

_____ **COMMUNITY CHURCH**

ABUSE/HARASSMENT PREVENTION POLICY

(Note: This policy is for all volunteers and staff in the children and youth ministries at _____ Community Church to read and sign.)

INTRODUCTION

It is a privilege to have the opportunity to be involved in Christian ministry at _____ Community Church. However, with this privilege comes responsibility. There is a responsibility of all involved to embody the principles they teach (James 3:1). Therefore, it is imperative that the highest level of moral behavior be observed by all involved in this ministry (Ephesians 3-7; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20). It is with this in mind that the following guidelines are given. Our desire is to prevent any abusive behavior from occurring. We also wish and to do all that is possible to protect our workers (staff and volunteers) from false allegations. This policy covers all those in a position of authority, which involves leadership, counseling or instructing of other persons.

The September 2002 Bulletin published by The Canadian Council of Christian Charities provides an Abuse Prevention Plan Checklist and the following Policy statement and guidelines attempts to address the seven points raised in that article. There must be the following ingredients in An Abuse prevention policy.

1. A statement of policy.
2. A definition of abuse
3. A screening process for workers
4. Operational procedures
5. Safe premises
6. A training program for staff
7. A system of responding to allegations or complaints

The following policy and procedures provide a good framework and covers the essential requirements noted above. If a more expanded policy is needed please refer to the Lincoln Road conduct policy on the Vision Ministries Website. (www.vision-ministries.org)

POLICY

1. _____ Community Church will not tolerate sexual, emotional or physical abuse of or by staff. The pastoral staff and/or elders of the church must be informed immediately of suspected offences. In support of the Ontario Human Rights Code, all staff, parishioners and guests can expect to be free of suggestive language and comments made to them directly or indirectly in any of the involvements with _____ Community Church. There will be no sexual solicitation or advances made by any and all members of staff including church leaders and pastoral staff (including suggestive language or comments)

directly or indirectly). Any person filing a complaint can be assured that their privacy will be protected and respected by all pastoral staff and elders at all times. They can also be reassured that any person filing a complaint against any person who violates the policy will be supported. Any allegations will be treated very seriously.

PROCEDURE (Sexual abuse guidelines)

We will ensure that a screening process is in place. All staff and volunteers must complete the appropriate application and provide references independent of family relatives. This is to ensure there is nothing known that would hinder them from performing their assigned duties. All applicants must have no known past record of abusive behavior, which would disqualify them from service.

These guidelines will be enforced by the Leadership Team.

1. An “*Application Form to Work with Children and Youth*” must be completed.
2. The “*Abuse/Harassment Policy Form*” must read, understood and signed by all volunteers.
3. In situations where children four years old and younger are in a class or nursery setting, there should always be at least three workers present. One of these should be an adult over 18 years of age. Teams from the same family (husband/wife, brother/sister) should not work together without another adult present. Only parents or guardians should be allowed to retrieve a child from the nursery.
4. There will be at least two adults present for all overnight activities or any activities at off site locations. There should always be a sufficient number of adults in attendance so that not only are the youth supervised, but the adults are held accountable as well.
5. When driving youth from off-site activities, drivers should avoid being in the vehicle alone with members of the opposite sex. Therefore they should drop off young people of the opposite sex first and those of the same sex last. They should also drop off “singles” first, then siblings (more than one).
6. We require volunteers to be associated with the church for at least six months before working with youth or children.
7. All volunteers are to wear nametags.
8. There are “Sign-In” sheets for staff and volunteers.
9. Classroom doors without windows will remain open at all times.
10. Two adults should accompany a child, under the age of four years, to the washroom.
11. We will conduct Police and background checks on all youth and children’s ministry personnel.
12. Church leaders will randomly visit classrooms and check all areas of the church.
13. All staff and volunteers should be trained at least once a year in recognizing signs of abuse, and reviewing policies and procedures.

REPORTING

1. If a staff member or volunteer becomes aware of any alleged incident, it must be reported immediately to the pastoral staff or elders. All reported incidents will be immediately investigated and appropriate action taken. The pastoral staff is required by law to report all allegations to the police.
2. Should a staff member or volunteer become aware that any member of the congregation may be suffering or may have suffered abuse in other circumstances i.e. a home, etc. they will immediately report it to the pastoral staff.
3. All staff members and volunteers must sign this form indicating that they have read and understand the above and will adhere to the policies as outlined. A copy will be given to each worker and the church office will retain a copy.

EXPECTED STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

We are called to be imitators of Jesus and live and relate as He did when He was here.

1. Behavior:

Leaders and volunteers of _____ Community Church are expected to do the following:

- a. To conform to and engage in conduct that is ethical (See examples of unethical behavior below), moral (See examples of immoral behavior below) and in conformity with biblical principles as generally understood in the church.
- b. Agree with the statement of faith and philosophy of the church. (The Statement of Faith is attached)
- c. Demonstrate Christian love in his or her dealings with others.
- d. Refrain from all forms of abuse, including sexual abuse.

2. Definitions:

Examples of unethical and immoral behavior include, though not limited to, the following:

- a. Substance abuse including the abuse of alcohol and drugs;
- b. Extra-marital sexual relationships (adultery)
- c. Pre-marital sexual relationships (fornication)
- d. Reading or viewing of pornographic material
- e. Homosexual relationships
- f. Theft or fraud
- g. Physical aggression
- h. Abusive behavior
- i. Sexual assault or abuse
- j. Harassment

- k. Lying, deceit or dishonesty
- l. Criminal activity
- m. Making false allegations against another person.
- n. Etc.

In this policy, "**sexual abuse**" means:

- a. Physical sexual relations between a person in a position of authority and a person under his or her influence except his or her spouse with consent;
- b. Touching of a sexual nature by a person in a position of authority of a person under his or her influence except his or her spouse with consent;
- c. Behavior or remarks of a sexual nature by a person in a position of authority to a person under his or her influence except his or her spouse with consent.
- d. In this policy, touching, behavior, or remarks of a sexual nature do not include touching, behavior or remarks that are appropriate in the circumstances.
- e. In this policy position of authority means an office or position held in the church which involves leadership, ministry, counseling or instruction of other persons. **Examples are:**
 - Members of the Leadership Team (Elders) or Ministry Team
 - Youth leaders and volunteers
 - Sunday School teachers and volunteers
 - Nursery workers
 - Counselors
 - Life Group Leaders
 - Etc.

I have read the above guidelines and agree to abide by them.

Signed _____

Date _____

_____ **COMMUNITY CHURCH**

Application Form to work with Children and Youth

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Home: _____
Bus: _____

Address: _____

Name and city of previous church: _____

Member in good standing: Yes _____ No _____

Previous experience in working with youth:

I authorize _____ Community Church (CCC) to contact the following individual for a character reference; I authorize that individual to answer any questions asked by _____ Community Church about my character.

References	<u>Phone</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

(Note: The reference must be a Pastor, or someone otherwise acceptable to _____ Community Church, who has known and worked with you for at least 5 years)

I realize that my actions can have an impact on the ministries of _____ Community Church. I hereby certify that I have never been convicted of a criminal act, other than those listed below, and that I have no tendencies (including sexual tendencies) or addictions which could compromise the integrity of this ministry.

Criminal Convictions: Yes _____ No _____

If Yes give details:

I, _____ give Cambridge Community Church permission to conduct a police search of my records or I will provide a copy for CCC.

Signed _____

Date _____

COMMUNITY CHURCH**STATEMENT OF FAITH****OF FAITH****1. THE BIBLE**

The Bible is God's word to us. It is infallible and without error and is our final authority in matters of doctrine and lifestyle. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 2:21)

2. GOD

God is one but exists in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each is eternal existent, one in essence, possessing the same nature and attributes. They do, however, have different roles, functions and activities. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19)

3. JESUS

Jesus is fully God and without sin. When he died on the cross He died in the place of fallen humanity as their representative. He rose from the grave to give evidence of His victory over sin and Satan and He is now at the Father's right hand as our Intercessor. (John 1:1; 1 John 5:20; Luke 1:35; Matthew 1:20; 1 Peter 1:19-19; Romans 4:25)

4. THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit indwells every believer and is at work confirming his or her relationship with God, and giving power for victory over sin. (John 14:16-18; 16:8-14; Ephesians 4:30; 5:8)

5. SIN AND SALVATION

Men and women were created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) but because of the sin of Adam and Eve all mankind has fallen under the curse of sin. Everyone is separated from God, sinful by nature and by practice, and is in need of the salvation provided by God in Jesus. This salvation is a gift of God's grace, is received by simply believing in Him, and makes the believer secure eternally. (Romans 3:23; 1 Peter 1:5; Titus 3:5)

6. THE CHURCH

The Church is God's vehicle to bring the Good News of God's salvation to our world. It is comprised of all persons who have received God's free gift of salvation in Jesus. These persons are united together in a true community, a unity based on common life in Christ.

The purpose of the church is to glorify God on earth, make disciples and provide an environment of spiritual growth for those who embrace the Christian faith. (Matthew 28:19-20; Ephesians 1:22-3)

7. CHURCH ORDINANCES

The church carries out two symbolic acts, which significantly reflect our Christian faith.

Baptism by immersion signifies a Christian's identification with Jesus in His death, burial and resurrection. (Romans 6:1-4; Colossians 2:12)

Communion is carried out by a regular sharing of bread and grape juice, symbolic of salvation accomplished and made available by Jesus' death. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

8. JESUS' RETURN

When Jesus comes back, His coming will usher in a series of end-time events, which will culminate in the end of the age. His promise to return is an incentive for holy living and faithful service. (John 14:1-6; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; Acts 1:11; Titus 2:13)