assistance. Report the allegation/ incident immediately to the Church's (i) lawyer, (ii) District office and (iii) insurance company.
- (d) Contact the proper civil authorities following the guidance of your insurance company and lawyer. Act in compliance with the Family and Children's Services Act. Do **not** attempt an in-depth investigation as this needs to be left to professionals who are familiar with these cases. Also, give full cooperation to civil authorities under the guidance of the Church's lawyer.
- (e) Legal advice **must** be obtained to determine the obligation to notify parents.
- (f) Do not confront the accused until the safety of the baby/child/youth is secured.
- (g) Take the allegations seriously and reach out to the victim and the victim's family as adequate care must be shown for the well-being of victims. The victim should not be held responsible in any way. Be careful not to pre-judge the situation.
- (h) Treat the accused with dignity and support. If the accused is a **volunteer worker**, that Person should immediately be suspended from any duties or responsibilities in nursery/children/youth ministry pending the outcome of the investigation and subject to any discipline policy as set out in the Church Constitution or Bylaw. If the accused is a **paid employee**, arrangements should be made to either maintain or suspend his or her income, in accordance with the Church's policies, until the allegations are withdrawn or established. Any notice of suspension shall be given in such a way that no investigation by the Family and Children's Services or police will be put in jeopardy and shall be done in consultation with the civil authorities. The suspension from duties and responsibilities is not and shall not be seen or accepted as "guilt" of the Individual, but only as an indication of the priority given to the need to protect all those involved pending the outcome of the civil authorities' investigation.

¹⁸ See e.g.: David G. Thwaites, LL.B., "How To Avoid Claims for Sexual Abuse and Harassment" *CCCC Bulletin No. 2* (March 31, 1995) at 9-10.

- (i) Use the text of a prepared public statement (refer Appendix 6) when providing information to the media and the congregation. The privacy and confidentiality of **all** those involved must be safeguarded.
- (j) Any personnel, volunteer, or employee, found to have abused a child or placed a child at risk of abuse shall, apart from any other discipline process, be prohibited from participation in any nursery/children/youth ministries on behalf of this Church.

TABLE OF LEGISLATION

Child and Family Services Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. C.11.

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**ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A CHURCH POLICY
ESTABLISHING A PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

The Church should document in writing its minimum standards in establishing a Personnel Committee. Such documentation should be included in (i) the Church's Constitution if unincorporated or the Church's Bylaw if incorporated AND/OR (ii) in the Church's Policy Binder. Such documentation should include provisions which address at least the following elements:

Definition of the Personnel Committee

Such provision defines the Personnel Committee by identifying (i) its purpose, (ii) the manner in which its members are elected or appointed, (iii) the minimum number of Church Members to be on such Committee and (iv) the accountability of the Committee to the Church Board.

Qualifications for Membership on the Personnel Committee

Such provision identifies the minimum qualifications for membership on the Personnel Committee. A candidate should:

- (i) be a Member in good standing of the Church;
- (ii) be at least twenty-one (21) years of age;
- (iii) be personally committed to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord and give evidence thereof;
- (iv) have an active involvement within the Church;
- (v) be in full agreement with the Church Constitution;
- (vi) desire to consistently work towards the fulfillment of the Church's Purpose Statement; and
- (vii) desire to serve with faithfulness and effectiveness.

Election/Appointment and Term of the Personnel Committee

Such provision identifies (i) the manner in which a Person is appointed/elected to the Personnel Committee and (ii) the term of office.

Duties of the Personnel Committee

This provision must clearly identify the duties and responsibilities of the Committee, including (i) its commitment to comply with the developed Prevention Plan and (ii) its accountability to the Church Board.

Structure of the Personnel Committee

Such provision identifies the internal operating structure for the Personnel Committee including the designations and responsibilities of its various members.

Children’s Ministry Helper Application Form

For Volunteers Under the Age of 16

CONFIDENTIAL

Any Applicant with questions of a sensitive or personal nature may discuss these with the Pastoral Staff or Elders, in confidence, prior to the completion of the application.

PERSONAL INFORMATION *(please print)*

Name: _____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____
first last year month day

Street: _____ City: _____

Province: _____ Postal Code: _____ Email: _____

Phone: () _____

INTERESTS & AVAILABILITY

1. Which areas of ministry are you interested in serving?
 Please check all appropriate ones.

Age(s)

- Babies
- Preschool
- Kindergarten
- Grades 2-5
- Where I’m Most Needed

Area(s) of Ministry

- Nursery
- Sunday School
- Kids Time
- Vacation Bible Camp
- Where I’m Most Needed

2. What time commitment are you able to make?

- Daily
- Monthly
- Weekly
- Negotiable
- Other: _____

3. Are you prepared to attend seminars or workshops on nursery, children and/or youth ministry as **required** by the church? Yes No

PERMISSION

I agree to allow the above mentioned to serve in a Helper capacity with Trinity EMC.

 Applicant’s Signature Date

 Guardian’s Signature Date

Children's Ministry Worker Application Form

For Volunteers Over the Age of 16

CONFIDENTIAL

Any Applicant with questions of a sensitive or personal nature may discuss these with the **Pastoral Staff or Elders**, in confidence, prior to the completion of the application.

PERSONAL INFORMATION *(please print)*

Name: _____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____
first last year month day

Street: _____ City: _____

Province: _____ Postal Code: _____ Email: _____

Day-Time Phone: () _____ ext. ____ Evening: () _____ ext. ____

Do you have a current driver's license? Yes No

If yes, what is the classification and number *(please include a photocopy)*:

Classification: _____ License #: _____

INTERESTS & AVAILABILITY

1. Which areas of ministry are you interested in serving?
Please check all appropriate ones.

Age(s)

- Babies
- Toddlers
- Kindergarten
- Grades 1 - 3
- Grades 4 - 6
- Grades 7 - 9
- High School
- Where I'm Most Needed

Area(s) of Ministry

- Nursery
- Sunday School
- Children's Clubs
- Vacation Bible Camp
- Youth Ministries
- Special Outreaches and Events
- Where I'm Most Needed
- Other: _____

2. What time commitment are you able to make?

- Daily
- Monthly
- Weekly
- Negotiable
- Other: _____

3. Are you prepared to attend seminars or workshops on nursery, children and/or youth ministry as **required** by the church? Yes No

Appendix 3

HISTORY & EXPERIENCE

4. What is your present Membership or Adherent status at Trinity? Please check one.

If you are unsure, contact the Church Office.

- On the Active roll of Church Membership at Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church
- On the Inactive roll of Church Membership at Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church
- Adherent for more than six (6) months at Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church
- Adherent for less than six (6) months at Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church

5. List any other **churches** which you have attended regularly during the past five years and any experience involving babies, children and/or youth (*attach a separate sheet if necessary*):

Church:		Dates:	
		<i>not required</i>	
Address:	<i>street</i>	<i>city</i>	<i>province</i>
			<i>postal code</i>
Position & Duties:			

Church:		Dates:	
		<i>not required</i>	
Address:	<i>street</i>	<i>city</i>	<i>province</i>
			<i>postal code</i>
Position & Duties:			

6. List any gifts, callings, training, education, or other factors that have prepared you for nursery, children and/or youth work (*attach a separate page, if necessary*): _____

7. List all previous **non-church** experience involving babies, children and/or youth (*attach a separate sheet if necessary*):

Organization:		Dates:	
Address:	<i>street</i>	<i>city</i>	<i>province</i>
			<i>postal code</i>
Position & Duties:			

Organization:		Dates:	
Address:	<i>street</i>	<i>city</i>	<i>province</i>
			<i>postal code</i>
Position & Duties:			

REFERENCE

Please provide **one (1) non-related reference** who knows you well enough to evaluate your qualifications as a nursery, children and/or youth worker. Please try to pick one reference from such as:

1. Your employer or a co-worker.
2. A professional person (teacher, clergy, lawyer, etc.)
3. Someone who is familiar with your work with children.

REFERENCE 1	
Name:	Relationship:
<i>first</i> _____ <i>last</i> _____	
Address:	
<i>street</i> _____ <i>city</i> _____ <i>province</i> _____ <i>postal code</i> _____	
Phone:	
() _____ - _____ ext. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Daytime <input type="checkbox"/> Evening

STATEMENT OF AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE

To the best of my knowledge, the information set out herein is true and correct. I authorize any reference or church named herein to release to Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church any information they may have which will assist Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church in evaluating my suitability as a worker within nursery/children/youth ministry.

I further release Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church from any claims or causes of action that may arise from their use of the information as provided by the other persons or churches.

I agree to **abide** by the Constitution and Bylaws, policies and procedures of Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church and/or Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church INC. and to refrain from any conduct unbecoming in the performance of my responsibilities on behalf of the Church.

Applicant's Signature

Date

Witness' Name and Signature

Date

Children's Ministry Volunteer Interview Form

For Volunteers Over the Age of 16

CONFIDENTIAL

Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Interviewers: _____

Welcome the applicant and thank them for their interest in children's ministry.

1. Why have you applied for involvement in our children's ministry?

2. What experience have you had with any other children's work?

3. What is your favorite area or aspect of service? (age, or type of ministry)

4. a) Have you taken the Network or other spiritual gift inventory? Yes No

b) Can you identify your spiritual gifts? *(Many in their application, referred to their training or experience but not their gifts).*

5. What gifts do you believe God has given you to equip you for his service?
(If they do not know their gifts, would they be interested in learning about Spiritual Gifts through a discovery course we provide called "Network: The right person, in the right place for the right reason.)

Appendix 4

6. Please tell us in brief, your personal testimony.

7. If the answer to the question of a criminal offence is “*yes*”, ask the applicant if he/she would mind giving an explanation.

8. Who on your list of references is most familiar with your work with children?

9. In your own family, what is your relationship with your parents and siblings?

10. a) What is your job or profession?
b) If they are working with children, ask:
 - how long?
 - what is their position?
 - what are their responsibilities?

11. a) What is your marital status?
 Married Single Student
 Widowed Separated Divorced
b) If they are married, how does your spouse feel about your ministry involvement?

c) Do you have children? If so, how many and what are their ages?

12. Describe your devotional life.

13. Do you have specific training for children/youth Ministry:

Appendix 4

14. Do you have any known health problems that may affect your ability to work with children/youth?

15. Is there anything we should be aware of as a Personnel Committee that you have not disclosed in your application or feel you should inform us of that would affect your ability to serve?

16. Is there anything that you would like to talk to us about, or any questions?

Children's Ministry Volunteer Reference Check

For Volunteers Over the Age of 16

CONFIDENTIAL

Person Contacting the Reference: _____

Date & Time of Contact: _____

Method of Contact: Phone Email Fax Other: _____

1. Name of Applicant: _____

2. Reference Contacted (*identify both the organization & person contacted*): _____

3. Nature of Reference to Applicant (*ie. employer*): _____

4. How many years has the Reference known the Applicant? _____

5. Would you have any reservations recommending the Applicant to serve within Children and/or Youth Ministries?

Yes No Uncertain

6. Please explain if the answer is no or not certain : _____

(Signature of Person Making Inquiry)

(Date)

LEGAL REPORTING OBLIGATIONS UNDER ONTARIO LAW

Legal counsel must be obtained prior to enacting any process or procedure to ensure compliance with Ontario law.²¹

Public Responsibility to Report a Child in Need of Protection

Every person, including a volunteer, who believes on reasonable grounds that a child *is* or *may be in need of protection* must report promptly the belief *and* the information upon which it is based to the local Family and Children's Services²². **No one is exempt from this responsibility.**

Special Responsibilities Imposed on Professionals and Officials to Report Abuse

The *Child and Family Services Act* gives professionals a particular reporting responsibility as they may have a special awareness of children who may be in an abuse situation. A professional or official who, in the course of his or her professional or official duties with respect to a child, has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child *is* or *may be suffering* or *may have suffered abuse shall* promptly report the suspicion *and* the information upon which it is based to the local Family and Children's Services.²³

A pastor having suspicion of abuse, either personally or through a communication with a church worker, has the obligation set out in Section 72 (3) of the *Child and Family Services Act*.

Professionals Affected

The professional duty to report affects the following persons²⁴ :

- (a) a health care professional, including a physician, nurse, dentist, pharmacist and psychologist;
- (b) a teacher, school principal, social worker, family counselor, priest, rabbi, other members of the clergy, operator or employee of a day nursery, a **non-volunteer** youth and recreation worker;
- (c) a peace officer and a coroner;
- (d) a solicitor; and
- (e) a service provider and an employee of a service provider.

The exact text of Sections 72(2), through (5) of the *Child and Family Services Act* appears in Appendix 5.

²¹ **The Church must** be careful in what it communicates publicly (i.e. to the church membership) in the event of an abuse allegation. For example, s.45 (8) of the *Children and Family Services Act, supra* states that “No person shall publish or make public information that has the effect of identifying a child who is a witness at or a participant in a hearing or the subject of a proceeding, or the child’s parent or foster parent or a member of the child’s family”. Section 85 of this same Act also states that if there is a contravention of s.45 (8) and a director, officer or employee of a corporation [i.e. of an incorporated church] authorizes, permits or concurs in such a contravention by the corporation, such director, officer or employee is guilty of an offense and on conviction is liable to a fine of up to \$10,000 or to imprisonment for a term of up to three years, or to both!

²² See: *Child and Family Services Act, supra* s. 72 (2).

²³ See: *Child and Family Services Act, supra* s. 72 (3), (4).

²⁴ See: *Child and Family Services Act, supra* s. 72 (4), (5).

Appendix 7

Professional Confidentiality

The professional's duty to report under the *Child and Family Services Act, supra* overrides all provisions of any other Act. A professional must report abuse even when the information may be confidential or privileged.²⁵

The only exception is that the privilege that may exist between a solicitor and his or her client can not be compromised.²⁶

Penalty For Failure To Report

Failure to report is an offense under the *Child and Family Services Act*. Examples of corresponding penalties include, but are not limited to, the following.

A professional who in the course of his duties fails to report child abuse pursuant to the *Child and Family Services Act, supra* s. 72 (3) and a director, officer or employee of a corporation (i.e. an incorporated church), who authorizes, permits or concurs in such failure to report by the corporation is guilty of an offense and on conviction is liable to a fine of up to \$1,000.00.²⁷

Any person who fails to report child abuse pursuant to the *Child and Family Services Act, supra* s. 72 (2) and a director, officer or employee of a corporation (i.e. an incorporated church), who authorizes, permits or concurs in such failure to report by the corporation is guilty of an offense and on conviction is liable to a fine of up to \$2,000.00 or to imprisonment for a term of not more than three years, or to both.²⁸

Protection From Liability

If civil action is brought against a person who made a report in accordance with the provisions of the *Child and Family Services Act, supra*, such person will be protected unless he or she acted maliciously or without reasonable grounds for the belief or suspicion.²⁹

²⁵ See: *Child and Family Services Act, supra* s. 72 (3), (7).

²⁶ See: *Child and Family Services Act, supra* s. 72 (8).

²⁷ See: *Child and Family Services Act, supra* s. 85 (1) (b).

²⁸ See: *Child and Family Services Act, supra* s. 85 (2).

²⁹ See: *Child and Family Services Act, supra* s. 72 (7).

**TEXT OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ACT
SECTIONS 72(2), (3), (4) AND (5)**

- (1) A person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is or may be in need of protection shall forthwith report the belief and the information upon which it is based to a society.**
- (2) Despite the provisions of any other Act, a person referred to in subsection (4) who, in the course of his or her professional duties, has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be suffering or may have suffered abuse shall forthwith report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to a society.**
- (3) Subsection (3) applies to every person who performs professional or official duties with respect to a child, including,**

 - (a) a health care professional, including a physician, nurse, dentist, pharmacist and psychologist;**
 - (b) a teacher, school principal, social worker, family counsellor, priest, rabbi, clergyman, operator or employee of a day nursery and youth and recreation worker;**
 - (c) a peace officer and a coroner;**
 - (d) a solicitor; and**
 - (e) a service provider and an employee of a service provider.**
- (4) In clause (4) (b), “youth and recreation worker” does not include a volunteer.**

RECOMMENDED PUBLIC POSITION STATEMENT

Legal counsel must be obtained prior to enacting any process or procedure to ensure compliance with Ontario law.

PUBLIC POSITION STATEMENT OF TRINITY EMC³⁰

We are aware of the devastation which child abuse brings and we are concerned for its victims. Within Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church, there exists the desire to continually develop and maintain a safe church environment for all children, youth, and those who minister to them.

In 1999, we implemented a Prevention Plan for the purposes of developing and maintaining a safe church environment. The policies within the Prevention Plan address such issues as careful selection and screening of both paid and volunteer workers; responsible supervision of both paid and volunteer workers; as well as, what our reporting obligations and procedures are in this province's fight against the occurrence of child abuse. We, as a church, have attempted to take all reasonable precautions to develop and maintain a safe church environment.

As for the specific allegation at hand, the accused Person has been suspended from all duties and responsibilities. However, the suspension is NOT and SHALL NOT be seen or accepted as "guilt" of this individual. Rather, this action IS and SHOULD be seen only as a further means of protecting ALL those involved pending the outcome of the civil authorities' present investigation.

Thank you.

CAUTION

No public position statement shall be made until first reviewed by the church's lawyer in the context of the relevant fact situation.

³⁰ The Church **must** be careful in what it communicates publicly (i.e. to the church membership) in the event of an abuse allegation. For example, s.45 (8) of the *Children and Family Services Act, supra* states that "No person shall publish or make public information that has the effect of identifying a child who is a witness at or a participant in a hearing or the subject of a proceeding, or the child's parent or foster parent or a member of the child's family". Section 85 of this same Act also states that if there is a contravention of s.45 (8) and a director, officer or employee of a corporation [i.e. of an incorporated church] authorizes, permits or concurs in such a contravention by the corporation, such director, officer or employee is guilty of an offense and on conviction is liable to a fine of up to \$10,000 or to imprisonment for a term of up to three years, or to both!