



ABUSE PREVENTION PLAN

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Approved August 2019

Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church

330 Conservation Drive, Waterloo, ON, N2V 2E8 | 519-746-647 | www.trinityemc.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	1
DEFINITIONS	4
INTRODUCTION	4
THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE	5
QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP ON THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE	5
DUTIES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE	5
STRUCTURE OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE	5
SCREENING AND APPROVAL OF WORKERS	5
INTRODUCTION	5
APPLICATION, SCREENING, AND APPROVAL PROCESS	6
ONGOING EXPECTATIONS OF WORKERS	8
MINORS SERVING AS VOLUNTEERS	8
INTRODUCTION	8
GUIDELINES	8
DESIGNATED HELPERS	9
Examples of things a Designated Helper can do:	9
Examples of things a Designated Helper cannot do:	9
SUPERVISION OF MINORS	10
INTRODUCTION	10
TWO APPROVED WORKERS RULE	10
HALL MONITORS	10
SUPERVISION RATIOS	11
How do Designated Helpers impact ratios?	11
SUPERVISION FOR WASHROOM BREAKS	12
REGISTRATION, ATTENDANCE & SIGN IN AND OUT PROCEDURES	12
OTHER ADULTS PRESENT AT A PROGRAM OR EVENT	13
TRANSPORTATION	13
WEEKEND AND OVERNIGHT EVENTS	13
COUNSELLING	13
NON-SPONSORED OFF-PREMISES CONTACT	13

DISCIPLINING A MINOR	14
DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION	14
ACCIDENTS AND FIRST-AID	14
MEDIA	14
COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE	15
SOCIAL MEDIA	15
PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO RECORDING	15
LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING	16
INTRODUCTION	16
WHY SHOULD A REPORT BE MADE?	17
WHEN SHOULD A REPORT BE MADE?	17
HOW SHOULD THE REPORTING BE DONE?	18
LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING	18
INTRODUCTION	18
BE PREPARED IN ADVANCE	18
RESPONDING TO AN ABUSE ALLEGATION	19
TABLE OF LEGISLATION	20
BIBLIOGRAPHY	20
APPENDIX 1: WORKER APPLICATION	21
APPENDIX 2: DESIGNATED HELPER INFORMATION AND DECLARATION PACKAGE	26
APPENDIX 3: WORKER APPLICATION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	29
APPENDIX 4: REFERENCE CONTACT FORM	32
APPENDIX 5: SAMPLE APPROVAL LETTER	33
APPENDIX 6: LEGAL REPORTING OBLIGATIONS UNDER ONTARIO LAW	34
APPENDIX 7: TEXT OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ACT	36
APPENDIX 8: RECOMMENDED PUBLIC POSITION STATEMENT	37
APPENDIX 9: TRINITY EMC SUSPECTED ABUSE REPORT FORM	38
APPENDIX 10: PARTNERSHIPS AND EXCEPTIONS TO SIX MONTH WAITING PERIOD	40
APPENDIX 11: INCIDENT REPORT	41
APPENDIX 12: REVIEW OF ABUSE PREVENTION PLAN DECLARATION FORM	42

DEFINITIONS

The Church/TEMC - The Church or TEMC refers to Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church Inc.

Church Board/Board of Deacons - Church Board or Board of Deacons refers to the directors of the church as defined by its bylaws.

Personnel Committee - The Personnel Committee refers to those responsible for implementing and monitoring the Prevention Plan as directed by the Board of Deacons.

Minor - A minor refers to any person under the age of eighteen (18).

Worker - A worker refers to any person eighteen (18) years of age or greater, whether paid or volunteer, acting on behalf of the church in any capacity with respect to minors. A worker aged 18, 19, or 20 may only serve as a supervisor of minors under the age of 14.

Screening Team - Screening Team refers to those charged with the screening and approval of workers. A Screening Team may be comprised of persons from the Church Board, the Personnel Committee, Ministry Leaders of ministries serving minors, or any others as appointed by the Church Board.

Designated Helper - A designated helper refers to a minor that has completed the "Declaration of interest to volunteer" form (see appendix 2) and has been accepted to volunteer by the church with programs or events for which he or she is older than the target age.

INTRODUCTION

The five critical areas addressed within the Abuse Prevention Plan are:

- i. the duties and responsibilities of the personnel committee
- ii. screening and selection of workers
- iii. supervision of minors by workers
- iv. legal obligations and procedures for reporting abusive, unhealthy, or inappropriate behavior
- v. legal obligations and procedures for responding to allegations.

The main objective of the Abuse Prevention Plan is to provide a safe and secure environment for all minors entrusted to the Church. In seeking to accomplish this objective, two other important objectives are being accomplished: the protection of the Church's workers from false allegations, as well as the reduction of the Church's legal risk and liability exposure. To accomplish the above objectives, the Church must implement the Abuse Prevention Plan and then proceed to monitor its effectiveness. Accordingly, those in leadership within the Church must regularly, consistently and without exception, ask the following questions.

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

THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP ON THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Trinity EMC Personnel Committee should contain a minimum of three (3) members. A potential candidate for the Personnel Committee should:

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

DUTIES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Personnel Committee is responsible for implementing and monitoring the Prevention Plan as directed by the Board of Deacons. This includes:

- i. Screening new volunteers;
- ii. Conducting reference checks on new volunteers;
- iii. Training volunteers with both refresher and orientation trainings;
- iv. Maintaining accurate records of volunteer information;
- v. Monitoring adherence to the policy, including the formal annual audit of all ministry areas;
- vi. Making policy recommendations to the Board of Deacons;
- vii. Reporting any concerns or lapses in any ministries adherence to the Prevention Plan

STRUCTURE OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Personnel Committee will conduct itself in accordance with Trinity EMC's By- laws; including, but not limited to (i) the nomination of a Chair of the Personnel Committee, (ii) keeping accurate minutes of all meetings, and (iii) submitting required reports directly to the Board of Deacons.

SCREENING AND APPROVAL OF WORKERS

INTRODUCTION

During the screening process, the Church shall use its best efforts to maintain confidentiality. This should include security of all information.

The Screening and Approval Policies contained herein shall be applied to all workers. All such policies and procedures shall apply to new applicants once the plan has been approved by the Board.

The specific requirements of the screening procedure contained herein shall be carried out by the Screening Team. The Personnel Committee may, with the prior approval of the Church Board, amend the screening procedure.

APPLICATION, SCREENING, AND APPROVAL PROCESS

Anyone wishing to serve as a worker must have been affiliated with the church for a period of at least six months, except in limited circumstances as outlined in APPENDIX 10.

Before a person can be approved to serve as a worker, the following steps are required:

- i. Agree to come under the authority of the Church, its Constitution, and all policies and procedures implemented from time to time by the Church.
- ii. The Applicant must review the Abuse Prevention Plan: Policies and Procedures and sign a declaration form (see APPENDIX 12) upon completion of the review.
- iii. The Applicant will apply for a Vulnerable Sector Check from the police (at the expense of the Church). The church will supply a letter confirming that the church is requesting the Vulnerable Sector Check.
- iv. The Applicant must complete the formal application (Appendix 1) and submit it to the Church Office where it will be kept on file in a locked filing cabinet.
- v. The Applicant must submit the Vulnerable Sector Check to the office once it is received, where it will be kept on file in a locked filing cabinet. No Person who has been previously convicted of child abuse as demonstrated by the Vulnerable Sector Police Records Check will be approved to serve in any such ministry involving minors even though if such Person has since become a Christian.
- vi. An applicant shall provide photographic identification (e.g. driver's license, passport, photo ID health card). The identification shall be photocopied and made part of the Applicant's file.
- vii. The Applicant will be interviewed by the Screening Team. A minimum of two members of the Screening Team must be present and be of no immediate relation to the Applicant or to each other, with the term "related" being defined as any of the following: spouse, parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sibling or spouse of such. (see Appendix 3). The date and time of the interview, the names of interviewers and any memos made during the interviews must be recorded and made part of the Applicant's file.
- viii. A minimum of two of the Applicant's references will be contacted by the Screening Team. For each reference that is contacted (Appendix 4), the date of the inquiry, the name of person contacted, the name of the organization with whom the individual is affiliated, the name of the personnel committee member making the inquiry, and the method of inquiry and the results of the inquiry must be recorded and made part of the Applicant's file.
- ix. The Screening Team will complete any additional safeguards as are deemed necessary by the Board.
- x. The Screening Team will make a recommendation to the Board of Deacons.
- xi. The Board of Deacons will communicate an approval decision with the Screening Committee and the applicant.
- xii. Once approved and before beginning to serve, the Applicant must complete a quiz that confirms understanding of the Abuse Prevention Plan.
- xiii. Once approved, the Applicant must complete the Abuse Prevention Plan training within a six month window upon beginning to serve.

The Church Board and Personnel Committee are responsible for the design and implementation of training and quizzes, as well as to provide an appropriate number of training sessions throughout the year to ensure that all workers have an opportunity to be trained.

The Personnel Committee shall maintain a list of all Persons who have completed the application process. The status of such Applicants shall be one of three categories: (i) awaiting decision, (ii) approved or (iii) not approved. Ministry Leaders for programs and events serving minors for the Church shall only recruit workers from the approved worker list as managed by the Personnel Committee.

All workers are encouraged to make recommendations to the Church Board concerning the screening procedure.

Deemed to be a part of this screening and selection process are any additional requirements as approved and directed, from time to time, by the Church Board.

ONGOING EXPECTATIONS OF WORKERS

In order to maintain approved worker status, the following requirements must be met:

- Continued affiliation with the Church
- Attend Abuse Prevention Plan refresher training annually.
- At the expense of the church, approved workers will submit a new Vulnerable Sector Check to the Church Office every five (5) years.

MINORS SERVING AS VOLUNTEERS

INTRODUCTION

The church will make every effort to provide a safe and secure environment for all minors. The church also desires to empower minors to grow in their abilities and service of Christ. Therefore, the church values providing opportunities for minors to volunteer alongside workers for programs and events. Before, during, and following all programs and events, workers will always maintain adequate supervision for all minors participating in the program or event as well as those minors volunteering.

GUIDELINES

No one under the age of 18 shall be placed in positions of trust with younger children. Positions of trust are leadership roles that may place the individual in situations where they are involved in making decisions about the health or welfare of those in their care, may require them to provide intimate care of babies, infants and younger minors (e.g. diaper changing in a nursery, trips to the washroom, supervision in higher risk sports, recreational or off-premises activities).

No one under the age of 18 is ever considered as supervising other minors, rather the workers are always supervising them. Therefore, they shall not be alone with other minors.

DESIGNATED HELPERS

The following applies to any minor in Grade 6 or above wishing to volunteer at a program or event for which he or she is older than the target age:

- The minor as well as his or her parent/guardian must read and sign the Designated Helper Information and Declaration Package (see Appendix 2) and return it to the office where it will be kept on file.
- Designated Helpers always serve alongside workers.
- Ministry leaders should provide clear expectations for the volunteer regarding the role he or she will have assisting the workers for a program or event.
- Criminal record checks are not required.
- Completion of a recognized babysitting course is required in order to volunteer in the nursery.

Examples of things a Designated Helper can do:

- Set a good example
- Pray for kids
- Help kids stay involved with what the group is doing
- Remind kids to listen
- Help with crafts
- Help with recreational events in open spaces
- Reading to kids
- Help set up before a program or event
- Help clean up after a program or event
- Share your ideas
- Help explain games, crafts, or activities

Examples of things a Designated Helper cannot do:

- Be in a room with kids where there are no adults
- Discipline kids
- Make decisions about the health of a child
- Register kids
- Dismiss kids
- Take someone to the bathroom
- Change a diaper
- Drive a child
- Contact a child through social media on behalf of the church
- Take pictures or videos of children

Once the Designated Helper Information and Declaration Package has been received and after consultation with and confirmation from the Screening Team, the Church Board, and his or her parent/guardian, a minor may serve as a Designated Helper.

SUPERVISION OF MINORS

INTRODUCTION

The Supervision Policy contained herein shall be applied to all workers.

The Supervision Policy described herein, together with any additional safeguards as approved and directed from time to time by the Church Board, will be overseen and enforced by those in leadership.

The Church shall use its best efforts to ensure that all workers comply with the Abuse Prevention Plan, and breaches will be dealt with in the manner hereinafter set out.

TWO APPROVED WORKERS RULE

The "Two Approved Workers Rule" shall be followed. The "Two Approved Workers Rule" requires that a minimum of two unrelated workers be present for all programs or events serving minors. The "Two Approved Workers Rule" offers protection to both the minor and the worker. If only one worker can be present at any given gathering or meeting, then that gathering or meeting shall be cancelled.

For programs or events where the target age includes minors ages 14 to 17:

- Workers ages 18 to 20 do not apply to the the "Two Approved Worker Rule"
- For coed programs and events there must be at least 1 male and 1 female worker

All classroom or confined meeting rooms should contain windows in each door. Alternatively, the door should be left open to ensure visibility.

Supervision shall be maintained before and after an event until all minors are in the custody of their parents, legal guardians, or designate. This is to protect against abuse of younger children by older children.

HALL MONITORS

A hall monitor is an approved worker that is assigned to maintain roving oversight during a program or event.

The use of a hall monitor is required if the program or event includes dividing minors into separate classroom settings.

The use of a hall monitor assists when:

- minors need to go to the washroom
- when there is temporarily only one approved worker in a classroom
- the only workers in a classroom are related

SUPERVISION RATIOS

All programs, events, and classroom settings must comply with the following supervision ratio limits for workers to minors at all times:

- Target age Under 2 - 1:3
- Target ages 2 to Senior Kindergarten - 1:5
- Target ages Grade 1 to Grade 8 - 1:7
- Target ages Grade 9 to Age 17 - 1:10 (Workers must be at least 21 years of age)
- The ratio applicable to the lowest age targeted by the program, event, or class shall be maintained.

How do Designated Helpers impact ratios?

If a Designated Helper is close to the target age of the program or event, **he or she is included in the count along with program participants when considering ratio limits.**

If a Designated Helper is sufficiently older than the target age for the program or event (as defined below), **he or she is NOT included in the count along with program participants.** In such cases each worker may supervise 1 Designated Helper over and above the maximum number of program participants set by the applicable ratio.

When considering supervision ratio limits, Designated Helpers **are not included** toward the maximum number of program participants **when the following age gaps exist:**

- Designated Helpers in Grade 11 or above for programs events that target minors up to grade 5.
- Designated Helpers in Grade 9 or 10 for programs and events that target minors up to grade 2.
- Designated Helpers in Grade 6, 7, or 8 for programs and events that target minors up to Senior Kindergarten.

Example 1: consider 3 workers and 1 Designated Helper in Grade 7 volunteering for a program that targets Kindergarten to Grade 5.

- A 1:5 ratio would apply, because the lowest target age is Junior Kindergarten.
- The Designated Helper **is not** sufficiently older than the target age.
- The maximum number of program participants is 14, because the Designated Helper is included in the limit of 15 minors that the 3 workers can supervise.

Example 2: consider 3 workers and 1 Designated Helper in Grade 11 volunteering for a program that targets Kindergarten to Grade 5.

- A 1:5 ratio would apply, because the lowest target age is Junior Kindergarten.
- The Designated Helper **is** sufficiently older than the target age.
- The maximum number of program participants is 15, because the Designated Helper is counted in addition to the limit of 15 minors that the 3 workers can supervise. The 3 workers could also, supervise up to 2 more Designated Helpers, but even if there were more Designated Helpers, there would still be a maximum of 15 program participants.

SUPERVISION FOR WASHROOM BREAKS

During programs or events targeting minors, the doors to the bathrooms should remain propped open. Wherever possible minors younger than Grade One should only be taken to the washroom or infants have their diapers changed by a parent, guardian or their own caregiver. If not possible, then the worker should do so in the presence of at least one other unrelated worker. Minors requiring assistance should be accompanied to the door of the washroom by a worker of the same gender. The worker will wait outside the door in the hallway in case they are called for help or hear anything suspicious. If help is needed in the stall, the stall should be kept open and another worker should stand outside the washroom. The workers should consider the privacy of the minor and ensure that the parent is informed of this occurrence.

Designated Helpers are not authorized to take minors to the washroom.

Whenever a minor requires a washroom break, hallways and washrooms shall be checked regularly by a worker who is trained regarding what to look for in terms of suspicious activity, including strangers lingering in halls or washrooms.

REGISTRATION, ATTENDANCE & SIGN IN AND OUT PROCEDURES

It is essential that every minor is always accounted for while under the care of the church. Registration procedures are mandatory for every program that deals with minors. All participants should complete a registration form which includes:

- Full name of minor
- Contact information for minor and parent / guardian
- Whom to contact in case of an emergency
- Any allergies, and any other information which may help us to ensure the best possible care for their child.

At the beginning of each program or event, attendance should be taken so that the ministry workers know who is under their care (including designated helpers). This is particularly important in the case of emergencies to ensure that every minor is accounted for.

For programs or events that target ages 0 to 2 a procedure shall be implemented which clearly identifies the minor and the minor's parent(s), or guardian(s), or care giver(s). Minors shall only be released to the properly identified person(s).

For each program or event with a target under Grade 1, a procedure for signing minors in and out must be established. For programs and events with a target age under Grade 6 a procedure for signing in and out shall be used wherever possible. The exact parameters and requirements will likely vary depending upon the type of event or program and age of the minors. It is the responsibility of the ministry leader to establish an appropriate procedure and that it is followed by all fellow ministry workers.

Similarly, at the end of an event, it is essential that the minor is safely returned to his/her parent, guardian, or designate. How this is fulfilled may be different depending upon the age of the minor. For example, if it is known that a 16-year old lives close to the church and has walked to the event, it is appropriate for the worker to allow the 16-year old to walk home at the end of the event. However, a 7-year old should never be allowed to leave the church alone or with someone that the parent has not authorized.

OTHER ADULTS PRESENT AT A PROGRAM OR EVENT

Whenever possible approved workers should be the only adults present at programs and events.

If other adults, that are not approved workers, are present, the following shall be observed:

- Other Adults must be visibly designated as “visitor” by wearing a sticker, name badge or similar.
- All “visitors” must be logged with the attendance.
- No “visitors” should be alone with minors.
- No “visitors” should be supervising minors.

Examples of reasons where other adults might be present at a program or event include, but are not limited to: a parent staying with a younger minor until the minor feels comfortable with the program or event, a guest speaker, and people volunteering to support the program or event in ancillary capacities that do not interact with the minors.

TRANSPORTATION

When transportation to or from an event is required the following will be observed (i) all drivers will be pre-approved by the ministry leader and have a copy of a valid driver’s license on file at the church as well as a copy of up to date automobile insurance on file at the church with a class “G” driver’s license; (ii) parent(s) or guardians(s) will have signed consent on file at the church (iii) A minimum of 2 approved workers or 1 approved worker plus at least 2 other minors in the vehicle at all times. Note: Having only one approved worker transporting minors should be avoided as much as possible, as it opens the worker up to false allegations of abuse, molestation or harassment.

WEEKEND AND OVERNIGHT EVENTS

During each weekend or overnight retreat, there must be at least one (1) female worker and at least one (1) male worker unless the retreat is either an all male or all female retreat, in which case there should be 2 males or 2 females accordingly. A worker to minor ratio of 1:7 shall be maintained for all such events. Every weekend and overnight retreat, together with all workers serving as chaperones and supervisors for such events, must be cleared in advance with the Church Board.

COUNSELLING

No worker should counsel a minor alone. However, if one-to-one counseling is requested, then a member of the pastoral staff shall first be advised. There shall be no one-to-one counseling without prior parental/guardian consent obtained in writing. There shall be no one-to-one counseling with a minor in secluded areas as the line of sight must be maintained at all times. “Counseling” will be defined, for the purpose of this document, as ongoing conversation dealing with one or more personal issues. In other words a brief one-time discussion (e.g. listening to a problem) is not included. Each worker who works with minors should direct counseling opportunities to Pastoral Staff, Elders or their designates. The qualified counselor must keep records of all counseling appointments together with a summary of each such counseling appointment.

NON-SPONSORED OFF-PREMISES CONTACT

Workers are strongly discouraged from meeting with minors outside the context of the ministry. If separate counseling is requested, pastoral staff should be made aware prior to the meeting. The meeting should be held in a public location or within the presence of another approved worker.

DISCIPLINING A MINOR

At no time should a worker PHYSICALLY discipline a minor. Nor should the worker threaten to withhold food (such as snack), but may withhold other special privileges.

The worker should deal with the minor calmly and fairly. It is beneficial to provide the minor with a choice to obey or disobey and clearly explain the consequences of each. Workers should remember to be sensitive to the minor's needs and take care to not embarrass the minor.

To help prevent behavioral problems from starting, workers should clearly state the rules and expected behavior. It is also beneficial for the workers to be good models themselves and to set a good example.

DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

Appropriate displays of affection include:

- Holding a younger minor that is crying
- Speaking to a minor at eye level
- Briefly holding a minor's hands when speaking, listening, or walking with him or her
- Gently holding the minor's shoulder or hand to keep their attention or redirect the minor's behavior
- Putting your arm around a minor's shoulder when comforting them
- Patting minors on the head, hand, shoulder or back to affirm them

Inappropriate displays of affection include:

- Kissing or coax a minor to kiss you
- Engaging in extended hugging or tickling
- Holding a minor's face while talking or disciplining the minor
- Touching a minor in any area that would be covered by a bathing suit. This includes aiding a child in doing up their pants' button or zipper.
- Carrying older minors and allowing them to sit on your lap. This includes piggy-back rides.
- Any prolonged physical contact with any minor

It is important to be mindful of how actions may be perceived. This also extends to the photography of an individual minor not within a group setting.

ACCIDENTS AND FIRST-AID

- If severe call 911 immediately
- Workers are NOT to give or apply ANY medications. Only parents may administer medications
- NO medications should be accepted or left in the classroom or nursery.
- Epi-pens and puffers may be left (in accordance with the direction of the parent/guardian). They shall only be administered in an emergency. 911 must be called as well as the minor's emergency contact.
- When dealing with any and all body fluids, universal precautions should be used. This includes minor cuts, bloody noses, vomiting, and all waste excretions.
- For all injuries and exposures to body fluids, Incident Reports (see appendix ?) must be filled out by the individual(s) who witnessed the incident.

MEDIA

COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE

Any church computer accessible to the general public will be placed in an open area where the screen is easily visible. All minors accessing a church computer must be authorized to do so by their ministry leader, and be fully supervised.

Internet filters will be installed on each church computer to limit access to adult content. Access to the church Wi-Fi connection will be password protected and limited to use by authorized ministry personnel.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Skype, etc.; as well as email and text messages; will be used to communicate with parents and youth for the following purposes:

- To improve communication
- To promote and advertise church activities
- To notify parents and/or youth of events
- To arrange face-to-face meetings

Communication for minors under grade 6 must be directed solely to the parent or guardian. Communication with a minors in grade 6 and above via email, text message, Facebook, or any other online social network will be used with parental permission obtained through registration forms.

All communication via social media networks should be done in view of other people, i.e. group pages, wall-to-wall, copied messages, etc. Workers will limit their communication with youth to daytime hours (8:00am to 11:00pm). Workers will refrain from using Social Media networks for counseling or pastoral care.

If a communication is received by a worker from a minor via social media, that is of 'counseling' or 'pastoral care' nature, the communication will be directed to a face-to-face meeting, and communicated to the Ministry Lead to establish follow-up action.

The church's Social Media Policy applies to all representatives of the church. Workers will adhere to this policy by demonstrating and modeling purity, integrity, transparency and accountability; ensuring appropriate content; and respect of confidentiality with all communications including those noted above.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO RECORDING

With a desire to capture on film memorable moments at TEMC, photography and video recording will be closely monitored by TEMC Leadership. All ministry departments must abide by the following guidelines:

Photography and video recording will be done by designated, approved workers only.

When photography or video recording will be done at a general public church service or activity, signage will be posted notifying those in attendance that the event will be captured on film. Individuals may choose to stay out of the line of the camera or, if necessary, opt out of the event.

For all events and programs serving minors, parental permission will be secured via the registration form, or on TEMC's 'Photography Release Form', prior to taking photographs of minors. No photographs will intentionally be taken of minors for whom we do not have parental permission; Any photographs containing an image of a minor, for which we do not have parental permission, will not be published, and will be destroyed.

No photographs will be posted by workers on Facebook or other online social networks.

No photographs will be tagged or labeled with the name of a minor at any time, including but not limited to, use on websites, bulletin boards, or newsletters.

When archiving and filing photographs and video shots of minors, only those with written parental permission can be kept for future use. Written permission forms will be kept permanently on file in the Church Office.

LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING

INTRODUCTION

If a Person observes a worker violating any of the above supervision requirements and/or demonstrating inappropriate behavior, then the Person shall first take steps to ensure the safety of the minor by removing the minor from the supervision of the worker. If this is not immediately possible, then steps should be taken to ensure that there is no one-to-one contact. The Person must then confront and discuss the behavior immediately with the worker in question, making sure to also alert the person in leadership over the respective area of ministry as to the incident. Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. The appointed leader shall ensure appropriate action is taken in accordance with the Abuse Prevention Plan. All incidents will be documented and signed by (i) the person reporting the offense; (ii) a Board Member or member of the Pastoral Staff. The original document will be kept on file and a copy will be given to the person who has been accused within three days.

The Reporting Policy contained herein identifies the "why", "when", and "how" of reporting abusive, unhealthy, or inappropriate behavior according to Ontario law (see Appendix 6&7). The obligations and procedures set out herein should be the responsibility of every person within the Church.

The Abuse Prevention Plan should be reviewed on a regular basis to reflect any changes in the law, together with any additional safeguards as approved and directed by the Church Board.

WHY SHOULD A REPORT BE MADE?

The Church's Corporate Obligation: Workers must be trained to identify inappropriate behavior with minors. If a Worker sees such inappropriate behavior the Worker shall first take steps to ensure the safety of the minor by removing them from the supervision of the offending worker. The Worker shall confront and discuss such behavior immediately with the worker in question, making sure to also alert the person in leadership over the respective area of ministry as to the incident. Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. The appointed leaders of that ministry shall ensure appropriate action is taken in accordance with the Abuse Prevention Plan and applicable legislation.

The Church's Legal Obligation: Every person who believes on reasonable grounds that a minor is or may be in need of protection must report promptly the belief and the information upon which it is based to the local Family and Children's Services¹.

The Church's Spiritual Obligation: God has given to everyone the responsibility to care for minors and, therefore, the personal responsibility to develop and maintain a safe church environment for all minors and those who minister to them. Reporting is a demonstration of this care and concern.

WHEN SHOULD A REPORT BE MADE?

What Constitutes Abuse for the Purpose of Professional Reporting? There is a duty to report if a minor suffers abuse² in any of the following circumstances:

- i. The minor has suffered physical harm either inflicted by the person having charge of the minor or caused by that person's failure to care and provide for or supervise and protect the minor adequately³;
- ii. The minor has been sexually molested or sexually exploited, by the person having charge of the minor or by another person where the person having charge of the minor knows or should know of the possibility of sexual molestation or sexual exploitation and fails to protect the minor⁴;
- iii. The minor requires medical treatment to cure, prevent or alleviate physical harm or suffering and the minor's parent or the person having charge of the minor does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, the treatment⁵;
- iv. The minor has suffered emotional harm, demonstrated by severe,
 - a. Anxiety
 - b. Depression
 - c. Withdrawal
 - d. Self-destructive or aggressive behavior and the minor's parent or the person having charge of the minor does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, services or treatment to remedy or alleviate the harm⁶
- v. The minor suffers from a mental, emotional or developmental condition that, if not remedied, could seriously impair the minor's development and the minor's parent or the person having charge of the minor does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, treatment to remedy or alleviate the condition⁷.

¹ See: Child and Family Services Act, RES. 1990, c. C.11, s. 72 (2).

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

³ Child and Family Services Act, supra s. 37 (2) (a).

⁴ Child and Family Services Act, supra s. 37 (2) (c).

⁵ Child and Family Services Act, supra s. 37 (2) (e).

⁶ Child and Family Services Act, supra s. 37 (2) (f).

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

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

HOW SHOULD THE REPORTING BE DONE?

Each person who believes or suspects on reasonable grounds that a minor is or may be in need of protection has the legal obligation to report the suspicion directly to Children and Family Services. It is the sole responsibility of the individual making the report to do so immediately.⁸

Prior to reporting the occurrence, if necessary, and pursuant to the Child and Family Services Act, no personnel, employees or volunteers, shall, apart from complying with paragraphs above, conduct any investigation or question any individual(s) unless specifically authorized by the Church Board. The Church shall use its best efforts to maintain confidentiality regarding any information obtained and any report pursuant to paragraphs above.

No investigation or inquiry shall be conducted where a report has been made to Family and Children's Services until the Family and Children's Services or the police investigation has been completed unless otherwise authorized by the appropriate civil authorities.

Should civil action be brought against a person who made a report, he or she will be protected unless he or she acted maliciously or without reasonable grounds for his/her belief or suspicion.⁹

LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING

INTRODUCTION

The Response Policy contained herein identifies the necessity of advanced preparation regardless of an allegation, as well as the procedure if an abuse allegation is made. The obligations and procedures set out herein should be the responsibility of every person within the Church.¹⁰

It is important that the Abuse Prevention Plan be amended to reflect any changes in the law, together with any additional safeguards as approved and directed from time to time by the Church Board.

BE PREPARED IN ADVANCE

The Church shall conduct periodic training with all workers and staff regarding (i) what constitutes abuse, (ii) the reporting obligations under Ontario law, (iii) the required reporting procedure, and (iv) the required procedure for responding to allegations.¹¹ Rather than issuing a “no comment” statement, a prepared position advising the public of the existence of the Abuse Prevention Plan clearly demonstrates the church’s concern and commitment in establishing a safe environment for children. A sample statement appears in Appendix 8.

⁸ See: David G. Thwaites, LL.B., “How to Avoid Claims for Sexual Abuse and Harassment” CCCC Bulletin No. 2 (March 31, 1995) at 9.

⁹ See: Children and Family Services Act, supra s. 72 (7).

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

¹¹ See e.g.: David G. Thwaites, LL.B., “How to Avoid Claims for Sexual Abuse and Harassment” CCCC Bulletin No. 2 (March 31, 1995) at 6-7.

The Board of Deacons appoints the Board of Deacons Chair or designate to speak to the media and the congregation regarding such a matter in a discrete, informed, and diplomatic way. In some cases, the media interviews several church leaders who have never given any consideration to responding to such inquiries. In such cases, conflicting and contradictory statements can abound, and the public will develop a negative impression of the Church. To avoid this, all requests for information, interviews or statements will be forwarded directly to the Board of Deacons Chair.

The Church must ensure that complete records are on file regarding the screening process for each and every worker involved in any manner in ministry to minors on behalf of this Church. This includes, but is not limited to, the application form, references, interview notes and status of such worker.

Each year the Church Board should also review the adequacy of its liability coverage so that proper coverage is in force should an abuse claim ever occur.

RESPONDING TO AN ABUSE ALLEGATION

Should any Person report to the Senior Pastor (or to such other Member as directed in writing by the Church Board) a belief or suspicion, based on reasonable grounds, that a minor has suffered abuse, the Church leadership shall respond accordingly. The allegation needs to be reported to the Children's Aid Society in terms of the Family and Children's Services Act.¹²

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

- i. All allegations must be taken seriously and each must be handled promptly with due respect for the privacy and confidentiality of all persons involved. Do not engage in denial, minimization, or blame. Do not be accusatory.
- ii. Document all your efforts at handling the allegation and ensure that these records are kept up to date. All suspicions and/or allegations of abuse should be documented using the Suspected Abuse Report Form (Appendix 9).
- iii. Do not try to handle the allegation without professional outside assistance. Report the allegation/incident immediately to the Church's (i) lawyer, (ii) District office and (iii) insurance company.
- iv. Contact the proper civil authorities following the guidance of your insurance company and lawyer. Act in compliance with the Family and Children's Services Act. Do not attempt an in-depth investigation as this needs to be left to professionals who are familiar with these cases. Also, give full cooperation to civil authorities under the guidance of the Church's lawyer.
- v. Legal advice must be obtained to determine the obligation to notify parents.
- vi. Do not confront the accused until the safety of the minor is secured.
- vii. Take the allegations seriously and reach out to the victim and the victim's family as adequate care must be shown for the well-being of victims. The victim should not be held responsible in any way. Be careful not to pre-judge the situation.

¹² See e.g.: David G. Thwaites, LL.B., "How To Avoid Claims for Sexual Abuse and Harassment" CCCC Bulletin No. 2 (March 31, 1995) at 9-10.

- viii. Treat the accused with dignity and support. If the accused is a volunteer worker, that Person should immediately be suspended from any duties or responsibilities in ministry to minors pending the outcome of the investigation and subject to any discipline policy as set out in the Church Constitution or Bylaw. If the accused is a paid employee, arrangements should be made to either maintain or suspend his or her income, in accordance with the Church's policies, until the allegations are withdrawn or established. Any notice of suspension shall be given in such a way that no investigation by the Family and Children's Services or police will be put in jeopardy and shall be done in consultation with the civil authorities. The suspension from duties and responsibilities is not and shall not be seen or accepted as "guilt" of the Individual, but only as an indication of the priority given to the need to protect all those involved pending the outcome of the civil authorities' investigation.
- ix. Use the text of a prepared public statement (refer Appendix 6) when providing information to the media and the congregation. The privacy and confidentiality of all those involved must be safeguarded.
- x. Any personnel volunteer, or employee, found to have abused a minor or placed a minor at risk of abuse shall, apart from any other discipline process, be prohibited from participation in any ministries serving minors on behalf of the Church.

TABLE OF LEGISLATION

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hammar, Richard R., Steven W. Klipowicz, and James F. Cobble, Jr., *Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in Your Church - A Complete and Practical Guidebook for Prevention and Risk Reduction*, (USA: Christian Ministry Resources, 1993).

Klipowicz, Steven W., *Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse [Training Manual]*, (USA: Christian Ministry Resources, 1993).

"Reducing the Risk: Making Your Church Safe from Child Sexual Abuse" [Video], (USA: Christian Ministry Resources, 1993).

"Reporting Child Abuse -- Your Responsibility under the Child and Family Services Act." [Pamphlet] Ontario: Ministry of Community and Social Services, (1995).

Thwaites, David G., LL.B., "How to Avoid Claims for Sexual Abuse and Harassment". Elmira, Ontario: CCCC Bulletin No. 2 (March 31, 1995) at 6-11.

APPENDIX 1: WORKER APPLICATION

YOUR INFORMATION

Your Name

Date of Birth

Address

City

Postal Code

Email address

Primary Phone#

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

Classification:	License#
-----------------	----------

INTERESTS & AVAILABILITY

1. Which areas of ministry are you interested in serving?

Ages & Areas of Ministry (Please check all that apply):

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Babies | <input type="checkbox"/> Nursery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toddlers | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Clubs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grades 1 - 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation Bible Camp |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grades 4 - 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Ministries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grades 7 - 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Outreaches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High School | <input type="checkbox"/> Where I'm Most Needed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

2. What time commitment are you able to make?

- Daily Weekly Monthly Negotiable Other: _____

3. Are you prepared to attend seminars or workshops on nursery, children and/or youth ministry as required by the church?

- Yes No

HISTORY & EXPERIENCE

4. What is your present Membership or Adherent status at Trinity? Please check one. If you are unsure, contact the Church Office.

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

5. List any other churches which you have attended regularly during the past five years and any experience serving minors (attach a separate sheet if necessary):

Church Name:	
When did you attend?	City:
Duties:	

Church Name:	
When did you attend?	City:
Duties:	

6. Please list all previous non-church experience involving minors (attach a separate sheet if necessary):

Organization Name:	
When did you attend?	City:
Duties:	

Organization Name:	
When did you attend?	City:
Duties:	

7. Please list any gifts, callings, training, education, or other factors that have prepared you for serving minors (attach a separate page, if necessary):

REFERENCES

Please provide two (2) non-related reference who knows you well enough to evaluate your qualifications to serve with minors. Please try to pick one reference from such as: Your employer or a co-worker, A professional person (teacher, clergy, lawyer, etc.), Someone who is familiar with your work with minors.

Reference #1	
Name:	Relationship:
Address:	
Phone#	Best time to contact: <input type="checkbox"/> Daytime <input type="checkbox"/> Evening

Reference #2	
Name:	Relationship:
Address:	
Phone#	Best time to contact: <input type="checkbox"/> Daytime <input type="checkbox"/> Evening

STATEMENT OF AUTHORIZATION, RELEASE, AND SIGNATURES

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

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

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

Applicant's Signature

Date

Witness' Name

Date

Witness' Signature

APPENDIX 2: DESIGNATED HELPER INFORMATION AND DECLARATION PACKAGE

INTRODUCTION

At Trinity we have a formal plan that we use to make sure we are always providing a safe place for everyone younger than 18. We also think it is important to give people under 18 chances to use their amazing abilities and ideas to serve Jesus at Church, so we are excited to have you volunteer to help our adult leaders. As part of our formal plan, the adult leaders will always be there to supervise and support you when you volunteer, as well as all the kids participating in the program or event.

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

To start volunteering as a Designated Helper:

- You must be in at least Grade 6.
- To volunteer in the nursery you must have completed a recognized babysitting course.
- You must have been consistently attending a program or event at Trinity for at least 6 months.
- You must fill in your information on the last page.
- You must read this whole package and then sign the last page.
- Your parent/guardian must read this whole package and then sign the last page.
- You must get 2 unrelated adults to sign the last page saying they recommend you as a volunteer.
- You must give the signed page to a leader and we will keep it in a file.
- You must complete the Designated Helper Quiz.
- You must wait to start volunteering until you have been told by the church that you are ready.
- You will always work with the adult leaders and not on your own with kids.
- The adult leaders will always explain what your job is at a program or event.

Important Information about the Church's Formal Plan:

- Every program or event must have at least 2 adult leaders that are approved within the plan. If not, it will be cancelled.
- If a classroom door does not have a window, the door must always stay open.
- Every program, event, and classroom has a limit to the number of children that each adult can supervise and it is based on the age of the children at the program. You are not supervising children, the adult leaders are, but it is helpful for you to know the limits:
 - 1 adult may supervise up to 3 kids under age 2
 - 1 adult may supervise up to 5 kids for age 2 to Senior Kindergarten
 - 1 adult may supervise up to 7 kids for Grades 1 to 8
 - 1 adult may supervise up to 10 kids for Grade 9 to age 17
 - In addition to those limits for the children participating in the program or event, each adult leader may supervise 1 designated helper.
- If a child tells you that he or she has been harmed by a caregiver, you must tell an adult leader.
- If you see a child get hurt, you must tell an adult leader. It doesn't matter if is by accident or on purpose (even if the child was hurt by someone from the church).
- If for any reason you think a child is unsafe, talk to an adult leader about it.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR ROLE AS A DESIGNATED HELPER

Examples of things you can do:

- Set a good example
- Pray for kids
- Help kids stay involved with what the group is doing
- Remind kids to listen
- Help with crafts
- Help with recreational events in open spaces
- Reading to kids
- Help set up before a program or event
- Help clean up after a program or event
- Share your ideas
- Help explain games, crafts, or activities

Examples of things you cannot do:

- Be in a room with kids where there are no adults
- Discipline kids
- Make decisions about the health of a child
- Register kids
- Dismiss kids
- Take someone to the bathroom
- Change a diaper
- Drive a child
- Contact a child through social media on behalf of the church
- Take pictures or videos of children

Examples of Appropriate displays of affection:

- Holding a younger minor that is crying
- Talking to a child at eye level
- Briefly holding a child's hands when speaking, listening, or walking with him or her
- Gently holding a child's shoulder or hand to keep his or her attention
- Putting your arm around a child's shoulder to comforting them
- Patting minors on the head, hand, shoulder or back to affirm them

Examples of Inappropriate displays of affection:

- Kissing or coax a child to kiss you
- Extended hugging
- Tickling
- Holding a child's face while talking to him or her
- Touching a child in any area that would be covered by a bathing suit
- Carrying older children and allowing them to sit on your lap (this includes piggy-back rides)
- Any prolonged physical contact with a child

DECLARATION OF INTEREST TO VOLUNTEER

YOUR INFORMATION

Your Name

Your Date of Birth

Your Parent or Guardian's Name

Phone Number for Parent or Guardian

OTHER ADULT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YOU TO VOLUNTEER

Unrelated Adult Recommendation #1	Unrelated Adult Recommendation #2
Name:	Name:
Phone#	Phone#
How do you know the volunteer and for how long?	How do you know the volunteer and for how long?
Signature:	Signature:

SIGNATURES

I have read the information provided and I understand it. I agree that as a designated helper I will follow the guidelines given. I recognize that I must listen to the adult leaders and I am under the authority of the Church.

Your Signature

Date

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date

APPENDIX 3: WORKER APPLICATION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Date:

Applicant:

Interviewer 1:

Interviewer 2:

TRINITY EMC PREVENTION PLAN PRE-INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

During the interview, we will ask about your faith journey. If you prefer, you are welcome to provide your story in writing prior to the interview.

TRINITY EMC PREVENTION PLAN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How did you come to apply for involvement in our children's ministry?

2. What experience, if any, do you have with working with children? Include length of time, position and responsibilities.

3. When working with children, which specific age group and/or area of involvement do you feel most comfortable?

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

5. At Trinity EMC, we believe that God equips each person with specialized gifts in order to share his love more effectively. What gifts do you feel God has given you?

6. Please describe your faith journey (feel free to enclose their written out pre-interview sheet).

7. How do your closest family or friends feel about your involvement in ministry?

8. If you have been convicted of a criminal offence, please provide an explanation for the criminal offense?

9. Is there anything you feel we should be aware of that you have not disclosed in your application or during this interview?

10. Do you have any questions for us?

APPROVAL AND SIGNATURES

Date: _____

We,

Names of Interviewers

hereby approve

Name of Applicant

to serve in the Children and/or Youth Ministries at Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church.

Signature of Interviewer 1

Signature of Interviewer 2

Please take a photocopy of the applicant's driver's license.

APPENDIX 4: REFERENCE CONTACT FORM

Person Contacting the Reference:	
Date & Time of Contact:	Method of Contact <input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Fax <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
Name of Applicant:	
Reference Contacted (identify both the organization & person contacted):	
Nature of Reference to Applicant (ie. Employer):	How many years has the Reference known the Applicant?
Would you have any reservations recommending the Applicant to serve in ministry with minors? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain - Please explain if the answer is no or not certain:	

Signature of Person Making Inquiry

Date

APPENDIX 5: SAMPLE APPROVAL LETTER

[date]

Dear [applicant],

Thank you for applying to serve in children and youth ministry here at Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church. The Abuse Prevention Plan [APP] is an important part of communicating to all involved that we take our responsibility seriously to care for the children and youth that we minister to. The APP is a prerequisite to work with children and youth at Trinity.

We are pleased to inform you that your application and interview have been approved.

May God bless you [applicant], as you work with our children and youth here at Trinity.

[Chair of the Board of Deacons]

Chair of the Board of Deacons

APPENDIX 6: LEGAL REPORTING OBLIGATIONS UNDER ONTARIO LAW

Legal counsel must be obtained prior to enacting any process or procedure to ensure compliance with Ontario law.¹³

PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT A CHILD IN NEED OF PROTECTION

Every person, including a volunteer, who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is or may be in need of protection must report promptly the belief and the information upon which it is based to the local Family and Children's Services.¹⁴ No one is exempt from this responsibility.

SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES IMPOSED ON PROFESSIONALS AND OFFICIALS TO REPORT ABUSE

The Child and Family Services Act gives professionals a particular reporting responsibility as they may have a special awareness of children who may be in an abuse situation. A professional or official who, in the course of his or her professional or official duties with respect to a child, has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be suffering or may have suffered abuse shall promptly report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to the local Family and Children's Services.¹⁵

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

PROFESSIONALS AFFECTED

The professional duty to report affects the following persons:¹⁶

- A. a health care professional, including a physician, nurse, dentist, pharmacist and psychologist;
- B. a teacher, school principal, social worker, family counselor, priest, rabbi, other members of the clergy, operator or employee of a day nursery, a non-volunteer youth and recreation worker;
- C. a peace officer and a coroner;
- D. a solicitor; and
- E. a service provider and an employee of a service provider.

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

¹³ The Church must be careful in what it communicates publicly (i.e. to the church membership) in the event of an abuse allegation. For example, s.45 (8) of the Children and Family Services Act, supra states that "No person shall publish or make public information that has the effect of identifying a child who is a witness at or a participant in a hearing or the subject of a proceeding, or the child's parent or foster parent or a member of the child's family". Section 85 of this same Act also states that if there is a contravention of s.45 (8) and a director, officer or employee of a corporation [i.e. of an incorporated church] authorizes, permits or concurs in such a contravention by the corporation, such director, officer or employee is guilty of an offense and on conviction is liable to a fine of up to \$10,000 or to imprisonment for a term of up to three years, or to both!

¹⁴ See: Child and Family Services Act, supra s. 72 (2).

¹⁵ See: Child and Family Services Act, supra s. 72 (3), (4).

¹⁶ See: Child and Family Services Act, supra s. 72 (4), (5).

PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY

The professional's duty to report under the Child and Family Services Act, supra overrides all provisions of any other Act. A professional must report abuse even when the information may be confidential or privileged.¹⁷

The only exception is that the privilege that may exist between a solicitor and his or her client cannot be compromised.¹⁸

PENALTY FOR FAILURE TO REPORT

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

A professional who in the course of his duties fails to report child abuse pursuant to the Child and Family Services Act, supra s. 72 (3) and a director, officer or employee of a corporation (i.e. an incorporated church), who authorizes, permits or concurs in such failure to report by the corporation is guilty of an offense and on conviction is liable to a fine of up to \$1,000.00.¹⁹

Any person who fails to report child abuse pursuant to the Child and Family Services Act, supra s. 72 (2) and a director, officer or employee of a corporation (i.e. an incorporated church), who authorizes, permits or concurs in such failure to report by the corporation is guilty of an offense and on conviction is liable to a fine of up to \$2,000.00 or to imprisonment for a term of not more than three years, or to both.²⁰

PROTECTION FROM LIABILITY

If civil action is brought against a person who made a report in accordance with the provisions of the Child and Family Services Act, supra, such person will be protected unless he or she acted maliciously or without reasonable grounds for the belief or suspicion.²¹

¹⁷ See: Child and Family Services Act, supra s. 72 (3), (7).

¹⁸ See: Child and Family Services Act, supra s. 72 (8).

¹⁹ See: Child and Family Services Act, supra s. 85 (1) (b).

²⁰ See: Child and Family Services Act, supra s. 85 (2).

²¹ See: Child and Family Services Act, supra s. 72 (7).

APPENDIX 7: TEXT OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ACT

SECTIONS 72(2), (3), (4) AND (5)

1. A person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is or may be in need of protection shall forthwith report the belief and the information upon which it is based to a society.
2. Despite the provisions of any other Act, a person referred to in subsection (4) who, in the course of his or her professional duties, has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be suffering or may have suffered abuse shall forthwith report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to a society.
3. Subsection (3) applies to every person who performs professional or official duties with respect to a child, including,
 - a. a health care professional, including a physician, nurse, dentist, pharmacist and psychologist;
 - b. a teacher, school principal, social worker, family counsellor, priest, rabbi, clergyman, operator or employee of a day nursery and youth and recreation worker;
 - c. a peace officer and a coroner;
 - d. a solicitor; and
 - e. a service provider and an employee of a service provider.
4. In clause (4) (b), “youth and recreation worker” does not include a volunteer.

APPENDIX 8: RECOMMENDED PUBLIC POSITION STATEMENT

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

PUBLIC POSITION STATEMENT OF TRINITY EMC²²

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

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

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

Thank you.

CAUTION

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

²² The Church must be careful in what it communicates publicly (i.e. to the church membership) in the event of an abuse allegation. For example, s.45 (8) of the Children and Family Services Act, supra states that "No person shall publish or make public information that has the effect of identifying a child who is a witness at or a participant in a hearing or the subject of a proceeding, or the child's parent or foster parent or a member of the child's family". Section 85 of this same Act also states that if there is a contravention of s.45 (8) and a director, officer or employee of a corporation [i.e. of an incorporated church] authorizes, permits or concurs in such a contravention by the corporation, such director, officer or employee is guilty of an offense and on conviction is liable to a fine of up to \$10,000 or to imprisonment for a term of up to three years, or to both!

APPENDIX 9: TRINITY EMC SUSPECTED ABUSE REPORT FORM

*COMPLETE AND RETURN TO TEMC OFFICE

Date of Incident:		
Name of Minor:		
Age of Student:	Grade:	Birthday (day/month/year):
Address:		
City:	Postal Code:	Phone Number:
Parents' Names:		
Siblings' Names:		
Name of Person Filing Report:		
Name of Pastor Receiving Report:		
Name of Social Worker:		
Social Worker's Phone Number:		
Name of Alleged Perpetrator: <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F		
Relationship between suspected victim and alleged perpetrator:		
Nature of suspected abuse: <input type="checkbox"/> Physical <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional <input type="checkbox"/> Neglect		

Indications of suspected abuse (including facts, physical signs, and course of events)

Action Taken (including Date and Time)

If a child is reporting, What did the child say? (Give quotes where possible)

What was your response?

Signature

Printed Name Date

Pastor's Signature

Pastor's Printed Name Date

The above information will serve as a guide and will be necessary if a formal report is filed with the police or appropriate government agency. All information received is to be kept STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

APPENDIX 10: PARTNERSHIPS AND EXCEPTIONS TO SIX MONTH WAITING PERIOD

Trinity EMC & another Church Co-Sponsor a Program or Event for minors

In order for volunteers from Trinity and the other Church to serve together following must be observed:

1. The other Church would provide a Certificate of Insurance to Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church showing that they have at least \$2 million General Liability Coverage and Abuse Coverage (Abuse, Molestation, Harassment – No Exclusion). The Certificate of Insurance would also name Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church as Additional Insured. This would be with respect to the co-sponsored event and Trinity EMC would provide the same to the other Church.
2. The other Church would provide a Letter from their Church Board confirming that all volunteers participating in the co-sponsored event are fully screened by their Church Organization and have been trained as per their Abuse Prevention Plan. You would then also provide the same.
3. All volunteers from both Churches will receive information or attend an information session regarding their volunteer positions and a reminder regarding Abuse Prevention standards.

EXCEPTIONS TO THE SIX-MONTH WAITING PERIOD:

1. Transferring from another church of the same denomination in which they have been long-time members and children's ministry workers in good standing, but only if they are fully screened by your organization, including a criminal record check and background references from at least three individuals, including one from their previous minister or children's ministry director and to whom they have been well known for a period of at least one year.
2. Known volunteers who attend other church congregations in the community who have been long-time members and children's ministry workers in good standing, but only if they are fully screened by your organization, including a criminal record check and background references from at least three individuals, including one from their current minister or children's ministry director to whom they have been well known for a period of at least one year.
3. New and returning counsellors, supervisors or volunteers in seasonal Christian ministries such as summer camping programs and short-term missions should only be approved if they are fully screened by your organization, including a criminal record check and background references from at least three individuals, including at least one from their current home church minister or the executive director at an organization where they previously served in children's ministry and to whom they have been well known for a period of at least one year.

APPENDIX 11: INCIDENT REPORT



Date of Incident

Time of incident

Names of those involved:

Fully describe the incident:

Action taken by worker(s), be specific and provide names:

Prevention - what can be done to avoid a recurrence of this incident (include the names of all staff at the debriefing and note any disagreements):

Report by

Signature

Noted by Ministry Leader



I have read and understand Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church Abuse Prevention Plan: Policies and Procedures.

Date

Name *(please print)*

Signature

Personnel Committee Team Member

Trinity Evangelical Missionary Church

330 Conservation Drive, Waterloo, ON, N2V 2E8 | 519-746-647 | www.trinityemc.com