

Lutheran Church – Canada, East District



**Abuse Prevention Policy
Manual**

Abuse Prevention Policy Committee

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LC-C East District Abuse Prevention Policy

Instructions for Using this Manual

The Abuse Prevention Policy Committee suggests that you use the manual in a number of ways.

- ❑ The Elders and/or Church Council should peruse the manual first.
- ❑ If your congregation has not yet adopted the District Policy found in Section II or has not returned the initial questionnaire to the District Office then we suggest that your Church Council or Voter's Assembly take action to adopt the policy and flag the action taken, the date and motion passed for your questionnaire. Return the questionnaire to the District Office as soon as possible.
- ❑ You may want to review the District Policy in Section II in conjunction with Section I, which is a simple bible study. This might be used as part of the training for your youth and child workers. Section I might also be used in your church as an introduction to the topic of abuse.
- ❑ Section III also can be used as an interactive training segment for your child and youth workers. Segments are identified for discussion purposes. This segment covers abuse policy procedure and some *dos and don'ts* as well as introduces topics of discipline and classroom conduct that will help prevent abuse. The more discussion the better your training will go.
- ❑ Section IV introduces complaint procedure and again is intended for discussion. This section has italicized print identifying subjects critical for discussion in your training. The intricacies of reporting abuse are discussed and may not prevent abuse but will help you to do more effective after care.
- ❑ There is a PowerPoint version of the District Abuse Prevention Policy, which would be ideal for a review of Section II.
- ❑ In the Resources Consulted section of the manual are listed other video resources and written resources you may want to add in your annual training. Information that helps us to be aware of ways and means of preventing abuse.
- ❑ The Manual has standardized forms, which can be used by your church and suggests the use of personnel files for all who take the training or apply for a position of trust as youth or child worker. The forms may well be reduced by a few as you develop your own method of tracking your annual trainings. We suggest following the manual if in doubt about what to do.

The aim in presenting this manual is to assist you in helping you to prevent abuse from happening to the brothers and sisters in Christ who are in your care.

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N.B. (The East District of Lutheran Church-Canada has property and liability insurance through a blanket East District LCC plan that covers many of the churches in Ontario. Recently, the insurance company that holds the insurance policy decided that if coverage for certain aspects of the Liability Section were to continue, each church would have to institute a program by which it would screen certain members of the staff including volunteers for any previous history of criminal offences. We have been asked to respond to a questionnaire indicating that we, as a congregation, have a program in effect or are prepared to initiate such a program. One of the requirements of such a program will be to obtain a police check on all new volunteers and then wait for six months before the volunteer can actually perform volunteer duties. Volunteers will include teachers and helpers in our Sunday school classes and VBS programs.)

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STEPS

Steps to Implementation of the District Abuse Prevention Policy

STEP ONE:

Complete the attached questionnaire and return it to the District Office marked District APP Team.

STEP TWO:

Formally adopt the District Abuse Prevention Policy attached. Your Church Council or Voters Assembly should record the action.

STEP THREE:

Elders read the District APP Team Implementation Manual.

STEP FOUR:

Assign responsibility to an elder for local APP Committee implementation.

STEP FIVE:

Elder assemble training staff or APP Committee and provide them with the APP Implementation Manual and other resources.

STEP SIX:

Training staff or APP Committee set up annual training events.

STEP SEVEN:

Elder see to it that all present employees/volunteers have been trained and recorded as such in a personnel file. Ensure that all NEW member applicants have had the APP training and that all pertinent guidelines have been followed.

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ABUSE PREVENTION QUESTIONNAIRE CHURCHES/CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

NAME OF ORGANIZATION/POLICYHOLDER: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PLEASE HAVE AN AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OF YOUR ORGANIZATION REVIEW THE FOLLOWING DECLARATIONS, MARK THE APPROPRIATE BOX FOR YOUR RESPONSE AND RETURN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE FOR UNDERWRITING REVIEW BY YOUR INSURANCE COMPANY.

DECLARATIONS

A. Our organization has implemented a formal written abuse prevention plan to protect the children, youth and/or vulnerable adults in our care.

YES NO

b. Our formal prevention plan contains the following measures:

1. A statement of policy confirming our organization's commitment to providing
 - a) a safe environment by preventing harm to those in our care,
 - b) protecting our children and youth ministry workers from false allegations, and
 - c) declaring zero tolerance for abuse, harassment or neglect.

YES NO

2. Our prevention plan assists workers by defining physical, sexual and emotional abuse, child neglect, harassment, inappropriate touching and improper discipline.

YES NO

3. We screen all staff and volunteers for any position involving work with children, youth or vulnerable adults, including the following:

PLEASE CHECK IF YES	EMPLOYEES	VOLUNTEERS
Signed Employee/Volunteer Application (including ministry agreement and release for references and criminal record checks)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Criminal Record Checks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Background Reference Checks (minimum 2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal Interviews	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minimum 6-month waiting period prior to eligibility for children/youth Ministry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. We have implemented written procedures to prevent or discourage abuse and harassment through the following measures:

(PLEASE CHECK IF YES)

- Prohibiting corporal punishment and inappropriate touching, affection or discipline
- Discouraging non-sponsored off premises contact with children/youth
- Addressing health, safety and sanitation issues including appropriate design of washroom facilities and adequate supervision of washroom breaks

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- Avoiding activities that could easily lead to allegations of abuse or harassment
 - Obtaining parental consent for sponsored off-premises or overnight activities and field trips.
 - Keeping confidential screening documentation on file indefinitely for all workers.
5. We have modified or altered our premises to prevent or discourage abuse incidents by ensuring the following:
(PLEASE CHECK IF YES)
- "Open door policy" and/or windows in all classrooms and/or "two-adult rule" and /or designated monitors circulating periodically from room to room for surveillance and in order to protect workers against false allegations.
 - Controlled access/entry for signing children in and out of sponsored activities, especially for nursery and younger children's programs.
 - Adequate lighting inside and outside of building(s) where children's/youth activities take place.
6. We have provided initial training and will conduct an annual review of our abuse prevention plan with our children's/youth ministry workers so that they will have an ongoing awareness of the issue of abuse, abuse prevention and the legal responsibility to report actual or alleged incidents.
- YES NO
7. We have implemented advance protocol and guidelines for responding to incidents of alleged abuse or harassment, including:
(PLEASE CHECK IF YES)
- Completion of a written Incident Reporting Form
 - Fulfilling statutory reporting obligations to child protective agencies or police authorities
 - Assuring serious and compassionate response to allegations without admitting legal liability or making public statements (without legal counsel)
 - Maintaining confidentiality for alleged victim and alleged perpetrator
 - Immediately suspending alleged perpetrator pending outcome of investigation
 - Requiring consultation with a lawyer and reporting the incident to our insurance company

The undersigned is duly authorized as a director, officer, board member or trustee to make representations on behalf of the organization and states that all of the declarations contained in this document are accurate and that the organization is in compliance with the provisions of its abuse prevention plan as stated in this document.

NAME OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE (PLEASE PRINT)

TITLE

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

DATE

Fact Sheet

**For Study
And Discussion**

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Fact Sheet (For Study and Discussion)

Abuse can happen any time in any setting, including churches. Churches generally are places of trust, where volunteer assistance with children and youth has traditionally been accepted and welcomed from anyone interested in working with this group. We hesitate to ask sensitive questions of those who are willing to donate time and energy to helping. These qualities can make a church especially vulnerable to abuse and molestation of children.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse occurs when a parent, guardian or caregiver (which can include church workers, Sunday School teachers, youth workers, etc.) mistreats or neglects a child, resulting in

- Injury, or
- Significant emotional or psychological harm, or
- Serious risk of harm to the child.

It entails the betrayal of a caregiver's position of trust and authority over a child. It can take many different forms:

- Physical abuse (hitting, shaking, choking, biting, kicking, dangerous force or restraint, etc.)
- Sexual abuse (exposing a child to any sexual activity or behaviour)
- Neglect (not providing what is essential to a child's emotional, psychological and physical development)
- Emotional abuse (insulting, humiliating, rejecting, name calling, intimidating, threatening)

Abuse happens in any age group, social stratus or ethno-cultural group. **It is vital that guidelines be put in place to prevent abuse and protect children and vulnerable individuals.**

Abusers are usually well known to their victims, and are often family members. **The abuser initiates the abuse and is responsible no matter what the child does.** Offenders will use many tactics to ensure the victim's silence, especially if the abuse is sexual. Children are told (usually bribed or threatened) to keep what happened a secret. In some cases the offender will use physical force to keep the child from telling. They may be made to believe that the abuse is their fault. If the abuser is a family member, the child may be made to feel guilty about the abuse and fear that they will not be believed or fear the reaction of the person to whom they disclose.

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When children are upset or have a problem, they may show it by acting out of character. The following symptoms may be present when a child is being abused or molested:

- Lacerations and bruises
- Painful urination, discomfort when sitting
- Withdrawal, isolating him/herself from others
- Reluctance to go to a particular place or with a particular person
- Acting out sexual behaviour
- Using words about sex that a child is not likely to know, or describing sexual activity
- Exhibiting self-destructive behaviour such as running away, hurting self or others, taking drugs or alcohol
- Regressing to earlier behaviour such as wetting, thumb-sucking
- Trying to be ultra-good or perfect; overreacting to criticism
- Aggressive behaviour
- Fear of physical contact – shrinking back if touched.

If you have reason to suspect abuse:

- Talk to the child in a quiet place, allowing the child to tell what happened in his or her own words, without pressing for details. It is important not to “interview”, as this may frighten the child.
- Listen to the child and accept what they are telling you, even if it is difficult to believe. Comfort the child by letting them know that it is good that they told you.
- Remain calm and do not overreact. If you feel angry, make sure the child knows that you are not angry with them.
- Assure the child that what has happened is not their fault.
- Reassure the child and let them know that you will do something to help. Do not promise the child that you will not tell anyone.
- Call for assistance immediately. If the abuse is of a criminal or sexual nature, call police or a child protection agency immediately.

PREVALENCE OF ABUSE IN CANADA

It has always been difficult to determine the exact number of children or vulnerable adults who are being abused in any given year. Often children will not disclose the abuse (see reasons cited above) or are too young or lack the verbal skills to talk about it. Government statistics are based on cases that were (a) reported to social service agencies, (b) investigated by child protection workers, and (c) had sufficient evidence to determine that a legal definition of "abuse" or "neglect" was met. Over 135,000 child maltreatment investigations were conducted in Canada in 1998. Approximately 61,000 were substantiated and 30,000 remained suspect. These cases are not isolated or unusual, as a matter of fact, conservative estimates indicate that incidences of child abuse in Canada in any year may exceed 500,000. They may be occurring right now in your neighbourhood, among your acquaintances. (From Health Canada's Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect)

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Developing a policy to prevent abuse of children and vulnerable adults is the first step in creating a safe environment and indicate a zero tolerance for abuse, neglect or maltreatment within your congregation. As we look at the policy proposed by Lutheran Church – Canada East District, you will see what further steps will help to put this important plan into practice.

Discussion leader/Trainer should be prepared to read or discuss the fact sheet.

Section I

Bible Studies

For

**Study and
Discussion**

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BIBLE STUDIES

“Love the Lord Your God with All Your Heart”

REASONS FOR CONCERN ABOUT PREVENTION OF ABUSE IN THE CHURCH

Our Love of God

1. Exodus 20:1-17
How do the Ten Commandments serve as a guide to the Christian life?
How does living a holy life relate to issues of abuse within the congregation?
Which commandments and meanings (Small Catechism) speak to the Christian responsibility to prevent abuse?
2. 1 John 4:11
What is our responsibility to each other according to John?
Matthew 25:37-40
1 Corinthians 6:13-20
What do these passages say about our relationship to our neighbours and the protection of his own God created body?
3. Galatians 6:10
As this passage relates to abuse against our neighbour what help should we provide especially for fellow believers? As it relates to the 8th Commandment and allegations of abuse?
4. Matthew 18:15-18
In what manner should this passage direct our conduct under this abuse policy?

Love for Neighbour

1. Exodus 20:12, Ephesians 6:4, John 15:12, 1 Peter 5:2,3 (Large Catechism, 4th Commandment).
What office is established by this Commandment?
What responsibility comes with this office?
What special injunctions are given to those who hold the office?
How are children to be viewed?
What view should these positions of trust take toward issues of abuse and self gratification?
What should the pastor’s office be in relation to those in his care?

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2. Exodus 20:13, Proverbs 13:24, Matthew 5:21-22, Acts 10:34, Galatians 3:28
What does the 5th Commandment and meaning say regarding issues of protection against abuse?
What is the difference between physical discipline and abuse?
How does God's view of people reflect in our actions toward others? Do threats, taunting, degradation or discrimination have a place among believers?
Can church discipline be considered abusive?
3. Ephesians 5:3-5, Exodus 20:14
What does the Sixth Commandment and its meaning have to say about matters of sexual abuse?

Remember: No touching of any kind is appropriate if it is unwanted. How does this principle impact our responsibility as volunteers/employees?
4. Ephesians 4:25, Exodus 20:16
Under the 8th Commandment and its meaning, what positive steps are we enjoined to take toward allegations of abuse against a neighbour?
May we report issues of suspected abuse to authorities?

Section II

Abuse Prevention Policy

Adopted by

**LC-C East District
Board of Directors**

For

**Adoption by
Congregations**

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Abuse Prevention Policy **Lutheran Church-Canada, East District**

- Whereas The Scriptures often speak of the love that Christians are to have for all people, and especially for one another; and
- Whereas That love shows itself in many ways, including the mutual care and concern that we have for one another; and
- Whereas in this sinful world we see a far different reality, as far too many examples of lovelessness are evident, and that one of the worst examples of this lovelessness comes in the abuse that is perpetuated against children and others in our society; and
- Whereas We, as a church, do not condone these evils in any way and will, in fact, do everything within our power to protect every individual, whom we recognize is precious and special to our God, and who should be treated with the same dignity, care and respect as God Himself would show to that individual; and
- Whereas Most organizations now have some form of abuse prevention policy in place—both as a legal safeguard and as a way of providing care to the people with whom they are involved; and
- Whereas The Church also will want to show that it is eager to protect and defend those who could be victims of the sinful actions of another;
- Therefore this congregation has adopted and implemented the following protocol and guidelines for responding to incidents of alleged abuse or harassment, including fulfilment of statutory reporting obligations to child protective agencies or police authorities, so that we may exercise the best possible care for one another in a spirit of Christian love.

I. Biblical Basis: “*Love the Lord Your God with All Your Heart*”

- A. As the baptized children of God we are called to fear, love, and trust in Him above all things (First Commandment). Therefore we confess that His Word establishes how we should live a holy life pleasing to Him (Exodus 20).
- B. Since all are created in His image, we confess that God calls us to love one another as He has loved us (1 John 4:11). What we do to the least of Christ's brothers we do to Him. Our body and the body of our neighbour is not meant for immorality but for the Lord (Matthew 25:37-40; 1 Corinthians 6:13-20).
- C. We therefore condemn all forms of abuse as being contrary to the will of God and will not be tolerated in our life together as a congregation by any of our volunteers or employees. (Gal. 6:10)

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1. We are committed to providing a safe environment by preventing harm to those in our care.
 2. We are committed to protecting our volunteers and employees from false allegations.
- D. Christ's instruction in Matthew 18 shall direct our conduct with each other under this policy.

II. Definitions: "*Love Your Neighbour as Yourself*"

- A. *The Fourth Commandment* - "Honour your father and your mother."
1. God has established the parental office and other authorities to support and provide for the bodily necessities of children and to raise them up to the praise and honour of God. God commands those in this office to rebuke, reprove, and correct those entrusted to their care (Large Catechism, Fourth Commandment).
 2. God commands fathers (parents and other authorities, e.g., teachers and pastors) not to exasperate their children but to bring them up in the instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4).
 3. God has not given us children to gratify our wantonness by abusing them physically or sexually (Large Catechism, Fourth Commandment).
 4. God has established male headship and fatherhood in the spiritual affairs of the church (pastors). Pastors are called not to lord their authority over the children of God, but to serve in Christ's stead and by His command (I Peter 5:2-3).
 5. Those in authority are in obligation to God to discharge their office earnestly and faithfully according to His command to love one another.
- B. *The Fifth Commandment*- "You shall not murder."
1. God calls us not to hurt or harm our neighbour in his body, but commands us to help and support our neighbour in every physical need. He thereby forbids any abuse of our neighbour, rather that we must protect him from every physical harm (Small Catechism, Fifth Commandment).
 2. God does not permit the use of physical violence in any form against our neighbour (e.g., striking in anger, improper discipline, or inappropriate restraint). God has given parents the authority to discipline their children physically (Proverbs 13:24). We confess, however, that discipline that is used to abuse or degrade or cause permanent severe physical harm is contrary to the fifth commandment.
 3. We must also not hurt or harm, whether in heart, mouth, looks, signs, or gestures (Matthew 5:21-22).
 4. God calls us not to use our tongue to verbally abuse, harass, threaten, taunt, intimidate, or degrade those whom he has created in his own image. God shows no partiality by making us one in Christ whether Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female (Acts 10:34, Galatians 3:28). Therefore, unsolicited and unwelcome verbal or physical conduct based on race, colour, place of origin, gender, mental or physical ability, ancestry, economic status, age, or political association is contrary to the fifth commandment.
 5. For the sake of our salvation God calls us to repentance through the preaching

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and teaching of His Law which condemns all of us as sinners and pronounces us guilty before Him. Preaching, teaching, pastoral admonition and the exercise of church discipline is neither abusive nor degrading but leads us to flee to the grace and mercy of God in Christ Jesus.

- C. *The Sixth Commandment* - “You shall not commit adultery.”
1. God created sexuality as an expression of love between husband and wife. All acts of a sexual nature outside of marriage are adulterous and condemned by God.
 2. God forbids sexual immorality, coarse joking and lewd speech as improper among His saints (Ephesians 5:3-5).
 3. Any inappropriate conduct such as gestures, caressing, or touching of a sexual nature with children, youth, or vulnerable adults is contrary to the sixth commandment.
 4. This commandment condemns any unwelcome, unwarranted, unsolicited, or offensive sexual comments or conduct towards anyone.
- D. *The Eighth Commandment* - “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbour.”
1. God calls us to defend our neighbour and speak up for him. Therefore to belittle, defame, humiliate, call him names or in any other way emotionally abuse our neighbour is forbidden by the eighth commandment.
 2. False accusations and allegations or any lies about abuse are not tolerated according to this commandment, rather we must speak truthfully to our neighbour (Ephesians 4:25). God forbids us to hurt our neighbour's reputation by lies and falsehood.
 3. When the physical welfare of our neighbour demands it, wrongdoing must be reported to the proper authorities, and evidence presented (Large Catechism, Eighth Commandment).
 4. God commands us to speak well of our neighbour and defend his rights lest he come to public disgrace.

III. Prevention: “*Help Your Neighbour and Be of Service to Him*”

- A. Called Church Workers, Volunteers and Employees
1. Screening
 - a. The screening of called church workers and candidates for the pastoral office in this congregation is entrusted to the appropriate synodical or district authority.
 - b. The screening of volunteers and employees in the congregation will be entrusted to the Elders.
 - c. All new members of this congregation wishing to serve as a volunteer or employee for any position involving work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults will:
 - i. wait six months before serving in this capacity;
 - ii. complete a volunteer application form (*see attached sample*).
 - iii. provide two references and a criminal record check;
 - iv. be personally interviewed (*see attached sample*); and

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- v. promise before the congregation to show themselves by word and example to be a pattern of good works and Christian devotion (*Lutheran Worship Agenda* p. 284).

- d. All information gleaned from the screening process will be kept in a permanent confidential file.

2. Instruction

All called church workers, volunteers, and employees will be provided with a copy of this policy and instructed in it annually. They will be instructed in appropriate and inappropriate touching, affection and discipline in the classroom, and in washroom assistance. The instruction will discourage them from non-sponsored, off-premises contact with children and activities that could easily lead to allegations of abuse or harassment. Detailed instruction can be provided by the District Abuse Prevention Team. A signed acknowledgement will also be required, indicating that each called church worker, volunteer, and employee have read, understood and agreed to this Abuse Prevention Policy. (See attached sample).

3. Parental Involvement

Called church workers, volunteers, and employees will ensure that parents and guardians:

- a. know when activities conclude;
- b. know that controlled access is maintained to young children and that called church workers, volunteers and employees will keep children in that controlled area until parents pick up their children. Parents will ensure that permission is given, if it is necessary, for a known designate to pick up children after activities;
- c. give written consent for sponsored off-premises or overnight activities and field trips (see sample form)
- d. are aware of disciplinary problems.

B. Facilities

- 1. All children and youth activities will occur in an 'open door' environment or with a minimum of two adults on the premises, and / or with designated monitors circulating through the premises.

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2. Adequate lighting, inside and outside of building(s) will be maintained where all children and youth activities take place. The property will be maintained to assure the health and safety of all.
3. Washrooms will be designed and facilities monitored to prevent abuse from occurring in them.
(See appendix)

IV. Complaint Procedures: “*Speak the Truth About Your Neighbour*”

A. General Considerations (*See also Complaint Procedure Guidelines in the appendix*)

1. All allegations of abuse will be treated seriously, compassionately, and confidentially ensuring the privacy of both victim and perpetrator.
2. All allegations of abuse will be reported to the appropriate civil authority, as required by law.
3. All allegations of abuse will be reported to and investigated by the Board of Elders or by those appointed by the Board of Elders (i.e. Abuse Prevention Team or District Abuse Prevention Team)
4. When an allegation is made, the individual involved will be suspended from office until such time as the incident is resolved. The matter shall be reported to the insurer; to the congregation’s lawyer and representatives. In no circumstance will liability be admitted.

B. Allegations Against a Pastor or Deacon

1. St. Paul instructs that no charge against a pastor should be admitted except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. Those who persist in sin should be rebuked publicly (1 Timothy 5:19).
2. Allegations against a pastor or deacon shall be dealt with in accordance with the Lutheran Church–Canada's “*Policy Regarding Misconduct by Professional Church Workers*” (see appendix).

C. Allegations Against a Volunteer or Employee

1. God will call to account and punish those who abuse in any form those entrusted to their care by Him (Matthew 18:5-6).
2. Christ has given authority to His church on earth to call abusers to repentance. The sins of impenitent abusers will be retained as long as they do not repent (Small Catechism, Office of the Keys).
3. The Complaint Procedure Guidelines provide direction in dealing with allegations of abuse. (See appendix).
4. If the allegations prove to be true, the perpetrator must acknowledge their sin and repent of it or be brought before the church and excommunicated (Matthew 18:17). Openly unrepentant sinners are excluded from the Christian congregation (Small Catechism, Office of the Keys).

**Complaint
Procedure
Guide**

For

**Discussion
And
Study**

LC-C East District Abuse Prevention Policy - Section II

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES GUIDELINES (For Discussion and Study)

If you have been abused, or suspect that someone in your congregation is being abused, it is essential that this be reported. Abuse thrives when it goes unnoticed or unreported. It will not stop on its own. *Remember that the goal for reporting abuse is four-fold:*

- a) *to stop the abuse and prevent further incidents;*
- b) *to begin the healing process for the victim;*
- c) *to allow the perpetrator (if the allegations are true) to be brought to repentance and reconciliation;*
- d) *to allow for the process of justice if the charges are of a criminal nature.*

If the Complainant is an Adult

Step 1

Any congregational entity or member which/who believes that he/she or another adult has been the subject of abuse is encouraged, *where possible*, to make it clear to the abuser that such behaviour is unwelcome, and should ask that the abuse stop. ***IF you feel threatened or frightened in any way, do not take this step.***

Step 2

If resolving the concerns under *Step 1 is inappropriate or fails*, the complainant may speak to or make a written complaint to any of the members of the Board of Elders, or to those who have been designated by the Board of Elders to serve as part of the APT. If desired, you may have the Pastor or a trusted friend assist you with this step.

Step 3

The Board of Elders or the Abuse Prevention Team may attempt to informally resolve the situation without the need for a formal investigation. The Board of Elders should report the incident in question to congregational legal counsel and to the District Office.

Step 4

Where a formal investigation is required, *the Board of Elders (or local APT) will require the complainant to produce to it any record of incidents of abuse, including dates, times, locations, possible witnesses, details of the abuse and the complainant's response to that abuse.*

Step 5

The Board of Elders will:

- a) Make arrangements for a thorough and unbiased investigation to be conducted in as timely and confidential a manner as possible and in accordance with internal policies and procedures;
- b) Request a written response from the alleged abuser, and show that response to the complainant;
- c) Interview the complainant as well as any witnesses to the behaviour, if necessary;

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- d) Interview the alleged abuser;
- e) Keep the parties to the complaint informed of the steps being taken during the investigative process;
- f) If it deems it necessary, prepare a written report outlining the allegations of the complainant, the alleged abuser's response, the evidence of any witnesses interviewed, and the conclusions reached by the Board of Elders;
- g) If necessary, and with the victim's knowledge, report anything of a criminal nature to police.
- h) Arrive at an appropriate recommended corrective/disciplinary action in the event that the complainant's allegations are established.

It is the obligation of every congregation affiliate to cooperate fully with the Board of Elders in the investigations of any alleged complaints of abuse.

Discuss the Steps to follow if the Complainant is an adult. (See italicized sections)

If Complainant is a Child (Minor):

Step 1

Any congregational entity or member which/who believes that a child has been the subject of verbal abuse is encouraged to find a way, where possible, to make it clear to the alleged abuser that such behaviour is unwelcome, and should ask that the abuse stop. If the abuse is in the form of inappropriate discipline such as harsh words or voice tones that demean the child or elicit feelings of shame or condemnation, it is advisable to discuss the problem either with the person (i.e. teacher) involved or the supervisor of the program in an effort to stop the behaviour. If no resolution is reached, the process of informal or formal investigation (as outlined above) may be followed.

Step 2

In the case of sexual or physical abuse, it is essential to make a report to Family and Children's Services immediately. The victim should be removed from the situation and have no contact with the alleged abuser until the matter has been resolved. You may also choose to report it immediately to the Board of Elders, the Pastor or a trusted friend who can be with you when you make the report. Call the local office (insert phone number), and ask for an intake screener or follow the prompts to speak to someone directly. The following information will be necessary:

- Give your name and location, or you may remain anonymous
- State that you are making a report of a child in need of protection or that you wish to consult
- State your relationship to the child and family
- Indicate what you heard from the child and/or what you observed (you may want to keep some written notes)

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- Offer any facts such as dates, descriptions of the child and identifying information about the family
- Share knowledge of other agency or community involvement if known
- Provide any relevant background information

Gather the following information if you can, before calling:

- If you are a professional working with children, know the full name of the child, date of birth, parent(s) name, sibling(s) name and date of birth, address, telephone number, work number of parent(s), etc.
- Be prepared to describe in detail any visible injuries (e.g. bruises—location size, and colour?)
- Keep notes on what you saw and heard
- Share relevant background information such as language, culture, etc.
- ***DO NOT inform the alleged abusive parent or alleged offender about the report***

When speaking with the FCS personnel:

- Record the first and last name of the intake worker for your records
- Ask if there are any steps you should take at this time (who will contact the parents?)
- Ask if you should inform the child of any plan at this time
- You may request that the FACS contact you when they have a plan of action (however depending on confidentiality, they may or may not be able to share this information with you)
- Ask if it is safe to send the child home at lunch or the end of the day
- Police are contacted when sexual/physical abuse is being investigated

Procedures for an F&CS investigation

- Interview child privately
- Arrangements for a medical exam are made if needed
- Police will be contacted if necessary and appropriate
- Interview siblings/other relevant parties privately
- Interview parents/non-offending parent
- Interview suspected offender

Step 3

All allegations/reports are to be taken seriously. Situations must be handled directly with respect for people's privacy and confidentiality. Allegations should be reported to congregational legal counsel and to the District Office.

Adequate care must be shown for the well being of victims. In no way should the victim be made to feel that they are to blame for the abuse.

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Pending the investigation, the alleged abuser should have no contact with the complainant/victim.

If an adult complainant/victim has a developmental disability, the following steps should be taken:

If he/she is living in an agency and the abuse stems from the living situation, the agency should be contacted first and told of the concerns. If it is felt that these concerns are not addressed, a report should be made to the funder (i.e. M.C.S.S.).

If he/she is living with family or friends, it is more difficult to decide on a course of action. If the abuse is of a criminal nature, the police should be contacted, preferably with the knowledge and consent of the victim. If the abuse is in the form of emotional abuse or neglect, the Ontario Disabilities Support Program (part of Ministry of Community and Social Services) can be contacted. Depending on the area, Community Care Access Centres or, in some cases, F&CS can be contacted for support or assistance.

In the case of abuse at the hands of a church worker or volunteer, the above would apply, with actions of a criminal nature being reported to police. Other types of abuse (verbal, emotional) could be dealt with within the context of the congregation's abuse prevention policies, specifically Steps 4 & 5 of the Complaints Procedure.

Discuss the Steps to follow if the Complainant is an adult. (See italicized sections)

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AFTERCARE

When an incident of abuse has occurred, there are many factors to consider beginning healing in the church.

The victim and their family require a great amount of care and support.

They should be made aware that the congregation does not blame them for what has happened and that their church family will assist them in bearing the burdens created.

In the case of a child, a great deal of counseling and support can be provided through the local child protection agency. They will also have other resources for the family to access counseling and any other assistance needed. Often a person's health insurance carrier will have psychological and emotional counsel available.

For adults, the church, community information centre or hospital may have a directory of local counseling agencies. Many Christian agencies (including Catholic Family Services in many areas) provide counseling services on an "ability to pay" basis. It is important to encourage the victim and their family to talk about what happened with a trusted professional so they can begin the healing process.

Within the congregation, information should be given honestly and shared on a need to know basis.

There will be a great deal of shock, denial and anger, which must be dealt with in a loving and understanding manner. Professional assistance may be required to assist the members to understand and accept what was happened, to care for the victim and even to acknowledge the sin and work towards the repentance and forgiveness of the abuser.

If the abuse has been of a criminal nature, the abuser will be dealt with first by legal authorities. No matter what the charge, it is important to remember that the goal within the church should be to bring the perpetrator to repentance. The abuser should not be abandoned by his or her Christian family, (even as God does not abandon them) even if they can no longer attend the church.

Remember that even allegations of abuse come at a cost emotionally and spiritually to the alleged abuser and alleged victim. When allegations are proven false some of the same resources should be sought to begin healing processes.

The health and well being of the congregation will depend a great deal on the handling of the situation. Prayer for God's guidance, loving concern from the staff and leaders of the church, and professional assistance will help facilitate this healing process.

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FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

Congregations are not required to incur the expense of major renovations to their facilities to comply with the policy, but the existing facilities should be reviewed and consideration given to what may be done to make the facilities less likely to foster allegations of abuse. For example:

- If there are no windows on classroom doors, the doors should remain open
- An adult should monitor activities within and between the rooms

Review current facilities and discuss how they can be made more visible

Consider whether there are other alternative areas where activities may take place

In terms of assisting children going to the washroom, congregations should ensure:

- Parents should be encouraged to take their children to the washroom before a class or activity begins
- That a monitor is appointed to accompany children aged seven and under to the washroom
- Washroom doors should be propped open and the monitor should wait outside for the child to finish
- Under no circumstances should anyone enter a washroom cubicle alone with a child and close the door
- For children requiring diaper changes, change tables should be in areas visible to others

Discuss your current washroom facilities and how they can be made more “user friendly” for children to use them on their own

**POLICY REGARDING
MISCONDUCT BY
PROFESSIONAL CHURCH WORKERS**



June 1992

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LC-C East District Abuse Prevention Policy - Section II

POLICY REGARDING MISCONDUCT BY PROFESSIONAL CHURCH WORKERS

(For the purpose of this policy the terms abuse, harassment and misconduct are interchangeable)

People who have been called or placed into positions of public ministry in the church have been given by God and His church a special position of privilege and trust. When this trust is violated by a church worker taking advantage of his or her position by causing abuse to people he or she is serving, all concerned parties need to be dealt with in a loving and orderly way.

The primary concern in dealing with actual misconduct should focus on the welfare of the victim who is at a disadvantage even to file a complaint. Other concerns are: the protection of other victims; a ministry to secondary victims such as the victim's and the church worker's family and the congregation; and finally, the need of the church worker for repentance, treatment, support, and when possible, rehabilitation.

Steps to take if one is being harassed:

Harassment is unpleasant and intimidating. Fear of retaliation, embarrassment, or feelings of guilt may inhibit one from raising a complaint. However, it is essential to complain if one is being harassed. The behavioral problem lies with the harasser, not with the one being harassed.

1. Inform the harasser that his/her behavior is unwelcome. An individual (although he/she should know better) may not realize that an action or a comment is offensive. A simple chat may resolve the problem. If the person refuses to cooperate, remind him/her that such behavior is against church policy.
2. Keep a record of the harassment. When did it start (e.g. dates, times, location)? What happened? Were there any witnesses? Were there any threats of reprisal? What was the response? Failure to keep a diary of the events will not invalidate the complaint. A record will, however, reinforce it by making the investigation procedure easier.

If the harassment continues, the victim or victims are encouraged to submit their complaint in writing either to the elders of the congregation, or the circuit counselor, or a vice-president, or to the district president. The complainant may request the assistance of a confidante in formulating and processing the complaint.

Guiding principles after the complaint is made:

1. If any of the aforementioned church officers are satisfied that an investigation is warranted, the church officer shall advise the district president. The district president shall then appoint a Review Committee made up of lay people and church workers to officially investigate the complaint. After its investigation, the Review Committee shall report its findings to the district president who shall then take appropriate action.

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2. The complainant is to be treated with care, respect and dignity. An allegation will not by itself jeopardize church membership or job security if the complainant is employed by the church.
3. The allegation should be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated without any presumption of its truth or falsity.
4. All parties are to be presumed innocent until sufficient evidence to the contrary appears.
5. As much as possible the confidentiality of the complaint is to be maintained and the complainant's identity is not to be shared outside of the Review Committee without the written permission of the complainant or an order by the court. As much as possible, the identity of the accused worker will also be held in confidence. Written records will be carefully safeguarded.
6. Both the complainant and the accused worker should have access to pastoral care during the investigation process.
7. The complainant and the accused worker will each have the right to be accompanied by an advocate to support them in the investigation process.

The activity of the Review Committee:

1. Meet with the complainant to determine the nature and extent of the allegations.
2. Inform the complainant about the review process.
3. Encourage the complainant to put the allegations in a detailed written statement and to be represented by an advocate for support in this process.
4. Review the allegations in the written statement and determine if any other parties may be involved or adversely affected.
5. If the complainant chooses not to proceed at this point, determine whether to continue with the investigation anyway. Civil authorities will also be notified if required by law or otherwise deemed appropriate in the circumstances. A written and/or audio report of the meetings with the complainant will be made available to civil authorities with permission of the complainant or where required by law.
6. Inform the accused worker in writing of the complaint and give the accused worker a copy of the complainant's written statement or sufficient details of the complaint so as to allow the accused worker to contest the facts alleged in the written complaint. The accused worker will then be:
 - a. Informed of his/her right to bring an advocate into the process.
 - b. Directed to refrain from initiating any contact with the complainant or other specified parties during the course of the investigation.
 - c. Obligated to present a response to the complaint in person to the Review Committee as soon as possible.
7. Prepare a written report of the meeting with the accused worker along with a written summary that has been reviewed with the accused worker by the Review Committee. The accused worker will have the right to make comments in writing for the record of the investigation.

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8. Meet with any other parties who may be involved in the subject matter, including those suggested by the complainant and the accused worker. All statements, summaries and other documents pertinent to the review will be received into the record of the investigation.
9. Submit a complete written report including all statements, summaries and documents pertinent to the review to the district president.

Resolution of the complaint:

When the report of the Review Committee has been received, the district president may:

- a. Direct a further investigation of the complaint.
- or -
- b. Close the investigation if the district president is of the view that the probability of misconduct has not been established, and respond with care and concern to the complainant and the accused worker. If the vindicated worker chooses, a public statement may be issued to exonerate him/her.
- or -
- c. If the district president is of the view that misconduct has been established, proceed with a course of disciplinary action in accordance with the synodical constitution, Article XIII; Bylaws I. B, 1.21; V. C. 5.49, and VIII, or other appropriate disciplinary action.

If the complaint against the church worker has been upheld, the church worker will be subject to such disciplinary action as the district president seems appropriate. This may include requiring the resignation of the accused worker from his/her position, or removal from the roster by the district president.

In resolving the complaint, pastoral and professional care should be provided to the victim, the family of the victim, the accused worker, the family of the accused worker, the congregation and peers in the ministry.

Adopted by Lutheran Church–Canada Board of Directors
March 6-7 1992
Added to COP Manual 09/2000

LC-C East District Abuse Prevention Policy - Section II

Appendix #2

PLACING OF SUNDAY AND OTHER CHURCH SCHOOL OFFICERS AND TEACHERS

Sit

1. *Before the Prayer of the Church, or The Prayers, the church school officers and teachers who are to be placed present themselves before the altar. The pastor announces the names and offices in which they are to serve. He then continues:*

P: Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, you have come to be placed as (officers/teachers) in the (Sunday school/church school) of this congregation, a work in which our Father in heaven has great joy.

You are to assist the ministry on the Word and sacraments by instructing God's children according to his holy Word. You are to prepare yourselves for this work by your individual and corporate study of the Word of God and the faith drawn from it as it has been delivered to us in the Creeds and Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

While holiness of life and work is the way of all who trust in Christ, it is especially important that you show yourselves, by word and example, to be patterns of good works and Christian devotion.

In the presence of God and of this congregation I therefore ask you: Do you accept the offices entrusted to you, and do you promise faithfully to carry out your duties, trusting in him and conforming yourself to his Word in accordance with the faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church? If so, answer: I do.

R: I do.

P: (Names), I place you as (officers/teachers) of (name of congregation), in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

P: The almighty and most merciful God, our heavenly Father, enlighten and strengthen you in your office that you may be good and faithful (officers/teachers), to the glory of His name and the salvation of His people.

C: Amen

Stand

LC-C East District Abuse Prevention Policy - Section II

2. *The pastor addresses the congregation*

P: Let us Pray.

Grant, O Lord, to these your people the gifts of wisdom and discretion, kindness and faithfulness so that they may effectively teach and guide; and grant to all your people a ready willingness to learn. Let the knowledge of your Word be preserved and extended among us that all may know you and, from the least to the greatest, praise you now and forever; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

3. *The pastor dismisses and blesses those who have been placed.*

P: Go in the peace of the Lord. The almighty and most merciful God, the Father, the ☩Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

C: Amen

4. *All return to their places.*

5. *The service continues with the Prayer of the Church, or The Prayers.*

Section III

**Abuse Prevention
Policy
Screening**

For

**Study, Discussion
And Implementation**

LC-C East District Abuse Prevention Policy - Section III

Prevention

SCREENING OF CALLED CHURCH WORKERS/VOLUNTEERS/EMPLOYEES WORKING WITH CHILDREN, YOUTH AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

1. Screening of Called Church Workers (Pastors, Deacons and Deaconesses)

The screening of called church workers and candidates for ministry (pastors and diaconate) for all congregations is entrusted to synodical and district authorities assigned (Lutheran Church-Canada, Lutheran Church-Canada East District).

2. Screening of Present Volunteers/Employees

The screening of Present Volunteers and local employees working with children, youth and vulnerable adults is entrusted to the local congregation's board of elders. Present volunteers and local employees shall be trained in the APP and have the date, time and signature acknowledging attendance on Form #1.1 and included in their personnel file along with Form #1.2.

3. Screening of NEW Member Applicants

The screening of NEW members wishing to serve as volunteers working with children, youth and vulnerable adults.

The adoption of the above policy guidelines, obligates the congregation to the following actions.

NEW member applicants:

- a) Shall be given a copy of the policy and sign an Acknowledgement Form (#1.3)
- b) Shall sign a Release of Information Form given for authorization to collect information (#1.2) in a file
- c) Shall wait six months to be known to the congregation before filling out an application (#1.6) to work in such areas as Sunday School, Youth Group and any groups dealing with vulnerable adults (any adult can be vulnerable by virtue of his/her emotional, financial, psychological inability and/or disability).
- d) May, after six (6) months, file an application (#1.7) to volunteer/ be employed in such a position. (The local congregation may make other requirements for employees such as resumes, curriculum vitae, etc.) The application may be filed with the local congregation, search or stewardship committee for review. Selected applicants may be forwarded to the local interview committee which shall be supervised by an elder or elders assigned to the Abuse Prevention Policy Committee.

LC-C East District Abuse Prevention Policy - Section III

- e) (Selected applicants) shall supply interviewers (pastor, elder, committee) with two (2) character references and a completed police check. References should be checked by the interviewer/s (Sample A/script is a guideline) and recorded on Form #1.4.
- f) The interview may be conducted using Form #1.5 as a guideline. Forms #1.4 and #1.6 should be in hand during the interview.
- g) (Successful new applicants as well as present volunteers/employees) shall be placed in office publicly by the local congregation using such service as is common such as (LW Agenda p.284) Appendix #1.
- h) (All information pertinent to the interviewee candidate) shall be kept in a confidential permanent personnel file and filed appropriately under the local direction of the local APP committee and supervised by the assigned elder(s).

4. What should a proper PERSONNEL file include?

- Form # 1.1 A coversheet such as an initial clearance checklist of what the file contains signed by the appropriate authority.
- Form # 1.2 A release of information form signed by the applicant with permission to collect the information.
- Form # 1.3 An acknowledgement form of having received the APP, signed, is not included on the coversheet.

Also a copy of the Criminal Record check or the info recorded from the form to the file.

- Form # 1.4 Reference contact form.
- Form # 1.5 Interview Form signed and dated by interviewer and applicant.

Any resume submitted.

- Form # 1.6 The application form.

LC-C East District Abuse Prevention Policy Section III

INSTRUCTION IN THE A.P.P.

All called workers, volunteers and employees shall be instructed in this policy at least annually.

In public ministry settings THESE APPLY:

1. **Appropriate touching** (caveat – no touching of any kind is appropriate if it is unwanted)
 - a) Eye level conversation, kind speech, active listening
 - b) Leading by the hand to or from activities
 - c) An arm around the shoulder for comforting
 - d) Taking both hands as you reinforce good behaviour: “You did a great job!”
 - e) Patting on the back, shoulder or head for affirmation.
 - f) Holding by the shoulders or hands while you redirect behaviour.
 - g) Gentle holding of the chin to help focus attention on what you say.
 - h) Holding a preschooler who cries.*

*A Sunday School teacher comforts a child left in her care by a parent.

Discuss the other examples and supply answers of your own.

2. **Inappropriate Touching** (Remember the caveat-no touching of any kind is appropriate if it is unwanted)
 - a) kissing a child*
 - b) coaxing a kiss from a child
 - c) extended hugging or tickling
 - d) touching a child in an area that would be covered by a swimsuit (exception: toileting)
 - e) caressing a child needlessly
 - f) having a child sit on your lap
 - g) being left alone with a child
 - h) any prolonged physical contact
 - i) opposite sex close contact games
 - j) seductive or suggestive contact
 - k) contact of a pleasurable nature only to the caregiver
 - l) touching meant to assert power or control

* “Everyone must give teacher a kiss”

“No-one leaves until they give teacher a kiss”

Discuss the other examples and supply answers of your own.

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3. **Discipline in class settings.**

How does Hebrews 12:7-11 define disciplines? Is discipline done to or done for a child? Define training from the same passage! The aim of discipline is discipleship!

Note: Abuse is less likely to occur in areas where preventive discipline is practiced.

a) Prevention Discipline:

- i. Loving, caring attitude
- ii. Proper environment for child learning
- iii. Repeat for each child
- iv. Make known realistic expectations for the child/children.*
- v. Meaningful age specific activities
- vi. Fair and consistent treatment of children
- vii. A focus on positive actions
- viii. Awareness of special needs.
- ix. Proper student teacher ratios.

* “Today we will learn all 66 books of the Bible 1st Graders” - unrealistic

Discuss the other examples and supply answers of your own.

b) Change Oriented Discipline

- i. Deal with problems individually
- ii. Explain clearly why certain behaviour is inappropriate
- iii. Redirect the child to positive action
- iv. Clearly explain the consequences and results in inappropriate behaviour and the correct way to behave.*
- v. Offer choices acceptable to both child and teacher/caregiver

* “If you continue to fight with Johnny, Johnny will cry and I will have to phone your parents to take you home. Will you please tell Johnny you are sorry now and sit down quietly.”

Discuss the other examples and supply answers of your own.

c) Clear Rules for Classes

- i. One voice speaks at a time
- ii. Quiet children get answered
- iii. Inside voices/outside voices
- iv. Obey directions right away
- v. Good manners
- vi. Keep your hands/feet to yourself
- vii. Respect the other child/adult
- viii. Be a friend!*
- ix. Visit the bathroom before class
- x. Remember – life is not fair

LC-C East District Abuse Prevention Policy Section III

- * Joan is a friend to a new student coming into the class helping her find a place in the Bible.

Discuss the other examples and supply answers of your own.

- d) Inappropriate discipline tools:
 - i. Corporal punishment
 - ii. Yelling, screaming or voice tones that demean the child, not the behaviour
 - iii. Words that elicit feelings of shame or condemnation; derisive comments.

Discuss the other examples and supply answers of your own.

- 4. Washroom Assistance
 - a) Plan children's washrooms for children
 - b) Limit the need for washroom assistance – remind parents to take their children to the washroom before class.
 - c) Children up to the age of seven (7) should not be alone in the washroom.
 - d) Provide hallway and bathroom monitors
 - e) Prop the bathroom door open to hear or see if assistance is needed.
 - f) Escort children back to class area.
 - g) Never enter a cubicle with a child and close the door.

Discuss the other examples and supply answers of your own.

- 5. Church Sponsored Activities should be accompanied by the use of Form 2.1 or 2.2 as appropriate, clearly indicating the sponsorship, times, dates and those in charge of the event.
- 6. Church sponsored events are events planned or known about by the church or its leaders. Volunteer/employees representing the church without the church's or leaders knowledge increase their risk of being accused of abuse. Events should registered with the church by using Form # 2.1 or # 2.2*
- 7. Further instruction and resource material can be accessed through the District Abuse Prevention Policy Committee by calling the LCC East District Office.

* James is a volunteer youth worker with St. Swithin's Lutheran Church. He met up with four girls from the youth group and drove them to a theatre. The next day he was accused of abusing two of the girls. The church was named as a contributing party to the alleged abuse.

Discuss this example!

Employee/Volunteer Initial Clearance Checklist

	Application for Ministries to Children & Youth completed and signed
	Application/instructions for Criminal Record Check given to applicant
	Reference Contact Form completed and signed; file copy for all contacts
	Criminal Records Report completed and received from authorities
	Interview Form completed and signed
	Driver's Record Check (if required) received
	All of the above in order, reviewed and cleared for applicant to serve in the Children's and Youth Ministries at (<i>name of your congregation</i>).

Signature of Pastor or Authorized Department Head _____

Date: _____

If this cannot be signed at this time because of an unsatisfactory response in any of the above categories, it must be referred to the Pastor or the Elder in Charge before any further discussion with the applicant.

I acknowledge receipt of the District Abuse Prevention Policy

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Training on Policy completed Date: _____

First Aid Certification/Documentation on file

Children's/Youth Ministries

(Insert your Church, Address, Telephone, Fax, Email)

(YOUR CHURCH LETTERHEAD)

Permission and Release of Information

Information Received is strictly confidential

I hereby give permission for the collection of personal information at *(name of your congregation)* as part of our congregation's ongoing efforts to show our care and concern for those who could be victims of the sinful actions of another. May God bless our congregation in its continued ministry to one another! This will be maintained in a personnel file in our office.

Full Legal Name: *(Print)* _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Witnessed: _____ Date: _____

(YOUR CHURCH LETTERHEAD)

Acknowledgement Form

Information Received is strictly confidential

This is to acknowledge that a copy of the District Abuse Prevention Policy was provided to me by *(name of your congregation)*. I have read, understand and agree to this Abuse Prevention Policy. May God bless our congregation in its continued ministry to one another!

Full Legal Name: *(Print)* _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Witnessed: _____ Date: _____

Record of Church Contact With a Reference or Church Identified by an Applicant for Children’s Work

Name of Applicant: _____

Reference or Church Contacted	Date of Contact	Person Contacting the Reference or Church	Method of Contact (phone, letter, in person)	Summary of Contact

Children’s/Youth Ministries
(Insert your Church, Address, Telephone, Fax, Email)

MINISTRY VOLUNTEER INTERVIEW FORM

A completed Ministry Volunteer Application Form for Ministries to Children must be completed and in hand to allow for reference checks and reviews prior to the interview.

Has anyone explained the types of children's ministries which we provide as a church and which might provide you with an opportunity for volunteer service? YES ___ NO ___

What prompted you to be interested in the ministry which you identified on your Ministry Volunteer Form?

Would you be willing to attend the training session associated with that Ministry?

YES ___ NO ___

Have the potential volunteer review their spiritual journey and compare responses with those indicated on the Spiritual History of the Ministry Volunteer Application Form. Note any omissions or questions which arise.

Review the items listed under Confidential Information on the Ministry Volunteer Application Form and note any significant omissions or questions which arise:

Ask the potential volunteer about their relationship with each reference listed on the Ministry Volunteer Application Form.

On what date would you be available? _____

What is the minimum length of your commitment?

Children's/Youth Ministries

(Insert your Church, Address, Telephone, Fax, Email)

Ministry Leadership Volunteer Application Form for Ministries to Children & Youth

(INFORMATION RECEIVED IS STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL)

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 your understanding.

Personal Information

Full Name: _____ Male _____ Female _____

Phone Number (Res.) _____ (Bus.) _____

Address: _____

_____ Email _____

Single
 Married
 Engaged
 Separated
 Divorced
 Remarried
 Widow/Widower

Date of Birth: _____

Spouse's Name: _____

Occupation and/or Employer: _____

Hobbies, Interests or Skills: _____

Spiritual History

Member of *(name of your congregation)*? Yes ___ No ___ How Long? _____

Baptized Member? Yes ___ No ___ Confirmed Member? Yes ___ No ___

Voting Member? Yes ___ No ___ Council Member? Yes ___ No ___

Church Attendance Background <i>(List churches attended in the past 5 years)</i>
Church Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____
Dates Attended: _____ Member: Yes ___ No ___

Church Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____

Present & Previous Ministry Experience
Church Name: _____ Phone: _____
Dates & Description of Ministry _____
Pastor or Ministry Supervisor _____

Church Name: _____ Phone: _____
Dates & Description of Ministry _____
Pastor or Ministry Supervisor _____

Church Name: _____ Phone: _____
Dates & Description of Ministry _____
Pastor or Ministry Supervisor _____

Lifestyle

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 process. All information will be kept strictly confidential. (Police may access this information under warrant, if requested.) Answering 'yes' to any of the questions may not necessarily preclude your involvement in ministry. **A meeting will be arranged with the Pastor so that you may discuss the circumstances.** Thank you in advance for your understanding.

If any of the following circumstances apply to you, please check here _____

- 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 hospitalized or treated for alcohol or substance abuse
- Have any communicable disease
- In treatment for any form of mental illness

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

References

Please provide the names of three individuals, excluding relatives, who could provide a reference for you. If you are a minor, you may use the name of a parent and/or teacher. If possible, include at least one reference from inside the church.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Ministry Profile

In answering the following, please don't be too humble as the purpose of this section is for you to declare your strengths so that your gifts will be put to the best use possible.

Mark the areas in which you desire to: **Oversee** (put an 'O' in the box) **Assist** (put an 'A' in the box) **Receive Training** (put a 'T' in the box)

Nursery	Ladies Group
Sunday School	Prayer
Youth	Stewardship
Church Council	Fellowship
Choir	
Vacation Bible School	Drama/Puppets
Bible Studies	Crafts
Office/Administration	Fund Raising Activities
Altar Guild	
Other (<i>specify</i>)	

Applicant's Statement

I hereby acknowledge that the information contained in this application for ministry is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references or churches listed in this application to give you any information they may have regarding my character and fitness for children's ministry, and I release all such references from liability for any damage that may result from furnishing such evaluation to you. I also grant my permission to *(name of your congregation)* to perform a personal Criminal Record Check for the purpose of my protection against any false allegations and for the protection of those I serve. I consent to such an investigation with the understanding that the results will be kept in extreme confidentiality. I further agree to adhere to the District Abuse Prevention Policy as adopted by *(name of your congregation)*.

Applicant's Name: (please print) _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witnesses Signature: _____ Date: _____

Children's/Youth Ministries

(Insert your Church, Address, Telephone, Fax, Email)

**Suggested “Script”
For Telephone Follow-Up
When Screening Applications**

“Hello, this is ----- . I serve on the Children’s Ministries Committee of *(name of your congregation)*. Like many churches today, we have a screening policy for all of the people who volunteer to work with our children in Sunday School and other programs. I am calling your church because *(applicant’s name)*...

1. Indicated on his/her application form that:
He/she attended your church/taught in your Sunday School in -----
(time/date) -----
(age level) -----

Can you verify this information?

Would you have any reservations about *(applicant)* working with children?
(If there are reservations, note them on the form)

OR

2. *(Applicant)* listed you as a personal reference.
How long have you known him/her?
Would you have any reservations about *(applicant)* working with children?

Thank you very much for your help.”

Record all information on the follow-up form and return to _____

NOTE: If the person who first answers your call does not know the applicant, please try to get the name and number of someone who can help you.

Children’s/Youth Ministries
(Insert your Church, Address, Telephone, Fax, Email)

**Waiver & Medical Release Form
Overnight Events**

Activity: _____ Date: _____

Chaperones: _____

Name of Child: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone: _____

School: _____

Does your child have any severe allergies? (Bee stings, food, penicillin, other drugs) Yes ___ No ___

If yes, please explain: _____

Does your child have any life-threatening allergies? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, please explain: _____

Is your child bringing any medication with him/her? (Antibiotics, ventilator, Ritalin) Yes ___ No ___

If yes, please explain: _____

Does your child 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 currently, or within the last three months, has had any of the following:

- Appendicitis Ear Infection Hay Fever Mumps Tonsillitis Asthma
 Hepatitis Bedwetting Diabetes Measles (red) Sinusitis Chicken Pox
 Fainting Measles (German) Severe Stomach Ache Other

Date of Last Tetanus Shot _____

Precautions are taken for the safety and health of your child, but in the event of accident or sickness, *(name of your congregation)*, its staff, and its volunteers are hereby released from any liability. **In the event that your child 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 *(name of your congregation)* to hospitalize, secure proper treatment for, and to order injection, anaesthesia or surgery for my child as named above.

Provincial Health Insurance Number: _____

(Your child must be covered by Provincial Health Insurance or equivalent medical insurance.)

Name of Physician: _____

Physician's Phone Number: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Children's/Youth Ministries
(Insert your Church, Address, Telephone, Fax, Email)

Waiver & Medical Release Form Field Trips and Special Events

Activity: _____ Date: _____

Chaperones: _____

Name of Child: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____

School: _____

Does your child have any severe allergies? (Bee stings, food, penicillin, other drugs) Yes ___ No ___

If yes, please explain: _____

Does your child have any life-threatening allergies? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, please explain: _____

Is your child bringing any medication with him/her? (Antibiotics, ventilator, Ritalin) Yes ___ No ___

If yes, please explain: _____

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

If yes, please explain: _____

Precautions are taken for the safety and health of your child, but in the event of accident or sickness, *(name of your congregation)* and its volunteers are hereby released from any liability. **In the event that your child requires special medication, x-rays or treatment, the parents/guardians will be notified immediately.**

Provincial Health Insurance Number: _____
(Your child must be covered by Provincial Health Insurance or equivalent medical insurance.)

Name of Physician: _____

Physician's Phone Number: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Children's/Youth Ministries
(Insert your Church, Address, Telephone, Fax, Email)

LC-C East District Abuse Prevention Policy

Abuse Prevention Policy

Resource Materials

LC-C East District Abuse Prevention Policy

Resources Consulted

- 1. Sexual Misconduct in our churches: Learn to Spot it Learn to Stop it**
The Anglican Church of Canada, Video VHS 28 min.,
ABC Publishing Anglican Book Centre
80 Hayden Street
Toronto ON M4Y 3G2
- 2. Plan to Protect Children, Youth and Leaders**
Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
Canadian Ministries Department
2450 Milltower Court
Mississauga ON L5N 5Z6
- 3. Volunteer Guidebook; Volunteer Administration Manual; Policies LC-06-04.01; LC-03-12.01; LC-06-03; LC-06-01; LC-06-02.01; LC-02-02.01;**
Lutheran Community Care Centre
245-B Bay Street
Thunder Bay ON P7B 6P2
- 4. Serious Occurrence Reporting Procedures for Service Providers**
Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services 2002

LC-C East District Abuse Prevention Policy

RESOURCES TO CONSULT

Information on Abuse

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.children.gov.on.ca/CS/en/programs/ChildProtection/Publications/repChAbuse.htm

www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/familyviolence

Counseling

The first step in seeking counseling would be to consult your Pastor.

Many communities have counseling services www.crosscanadasearch.com