



FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

Fellowship Church  
**Safe Church Policy**

(Revised June 5, 2020)  
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Safe Church Policy - Table of Contents**

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# Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy

## Introduction

### Biblical and Theological Perspective

Each time a child is baptized we are reminded of these words of Jesus Christ: “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.” (Mark 10:14) As the congregation of Fellowship Church we respond to the following question: “Do you, the people of the Lord, promise to receive these children in love, pray for them, help instruct them in the faith, and encourage and sustain them in the fellowship of believers?” by answering: “We do, God helping us.” (Form for Baptism of Children)

Child abuse... it's a sensitive issue. An emotional issue. It's an issue that we would rather not think about, or at least not believe that we would have to face in a Christian organization. Unfortunately, we must. Society – even the church – has become tainted by the presence of child abuse, and most of us have heard stories or experienced first-hand what happens to a congregation when abuse is discovered in church. Worse, children's lives have been severely and permanently damaged as a result of abuse.

That reason alone compels us to be on guard at all times, working to prevent child abuse before it occurs, and to respond to it properly if it does.” (Child Abuse Handbook, the Calvinist Cadet Corps)

### Purpose:

The objective of this policy is to ensure a wholesome congregational environment in which people of all ages can feel safe from abuse of all kinds.

It is our hope that our church community will be a place of God's presence in the world. Therefore, we strive to create in our church an environment that nurtures each person's dignity and safety so that everyone can grow and mature as the Creator intended. We acknowledge, however that we live in a broken world, and that one of the signs of that brokenness is the violation of boundaries for healthy relationships. When sin of this nature occurs, appropriate action is required. We must strive to achieve justice, protect victims, and promote the healing of those who have been abused and work towards the repentance and healing of the abuser.

### Vision:

Fellowship Church acknowledges that abusive behaviour does exist and may exist in our church (See the Christian Reformed Church survey by the Calvin College Social Research Center, Agenda for Synod 1992,p..3-20) and therefore: firstly, seeks to promote the safety of all its members; secondly, seeks to take action to prevent abuse; and thirdly, seeks to help break the cycle of this behavior. We will co-operate with the authorities in cases of allegations/suspicions of abuse, seek to handle claims of abuse with fairness toward both the victim and the accused, support victims of abuse without judgment, insisting on accountability for the abuser's actions, and exercising church discipline. In so doing we strive to offer and promote understanding and forgiveness through faith, patience and love.

# Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy

## Definitions of Abuse

In order to help us determine the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships, the following definitions are given.

### **Physical Abuse:**

Any non-accidental human act that results in physical pain or injury to a child whether it leaves a cut or wound, or a mark or a bruise. Physically abusive behavior ranges from slapping, pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, and biting to more severe forms like choking, severe spanking, beating, hitting with an object, burning, stabbing and shooting. In other words, physical abuse is any intentional means of inflicting pain or injury to another person. It is sometimes a single event but can also be a chronic pattern of behavior.

### **Physical Neglect:**

Not doing what one is supposed to be doing to meet the physical needs of someone in his or her care. Neglect interferes with or prevents a child's normal development.

### **Sexual Abuse:**

The exploitation of a child or any sexual intimacy forced on a child for the sexual stimulation or gratification of another person. Child sexual abuse can refer to taking advantage of a child who is not capable of understanding sexual acts or is not capable of resisting coercion such as threats or offers of gifts. Sexual abuse may or may not involve physical contact. Examples of nonphysical sexual abuse include people exposing themselves, displaying pornographic material, photographing a child for pornographic materials, obscene telephone calls, "peeping Toms," and requests to engage in sexual activity (where no physical contact occurs). Examples of sexual abuse involving physical contact, include fondling of body parts such as breasts, crotch, buttocks, or sexual organs; intercourse; oral and anal sex.

### **Emotional Abuse:**

Attempting to control a child's life through words, threats, and fear; destroying a child's self-worth through harassment, threats, and deprivation. Emotional abuse weakens a child's mental and physical ability to resist the abuse, cuts off his or her contacts with others, and causes a gradual loss of self-esteem - all of which reinforce a sense of helplessness and dependence on the abuser. Spiritual Abuse: The mistreatment of a person who needs help, support, or greater spiritual empowerment with the result of weakening, undermining or decreasing that person's spiritual empowerment. The individual is left bearing a weight of guilt, judgement or condemnation and confusion about their worth and standing as a Christian.

### **Spiritual Abuse:**

The mistreatment of a person who needs help, support, or greater spiritual empowerment with the result of weakening, undermining or decreasing that person's spiritual empowerment. The individual is left bearing a weight of guilt, judgement or condemnation and confusion about their worth and standing as a Christian

### **Harassment**

Shall be deemed to include comments or conduct by a person directed at another person that is discriminatory, intimidating, annoying, deliberately hurtful, malicious and unwanted.

# Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy

## Definitions

### Ministry Provider

A ministry provider is a person who serves in a leadership capacity in any program or ministry of Fellowship Christian Reformed Church, St. Thomas.

### Staff

Staff are those individuals paid by the church to serve in various programs and who may have direct contact with minors or vulnerable persons in their care or supervision.

### Volunteers

Volunteers are individuals ages 18+ who serve in a child or youth program and/or who have direct contact with minors in their care or supervision. Volunteers must be older by 2-3 years than the minors in their care with another adult present.

### Helper

Helpers are individuals under 18 years of age who assist in Children's Programs. The age of helpers is defined within the guidelines of each separate program.

### Adult

An adult is defined as a responsible person 18 years of age or older.

### Child (Minor)

Any person under the age of 18 years old

### Victim

A person who alleges that an abuse has been committed against him/her and/or who is harmed or made to suffer from and act or incidence.

### Council

The Council consists of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Clerk, Elder(s), Deacons, and the Pastor(s).

- Names of Council members can be found in the front of the yearbook/directory in the Council Members list.

### Safe Church Committee

The Safe Church Committee shall consist of three to five persons. They will be members of Fellowship Christian Reformed Church, and positions on the team will hopefully be persons who would have formal education in the social sciences and/or have expertise in the area of abuse response. A gender balance will try to be maintained.

# Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy

## GENERAL PREVENTION POLICIES:

The following policies are for the prevention of abuse and the creation of a healthy environment.

**1. Discipline Policy:** Fellowship Church has a Discipline Policy for volunteers/staff who work with youth. Volunteers/staff must agree to abide by the Discipline Policy (see page 7)

**2. Risk Prevention Policy:** Fellowship Church has a Risk Prevention Policy (see page 8). These policies are for specific child and youth programs, which include – Seedlings, Growzone, Zone Camp (VBS), Youth Group, Praise Team.

- **Two-Person Rule** – Volunteer (over 18), Helpers (under 17) who are non-related, should be present for all programs involving children & youth. The two-person rule is preferred for all programs but not always feasible. Where the two-person rule is not in effect the establishment of hall monitors would be a necessity.
- **Transportation of Children/Youth** - It would be ideal to have two adults in a vehicle when transporting children, however this is not always feasible or practical. Leaders need to be cautious and use common sense. Fellowship Church is not responsible for any youth who transport themselves, or others, on their own accord to a church sponsored event.
- **Hall Monitors** - Hall monitors must be 18+ and agree to comply with General, Discipline & Risk Prevention Policy (pages 6, 7 & 8) and have a Criminal Records and Vulnerable Persons (CR-VP) Check completed. Hall monitors will monitor the building and the programs occurring. They would be able to assist if children would need to leave a classroom and use the washroom. This would allow for the necessity of the occasional one-to-one contacts between volunteers and children, as monitors would be there to observe at a distance. Contact supervisor if needed.
- **Screening Policy:** Fellowship Church has screening procedures for volunteers and staff. All volunteers and staff must agree to comply with Fellowship Church's General, Discipline & Risk Prevention Policies (pages 6,7,8) and have a Criminal Records and Vulnerable Persons (CR-VP) Check completed. A volunteer or staff person who refuses to follow prevention policies or who violates policies may be required to relinquish his or her responsibility in a child or youth program.

**3. Education Policy:** (page 9) Supervisors of any program serving minors, and where possible, other volunteers and staff, will attend educational presentations on such topics as: the signs and symptoms of child abuse, awareness of abuse, reporting suspected child abuse, and the dynamics of abuse..

**4. Reporting Policy:** (page 10) All staff, leaders, teachers and others in positions representing Fellowship Church are required to report any suspected or alleged incidence of abuse to the Family & Children's Services St Thomas Elgin, and the Safe Church Team.

# Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

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As adults, it is important that we model behavior that is Christ-like. By our example we can teach children and youth what is acceptable behavior and which behaviors do not show respect for our classmates and neighbors. An adult can stop unacceptable behavior by intervening with a constructive form of discipline to the child/youth. The following Discipline Policy will reduce the incidence of minors being subjected to physical and verbal abuse and will reduce the risk of volunteers/staff being accused of being abusive. It provides clear guidelines about how to administer discipline in church sponsored child and youth programs.

1. Corporal punishment is not permitted. Corporal punishment includes, but is not limited to, slapping, hitting, pushing and touching in an aggressive manner.
2. Abusive verbal discipline is not permitted. Abusive verbal discipline includes, but is not limited to, yelling, hurling insults, verbally embarrassing a child and threatening a child expressly or by implication.
3. Parent(s) are to be informed and involved whenever a child/youth misbehaves beyond minor correction or if a pattern of misbehavior increases.
4. Concerns about a child's behavior or the appropriate response to a child's behavior should be reported to the program supervisor.
5. An aide or a parent should be involved weekly in classrooms where misbehavior is an ongoing problem.
6. Expectations of children's/youth's behavior must reflect their age and level of comprehension. Similarly, discipline must reflect their age and level of comprehension. distract the child/youth with another activity
7. Children are to be reminded of the kind of behavior that is acceptable for the setting. Older children and youth may benefit from having these expectations in written form.
8. Appropriate forms of discipline are to be reviewed with volunteers/staff before church sponsored programs begin a new season. Then periodic reminders are to be given as needed.
9. Whenever possible, leaders should try to avoid having to discipline a child/youth by choosing one or more of the following options:
  - a. Distract the child/youth with another activity
  - b. Help the child/youth focus on another more acceptable behavior.
  - c. Isolate the child/youth from others if another volunteer/staff is available to assist
10. For young children, time-outs should not last longer (in minutes) than the age of the child. For example, a three-year old should not have to sit for a time-out any longer than three minutes.
11. When nothing seems to be working, staff/volunteers/leaders should get help before losing their cool.
12. Volunteers/staff will regularly participate in an information and/or training program on some aspect of child abuse to be determined by the Safe Church Team

## Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy

### RISK PREVENTION POLICY

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- **Volunteers/Helpers:** To be considered for any volunteer/helper position in the church, a person should have been consistently attending the church for at least 6 months and must be at least 12 years of age. Those wishing to volunteer that have been attending the church for less than six months, must be in good standing in their prior church and will be required to provide two letters of reference. Those wishing to serve in a volunteer position in the church which involve children will be asked to fill in a Volunteer/Helper Position Application (**Appendix E, page 25**) Any **volunteer** will be required to have a Criminal Records and Vulnerable Persons (CR-VP) Check completed. This will allow the Safe Church Team to screen out any individual who may not be appropriate for involvement with children, youth, and vulnerable persons. This would include individuals who have been suspect or convicted of abuse or assault or any crime against a person. Any concerns the Safe Church Team has with information gathered from volunteer profiles and CR-VP will be forwarded by the Safe Church Team to Council.
- **Criminal Records and Vulnerable Persons Check** will be completed every five years
- **Youth Volunteers:** Fellowship Church encourages the development of youth to volunteer within the church. Volunteers will serve under the supervision of a ministry leader to ensure guidance, supervision, and accountability.
- **Staff Positions:** All paid staff will have a Criminal Records and Vulnerable Persons (CR-VP) Check completed.
- **Volunteer Files:** All information gathered from this screening process will be returned to the administration office and will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the church office with access limited to the administrative assistant.
- All program leaders are responsible to ensure that all Criminal and Vulnerable Person (CR-VP) checks have been completed and approved prior to any person actively volunteering.
- The Criminal Reference Check Report is to be submitted to the administrative assistant who will notify the Safe Church Team if there is concerning information which may reflect negatively on the candidate's suitability for a volunteer position with children, youth and vulnerable persons. The Church reserves the right to reject an applicant for any reason. Those reasons include but are not limited to: refusing or failing to complete screening; failing to provide requested information; providing information subsequently determined to be false or misleading; or obtaining information from references or a criminal record check which suggest the applicant is not suitable for the position. A letter will be given to the volunteer applicant who fails to meet the screening process requirements. The executive of council will be informed of the decision made by the Safe Church Team.
- A past criminal record will not necessarily exclude a person from holding a volunteer position, if the offences are not relevant to children, youth or vulnerable persons.



# Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy

## EDUCATION POLICY

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- The Safe Church Team will assume overall responsibility for the education of the entire congregation in matters of abuse prevention and safety.
- The entire congregation will be given opportunity to learn about abuse & abuse prevention.
- All staff, and volunteers (Seedlings, Grow Zone, Zone Camp, Youth group leaders Praise Team leaders & Council) in church programs will be mandated to attend an educational seminar on the dynamics of all types of abuse; this will include the church's policies and how to recognize signs of abuse and inappropriate behaviour. Other volunteers will be encouraged to attend as well. Those not attending will receive education as directed by Children's Ministry Director, Youth Pastor, Praise team Leader, & Pastor.

# Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy

## REPORTING POLICY

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Obligation to Disclose (**see appendix A page 20**)

An investigation of said symptoms and reports must be conducted by people trained in signs and symptoms of abuse and reports of abuse by a minor need to be taken seriously. In the case of a minor (under 16 years of age), you are legally obligated to IMMEDIATELY inform the trained investigators at the CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY or if the victim is between 16 and 18 years of age notify the LOCAL POLICE.

Anyone with a reasonable suspicion of child abuse is considered legally obligated to report the abuse. If possible, notification of the police or CAS must occur immediately after contact with the child. If not reported, one could be held liable. If a reasonable suspicion is reported, and the report is not substantiated or no charges are brought, the leaders and Safe Church Team members are usually protected from liability resulting from a case of false accusation and/or slander.

A VOLUNTEER OR STAFF PERSON SHOULD NOT CONDUCT A SOLO, OR INDEPENDENT, INVESTIGATION OF THE MATTER. INSTEAD THEY SHOULD FOLLOW THIS REPORTING PROCEDURE:

1. When staff and volunteers of the Fellowship CRC become aware of abuse\* that has occurred on church property or in the context of its ministries or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a person is being, or has been abused, they are encouraged to report such information immediately to the authorities, upon which they will contact a member of the Safe Church Team.
2. Volunteers and staff who observe signs and symptoms of abuse or who have had a child disclose allegations of abuse to them, should seek consultation IMMEDIATELY with the leader of the program they both serve (unless the leader is the suspected abuser). A report of incidents or observations (**see Appendix H**) should be completed by the individuals, who should then contact the authorities. If the leader wants/needs to consult with the Safe Church Team they must do so immediately. The Safe Church Team will then deal with the situation. If the Safe Church Team is not available, then the leader(s) are responsible for contacting the authorities immediately.

A report by a volunteer or staff person should:

- (a) indicate what the specific signs or symptoms of abuse are.
- (b) the date these symptoms were noted.
- (c) what if any comment/response the minor had to the signs or symptoms.

In the case of a child reporting abuse, the volunteer or staff person should:

- (a) indicate specifically what was told to him/her by the child.
- (b) the date of the report and the dates when the abuse allegedly occurred.
- (c) what if any emotion/response the child had while making the complaint.

## **Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy**

### **REPORTING POLICY** (continued)

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#### Obligation to Disclose (see appendix A)

3. The Fellowship Safe Church Team will handle such matters as:
  - (a) contacting the authorities or direct the person who witnessed the alleged abuse to make the referral.
  - (b) filing a report to authorities; (if necessary - when persons disclosed to or suspicious of abuse do not report)
  - (c) informing Council and/or Pastor
  - (d) informing the liability carrier if the alleged abuser is a church volunteer or staff.In the case of paid staff being the alleged perpetrator, the Safe Church will immediately notify Council who in turn will be responsible for contacting the Classical Safe Church Team.
4. After a report is filed with CAS/police, one of the members of the Safe Church Team is designated to be the liaison between the legal authorities/CAS and the church. This person also becomes the liaison between the Council and/or Pastor and the authorities if the report leads to an investigation, criminal charges, arrest, trial, conviction, or dismissal of charges. Council must also contact the churches insurance company to advise of the allegation and to seek advice respecting procedures required by the insurance company.
5. Any written suspicion or documentation of abuse by a church leader, volunteer, or staff should be compiled and placed in a locked file by the Safe Church Team. Accessibility to this file is limited to safe church team and the administration.
6. If the authorities choose to not proceed further and concern for the child remains, then the volunteer or staff who first reported observing signs or symptoms of abuse, or to whom the child disclosed allegations of abuse, should be notified that no further action will be taken. It may be advisable to keep a written log of any further signs, symptoms or complaints that reflect an ongoing pattern of abusive behavior or may lead to detection of another difficulty in the youth's life. Of particular note would be a pattern of increased frequency or intensity of signs, symptoms, or complaints of abuse.

### **Abuse of Power (The act of using one's position of power in an abusive way)**

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1. A confirmed abuser shall not be placed in a position of trust regarding any vulnerable persons. For the purposes of this policy, the definition of confirmed shall be determined by the council.
2. Upon disclosure of an allegation of abuse to Council and pending the outcome of an investigation, the alleged abuser, if a member of council, or in a position of trust, shall be suspended from his or her duties.
3. Allegations of abuse against church leaders and staff shall be dealt with by the procedures set forth in the (Church Order Article 81, 82, 83, 84, pp 96-97)
4. A Pastor, council member of ministry leader, upon the confirmation of abuse, shall in accordance with the Church discipline process be suspended or removed from such office or position of trust. (Acts of Synod 2018, pp, 523-524)

# Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy

## POLICIES FOR SPECIFIC CHILD/ YOUTH/VULNERABLE PEOPLE PROGRAMS

### Seedlings 1 & 2

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*All Seedlings volunteers 18 years and older must sign the "Code of Ethics" (Appendix C), must agree with the Discipline Policy (page 8) and will require a police check every five years. The police checks will only be viewed by the Safe Church Committee and the Church Administrator and will be held in strict confidence and locked in the church.*

1. All volunteers/helpers must be members or have attended Fellowship Church regularly for the last six months and/or have filled in an application for a screening process.
2. At least two adults, one on both sides, 18 years of age or older, who are not directly related to one another remain in the nurseries at all times. In scheduling, a balance of volunteers/helpers from each gender will be sought.
3. Minors (ages 17 and younger) may volunteer for service, provided that an adult is present. Minors may not care for children without adult supervision.
4. There should be at least two volunteers/helpers serving at a time. These two cannot be immediate family (immediate family members such as mother/daughter or wife/husband or father/son). The two volunteers/helpers must stay in the nursery or classroom until all children are gone. A volunteer should not supervise a child alone, or in a private or isolated area. Program must be cancelled or combined if adequate supervision cannot be provided. This will decrease the potential for inappropriate behavior by volunteers and will reduce the risk of false accusations.
5. People, both adults and minors, who are not scheduled or appointed as a nursery volunteer/helper for that particular day may not spend time in the nursery room(s) during or after the service unless this person is in the care of the scheduled nursery attendant. Parents and/or legal guardians are permitted to personally care for their own child.
6. For children who do not require assistance in the bathroom, the volunteer/helper must remain outside the bathroom in the "Seedlings 2" bathroom and for the "toddler plus" outside the bathroom stall of the main bathroom. For children who require assistance, the volunteers/helpers must assist the child with all the doors ajar. The diapering of an infant or toddler must take place in the nursery room in the presence of another volunteer/helper.
7. When the child is signed in at the desk the parent/legal guardian will be issued an electronic number. Any pertinent information like food allergies or any medical history of which the caregivers need to be made aware is also recorded. The persons permitted to pick up the child/ren from Seedlings are the parent who dropped them off, a sibling, or a family member with the electronic number or tag. Children are to be picked up within 15 minutes of the end of the worship service

## Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy

### Seedlings 1 & 2 (continued)

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8. Children should not leave the Seedlings area except for illness, or other compelling reasons. Any significant medical problems should be reported immediately to the child's parent/legal guardians.
9. If a child cries uncontrollably for more than 10 minutes and cannot be comforted, then inform the parent (let Hall monitor find parents).
10. Accident or incident forms are available in the Seedlings room in a binder which is in the cupboard.
11. There are first aid kits available on both sides of the Seedlings room

### Grow Zone (JK & SK & Grades 1-5)

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*All Grow Zone volunteers 18 years and older must sign the "Code of Ethics" (Appendix C), must agree with the Discipline Policy (page 8) and will require a police check every five years. The police checks will only be viewed by the Safe Church Committee and the Church Administrator and will be held in strict confidence and locked in the church*

1. All volunteers/helpers in Grow Zone must be members or have attended Fellowship Church regularly for the last six months and/or have filled in an application for a screening process.
2. One volunteer should serve in a classroom at a given time and if additional helpers are needed in any class, they cannot be from the same family/immediate relative.
3. In the Grow Zone classrooms, only one volunteer/helper is required, with the aid of the Hall Monitor if necessary.
4. Children should not leave the classroom except for illness, bathroom assistance, or other compelling reason. Children should be encouraged to use the bathroom facilities before and after class. Utilize a Hall Monitor to send child back to class program if needed.
5. Any medical problems should be reported immediately to the child's parent/legal guardians.
6. Whenever a class is in session, the classroom door windows shall not be obstructed to allow a clear view into the classroom to allow program supervisors to monitor class activities.
7. When the child is signed in at the desk the parent/legal guardian will be issued an electronic number. Any pertinent information like food allergies or any medical history of which the caregivers need to be made aware is also recorded. The persons permitted to pick up the child/ren from JK/SK/Grade 1 are the parent who dropped them off, a sibling, or a family member with the electronic number or tag. Children are to be picked up within 15 minutes of the end of the worship service.

## Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy

### **Grow Zone (JK & SK & Grades 1-5) (continued)**

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8. If a child cries uncontrollably for more than 10 minutes and cannot be comforted, then inform the parent (if unknown, let Hall monitor find parents).
9. Notes of encouragement or gifts being given by the volunteer to their students, should be approved by the Children's ministry director.

### **Zone Camp**

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*All Zone Camp volunteers 18 years and older must sign the "Code of Ethics" (Appendix C), must agree with the Discipline Policy (page 8) and will require a police check. The police checks will only be viewed by the Safe Church Committee and the Church Administrator and will be held in strict confidence and locked in the church*

1. All volunteers must have attended and completed a "Leaders Shaping Class" and have completed an application for the screening process. Minors (17 and younger) may volunteer for service, provided that an adult is present. Minors may not care for child(ren) without adult supervision
2. All Zone Camp classes and activities will be conducted with at least two staff/volunteer, with at least one of these being an adult and has successfully completed a vulnerable persons/police record check.
3. Volunteer/staff will not meet alone with a child without another adult or leader nearby to observe.
4. Only one member of an immediate family should serve in a room at a given time (immediate family members such as mother/daughter or wife/husband). The two volunteers shall not both be male. The two volunteers must stay in the room until all children are gone. A volunteer should not meet or supervise a child alone, or in a private or isolated area. Program must be cancelled or combined if adequate supervision cannot be provided, this will decrease the potential for inappropriate behavior by volunteers and will reduce the risk of false accusations.
5. Whenever a children's program is in session, the classroom should allow for an unobstructed view of the room.
6. Classrooms held outside should adhere to the same safety guidelines as classrooms in the church building. Children will not meet without adequate supervision.
7. Children should not arrive more than fifteen minutes before the start of the meeting or activity, nor should they stay longer than fifteen minutes after the camp.
8. Children should not leave their classroom except for illness, to use the bathroom, or other compelling reason. Any medical problems should be reported immediately to the child's parent/legal guardian.

## Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy

### **Zone Camp** (continued)

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9. Whenever Zone Camp is in session, the classroom door should allow for unobstructed view of the room.
10. Church volunteers or staff transporting a child must have parental permission to do so. A consent form will be signed prior to the program beginning. (See appendix D). The number of passengers in any given vehicle will not exceed the number of seat belts in use.
11. Notes of encouragement or gifts being given by the volunteer to their students, should be approved by the Children's Ministry Director
12. All children attending Zone Camp must be registered and signed in/out each day by a parent/ legal guardian, or someone who has been approved to pick up the child on the registration form and must be 18 years or older.
13. Volunteer/staff cannot physically restrain a child in their care. VBS leaders should ask for assistance if a child behaves in a manner that seems to require more assistance. If the leader determines that assistance is needed, the child's parent or guardian will be notified immediately, and the child may be removed from the class until the parent or guardian arrives.
14. There will be periodical monitoring of hallways by a designated Hall Monitor.

# Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy

## Youth Groups (serves Jr High & Sr High)

*All Youth Group volunteers 18 years and older must sign the "Code of Ethics" (Appendix C), must agree with the Discipline Policy (page 8) and will require a police check. The police checks will only be viewed by the Safe Church Committee and the Church Administrator and will be held in strict confidence and locked in the church*

1. All volunteers in Youth must be members or have attended Fellowship Church regularly for the last six months or have filled in an application for a screening process.
2. From time to time, the Safe Church Team will sponsor a class about abuse for leaders and members of the Youth group. Topics may include date violence, biblical guidelines for dating relationships, awareness of the signs of abuse, a teenager's response to a teenage victim or abuser, or prevention of abuse
3. A Youth Parental Permission Form/Consent Waiver (Appendix F) must be filled out each year for each child at the beginning of the program season
4. Regardless of the ages, it is never appropriate for a youth group volunteer/helper and a youth group member to date each other.
5. A volunteer should not meet or supervise a youth alone, or in a private or isolated area. Program must be cancelled or combined if adequate supervision cannot be provided. This will decrease the potential for inappropriate behavior by volunteers and will reduce the risk of false accusations.
6. When the volunteers are a married couple attending a youth group function, another volunteer/helper must be present.
7. Youth group volunteers may meet privately with a youth group member once or twice and after that only with the permission of a parent and/or with another youth leader in attendance. Any meetings should only occur in a public place (example: door ajar or in a main area).
8. In the context of group activities, youth group volunteers/helpers should provide supervision of the youth in their care. Youth group volunteers/helpers should not hold a youth group function without appropriate or sufficient supervision. Youth group functions should be under the supervision of at least two persons, one a youth group volunteer/helper and the other being an adult volunteer. These guidelines also apply to activities away from the church site.
9. Youth Pastor or designated volunteers transporting a child must have parental permission to do so via a signed consent form (Appendix F). This includes functions such as campouts and sleepovers. Sleeping arrangements are to be in keeping with this policy.
10. The following precautions for offsite activities are to be observed as follows:
  - a. Prior to any off-site or overnight activities, written parental permissions are obtained using consent forms (Appendix F)
  - b. Youth Pastor keeps written plans and consent forms on file until the end of the church year season after which they are filed in a secured file kept by the Youth Pastor or administrative assistant.
  - c. Parents or legal guardians are responsible to pick up children within fifteen minutes of the scheduled end of a program or activity.



# Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy

## **Youth Groups (serves Jr High & Sr High) (continued)**

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11. Appropriate displays of affection are often part of conveying support and encouragement to one another. Displays of affection between volunteers/helpers and youth group members should be limited to such actions as a brief hug, an arm around the shoulder, and open-handed pat on the back, a handclasp or handshake, or a light touch to the forearm. These displays of affection should be restricted to public areas. A youth group leader's or member's right to refuse such a display will be respected.
12. Notes of encouragement or gifts being given by the volunteer/helpers to their students should be approved by the Youth Pastor.
13. A first aid kit is available, and its location is clearly marked. A first aid kit ought to be taken along on any youth program outing involving overnight stays.
- 14: Risk Prevention Policy applies to the Youth Program.

## **Social Media**

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Social media is a reality today. The instantaneous ability to communicate electronically has significantly infiltrated our lives today and how we communicate. It is essential for the church to engage in this area and ensure we do so with integrity.

"Risk Management and Christian Ministry do go together. Managing social media risks responsibly is about building a more effective ministry, one that enables leaders, ministers and volunteers to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by electronic communication. Managing risk is not about saying "no" to the ministry opportunities offered by social media; it's about saying "yes", responsibly and wisely.'

Definitions for the purpose of understanding following context:

Normal: Activity that happens on a regular basis, is typical.

Pattern: A repeated occurrence happening more than two times.

One-Off: Something done, or happening only once, not as part of a regular sequence.

Closed Group: It is known who is being communicated to. The communication involves at least two ministry leaders. The groups consist of at least 3 or more people.

Internal: Communication or viewing remains within Fellowship Church's building.

Private: One on one.

### **A. Onsite Digital Media Devices**

All onsite digital media devices e.g. computers, WIFI, are controlled with pass codes. Access is limited to staff and ministry leaders for the purpose of advancing Fellowship Church ministries. Any usage that does not glorify the Lord and His kingdom work is not permitted.

# Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy

## **Social Media** (continued)

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### **B. Communication with Youth**

Texting When texting the youth volunteer will normally contact youth in a closed group format. It is recognized that one-off communication can occur. If a pattern starts to develop where the communication is no longer a one-off communication the youth volunteer will address the issue by informing a second youth volunteer. The youth will be made aware of alternative healthy ways of communication.

Emailing/Facebook/Electronic communications. When emailing or using Facebook private messaging with youth, a second youth volunteer shall be informed that the correspondence is taking place. Other electronic communication include blogging, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, Pinterest, What's app or the next new thing.

### **C. Safe Practice Guidelines**

1. Communication normally should occur between 8 a.m. and 9 p.m.
2. Restrict content to facts, not feelings.
3. Questions should be kept simple requiring only a "yes" or "no answer.
4. All obscene or bad language, bullying, inappropriate discussions, and discrimination are prohibited. Any concerns of such conduct will be addressed by the leadership.
5. When dealing with an emotionally charged conversation, pastoral care, counselling and/or when issues are of a confidential nature, phone calls, and/or face to face meetings should be utilized.

### **D. Photography**

Pictures taken for the purpose of internal poster board displays or internal power point presentations are not part of Social media. Consent from parent(s)/guardian(s) is required when the photo is of a person under 18 years. Consent will be integrated into signed registration forms, or parental permission forms.

## **Fellowship Church Safe Church Policy**

### **Praise Team Leaders**

*All Praise team leaders must sign the "Code of Ethics" (Appendix C) and will require a police check every five years. The police checks will only be viewed by the Church Administrator. The church administrator will engage the SCC if there are any concerns with Police Checks. All police checks will be held in strict confidence and locked in the church.*

1. All active worship members over 18 on the Praise team must be members or have attended Fellowship Church regularly for the last six months or have filled in an application for volunteering in this program (Appendix E).
2. From time to time, the Safe Church Team will sponsor a class about abuse for leaders and members of the Praise Team.

### **Church Staff & Council Members**

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*All Staff and Council members must sign the "Code of Ethics" (Appendix C) and will require a police check every five years. The police checks will only be viewed by the Church Administrator. The church administrator will engage the SCC if there are any concerns with Police Checks. All police checks will be held in strict confidence and locked in the church.*

1. The Pastor and/or associates will engage in Pastoral Care as part of the regular work of a Pastor. Except in cases of emergency this should occur between the hours of 8:00am - 9:00pm. Specific individual counselling will preferably take place in the Pastor's office in the church. Counselling with individual members may occur *only* when another identified church professing member is present. Outside of regular pastoral visitation, the Pastor may meet privately with church members but it is advised these visits should only occur in a place where there are other persons present.
2. Specific counselling by other office bearers, or staff, and other volunteers with any member of Fellowship CRC should be limited to once or twice without the knowledge of their peer group. Subsequent meetings with members of the opposite sex or youth of the same sex should occur with another adult present or these visits should occur only in a place where there are other persons present. Avoid transporting a minor alone. Conduct your office to promote the spiritual and interpersonal growth and healing of the individuals, of the congregation, and the denomination you serve. Recognize when it is necessary to refer a congregant to an appropriate therapist.

## **Appendix A**

### **Fellowship Church Obligation to Disclose**

#### **The Ontario Child and Family Services Act**

The Ontario Child and Family Services Act provides, in part that a person who in the course of his/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 forthwith report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to a Children's Aid Society. (CFSA s 72 (3))

Further, the professional's duty to report overrides the provisions of any other Provincial Statute, specifically, those provisions that would otherwise prohibit disclosure by the professional or official (CFSA s 72 (7)). With respect to adults, there is no legal obligation currently within the Criminal Code of Canada for Pastors or Professionals to report on the abuse, unless there are minors still at risk. The failure to report pursuant to s 72 (3) of the CFSA attracts quasi-criminal consequences.

## Appendix B

### Fellowship Church SAFE CHURCH TEAM

**Purpose:**

To address the issue of abuse in Fellowship Christian Reformed Church through prevention education, policy development, and response to reported incidents of abuse.

**Reporting Relationship:**

The Safe Church Team will be responsible and report to the Council of Fellowship Christian Reformed Church.

**Duties:**

- To provide education about the dynamics of abuse and thereby strive for abuse prevention.
- To establish and monitor a procedure for reporting abuse and for dealing with reports of abuse.
- To establish and maintain a support system for victims of abuse, person(s) reporting abuse, person(s) accused of abuse, as well as others who are affected by the abuse.
- To develop, implement and update the policies, procedures, and guidelines.
- To ensure adherence to the policies, procedures, and guidelines.
- To conduct an annual evaluation of the Safe Church Team's effectiveness.
  - To ensure that all members of the team take an oath of confidentiality.

**Membership:**

Constituency: The team will consist of three to five persons. They will be members of Fellowship Christian Reformed Church, and positions on the team will hopefully be persons who would have formal education in the social sciences and/or have expertise in the area of abuse response. A gender balance will try to be maintained.

**Appointment, Term of Membership, and Accountability:**

Members will be appointed by the Council of Fellowship Christian Reformed Church and will serve for three years, renewable.

The makeup of the Safe Church Team will be reviewed annually.

The Safe Church Team will be accountable to the Council of Fellowship CRC for reporting purposes.

**Meetings:**

The Safe Church Team will meet as needed, but at least twice per year.

**Structure:**

The Safe Church Team will select a chairperson and secretary to serve for terms of one year, renewable up to six years.

## Appendix C

### CODE OF ETHICS FOR VOLUNTEERS, STAFF, AND LEADERS IN CHILD AND YOUTH/VULNERABLE PEOPLE PROGRAMS

#### **Believing that God is calling me to serve children/youth/vulnerable people in this congregation . . .**

1. My priority in teaching/supervising/leading children/youth/vulnerable, will be to seek the welfare of the children/youth/vulnerable physically, socially, educationally, and spiritually.
2. I will also try to understand and respect the child's/youth's/vulnerable persons' cultural background.
3. I will give the parent(s) or guardian(s) full information about the program I am teaching/supervising/leading, and what time it begins and ends.
4. I will try not do anything that will damage a child's/youth's/vulnerable person's trust. I will try to protect the child/youth/vulnerable from all forms of abuse while he or she is in my care.
5. If I suspect that a child/youth/vulnerable may be hurt by the abusive actions or attitudes of another person, I will report that suspicion to a responsible person so that it can be investigated properly.
6. If I wish to talk to the child/youth/vulnerable alone, it will be within the sight and sound of other people.
7. I will answer a child's/youth's/vulnerable person's questions openly and honestly.
8. I will work with the children/youth/vulnerable to set some agreed upon guidelines for acceptable behavior within the group. I will expect the children/youth/vulnerable to act on the basis of those guidelines, and if a child/youth/vulnerable consistently breaks them, I will seek help from parents, guardians, and others to assist me in responding to the child/youth/vulnerable.
9. If a child/youth/vulnerable is distressed, I will try to offer comfort and help. I will encourage the child/youth/vulnerable to find the appropriate help for their needs.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of Fellowship Church's Code of Ethics, Discipline Policy & Risk Prevention Policy.

I also had a chance to review the policies and understand my duties as a volunteer. I am aware that the Safe Church Committee is available to answer any of my questions or concerns regarding this policy and flowchart.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer/Staff Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix D (page 1)**  
**Fellowship Church**  
**Seedlings/Grow Zone/ Consent Waiver**

**STUDENT(S) INFO**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date (dd/mm/yyyy): \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date (dd/mm/yyyy): \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date (dd/mm/yyyy): \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date (dd/mm/yyyy): \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Medical information:**

Health Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ (voluntary)  
Are there any specific medical problems? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, please answer the following questions:  
The person is allergic to: \_\_\_\_\_  
Describe other medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_  
The person is under medical care provided by:  
Doctor's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Doctor's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Every effort will be made to contact parents / guardian before medical treatment is sought

Health Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ (voluntary)  
Are there any specific medical problems? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, please answer the following questions:  
The person is allergic to: \_\_\_\_\_  
Describe other medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_  
The person is under medical care provided by:  
Doctor's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Doctor's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Every effort will be made to contact parents / guardian before medical treatment is sought

Appendix D (page 2)

Fellowship Church  
Seedlings/Grow Zone/ Permission Form

Health Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ (voluntary)

Are there any specific medical problems? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, please answer the following questions:

The person is allergic to: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe other medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

The person is under medical care provided by:

Doctor's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Doctor's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Every effort will be made to contact parents / guardian before medical treatment is sought

Health Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ (voluntary)

Are there any specific medical problems? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, please answer the following questions:

The person is allergic to: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe other medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

The person is under medical care provided by:

Doctor's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Doctor's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Every effort will be made to contact parents / guardian before medical treatment is sought

**Photographs:** As a parent or guardian of this child, I hereby consent to the use of photographs/videotape taken during the course of the program's year for publicity, promotional and/or educational purposes (including publications, presentation or broadcast via newspaper, internet or other media sources). I do this with full knowledge and consent and waive all claims for compensation for use, or for damages.

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I give consent for Fellowship Church to photograph my child for youth programs and events.

\_\_\_\_ No, I do not authorize Fellowship Church to photograph for my child for any event



Fellowship Church  
Seedlings/Grow Zone/ Permission Form

**PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTACT INFO**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell/work #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**EMERGENCY CONTACT INFO (Other than Parent/Guardian)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relation to student: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell/work #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E

### Fellowship Church Application for Volunteer Ministry Provider Position

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City Province Postal Code

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
mm/dd/yyyy

Ministry Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check which is true or false for each of the following statements.

T F I have attended Fellowship Christian Reformed Church for at least six months.

T F I have never been investigated for, charged with, or convicted of child endangerment or abuse or any other sexual crime.

If you have not been able to check "true" boxes to the above three statements, please provide details and explain why that should not stand in the way of your serving in the respective ministry position.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please describe why you want to serve in the indicated ministry position:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please provide two personal references who are not related to you, and who know your personal qualities.

Please let them know they may be contacted by a church representative:

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I hereby authorize people named as references above to respond to questions concerning my character and to provide any information relevant to my suitability for the indicated ministry position. I also understand that a Criminal Reference and Vulnerability Check will be required when the position deals directly with minors and agree to obtain this check.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Appendix F (page 1)**

**Fellowship Church  
Youth Parental Permission Form / Consent Waiver**

**Description of Activities:** Students may attend events that are held at Fellowship Church or other venues as determined by the Youth Pastor. They may travel by bus, van, or in cars with drivers approved by the Youth Pastor. Information on individual events and activities will be available through flyers, newsletters, website, social media, and emails during the year.

**I give consent and permission** for \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in all activities as described above and to travel to the province(s),state(s), and country(ies), anytime during the period of September 1st, 20\_\_ – August 31st, 20\_\_.

**I understand** there is inherent risk of injury and/or sickness to the minor in connection with this program. Further, I understand that the minor may be subject to greater risks of injury, accident, sickness, disease, and death while participating in these activities.

Notwithstanding these things, **I fully indemnify and hold harmless Fellowship Church** from any claims whatsoever that relate to the minor in connection with any Fellowship Youth activities, including attorney fees, cost and expenses Fellowship Church may incur in connection to any injury, death, or loss the minor may suffer, unless there is gross negligence on the part of the leader of Fellowship Church.

**I understand** that if the above-named participant chooses to disregard the rules and directions given by his/her leader, he/she may be sent home at my expense.

**This authorization will remain active until the program is terminated, unless sooner revoked in writing, delivered to the adult sponsor of the Fellowship Church activity.**

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix F (page 2)

Fellowship Church  
Youth Parental Permission Form / Consent Waiver

**STUDENT(S) INFO**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date (dd/mm/yyyy): \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date (dd/mm/yyyy): \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date (dd/mm/yyyy): \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Medical information:**

Health Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ (voluntary)

Are there any specific medical problems? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, please answer the following questions:

The person is allergic to: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe other medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

The person is under medical care provided by:

Doctor's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Doctor's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Every effort will be made to contact parents / guardian before medical treatment is sought

Health Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ (voluntary)

Are there any specific medical problems? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, please answer the following questions:

The person is allergic to: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe other medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

The person is under medical care provided by:

Doctor's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Doctor's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Every effort will be made to contact parents / guardian before medical treatment is sought

**Appendix F (page 3)**

**Fellowship Church  
Youth Parental Permission Form / Consent Waiver**

Health Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ (voluntary)

Are there any specific medical problems? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, please answer the following questions:

The person is allergic to: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe other medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

The person is under medical care provided by:

Doctor's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Doctor's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Every effort will be made to contact parents / guardian before medical treatment is sought

Health Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ (voluntary)

Are there any specific medical problems? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, please answer the following questions:

The person is allergic to: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe other medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

The person is under medical care provided by:

Doctor's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Doctor's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Every effort will be made to contact parents / guardian before medical treatment is sought

**Photographs:** As a parent or guardian of this child, I hereby consent to the use of photographs/videotape taken during the course of the program's year for publicity, promotional and/or educational purposes (including publications, presentation or broadcast via newspaper, internet or other media sources). I do this with full knowledge and consent and waive all claims for compensation for use, or for damages.

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I give consent for Fellowship Church to photograph my child for youth programs and events.

\_\_\_\_ No, I do not authorize Fellowship Church to photograph for my child for any event

Appendix F (page 4)

Fellowship Church  
Youth Parental Permission Form / Consent Waiver

**PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTACT INFO**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell/work #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**EMERGENCY CONTACT INFO (Other than Parent/Guardian)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relation to student: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell/work #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix G  
Fellowship Church  
Off-Site Permission Form**

To be completed by the leaders before distributing to participants/parents:

Details of Event:

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Adult Supervisors:

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Fee for Event: \_\_\_\_\_

The group will leave from the church at \_\_\_\_\_

*Please arrive at least 5 minutes before departure time.*

The group will return to the church at approximately \_\_\_\_\_

Transportation plan:

- Adult Supervisors will be driving.
- Car pool of parent volunteers and adult leaders.
- Group will travel on a bus.
- Parents are responsible to arrange rides.

Please return this form to

\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Coordinator

Due Date

To be completed by the parents:

I give my permission for \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Son / Daughter

Event

described above to occur on \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Event

We have arranged to have our son/daughter

picked up by a parent or sibling.

picked up by a friend named \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Print

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix H

### Fellowship Church Incident Report

This form may be used to report and file a record of an incident relating to illness, injuries, accidents, first aid treatment or advice, complaints or concerns about behaviour, altercations, or any situation in which a person feels physically, emotionally, or sexually threatened or injured while within the parameters of Fellowship Church programs or activities.

Name of Reporting Person Completing this Form:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Report: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Incident: (use reverse side if more writing space needed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Witness(es):

\_\_\_\_\_

Church Program or Activity:

\_\_\_\_\_

Action(s) Taken:

G Informed parent or legal guardian.

G Informed program leader.

G Consulted or informed the following person(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Describe Action Taken:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Note: If the incident involved action with minors which may be interpreted as a form of abuse, Family and Children Services and the Fellowship Church Safe Church Team members must be informed immediately.**



## Appendix I

### Fellowship Church SIGNS AND/OR SYMPTOMS OF CHILD ABUSE

#### A. Pre-school Children

1. Regression of behaviour to an earlier stage of development e.g. baby talk, thumb sucking, wetting the bed.
2. Change of sleeping or eating habits, generally dramatic, and continuing for a period of time.
3. Change in social behaviour to becoming aggressive, or becoming withdrawn, excessive crying, or clinging.
4. Physical manifestations like loss of bowel control, bed wetting, frequent urination, headaches, stomach aches, breathing difficulties, complaints of sore throats, accompanied by gagging, stains in the child's under clothes.
5. Exhibit signs of fear around a family member or a familiar person, or fear of a familiar place or object.
6. Fear of being touched or shying away from physical contact. Resistance to being diapered or assisting in the bathroom.
7. Use of explicit language or sexual behaviour that is beyond the child's comprehension or life experience.
8. Attempting sexual behaviour with other children or attending adults.
9. Unexplained injuries and/or bruises, repeated injuries blamed on the child's carelessness, multiple bruises sustained in one event, or bruise to child's midsection, back, head, or back of thighs. Also signs of scalding, burning, or distinctive bruising e.g. in the shape of a belt buckle.
10. Name calling toward other children, bullying behaviour, sulking/brooding.

#### B. School Age Children

1. Physical manifestations such as loss of bowel control, with addition of complaints of pain, irritation, soreness, redness on the bottom.
2. Pattern of injuries, multiple injuries, injuries about the face or neck, no complaint about an obvious physical discomfort, avoids explaining what happened.
3. Change in sleeping and eating patterns, dramatic, not of short duration.
4. Unusual fears, such as a familiar person, a room, a particular object, or fear of new experiences.
5. Poor concentration in the classroom.
6. Exhibits adult-pleasing behaviours, strives for perfection, acts miserable if fails.
7. Engages in self-injury; engages in excessive masturbation or masturbation in public setting.

## Appendix I

### Fellowship Church SIGNS AND/OR SYMPTOMS OF CHILD ABUSE

#### **B. School Age Children (continued)**

8. Acts rageful and out of control; expresses anger through destruction.
9. Shy about physical touch.
10. Exhibits sexual behaviour beyond comprehension or maturity level. Behaves in sexual manner with other children or adults.
11. Exhibits signs of needing to be in control of others or situation, bullies' others.
12. Shows hostility and distrust of adults, mood swings and irritability, and violent disruptions.
13. Acts out by hoarding food and toys, lying, stealing, assaulting.
14. Has frequent absences from school or other scheduled events either because of being punished or an attempt to hide the bruises.
15. Exhibits low self-esteem, particularly sensitive to criticism.

#### **C. Adolescents**

1. Eating disorders, use of laxatives, and unexplained and dramatic changes in weight.
2. Change in sleep patterns, including excessive sleeping, sleeping during the day, and insomnia.
3. Performance in school plunges.
4. Perfectionist and excessively harsh on oneself, attempt to please adults, stunned by any form of criticism or complaint.
5. Sexually provocative- or behave in an asexual manner, denying body changes and sexual development.
6. Experimentation with drugs or alcohol.
7. Self-abusive behaviour including cutting oneself, preoccupation with danger and weapons, suicide attempts.
8. Truancy from school.
9. Cruelty to animals, bullying younger children.
10. Numb to feelings, unable to be emotionally supportive to others.
11. Few friends, changes friends often.
12. Depression and other signs of withdrawal and avoidance.
13. Pregnancy.
14. Refusing to attend to basic hygiene.
15. Rectal and vaginal infections.

## Appendix I

### Fellowship Church SIGNS AND/OR SYMPTOMS OF CHILD ABUSE

#### D. Parental Behaviours and Home Life

1. Does not attend meetings about the child, does not show an interest in the child, is critical of child, not complimentary of child.
2. Constantly puts the child down, uses harsh words to describe child, uses threats and unflattering language.
3. Speaks of child as underachiever, child lets people down; child is less than brothers and sisters.
4. Speaks of child in way that sounds romantic, too grown up, too special, too sugary, too perfect.
5. Hostile, closed-minded, overprotective, isolating; doesn't let others into the house, won't participate in activities with other parents. Makes excuses about failing to do tasks, talks about things not being good at home.
6. Other reports of suspicious behaviour. The greatest predictor of abusive behaviour is past behaviour. Were there concerns that an older brother of sister may have been mistreated?

## Appendix J

### Fellowship Church RESPONDING TO A CHILD'S REPORT OF ABUSE

1. Take the child seriously when he/she tells the story.
2. Avoid judgmental statements, such as, "I think you had a bad dream."
3. Do not appear frightened or disgusted by the child's story since this may cause the child to stop talking or to believe you are upset with the child.
4. Do not try to convince the child that the story isn't true or that it did not happen the way the child reports it did.
5. Do not make promises to the child that you will not tell anyone what has been shared with you.
6. Remind the child that whatever happened wasn't the fault of the child.
7. Remind the child that it was a good decision to tell someone what happened to him/her.
8. Do tell the child that you want to find help, so the incident can be prevented from happening again.
9. Do not offer child a reward for telling the story or promising a gift if the child tells another adult.
10. Reassure the child that he/she is a special person who does not deserve to be hurt by anyone.
11. Do not frighten the child by talking about police involvement or medical examinations to verify the complaint; instead, share with the child that other people need to know about what happened and they will talk to the child later.
12. Do not ask the child to show you any bruises that are beneath the child's clothing; only examine those bruises which may appear on the child's skin or in the mouth; if a child insists on showing a bruise beneath the clothing, ask another adult to witness the bruise with you or tell the child you believe him/her without seeing the bruise.
13. Do not investigate the child's story; rather listen to the story and take notes immediately afterwards to refresh your memory as to what the child told you.
14. Do not tell the child he/she has been abused.
15. Offer to support the child, remind the child you care about him/her.
16. Follow through in consecutive weeks and months by speaking to the child and offering support to him/her, whether an investigation is being pursued.

## Appendix K

### Fellowship Church RESPONDING TO PARENT(S) WHO ARE NOTIFIED OF AN ABUSE REPORT

1. Remain calm and non-judgmental.
2. Anyone who makes a report to the police or CAS is granted anonymity, so do not identify the reporter unless you are given permission to do so.
3. Do not share statements by the child to a parent or relative who is implicated by the child as an abuser; it is advisable not to share the child's statements with anyone other than the authorities until the identity of the abuser can be determined and whether or not the child can be protected from contact with that person.
4. Do not attempt to convince a parent that the alleged abuse happened or did not happen; neither should you attempt to discredit the child nor cast suspicion on to the alleged abuser.
5. Do not investigate with the parent what may be happening in the home; do not share information with a parent that has not been shared with the authorities.
6. Do not make promises to a parent about the outcome of the investigation.
7. Listen to any information the parent may offer about the incident and record it immediately after the conversation; report additional information to authorities through the reporting procedures outlined in the church's policy.
8. Assure the parent(s) of your support and ask if there are additional needs at the moment.
9. Suggest resources for the parent(s) including books or literature that may be helpful to them.
10. Allow the parent(s) to express their disbelief, anger, and grief; the parent(s) may be in shock or denial at the mention of abuse allegations.
11. Do not minimize the type of abuse, its impact on the child, or its harm to the child.
12. Assure the parent(s) of the confidential nature of the report and the need to maintain confidentiality unless disclosure is necessary to protect the well-being of other children.