

**Any Baptist Church
Church Ministry Policy and Procedures
Regarding Child Safety**

1. Purpose

This document has been written in reference to the Constitution under Article VII Section I Protection and Care.

This policy document is intended to:

- Protect the children in the care of Any Baptist Church;
- Protect volunteers who work with children in the care of Any Baptist Church;
- Provide a basis for educating the congregation in the protection of children in the care of Any Baptist Church;
- Meet legal and insurance requirements of Any Baptist Church concerning children in its care.

2. Definitions and Principles

Child of God. Our care for our children is informed by the belief that they are full persons in the eyes of God. We welcome all children of all backgrounds—circumstantial and cultural—and seek to implement this policy in ways that respect and are sensitive to differences in background.

Child. Who is considered a “child” with respect to this policy depends on the circumstances. Where an appropriate age for a particular part of the policy is not specified, the Christian Education Commission will determine and inform caregivers (see definition below) of the appropriate age: not an adult, the legal age of reason; the age up to which children can’t be left alone, or one of the ages defined in the Day Nursery Act: infant, toddler, pre-schooler; primary, junior, senior.

Definition of “caregiver”: For purposes of this document, “caregiver” of a child means the adult person immediately responsible for the child at a particular time. It could be the child’s parent, guardian, foster parent, Sunday school teacher, group leader, nursery school worker, babysitter, activity supervisor, someone accompanying the child to the washroom, or someone looking after the child in the sanctuary before, during, or after worship. Caregivers may be volunteers or employees of Any Baptist Church.

Principle of continuous care by a caregiver: Any child involved in any Any Baptist Church activity, including but not limited to being in the church during Any Baptist Church functions, must always have at least one designated caregiver. Furthermore the child should know who this person is.

Acceptable behaviour: Caregivers are expected to know what child behaviours are acceptable and what are not. Furthermore, they are to do everything they can to ensure that the children in their care know what behaviours are acceptable and what are not. Caregivers are expected to know the consequences of unacceptable child behaviour. In case of doubt they are to consult with the person responsible for implementing the policy (Chair of the Christian Education Commission, or Sunday School Superintendent, if such a person is appointed).

Consistency with the laws of Ontario. This policy is deemed to include any relevant laws of Ontario, especially those having to do with child safety and protection, and if it in any way contradicts those laws, the laws shall prevail.

3. Volunteer Recruitment Procedures

Volunteers will be recruited by the Christian Education Commission, Nursery coordinator, pastoral staff or volunteers helping to administer a particular program.

All names of potential volunteers will be approved by the Christian Education Commission before they are approached regarding a ministry assignment. New potential leaders for any program will not be assigned to work alone, but will be paired with leaders who are familiar with the program. If parent volunteers are needed for a particular program, they will be screened by the co-ordinator of the program, and the parent volunteer(s) will not be alone with a child or group of children or out of sight of other leaders.

We encourage the development of new leaders. These leaders are approved by the Christian Education Commission and the Nursery coordinator, and are provided with opportunities to develop their abilities and interests. Junior and senior high school students who are beginning as leaders will be paired up with adult leaders who can assist in the development of their gifts.

The Any Baptist Church Children's and Youth Ministry Information Form must be filled out by potential volunteers. It is a vital part of protecting the church from legal action if a case of an alleged wrongful act is filed against the church. This form must be completed by the volunteer prior to being approved by the Christian Education Commission.

All hired and volunteer staff of Any Baptist Church will be required to have a police check done annually at the expense of Any Baptist Church. The level of this check will be indicated by the Christian Education Commission.

4. Personal Safety Procedures

We are concerned about the safety of the children, families, and volunteers we serve. In an effort to lessen the possibility of abuses occurring and to maintain conduct which is above reproach, we have developed the following standards for our children's ministry.

Supervision Ratios

Our goal in the classroom is to provide an environment of acceptance and love in which learning can take place. Room allocation is geared to the needs and size of a particular class or group.

Each Sunday school class will have at least one adult teacher. When the size exceeds the age-specific limit specified by the Christian Education Commission, then an extra assistant will be provided from the Sunday School helper list, or will be a teacher who is not scheduled to teach that particular day.

For club programs, no fewer than two adult leaders present for all group meetings for children, additional adult volunteers for special activities.

Nursery

The church nursery is an important aspect of our children's ministry and as such we seek to provide the best care for our children. The following guidelines are in place to make the nursery a safe place for young children.

There will be a minimum of one adult and one helper in the nursery when children are in the room. If there are more than 3 infants or 5 toddlers, additional helpers are to be recruited. When toddlers require trips to the washroom, a caregiver must supervise the children in the washroom (parents or guardians are encouraged to take their children to the washroom before leaving them in the nursery).

The change table will be located where the child being changed can be easily seen by another nursery worker.

Nursery toys should be inspected and either replaced or repaired if damaged. Toys, furniture and bedding should be cleaned at regular intervals.

Nursery workers for events must note the names of children and any particular medical information that is needed for a particular child; e.g., food allergies, asthma.

Washrooms

No child should be sent to the washroom alone; they should be accompanied by a caregiver.

Emergencies

Caregivers are not to give or apply any medication to children except for bandages for minor cuts/abrasions, ice packs for bumps, or epi-pens. If a child needs medication, the parent or guardian must administer it. Furthermore parents will be required to provide the Christian Education Commission with documentation on special conditions or care needs and steps to be taken should some problem arise. No medications will be left in the nursery department or any classroom with the following exception: children who carry inhalers for asthma or medication for serious allergies.

Emergency procedures in the event of a fire, including escape routes and gathering places, will be reviewed semi-annually and when new volunteers are added. Caregivers will be trained in these procedures. Evacuation procedures are to be posted in each room and practiced with the children regularly. Someone trained in child CPR will be present among all the caregivers at any Any Baptist Church function involving children.

First aid boxes will be kept on hand in convenient locations and all caregivers are to review their locations and contents in the early fall and early spring terms. Those caregivers for the summer activities will review the locations and contents as part of their ministry preparation annually.

Activities off Church Premises (Sleepovers, Parties and Field Trips)

Precautions/waivers/ etc. are done at the time of the event, and are specific for the particular event.

Caregiver Behavior

Caregivers must always be above reproach in their words and conduct. They are to behave in a Godly manner demonstrating Christian conduct, respect, honesty and trustworthiness.

All caregivers must fill out and keep up to date a Any Baptist Church Ministry Information Form. This form is to be reviewed annually.

To ensure the safety of those children/young people from each other as well as their surroundings, at no time should any child or children be left unsupervised (Principle of continuous care by a caregiver).

6. Caregiver Support

It is our goal, not only to provide for the safety of our children and youth, but also to support and provide, to the best of our ability, a system of procedures that will protect the caregivers from being falsely accused of wrongful acts. This is accomplished by:

- a) Screening potential leaders to determine where a caregiver would be best suited to use his or her gifts, abilities, interests, and experiences.
- b) Providing leadership development that will further prepare the caregiver for leadership within a group/class/club.

- c) Adhere to the Procedures in Section 2: Personal Safety Procedures.
- d) Maintaining the records of groups/classes/clubs for a period of 30 years in their original form.
- e) Providing coverage for all caregivers under the Any Baptist Church Insurance Policy with periodic reviews to ensure that the Policy covers all the areas of our church ministry.

When a caregiver is accused of an alleged wrongful act, the church congregation will provide spiritual and moral support to the person(s) involved.

7. Child Abuse: Prevention

Definitions:

Physical Abuse: This is the use of physical force by the caregiver of the child which results in any injury to the child. This injury is sometimes described as a non-accidental injury by health professionals.

Physical Neglect: This is the chronic or episodic withholding of necessary or essential physical care from the child with resulting injury or damage to the child. Necessary physical care can include food, nutrition, shelter, clothing, medical care, safety, supervision, sensory stimulation (particularly to young infants).

Emotional Abuse: This is the acting out by the child's caregiver of his or her negative or ambiguous feelings towards the child, resulting in some degree of emotional damage to the child. This kind of behavior may consist of constant chastising, belittling, verbal tirades, ridicule, humiliation, or the out and out rejection of the child's sense of self-worth and dignity.

Emotional Neglect: This is the chronic or episodic withholding of necessary emotional care and support from the child which results in some degree of emotional damage to the child. This kind of neglect might consist of withholding affection and love from the child; it might also include the withholding of affirmations of the child's self-worth, trust and belongingness. In extreme forms, emotional neglect can involve the complete withdrawal of any verbal and/or non-verbal interactions with the child, manifesting the complete rejection of the child.

Sexual Abuse: This is the sexual exploitation of a child by a caregiver or other family member, or any adult, resulting in damage or injury to the child sexually, either psychologically or physically. Forms of sexual exploitation include behavior of a sexual nature, touching of a sexual nature and sexual intercourse.

The Responsibility to Report

Public responsibility to report a child in need of protection ADAPTED FROM CFSA s.72(2)

Every person who believes or suspects on reasonable grounds that a child is or may be in need of protection must report promptly the belief and the information upon which it is based to a Children's Aid Society.

Special responsibility imposed on caregivers to report abuse ADAPTED FROM CFSA s.72(3)

A caregiver who in the course of his/her duties with respect to a child has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be suffering or may have suffered abuse shall report forthwith the suspicion and

the information upon which it is based to a Children's Aid Society even if he/she has already reported a previous incident.

What constitutes 'abuse' for the purpose of professional reporting? ADAPTED FROM CFSA s.72(1)

A child suffers 'abuse' in any of the following circumstances:

- the child has or is at risk to likely suffer physical harm or there is a pattern of neglect either inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by the person's failure to adequately:
 - care and provide for the child, or
 - supervise and protect the child;

- the child has been or is at risk to likely be sexually molested or sexually exploited by the child's caregiver, or by another person where the child's caregiver:
 - knows or should know of the possibility of sexual molestation or sexual exploitation, and
 - fails to protect the child;

- the child requires medical treatment to cure, prevent or alleviate physical harm or suffering, and the child's caregiver:
 - does not provide the treatment, or
 - refuses to provide the treatment, or
 - is unavailable to consent to treatment, or
 - is unable to consent to the treatment;

- the child has or is likely to suffer emotional harm or there is a pattern of neglect by the child's caregiver, demonstrated through the actions of the child as:
 - serious anxiety, or
 - severe depression, or
 - serious withdrawal, or
 - serious self-destructive or aggressive behavior, or
 - seriously delayed development

and the child's caregiver:

- does not provide services or treatment to remedy or alleviate the harm,
 - refuses to provide such services or treatment,
 - is unavailable to consent to such services or treatment,
 - is unable to consent to such services or treatment;
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- the child suffers from a mental, emotional or developmental condition that, if not remedied, could seriously impair the child's development, and the child's caregiver:
 - does not provide treatment to remedy or alleviate the condition,
 - refuses to do so,
 - is unavailable to consent to treatment, or
 - is unable to consent to treatment.

 - the child has been abandoned, the child's parent or guardian has died, or is unavailable to exercise his or her custodial rights over the child and has not made adequate provision for the child's care and custody, or the child is in a residential placement and the parent or guardian refuses, or is unable, or unwilling to resume the child's care and custody;

- the child is less than twelve years old and has killed or seriously injured another person, or caused serious damage to another person's property, services or treatment are necessary to prevent a recurrence and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, or refuses, or is unavailable, or unable to consent to those services or treatment;
- the child is less than twelve years of age and has on more than one occasion injured another person or caused loss or damage to another person's property, with the encouragement of the person having charge of the child, or because of that person's failure or inability to supervise the child adequately.

Professional confidentiality ADAPTED FROM CFSA s.72(3),(7),(8)

The professional's duty to report overrides the provisions of any other Provincial statute, specifically, those provisions that would otherwise prohibit disclosure by the caregiver. That is, the professional must report abuse even when the information is supposed to be confidential or privileged.

Protection from liability ADAPTED FROM CFSA s.72(7)

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

How To Report

Reporting abuse: An alleged victim less than eighteen years of age, and alleged perpetrator not acting on behalf of the church.

Any report of abuse by a child to a Sunday School teacher, club leader, person on the pastoral staff or other member of the church will be reported to the local Children's Aid Society (CAS). The report will be made immediately by the person who was initially provided with the information. If there is doubt as to the validity of the information, the report will still be made to the CAS. The decision to investigate the report will be made by the CAS. When a Sunday School teacher, club leader, person on the pastoral staff or other member of the church has reasonable ground to suspect that a child may be suffering from abuse or is at risk to suffer abuse, the person who suspects the abuse will report to the CAS with the information immediately. The decision to investigate will be made by the CAS.

Reporting abuse: An alleged victim less than eighteen years of age, and alleged perpetrator acting on behalf of the church (caregiver).

Any report of abuse within the church will be reported directly to the Children's Aid Society immediately by the person who receives the information. If there is doubt as to the validity of the information the CAS will be notified and the decision to investigate will be left there. When someone in the church suspects that a caregiver or other adult is behaving abusively towards a child or children, the person with the suspicion will directly report it to the CAS. The CAS will make the decision for further investigation. The individual who receives the information of abuse from a child or alleged victim, or suspects another person of abuse will then also contact either the chairperson of the Pastoral Ministry Team, the chairperson of the Christian Education Commission, or a member of the pastoral staff. The person who has been contacted will then arrange a meeting with the rest of the above mentioned people. If it is appropriate to the situation, the Chair of the Christian Education Commission (or Sunday School Superintendent, if such a person is appointed) will also be invited to the meeting. This group will meet to assess whether or not it is appropriate for the alleged perpetrator to continue in his/her role within the church at that time. Until the investigation is complete, the person in question will be suspended from any responsibilities as caregiver. Any further discussion with the parties involved will be done under the direction of the investigating body (CAS).

Reporting abuse: Alleged victim eighteen years of age or older.

The individual who receives the information will encourage the alleged victim to access counseling and protection through the local police and pastoral or counseling services. No one will be informed of the allegations without the consent of the alleged victim. The church will listen to and support the alleged victim but will not take action outside of the church on his/her behalf; that is, the alleged victim must be the individual to lay charges with the police, but the church will provide physical and emotional support during this time if requested. If the incident involves an alleged perpetrator acting on behalf of the church (Sunday School teachers, club leaders, pastors, etc.), the alleged victim will be informed of any church policy or accepted practice to assess the appropriateness of the alleged perpetrator continuing in his/her role in the church. This assessment will be made at a meeting of the Chair of the Pastoral Ministry Team, the chair of the Christian Education Commission, and the pastoral staff. With the knowledge of the alleged victim, one of the above people will be informed for the purpose of contacting the remaining people and coordinating a meeting.

Reporting Accidents/Injuries

Occasionally during the course of regular program activities, injury occurs. These may be minor or major in nature. After appropriate support and assistance is given to the injured child or leader, a written Incident Investigation Report should be filled out by the program co-ordinator or appropriate person on the pastoral staff. A description of the incident, contributing factors and the treatment given should be noted. Witnesses to the incident should be listed with addresses and phone numbers for follow-up purposes. The Incident Investigation Reports should be reviewed by the Christian Education Commission. A member of the Commission should be appointed to investigate the incident and bring recommendations back to the Commission to prevent a recurrence of the accident. These Reports are to be kept in the church office for future reference.

Any Baptist Church Incident and Accident Investigation Report

[Confidentiality: This document will be kept confidential. It will be kept with other records related to child protection and will be viewed only by those members of Any Baptist Church who are directly responsible for administering the policy.]

Organization: _____

Claimant: Name: _____ **Age:** _____

Date of Incident: _____ **Time:** _____

Description of Incident or Accident: _____

Contributing Factors : _____

Medical Treatment: _____

Location of Treatment: _____

Witness: _____ **Age :** _____

Address: _____

_____ **Telephone Number:** _____

Witness: _____ **Age:** _____

Address: _____

_____ **Telephone Number:** _____

Action Taken to Prevent Recurrence: _____

Legal Counsel: Yes. ____ No. ____

Name of Counsel: _____

Address: _____

Investigated by: (Name) _____ **Title :** _____

Signature : _____ **Date:** _____

Review by: (Name) _____ **Date:** _____

Review by: (Parent or Guardian) _____ **Date:** _____

Further Comments: _____

Any Baptist Church Children's and Youth Ministry Information Form

[Confidentiality: This document will be kept confidential. It will be kept with other records related to child protection and will be viewed only by those members of Any Baptist Church who are directly responsible for administering the policy.]

A. Basic Information

Name: _____
Address: _____
Telephone Number: Home: _____ Work: _____
Best time to call: Home: _____ Work: _____

B. Ministry

What area(s) would you like to volunteer to become involved? (Check all that apply.)

- Teaching Helping Other
- Preschool Babysitting Music - instrument
- Grades 1 – 3 Nursery Music - vocal
- Grades 4 – 6 Preschool Storytelling
- Grades 6 – 8 Grades 1 – 6 Crafts
- Highschool Grades 6 – 8 Games/Activities
- Girl's Club Highschool Other (specify)
- Boy's Club Girl's Club Other (specify)
- Teen's Group Boy's Club Teen's Group

Why do you want to volunteer in this area? _____

Are you open to attend relevant seminars or workshops and resource materials that our Christian Education Commission will be offering on working with the children and program materials? yes / no

C. Experience

What previous experience have you in children/youth ministry? (Be specific.)

D. Personal Data

Are there any conditions or personal circumstances which would hinder you from performing certain types of activities in the position(s) for which you are volunteering? (e.g. allergies, asthma, diabetes, fainting, seizures, unable to lift children, etc.)

Please read and sign the following statement.

I have read and agree to adhere to the best of my ability to, the ANY BAPTIST CHURCH Church Ministry Policy and Procedures Regarding Child Safety.

Date, Signature

References:

List two persons not related to you who can comment on your suitability for this ministry.

Name Address Telephone How long?

Reference Check

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For: _____ Position: _____

Reference: _____ Phone: _____

My name is (reference checker). I am phoning to obtain a reference for (volunteer's name) who has expressed an interest in the volunteer position of _____ at (Name of Church). He/she has given us your name as someone who would be familiar with his/her qualifications for this position.

1. What is your relationship to this person (work, social, volunteer, etc.)? _____

2. How long have you known him/her _____

3. What knowledge do you have of this person's commitment to Jesus Christ? _____

4. Have you ever worked with this person in ministry? Please specify in what area(s). _____

5. What characteristics would enable this person to fulfill this position? _____

6. Do you have any concerns relating to this person being involved in this ministry? _____

7. Additional comments regarding suitability for ministry: _____

8. Do you affirm this person for ministry? _____

Reference Checker Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____