

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

First Christian Reformed Church of Vancouver
Revised January 2012

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I. INTRODUCTION

Every one who teaches, helps or cares for children/youth under the auspices of the First Christian Reformed Church of Vancouver is required to follow the guidelines and procedures as defined in this policy. Council has reviewed and adopted them as official policy. While rules and policy will not prevent abuse, this policy aims to heighten the sensitivity and awareness of this issue.

The policy is designed to assist church leaders in their recruiting of volunteers and, to the greatest extent possible, provide for the safety of the children/youth served by these volunteers.

The gospel of Mark records that when people brought little children to Jesus, He took them in his arms, put His hands on them and blessed them. As a church it is our desire to bring children to Jesus, too.

In the church, we recognize that we are a reflection of God's love to those in our care and we take our responsibility to them seriously. In our ministry to children and youth we must follow carefully what scriptures teach:

- Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which He bought with his own blood. (Acts 20:28)
- Avoid every kind of evil. (1 Thess. 5:22)
- But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. (Eph. 5:3)

Sadly, in our society, children/youth are seldom given credibility when/if they do disclose. Our desire must be to educate ourselves and others around the issue of abuse so as to recognize the signs, respond appropriately, support the victim and remain accountable to one another for our actions.

Above all, we must be seriously concerned with the need of protection for the victim of abuse. It may also be required that the situation reported may involve criminal charges in order that the victim may be protected and that the perpetrator be brought to justice.

Council will insure that there is an annual review of the child abuse prevention policy, procedures and requirements.

II. DEFINITIONS

- Alleged:** Represented as being as described, but not so proved.
- Child Abuse:** Defined by law, but generally includes non-accidental physical injury, sexual contact or exploitation, neglect, and emotional distress.
- Child/Youth:** A person of 18 and under years of age.
- Church:** Vancouver CRC
- Council:** The elected governing board of the church, consisting of pastor, elders and deacons.
- Guideline:** General rules for a course of action.
- Incident:** An occurrence or event that interrupts normal activity or could precipitate a crisis.
- Policy:** A rule which describes or structures the proper working behaviour of a church volunteer/staff.
- Staff:** An employee of the church.
- Volunteer:** A volunteer who has completed the Children/Youth Ministries Application Form, completed a volunteer interview with a ministry leader, and based upon the review of completed forms and interview, is placed in a ministry.

Description of Child Abuse

All abuse involves the **MISUSE of POWER**. Misuse of power takes place when people take advantage of the authority or power they have over children/youth. Abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual or in the form of neglect.

- **Physical Abuse**

Any non-accidental human act that could result in or results in physical pain or injury to a person – whether or not it leaves a cut or wound, or a mark or a bruise. Physically abusive behaviour ranges from slapping, pushing, shoving, punching, kicking and biting to more severe forms, i.e., choking, severe spanking, beating, hitting with an object(s), burning, stabbing and shooting. It can sometimes be a single event, or may be a chronic pattern of behaviour. Injuring a child/youth is not acceptable, regardless of differing cultural standards on discipline.

- **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is a pattern of hurting a child/youth's feelings to the point of damaging their self-esteem. It includes verbal attacks on the child/youth, insults, humiliation or rejection. A child/youth who is emotionally harmed may demonstrate severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, and self-destructive or aggressive behaviour.

- **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse occurs when a child/youth is used by another individual for sexual stimulation or

gratification. Child sexual abuse can refer to taking advantage of a child who is not capable of understanding sexual acts. Sexual activity between children/youth may also be sexual abuse if older or more powerful children/youth take sexual advantage of those who are younger or less powerful. Sexual abuse may or may not involve physical contact. Examples of non-contact sexual abuse include exposing others to pornography or any sexually explicit material inappropriate to their age or situation.

- **Neglect**

Neglect is the chronic failure of a parent or caregiver to provide a child with basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, medical care, educational opportunity, protection, and supervision.

III. GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS/STAFF

General Guidelines

1. All staff and volunteers are required to fill in an application and release form complete with references, submit to a criminal check initially and thereafter as often as requested by the Church and agree to a personal interview with the leader of ministry and/or council member.
2. Volunteers must normally be members or regular attendees of the church for a minimum of 6 months who have agreed to be subject to the authority of the Vancouver CRC as set out in the church's abuse prevention policy. If any volunteer is non-compliant, he/she will be required to relinquish his/her responsibility in the children/youth program.
3. Normally all programs must use the 'two adults rule' which requires that two adult (older than 18) leaders must be present in each classroom or activity area. Two related adults may be involved as long as a third unrelated adult is present. An adult hall monitor must be used if the above requirements are not met.
4. Helpers who are minors should be four years older than program participants.
5. Activities conducted away from church property should be pre-approved by the church leadership. Parents of minor aged children must be notified prior to the event.
6. Children/youth participating in overnight and/or out of town activities must have proper written consent and medical release form in place prior to the event. A ratio of one leader for every 5 children/youth should be maintained. Overnight activities must be approved by Council.
7. Drivers for events must have a valid driver's license and current automobile insurance with a minimum \$2,000,000 liability coverage. Drivers must be at least 25 years of age with at least 5 years of driving experience. The number of passengers must not exceed the number of seat belts.
8. Leaders and helpers transporting a child/youth must have parental/custodial permission to do so.

Nursery Program Guidelines

1. The 'two adults rule' (see Guidelines for Volunteers/Staff) must be used in the nursery, even if only one child is present. A ratio of one attendant for every four children must be maintained. A couple (husband and wife) should not serve in the nursery at the same time.
2. Minors (12-18 years of age) may not care for child(ren) without adult supervision.
3. Attendants may take children from the nursery only for good reason, such as to use the bathroom or in case of illness. Any significant medical problem should be reported immediately to the child's parents.
4. For children who do not require assistance in the bathroom, the adult attendant must remain outside the bathroom. For children who require assistance, the adult attendant must assist the

child with the bathroom door ajar. The diapering of an infant or toddler must take place in the nursery room with at least one other, unrelated attendant present.

5. No adult or minor who is not scheduled as a nursery attendant, or who is not on the list of nursery attendants, may spend time in the nursery room(s) during or after the service. Parents/caregivers may attend to their child(ren) as needed.
6. The Discipline Policy applies to the nursery program.

Sunday School Program Guidelines

1. Only one adult member of a family should serve in the classroom at a given time. A couple (husband and wife) should not serve in the same classroom at the same time.
2. The 'two adults rule' (see Guidelines for Volunteers/Staff) must be used for all Sunday School programs.
3. Only adults may assist children with bathroom needs. For children who require assistance, the adult attendant must assist the child with the bathroom door ajar. Children in kindergarten through 3rd grade must use the buddy system when going to the bathroom (same age buddy). Parents should encourage children to use the bathroom facilities before the service.
4. Children should not leave their activity area or classroom except for illness, to use the bathroom, or other compelling reasons.
5. Whenever Sunday school is in session, the activity area or classroom door should allow for an unobstructed view of the area or room either through a window or an open door.
6. The Discipline Policy applies to the Sunday school program.

Vacation Bible School Guidelines

1. All VBS classes and activities must follow the 'two adults rule' (see Guidelines for Volunteers/Staff).
2. Leaders and GEMS/cadets may meet privately only with the permission of a parent. Any such meeting should occur in a public place.
3. If a child needs medical attention, the parent(s) should be notified immediately.
4. Club members should not arrive more than ten minutes before the start of class, nor should they stay longer than ten minutes after the class. Parents should be encouraged to pick up the club member at the door.
5. Club activities away from the church facility, out of town, or overnight should be conducted in general compliance with the aforementioned policies.
6. While the appropriate display of affection between club leaders and club members is often part of conveying support and encouragement to one another, such displays can be misinterpreted.

For that reason, displays of affection should be limited to such actions as a brief hug, an arm around the shoulder, an open-hand pat on the back, a handclasp, or a light touch to the forearm. A leader's or member's right to refuse any of these will be respected.

7. The Discipline Policy applies to club programs.

Youth Program Guidelines

1. Each year youth group leaders should sponsor a class about abuse for members of the youth group. Topics for this class might include date violence, biblical guidelines for dating relationships, awareness of the signs of abuse, a teenager's response to a teenage victim or abuser, or prevention of abuse.
2. A youth group leader may meet privately with a member only with the permission of a parent/guardian. Any such meeting must occur in a public place.
3. Regardless of the relative ages, it is never appropriate for a youth group leader and a youth group member to date each other.
4. The 'two adults rule' (see Guidelines for Volunteers/Staff) must be applied to all programs and functions.
5. In the context of group activities, youth group leaders should provide supervision of the youth in their care.
6. While the appropriate display of affection between leaders and youth is often part of conveying support and encouragement to one another, such displays can be misinterpreted. Therefore, display of affection between youth leader and youth group member ought to be limited to such actions as a brief hug, an arm around the shoulder, an open-hand pat on the back, a handclasp or handshake, or a light touch to the forearm. Restrict these displays to a public area. A youth group leader's or member's right to refuse such a display of affection will be respected.
7. A youth group leader should not direct personal gifts, phone calls, or letters of an intimate nature to a youth group member.
8. The Discipline Policy applies to the youth program.

IV. SCREENING PROCEDURE FOR VOLUNTEERS/STAFF

General Screening Requirements

- All present and future volunteers/staff will be required to complete an application form.
- All present and future volunteers/staff will need a criminal record check. The cost if any will be paid by the church
- All applicants will have a personal interview with the ministry program leader or a council member if applying for a ministry leader position.
- All application forms must be kept in a locked, confidential file.
- All criminal record checks must be kept in a locked, confidential file.
- All personnel files must be retained even if the volunteer has left the church.
- Applicants with a criminal record of child abuse or a felony conviction of assault, etc. must be denied.
- The screening committee can deny any applicant for any reason.

Sequential Steps in Screening Procedure

1. A new person is asked to volunteer in a specific ministry or expressed an interest to serve in a ministry.
2. The leader of a specific ministry gives an application form to the volunteer to be completed and returned to the Clerk of Council.
3. Upon receipt, the clerk will retain the cover letter and document the date received.
4. The clerk will forward the completed application to the designated leader of the ministry, i.e., GEMS, Cadets, Sunday School, Youth Group, etc.
5. The leader of the ministry will then contact the applicant to give him/her the criminal record check form to be processed by the police department.
6. The police will mail the completed criminal record check to the Clerk of Council and if no record is found it will be filed in the locked confidential file. If there is a record it will be given to the pastor for follow-up, after which the record will be filed in the locked, confidential file.
7. The clerk then dates and checks off criminal record check on the cover letter and forwards the letter to the leader of the ministry.
8. The Reference Check Forms (see Appendix) will be sent to the reference by the appropriate leader of the ministry.
9. Once all the completed reference checks have been received, an in-person interview, using the Interview Guidelines Form (see Appendix), will be conducted by the appropriate leader(s) of the ministry.

V. TRAINING

Training and ongoing support will be provided to all applicants for effective ministry.

A regularly scheduled annual training program will be offered each fall. Volunteers/staff who begin at a later date should meet with a designated person to review the policies and procedures.

Volunteers/staff who work in child and youth programs should be trained to recognize the signs and symptoms of abuse. Training should include learning how to respond to child's report of an abusive experience.

VI. REPORTING PROCEDURES

Reporting Procedure Overview

Any information which indicates the possibility of existence of abuse must be taken seriously. A volunteer/staff person should not conduct an investigation of the matter individually. Instead, volunteers and staff should follow the established reporting procedure. An investigation must only be conducted by local police and the Ministry of Children and Families, people trained to investigate child abuse complaints.

As per Section 14.1 of the *Child, Family and Community Services Act* of British Columbia, an individual is legally required to report child abuse.

When a volunteer/staff person observes what may be a sign or symptom of abuse, it is appropriate to ask the child how the sign or symptom appeared. However the volunteer/staff person should not interview the child in great detail about the signs or symptoms. Furthermore it is never appropriate to suggest to the child that he or she has been abused.

Any meetings held in regards to suspected abuse, even if reporting is not warranted, must be documented and filed in the locked confidential filing cabinet.

Steps in Dealing with Alleged Child Abuse

The following steps must be performed promptly and be kept **CONFIDENTIAL**.

1. A Suspected Child Abuse Report form must be completed by volunteer/staff if signs of abuse are observed or abuse is reported by the child/youth.
2. The volunteer/staff should seek consultation as soon as possible with the program leader to determine if further inquiry is warranted.
3. If further inquiry is not deemed necessary, a notation is made in the action part of the form and it is filed.
4. The pastor and council designate are consulted if alleged abuse is reportable to the police/MCF.
5. The volunteer/staff must report the alleged abuse/incident to the police/MCF.

VII. HANDLING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

Guidelines for Responding to Allegations of Abuse

1. If the investigation finds reasonable cause to support the allegations, the alleged offender will be informed by the police (or Ministry of Children and Families) that an investigation is underway. The alleged offender will then be suspended from participating in all service roles in the church, pending the outcome of the civil legal and/or the church process(es). When the alleged offender is the pastor suspension according to Church Order rules (Articles 82-83, with their supplements) will be immediate – suspended with full pay and without prejudice pending the hearing.
2. If the pastor or youth/music leader is suspended, the congregation will be officially notified by letter explaining the reasons and steps being taken. Crisis intervention with the congregation needs to begin here, not after finding of guilt or innocence. The letter should make clear that an allegation of abuse has taken place, council has suspended the pastor or youth/music leader for the protection of all parties, and that an investigation is underway.
3. The identity of the alleged victim(s) should be protected.
4. If the abuse is not verified, the suspension will be lifted and the person reinstated. If the alleged abuse involved the pastor or youth/music leader the congregation needs to be notified. Because an abuse charge, even though unsubstantiated, will have ramifications for all involved (including the congregation), council will develop specific initiatives that will promote healing.
5. During the entire process, the victim and the accused require much support. They will need therapeutic intervention and the church may help with the costs involved.
6. The Church should, in so far as possible, follow the guidelines set out in the Acts of Synod of the Christian Reformed Church 1997 – “Guidelines for Handling Abuse Allegations”.

APPENDIX A – INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

Guidelines for use in interviewing an applicant after an application form has been completed.

The primary reason for this interview is to get to know the applicant better and to help the applicant better understand the ministry and their giftedness to serve.

Prepare yourself for the interview by looking over the application form and these suggested questions.

Introduction

I would like to open the interview with an introduction of myself, my role, and why we take the time to meet one-on-one. All volunteers in children's ministry will have an interview and will be asked the same questions. If at any time during the interview you feel as though any of the questions are too personal, please let me know and we can discuss other options.

1. Relational – get to know each other

2. Awareness of program goals

- for the children to know Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour
- for the children to develop a sense of belonging through friendship with other children/youth
- interviewer will elaborate on goals specific to the ministry applicant desires to serve in.

3. Applicant's background

Refer back to application form and follow the flow of questions. Ask question such as:

- What motivated you to apply for this ministry now?
- Tell us about your previous involvement with children/youth.

Then ask lifestyle questions and request a yes or no answer.

In order to provide a safe and secure environment for our children, we believe it is necessary to include the following questions as part of our interview process. All information will be kept strictly confidential. Answering “yes” to any of the questions may not necessarily preclude your involvement in ministry. A meeting will be arranged with the Pastor or council member so that you may discuss the circumstances. Thank you in advance for your understanding.

If any of the following circumstances apply to you, please answer yes:

- have been convicted of a criminal offense involving children
- have been convicted of a sexually related crime
- have been convicted of an abuse-related crime
- have been convicted or treated for alcohol or substance abuse
- currently being investigated for a criminal charge

If the applicant answers yes to any of these questions, ask if they would care to elaborate now or arrange a visit with a council member or the pastor.

4. Roles/responsibilities as a volunteer at this church

- See Guidelines and Policy – emphasize specific area of ministry. Ask if there are any questions or items which need clarification.
- Volunteers are expected to commit for at least one year. They are responsible to serve on their scheduled dates or to find replacements from the approved list of substitutes.
- Explain that leaders are role models reflecting Christ in our own lives.
- Talk about the importance of consistency in our relationship – recognizing each individual as a child of God.
- Leaders are facilitators – working with the home in helping the child to grow.

5. This church's commitment to the volunteer

- We commit to training and fellowship times each year and expect each volunteer to attend these sessions each year. One way we will do this is with a “kick-off” at the beginning of the year. This will allow fellow volunteers to get to know one another better, to be unified in purpose of ministry, and to learn and be reminded of the policies and procedures specific to the ministry.
- A ministry resource room will be available to all those serving in ministry. This room will provide resources necessary to carry out the work of each ministry. It will also provide a place to meet with fellow volunteers and with leaders.

6. Ongoing support

We always want to assume that in ministry everything is great, but we know better. We need to be willing to work with each other through our strengths and weaknesses. If you ever have a need of any kind relating to your specific volunteer role, a larger concern with the church, your family or relationship, I want to assure you of our support. I am here to help you as you serve. We have resources through parents in dealing with classroom concern; we have experienced fellow church members to brainstorm with when you feel frustrated. For only when we are all working together as the Body of Christ can we see full power that the Body carries.

7. Wrap-up

- Any questions?
- Do you feel the excitement growing as we talk about your new role?
- Prayer together

APPENDIX B – FORMS

- Waiver & Medical Release Form
- Children/Youth Ministries Volunteer Application and Release Form
- Cover Letter for Application Form
- Reference Check Form
- Suspected Child Abuse Report Form
- Incident Report Form

First Christian Reformed Church of Vancouver

Waiver & Medical Release Form – Field Trips & Special Events

Activity: _____ Date: _____

Chaperones: _____

Name of Child/Youth: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Program: _____

➤ Does your child/youth have any severe allergies? (Bee stings, food, penicillin, other drugs) Yes ___ No ___ If yes, please explain: _____

➤ Does your child/youth have any life threatening allergies? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, Please explain: _____

➤ Is your child/youth bringing any medication with him/her? (Antibiotics, ventilator, Ritalin) Yes ___ No ___ If yes, explain: _____

➤ Does your child/youth have any physical, emotional, mental or behavioral concerns or limitations that our staff should be aware of? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, please explain: _____

➤ Check if your child/youth currently, within the last three months, has had any of the following:

Appendicitis	Ear Infection	Hay Fever	Mumps	Other
Asthma	Hepatitis	Sever Stomach Ache	Tonsillitis	
Bedwetting	Diabetes	Measles (Red)	Sinusitis	
Chicken Pox	Fainting	Measles (German)	Epilepsy	

Date of last Tetanus Shot: _____

Precautions are taken for the safety and health of your child/youth, but in the event of accident or sickness, the church and its volunteers/staff are hereby released from liability.

In the event that your child/youth requires special medication, x-rays or treatment, the parents/guardians will be notified immediately.

In case of surgical emergency, I hereby give permission to the physician selected by the church to hospitalize, secure proper treatment for, and to order injections, anesthesia or surgery for my child/youth as named above.

Your child must be covered by provincial health insurance or equivalent medical insurance. Provincial health Insurance Number: _____

Name of Family Physician: _____ Phone Number: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

First Christian Reformed Church of Vancouver

Children/Youth Ministries Volunteer Application and Release Form

This application is to be completed by all paid and volunteer staff. It is being used to help the church provide a safe and secure environment for the children/youth of this church. Please complete this form and return it in a sealed envelope addressed to the Clerk of Council.

Personal Information

Name: _____ Home Phone: _____
Work Phone: _____ E-mail: _____
Address: _____
Postal Code: _____ Birth Date: _____

Positions Applying For

Please indicate the children/youth ministry position you are applying for: _____

Please indicate the date you would be available: _____

What is the minimum length of commitment you can make? _____

Church Activity

Are you a member of this church? _____ How long? _____

If not a member, are you a regular attendee at this church? _____ How long? _____

List other churches you have attended regularly during the past five years:
(Name of the church, location, and pastor)

List all previous church and non-church work involving children/youth.

Do you feel you have gifts or a calling to serve in this area? Explain.

Do you have any physical conditions that would prevent you from performing certain types of activities (lifting children, playing sports)? If so, please explain.

Do you have any health concerns that might affect your ability to work with children? Please explain.

Are you currently being investigated with a criminal offense? _____

Person References (Supervisors or church co-workers or non-relatives)

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____
Relationship to you: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____
Relationship to you: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____
Relationship to you: _____

Applicant's Statement

The information I have provided is correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that my name will be submitted to the pastoral staff and/or designated council member of this church for the purpose of affirming my character and fitness for children/youth's ministry. *I release the persons giving the references from any liability arising from it.* I agree to serve scripturally, with integrity, and will participate in training and discipline to enhance my ministry to children/youth.

I, agree to abide by the terms of the First Christian Reformed Church of Vancouver Abuse Prevention Policy.

I do not have a criminal record for offenses involving children or violent crime of any kind, nor have I ever been charged with any such offenses.

I will comply with any requests made by the Church Council to provide a letter authorizing First Christian Reformed Church of Vancouver to request a criminal record check through the local police or child protection authorities.

If requested, I will attend to obtaining a criminal records check through the local police department prior to commencement of the volunteer activity.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Dear Ministry Volunteer Applicant,

We are so pleased that you are interested in serving God by using your gifts and talents in a children/youth ministry. Please look over the application attached, fill it out, and return to the Clerk of Council. In our desire to reduce the risk of abuse within our church ministries, we believe this information is necessary to protect our children and to protect our volunteers. Thank you in advance for our understanding.

There are a variety of children and youth ministries. The volunteer needs to be ready to abide by the discipline and abuse policies of this church. He/She needs to communicate and share responsibilities with all the volunteers of the ministry and to provide full support to the leader of the ministry.

Please indicate which ministry you are currently applying for: _____.

Please do not hesitate to contact the leader of the ministry for further clarification, if needed.

Thank you for your time and consideration in filling out these forms.

God bless you as you seek to do His will.

Sincerely,

Clerk of Council

First Christian Reformed Church of Vancouver

Reference Check Form

Applicant's Name: _____

Name of Reference: _____ Phone Number: _____

1. How long have you known this person? _____

2. In what capacity do you know him/her? _____

3. Have you ever observed this person interact with children/youth? Please describe.

4. How do you describe this person's ability to follow through on his/her commitment?

5. Do you have personal knowledge of this person having any problems with the abuse of drugs, alcohol, sex, or abuse of anything else? _____

6. Do you have any knowledge about this person's behavior, attitude, or emotions toward children that might cause a parent to worry about his person caring for his/her children? If so, please specify. _____

7. Can you recommend that this person be in a position of caring for children without any concern, reservation, or hesitation? Yes _____ No _____ Please explain: _____

8. Is there any additional information that you think is important for our church to know about this person? _____

Thank you for your time and effort in completing this survey.

To the best of my knowledge, I believe that above information to be accurate.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return within **one week** to:

Clerk of Council, First Christian Reformed Church of Vancouver

First Christian Reformed Church of Vancouver

Suspected Child Abuse Report Form

Name of Child: _____

Address: _____ Phone number: _____

Name of Person filing report: _____

Nature of suspected abuse (Physical, sexual, emotional, neglect): _____

Indications of suspected abuse (Including facts, physical signs and course of events where necessary): _____

Action taken (include date and time): _____

The above information will serve as a guide and will be necessary if a formal report is filed with the police or Ministry of Children and Families. All information is to be kept STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

Signed: _____ Signed: _____
(Person reporting) (Pastor)

APPENDIX C – SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

1. Physical manifestations as above with addition of complaints of pain, irritation, soreness, redness on the child's bottom; smearing of feces on walls or objects.
2. Pattern of injuries, multiple injuries, injuries about the face or neck; failure to complain about or explain an obvious physical discomfort.
3. Unusual fears of a familiar person, a particular room, a particular object, or fear of new experiences.
4. Poor concentration in classroom.
5. Exhibiting adult-pleasing behaviours, striving for perfection, acting miserable if failing.
6. Engaging in self-injury; engaging in excessive masturbation or masturbation in public setting.
7. Acting enraged and out of control; expressing anger through destruction.
8. Shyness about physical touch.
9. Exhibiting sexual behaviour beyond comprehension or maturity level; behaving in sexual manner with other children or adults.
10. Exhibiting signs of needing to be in control of others or situations; bullying others.
11. Hostility and distrust of adults, mood swings and irritability, assaulting.
12. Acting out, including hoarding food and toys, lying, stealing, assaulting.
13. Frequent absences from school or other scheduled events either because of being punished or to hide bruises.
14. Low self-esteem, particular sensitivity to criticism.
15. Hyper-vigilance – excessive and suspicious watching of other people; easily startled.
16. Preoccupation with fire and setting fires.

Youth

1. Eating disorders, use of laxatives, unexplained and dramatic changes in weight.
2. Change in sleep patterns, including excessive sleeping, sleeping during the day, and insomnia.
3. Performance in school plunges.
4. Perfectionistic behaviour, excessive self-criticism, attempting to please adults.

APPENDIX D – DISCIPLINE POLICY

Handling Discipline

Children and youth sometimes engage in behaviours that adults find unacceptable and contrary to their wishes. These behaviours occur in church-sponsored programs as well as in the family home. When these behaviours occur in church-sponsored programs, however, it is often a church volunteer/staff person who must intervene, especially when the child/youth is under his or her supervision. An adult can interrupt or stop an unacceptable behaviour by teaching the child/youth which behaviours are acceptable and which behaviours are not. By example and over time, the adult teaches the child/youth how to behave in a socially acceptable way and in a manner that is Christ like.

An adult can also interrupt or stop an unacceptable behaviour by intervening with a mild form of discipline to the child/youth. The discipline is intended to “catch the child's attention” and thus act as a deterrent and a reminder that a certain behaviour is not acceptable. Discipline can turn into abuse when pain, injury, or humiliation results from the discipline, or it is used excessively in a short span of time.

Some examples of excessive or abusive discipline are listed below:

Abusive Physical Discipline (corporal punishment)

1. Slapping, kicking, punching, hitting, choking, pushing, shoving, hair pulling, twisting, pinching.
2. Discipline that leaves a bruise, mark, wound or cut.
3. Discipline administered with any device or object (such as a paddle, spoon, stick, book).
4. Discipline followed by a request/threat to the child/youth not to tell anyone what happened, not to report the discipline, or not to show anyone the mark or bruise.

Abusive Verbal Discipline

1. Shouting, yelling, threatening, hurling insults or obscenities.
2. Discipline that is intended to humiliate a child/youth.
3. Discipline by refusing to speak to a child.
4. Discipline that involves bribery, coercion, or threats.
5. Discipline followed by a request/threat to the child not to tell anyone what happened, not to report the discipline.

Discipline Policy

1. Corporal punishment (slapping, hitting, pushing) is not permitted.
2. Abusive verbal discipline (yelling, hurling insults, threatening) is not permitted.
3. Parent(s) are to be informed and involved whenever a child/youth misbehaves beyond minor correction, or if a pattern of misbehaviour increases.
4. Concerns about a child's behaviour or the appropriate response to a child's behaviour should be reported to the program supervisor.

5. An aide or a parent should be involved weekly in classrooms where misbehaviour is an ongoing problem.
6. Expectations of children/youth's behaviour must reflect their age and level of comprehension. Similarly, discipline must reflect their age and level of comprehension.
7. Children/youth are to be reminded of the kind of behaviour that is acceptable for the setting. Older children/youth may benefit from having these expectations in written form.
8. For young children, time-outs should not last longer (in minutes) than the age of the child.
9. When nothing seems to be working, leaders should get help before “losing their cool”.
10. Appropriate forms of discipline are to be reviewed with volunteers/staff before church sponsored programs begin a new season. Then periodic reminders are to be given as needed.
11. Whenever possible, leaders should try to avoid having to discipline a child/youth by choosing one of the following options:
 - distract the child/youth with another activity
 - help the child/youth focus on another more acceptable behaviour
 - isolate the child/youth from others if another volunteer/staff is available to assist