



Volunteer Essentials



Our Heart at SEEDS:

Vision Statement

Cultivating a healthy, thriving Conestoga Valley community.

Mission Statement

Enriching lives by connecting our community to Housing Resources, Educational Supports and Health Services.

Statement of Faith

1. The Bible is the inspired Word of God.
2. There is only one God, who exists eternally as three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is good and all loving.
3. All people are created in God's image and matter deeply to Him. The core message of the Bible is that God loves people and invites them to live in communion with Himself and in a reconciled community with each other.
4. Jesus Christ came to earth as an infant, lived a sinless life, lived in community with others, and sacrificed his life in the ultimate act of selfless love. He rose from the dead. This was done, in love, so that all can have the opportunity for a reconciled relationship with God and with each other.
5. We are to be examples of Jesus to those we interact with in the world.

Core Values

Selfless Love - We desire to love and serve all people as we follow the example of Jesus.

Empowerment - We desire to make resources & tools available for all people to flourish.

Equity - We desire to serve everyone regardless of religion, ethnicity, race, gender, sexuality, or political affiliation.

Deliberate Partnership - We desire to build intentionally collaborative relationships.

Stewardship - We desire to honor the value and giftedness of all people.

We want our volunteers, employees, and board members to understand the atmosphere and culture of SEEDS, as we live out our Core Values within our community.

Selfless Love:

We value honest, kind transparency in our record keeping, our written and verbal communication, and in our interactions.

We value hospitality and being welcoming. We want to intentionally see people, to see beyond circumstances, recognize the humanity in all we interact with, and choose kindness and grace in our interactions.

We value humility. We want to be learners and listeners. We want to be self-reflective, continuing to recognize what we don't know or understand.

Empowerment:

We value intentional celebration. Life is hard and messy. In the midst of that, we choose to be intentional about seeing the good and pausing to celebrate it.

We value dreaming big. We want to be people who are excited about new ideas, creative ways to engage with our community, and problem solving.

We value breaking barriers. We believe that all people are created equal and need the opportunity, tools, and resources to grow into the gifts and talents they have. We want to come alongside, take the time to learn what barriers are in the way of a thriving, healthy life for those we interact with, and be a part of breaking the barriers that are in their way.

Equity:

We value dignity. In the way we talk to and about people and with the images we use in our social media/website/communications, we will portray dignity and hope.

We value behavior that models care and safety for all. We want to respect the human rights of all people and protect beneficiaries and children from exploitation and abuse. We will avoid inappropriate physical or sexual relationships with other volunteers, staff, participants, and community members.

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Deliberate Partnerships:

We value feedback. We will listen to what other businesses and community members see as current needs.

We value “failing fast.” While we hold strong to our 3 core focus areas and to our core values, within that, we don’t want to be so committed to one way of doing or seeing something that we miss the other possible opportunities that might be there for us & members of our community.

Stewardship:

We value respect. We want to treat all volunteers, participants, community members, and employees with respect. We want to avoid offensive and insensitive language, and we desire to make an effort to understand other cultures.

Mandated Reporting

All volunteers who work with youth are mandated reporters as of January 1, 2015. This includes all SEEDS volunteers. Please review this policy and sign the receipt of acknowledgement at the end of this handbook. SEEDS will provide you with this information yearly and will ask for a signed receipt at that time.

1. Discussions between you and your student are considered confidential, unless they share information that they may harm themselves, someone else or that they are being harmed. Any information along these lines must be reported immediately to Child Line (see below), and then to the Director of the program in which you are involved.
2. If you suspect child abuse you will need to report the suspected abuse. You do not need to know all the details at the time of reporting. You can allow authorities to figure out the details. If a child directly discloses, please do not ask too many questions regarding the abuse. You can allow authorities to ask further questions.
3. Reports of child abuse should be based on having a reasonable cause to suspect or reasonable suspicion on what you heard, saw, what you know about the family and what you observed from the situation.
4. If someone tells you that they have been abused, please respond immediately that you believe them and are grateful that they shared that information with you.

How do you report?

Call Child Line at 1-800-932-0313 immediately. If the victim did not disclose to you directly and you are unsure about the situation, please contact SEEDS personnel with questions and observations.

1. Immediately thereafter inform SEEDS personnel.
2. Submit your written report as soon as possible. (See report attached). The reporting form can also be accessed on the PA Department of Human Services using this link http://www.dhs.state.pa.us/cs/groups/webcontent/documents/form/c_137044.pdf.

What happens to the one making the report?

1. The one making the report may call to find out whether the report was deemed indicated, founded or unfounded; and what, if any, services were provided to protect the child.
2. The identity of the one making the report is kept CONFIDENTIAL, except in limited circumstances (which do not include revealing the reporter's identity to the child/family or perpetrator).
3. You will receive a report back after 90 days regarding action taken after an initial report was made.

What is "Child Abuse"?

Intentionally (a), knowingly (b), or recklessly (c), doing any of the following (d):

Definition of Above Terms:

- a. Intentionally, meaning that you meant to cause the abuse by your act or omission.
- b. Knowingly, meaning that while you did not intend to cause the abuse, you nonetheless committed an act or omission which you knew would result in abuse.
- c. Recklessly, meaning that while you did not intend to cause the abuse, nor did you know it would happen, you nonetheless created and disregarded a substantial and unjustifiable risk that your act or omission would result in abuse; Recklessness is a gross deviation from reasonable conduct.

d. Any of the Following, the next and last step down the ladder of culpability is “negligence,” which means that you neither intended to cause the abuse, nor did you know your act or omission was abusive, nor did you create and disregard a substantial and unjustifiable risk that your act or omission would result in abuse; you simply were careless and failed to exercise the standard of care of a reasonably prudent person. Negligent acts or omissions do NOT constitute “child abuse.”

- 1. Causing bodily injury to a child through any “recent” (i.e. within two years) act or failure to act.
- 2. Fabricating, feigning or intentionally exaggerating or inducing a medical symptom or disease
 - which results in a potentially harmful medical evaluation or treatment to the child through any
 - recent act.
- 3. Causing or substantially contributing to serious mental injury to a child through any act or failure
 - to act or a series of such acts or failures to act.
- 4. Causing sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any act or failure to act.
- 5. Creating a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- 6. Creating a likelihood of sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- 7. Causing serious physical neglect of a child.
- 8. Engaging in any of the following recent acts:
 - a. Kicking, biting, throwing, burning, stabbing or cutting a child in a manner that endangers the child.
 - b. Unreasonably restraining or confining a child, based on consideration of the method, location or the duration of the restraint or confinement.
 - c. Forcefully shaking a child under one year of age.
 - d. Forcefully slapping or otherwise striking a child under one year of age.
 - e. Interfering with the breathing of a child.
 - f. Causing a child to be present at a location while a violation of 18 Pa.C.S. § 7508.2 (relating to operation of methamphetamine laboratory) is occurring, provided that the violation is being investigated by law enforcement.
 - g. Leaving a child unsupervised with an individual, other than the child’s parent, who the actor knows or reasonably should have known:
 - i. Is required to register as a Tier II or Tier III sexual offender under 42 Pa.C.S. Ch. 97 Subch. H (relating to registration of sexual offenders), where the victim of the sexual offense was under 18 years of age when the crime was committed.
 - ii. Has been determined to be a sexually violent predator under 42 Pa.C.S. § 9799.24 (relating to assessments) or any of its predecessors.
 - iii. Has been determined to be a sexually violent delinquent child as defined in 42 Pa.C.S. § 9799.12 (relating to definitions).
- 9. Causing the death of the child through any act or failure to act.

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What is not “Child Abuse”?

Sexual Abuse is not consensual activities between a child who is 14 years of age or older and another person who is 14 years of age or older and whose age is within four years of child’s age.

1. A few comments on consent:

- a. A child under the age of 13 cannot legally give consent to sexual activities with any person (adult or another child)
- b. A child who is 13, 14 or 15 may legally consent to sexual activities, but not if the person is 4 or more years older than the youth. For example, a 14-year-old can consent to sexual activity with a 17-year-old, but such activities with a person who is 18 years old (or older) can lead to criminal charges related to statutory sexual assault.
- c. Youth who are 16 years or older are able to legally consent to sexual activities.
- d. Consent does not apply when you have a youth under the age of 18 where the sexual activity involves an adult who is in a position of power/influence over the youth (teacher, pastor, coach, etc.) Here is where then the criminal offense of institutional sexual assault comes into play.

2. Reasonable parental discipline – the use of reasonable force by a parent on or against the parent’s child, for the purpose of supervision, control and discipline;

3. The use of reasonable force on a child by that child’s parent or person responsible for that child’s welfare, constituting incidental or minor physical contact, or other actions designed to maintain order and control/avoid greater physical harm;

4. The omission of medical care to a child, based on the sincerely held religious beliefs of that child’s parents/close relatives, which beliefs are consistent with the tenets of a bona fide religion, provided that such omission of medical care does not cause the death of the child;

5. Environmental Factors – injuries resulting solely from environmental factors, such as inadequate housing, furnishings, income, clothing and medical care, that are beyond the control of the parent or person responsible for the child’s welfare with whom the child resides.

Confidentiality Policy

Employees, volunteers, interns and board members of SEEDS are bound by ethical and legal codes to protect the confidentiality and privacy of our clients and to protect and maintain the confidentiality of all information learned about clients, their family members and acquaintances in the course of providing services to them. Confidential communications include conversations, reports, forms, correspondence, and computer-generated communications with, about or involving in any way any participant of SEEDS Programs. Minors are entitled to confidentiality also, and only the guardian of the minor can give permission to release confidential information. Access to documentation shall be limited to an “as needed/need to know” basis.

Conestoga Valley SEEDS and its employees have an ethical and legal obligation to respect the privacy of our clients, and to protect and maintain the confidentiality of all information that we obtain about clients, their friends, acquaintances and family members in the course of providing services to them. Client records are legally protected confidential records and must be treated as such. It is unethical to discuss clients with family or friends, unless you are ordered to do so by a court or otherwise required by law.

Client confidentiality will be broken only under certain conditions.

1. When the client is a threat to others or self. If a staff member or volunteer suspects that a child is being neglected or abused, a report to ChildLine (800-932-0313) is required.
2. If client files are subpoenaed.

Code of Conduct for Volunteers

SEEDS is committed to providing a safe environment for participants of all ages and has policies in place to prevent and detect child abuse and molestation. As a volunteer working with minors or adult participants on SEEDS behalf, you will be held to the highest standards of conduct, including, but not limited to the following:

- You will treat minors and adult participants with respect at all times, regardless of their race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, disability, medical condition, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.
- You will not engage in:
 - Physical abuse: hitting, spanking, shaking, slapping, unnecessary restraints
 - Verbal abuse: degrading comments, threatening, cursing
 - Sexual abuse: inappropriate touching, exposing yourself, etc.
 - Mental abuse: shaming, humiliation, cruelty
 - Neglect: withholding food, water, shelter, bathroom privileges
- You will immediately report suspected child abuse or neglect to your Program Director and follow the guidelines for Mandated Reporting.
- You will not work one-on-one with minors in a private or secluded setting.
- You will not stare at or comment on minors' or adult participants bodies.
- You will not use profanity or tell inappropriate jokes around minors or adult participants.
- You will not discuss your sex life around minors or adult participants or involve minors or adult participants in your personal affairs.
- You will not have sexually oriented materials, including pornography, around minors or adult participants.
- You will follow your program's policies regarding off-hours contact with minors or adult participants.
- You will not use or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs around minors or adult participants, or purchase alcohol, drugs, or cigarettes for minors or adult participants.
- You will stop as soon as is safely possible the following behaviors between minors or adult participants while participating in SEEDS programming:
 - Hazing
 - Sexual Activity
 - Games of Truth or Dare
 - Bullying
 - Fighting
 - Ridicule or Humiliation
 - Derogatory name-calling

Failure to follow these or any other standards set forth by your program will subject you to immediate dismissal from the program and, if warranted, criminal prosecution. You will not be entitled to defense and indemnification by SEEDS in the event you are sued or criminally prosecuted.



DISCLOSURE STATEMENT APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

Required by the Child Protective Service

Law 23 Pa. C.S. Section 6344.2 (relating to volunteers having contact with children)

I swear/affirm that I am seeking a volunteer position and AM NOT required to obtain a certification through the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), as:

- the position I am applying for is unpaid; and
- I have been a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the previous ten-year period.

I understand that if I have not been a resident of Pennsylvania during the entirety of the previous ten-year period, but have received certification from the FBI since establishing residency, I must provide a copy of the certification to my employer and am not required to obtain any additional FBI certifications.

I swear/affirm that, if providing certifications that have been obtained within the preceding 60 months, I have not been disqualified from service as outlined below or have not been convicted of an offense similar in nature to a crime listed below under the laws or former laws of the United States or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of this Commonwealth.

I swear/affirm that I have not been named as a perpetrator of a founded report of child abuse within the past five (5) years as defined by the Child Protective Services Law.

I swear/affirm that I have not been convicted of any of the following crimes under Title 18 of the Pennsylvania consolidated statutes or of offenses similar in nature to those crimes under the laws or former laws of the United States or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of this Commonwealth.

- Chapter 25 (relating to criminal homicide)
- Section 2702 (relating to aggravated assault)
- Section 2709.1 (relating to stalking)
- Section 2901 (relating to kidnapping)
- Section 2902 (relating to unlawful restraint)
- Section 3121 (relating to rape)
- Section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault)
- Section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse)
- Section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault)
- Section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault)
- Section 3126 (relating to indecent assault)
- Section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure)
- Section 4302 (relating to incest)
- Section 4303 (relating to concealing death of child)
- Section 4304 (relating to endangering welfare of children)
- Section 4305 (relating to dealing in infant children)
- Section 5902(b) (relating to prostitution and related offenses)
- Section 5903(c) (d) (relating to obscene and other sexual material and performances)
- Section 6301 (relating to corruption of minors)
- Section 6312 (relating to sexual abuse of children), or an equivalent crime under Federal law or the law of another state.

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I swear/affirm that I have not been convicted of a felony offense under Act 64-1972 (relating to the controlled substance, drug device and cosmetic act) committed within the past five years.

I understand that I shall not be approved for service if I am named as a perpetrator of a founded report of child abuse within the past five (5) years or have been convicted of any of the crimes listed above or of offenses similar in nature to those crimes under the laws or former laws of the United States or one of its territories or possessions, another state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a foreign nation, or under a former law of this Commonwealth.

I understand that if I am arrested for or convicted of an offense that would constitute grounds for denying participation in a program, activity or service under the Child Protective Services Law as listed above, or am named as perpetrator in a founded or indicated report, I must provide the administrator or designee with written notice not later than 72 hours after the arrest, conviction or notification that I have been listed as a perpetrator in the Statewide database.

I understand that if the person responsible for employment decisions or the administrator of a program, activity or service has a reasonable belief that I was arrested or convicted for an offense that would constitute grounds for denying participation in a program, activity or service under the Child Protective Services Law, or was named as perpetrator in a founded or indicated report, or I have provided notice as required under this section, the person responsible for employment decisions or administrator of a program, activity or service shall immediately require me to submit current certifications obtained through the Department of Human Services, the Pennsylvania State Police, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as appropriate. The cost of certifications shall be borne by the employing entity or program, activity or service.

I understand that if I willfully fail to disclose information required above, I commit a misdemeanor of the third degree and shall be subject to discipline up to and including denial of a volunteer position.

I understand that certifications obtained for the volunteering purposes can only be used for that purpose and cannot be used for employment purposes.

I understand that the person responsible for employment decisions or the administrator of a program, activity or service is required to maintain a copy of my certifications.

I hereby swear/affirm that the information as set forth above is true and correct. I understand that false swearing is a misdemeanor pursuant to Section 4903 of the Crimes Code.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Witness: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Receipt of Acknowledgement Signatures

Mandated Reporting Process

Please sign below to indicate that you understand this Mandated Reporting Process and agree to abide by it. You may not participate in SEEDS programs involving minors or adult participants unless you sign this form as is.

Name (Print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Confidentiality Policy

Please sign below to indicate that you understand this Confidentiality Policy Process and agree to abide by it. You may not participate in SEEDS programs involving minors or adult participants unless you sign this form as is.

Name (Print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Volunteer's Code of Conduct

Please sign below to indicate that you understand this Volunteer's Code of Conduct and agree to abide by it. You may not participate in SEEDS programs involving minors or adult participants unless you sign this form as is.

Name (Print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____