



ABUSE PREVENTION PLAN

TRAINING MANUAL

Approved September 2013

STEPS TO BECOME APPROVED:

1. Review Abuse Prevention Plan: Policies and Procedures and sign declaration form.
2. Get police record request form from the church for Working with Vulnerable Sector.
3. Apply for Police Record Check.
4. Fill out the application form.
5. Review pre-interview package – included: church vision statement, pre-interview questions (testimony), and training manual.
6. Provide the church with police record check, copy of ID, and application form.
7. Interview
8. Approval decision
9. Complete an orientation training within six months of approval

TRINITY EMC PREVENTION PLAN TRAINING MANUAL

GOAL OF THE PREVENTION PLAN:

The importance of having a prevention plan lies in the responsibilities we have. This includes:

- our legal responsibilities
- our promise of safety to the community and the parents of the children we supervise
- our calling from God to be good stewards and His earthly representatives.

In order to effectively minister to children, it is important that Trinity EMC is viewed as a safe place for parents to leave their children. Therefore, the prevention plan has been put in place to ensure due diligence in creating a safe environment, and it is essential that each person who will be working with children and youth on behalf of Trinity EMC understands their role in protecting the children, the church and themselves.

POLICE CHECKS & INTERVIEWS:

Prior to beginning ministry, each worker should provide an up-to-date police check. Receipts can be presented to the Church Office and the church will reimburse the cost of the police check. Police checks should be renewed every **five years**.

Also, an interview with the applicant should be conducted by two eligible interviewers. Qualified interviewers include members from the Screening Team and members of Board of Elders and Board of Deacons who have been trained in the Prevention Plan. Interviewers may not be related to the applicant where applicants are defined as any of the following: spouse, parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sibling or spouse of such. Interviews are to take place within the church.

A copy of a valid driver's licence or government issued ID with photo & signature (such as a passport and new Ontario health cards) is to be provided to the church office.

REGISTRATION & SIGN IN AND OUT PROCEDURES:

It is essential that each child is always accounted for while under the care of Trinity EMC. All participants should complete a registration form which includes: full name and contact information for child and parent / guardian, who 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. However, if the parent/guardian is present within the building while the child is

under Trinity EMC's care (such as during Bright Beginnings), the registration form may not be necessary.

For each children ministry, a procedure for signing in and out children should be established. The exact parameters and requirements will likely vary depending upon the type of event and age of the children. It is the responsibility of the ministry leader to establish an appropriate procedure and that it is followed by all fellow ministry workers.

Generally speaking, at the beginning of each session/event, attendance should be taken to so that the ministry workers know who is under their care. This is particularly important in the case of emergencies to ensure that each child is accounted for.

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

THE TWO-PERSON RULE

The Two-Person Rule requires that a minimum of two workers should be present for all programs or events. This is for the protection of the worker as well as the child. No worker should counsel a child/youth alone. If one-to-one counselling is requested, a member of the pastoral staff should first be advised.

SUPERVISION FOR WASHROOM BREAKS

Children (other than youth) should NOT be sent to the bathroom alone. They should be accompanied by a ministry worker of the same gender. The doors to the bathrooms should remain propped open and the worker should remain outside the bathroom and wait for the child. At no time should the worker be alone with the child in the bathroom with the door closed. Nor should the worker ever enter the cubicle with the child.

If a preschool child (age 4-6) requires assistance, the worker should ensure the door remains propped open and may stand within the open cubicle door to assist. Another worker should stand outside the bathroom to ensure the protection of the child and the worker. The workers should consider the privacy of the child and ensure that the parent is informed of this occurrence.

DISCIPLINING A CHILD

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

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

To help prevent behavioural problems from starting, leaders should clearly state the rules and expected behaviour. 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 pre-school child (age 4-6) who is crying
- Speaking to a child at eye level
- Holding a child's hands when speaking, listening, walking him/her
- Gently holding the child's shoulder or hand to keep their attention or redirect the child's behaviour
- Putting your arm around a child's shoulder when comforting them
- Patting a child on the head, hand, shoulder or back to affirm them

Inappropriate displays of affection include:

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

Generally speaking, it is important to be mindful of how actions may be perceived. This also extends to the photography of an individual child not within a group setting.

NON-SPONSORED OFF-PREMISES CONTACT

Ministry workers are strongly discouraged from meeting with children outside the context of the ministry. If separate counselling 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 worker who has been approved by the prevention plan.

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 Children (under grade 6) must be directed solely to the parent or guardian.

Communication with a youth via email, text message, Facebook, or any other on-line 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. Ministry personnel will limit their communication with youth to daytime hours (8:00am to 11:00pm). Ministry personnel will refrain from using Social Media networks for counseling or pastoral care.

If a communication is received by ministry personnel from a youth 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.

TEMC's Social Media Policy applies to all representatives of TEMC. Ministry personnel 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 ministry personnel who have been trained in TEMC's Plan to Protect Policy procedures.

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 Children's and Youth activities and programs, parental permission will be secured via the registration form, or on TEMC's 'Photography Release Form', prior to taking photographs of children and youth. No photographs will intentionally be taken of children or youth for whom we do not have parental permission; Any photographs containing an image of a child or youth, for which we do not have parental permission, will not be published, and will be destroyed.

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

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

When archiving and filing photographs and video shots of children and youth, 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.

IN THE CASE OF AN INCIDENT OR ABUSE ALLEGATION

If a worker witnesses a situation which puts a child at risk, the worker shall first ensure the safety of the child by removing him/her from the supervision of the offending worker. The ministry leader should be advised of the situation, and the inappropriate behaviour should be

addressed with the offender. If the incident concerns the ministry leader, a member of the pastoral team, Board of Elders or Board of Deacons should be advised.

It is the responsibility of all ministry workers to ensure that they disclose any evidence or suspicion of abuse. A full report should be made if a child has suffered physical harm, has been sexually molested or exploited, required medical treatment while under the care of Trinity EMC, suffered emotional harm or suffers from a mental, emotional or developmental condition. Ministry leaders, members of the pastoral staff, Board of Elders or Board of Deacons should be advised of the situation to deal with accordingly.

In the event that an allegation has been made which involves the church and has been made public, it is essential that ministry workers do not speak with the media regarding the issue.