



**Child, Youth and Vulnerable  
Person Abuse Prevention &  
Response Policy**

**&**

**Abuse Procedures and  
Protocols Manual**

**of**

**Billtown United Baptist Church**

February 2022

‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’

Matthew 25:40

**Billtown United Baptist Church  
Child, Youth & Vulnerable Person Abuse Prevention  
and Response Policy**

**Preamble**

WHEREAS we acknowledge that the abuse of children (sexual, physical and emotional) can happen anywhere, including in this Church or in other facilities used by our church in children's and youth ministry;

WHEREAS we understand that the effects of such abuse have a profound short-term and long-term impact on the victim;

WHEREAS we understand that, as members of this Church, we must seek to ensure that children and youth, who participate in any programs offered through our church, may do so without fear of abuse;

WHEREAS we acknowledge that a person who would prey upon children may see this Church as a place where he/she may have access to children or youth;

WHEREAS we understand that any abuse, or allegation of abuse, can seriously compromise our witness for Christ within our church, community, and beyond.

**WE**, the members of Billtown United Baptist Church, solemnly agree to adopt this Policy for Child, Youth & Vulnerable Abuse Prevention, effective immediately and dated this 28 day of February 2022.

**Purpose & Application**

The purpose of the Child, Youth & Vulnerable Persons Abuse Prevention and Response Policy is to outline its principles, to reinforce the Church's efforts and intentions in this matter, and to provide general direction for the Church's leaders and individual members. This policy has zero tolerance for abuse in any form.

This policy will apply to each program, service, and activity organized by the Church. Every individual who is involved with such programs, services, or activity is subject to this policy. Likewise, each official office or body of the Church—e.g., the Deacons, the Christian Education Committee, the Moderator, and other Church committees or officials are also subject to this policy and must abide by it.

## **Child/Youth & Vulnerable Adult Workers**

All persons desiring to work with children/youth (ages 0-18) or vulnerable adults through any ministry of this church must first meet the following qualifications:

1. Be a member or ministry leader, in good standing of Billtown United Baptist Church or another Christian church for a minimum of 6 months, or be interviewed by a committee composed of the Lead Pastor and at least two unrelated individuals holding leadership positions within the Church;
2. Provide a mandatory Criminal Records check and a Vulnerable Sector check every 3 years. A record from the Vulnerable Sector check involving any abuse of children will, in all cases, disqualify the individual from ever working with youth, children or vulnerable adults through this church;
3. Participate in an annual information session which will include the review of this policy;
4. Sign a Covenant of Care stating that they understand and will uphold all policies and procedures.
5. All youth volunteers (age 12-17) involved in children's/youth/vulnerable adult's ministry will be accompanied/supervised by an adult. It will be the responsibility of the ministry coordinator to assure that youth wishing to volunteer in their ministry are suitably qualified to do so; and to provide these youth volunteers with age-based training regarding appropriate interactions within that ministry.

As of the date of this policy, all future persons desiring to work with children, youth or vulnerable adults will be required to:

- Complete an application form and supply references upon request;
- Be willing to participate in an interview if requested.

Individuals who work with children, youth or vulnerable adults need to be mindful of the importance of avoiding potentially compromising situations in which an allegation of abuse could be made and must understand the definitions and symptoms of abuse outlined in the Protection Procedures.

## **Classroom**

We desire to provide a safe, loving classroom where everyone feels comfortable and where learning can take place in order to foster genuine connections and encounters with God. Workers should always conduct themselves in a godly manner, being an example of obedience, respect, and honesty to young believers.

Teacher student ratios will be maintained whenever possible in the classroom. (Refer to Protection Procedures)

All classrooms will be equipped with a window in the door or the door is to remain open.

## **Offsite Events**

We strive to ensure that parents are aware of the precautions being taken to protect their children therefore;

1. Parental consent forms will be used for special activities or events when children/youth are off site and not accompanied by a parent or guardian.
2. Any vehicle used to transport children/youth must carry no less than \$1,000,000 liability coverage, be registered, safety inspected, have appropriate tires, and the number of passengers will not exceed the number of working seat belts.
3. Driver will be a minimum of 21 years of age with at least 3 years' experience (age 25 is recommended, however exceptions can be considered for safe, mature ministry volunteers), valid drivers' license, appropriate license class, no at fault accident and no more than 2 minor traffic violations in the past 3 years, and subject to the Church's discretion. A volunteer driver application will be required prior to driving.

### **General**

The congregation is annually informed of the importance of child safety and the church's Protection Policy; and is encouraged to discuss and offer recommendations.

The Christian Education Committee will review the Child, Youth and Vulnerable Persons Protection Policy and Procedures annually, make changes as required and as programs and activities change and evolve. Any changes will be ratified by the church body at the following regular business meeting.

The Protection Policy will be made available on our Church Website, to any parent or church member upon request and at each annual meeting.

### **Allegation of Abuse**

In the event that an allegation of abuse is made:

1. It will be reported immediately to the Lead Pastor or the Deacons if a Pastor is implicated.
2. The process will be carefully documented including date(s), time(s) and content of all conversations pertaining to the alleged abuse.
3. If the Pastor is accused of abuse the appropriate Associate Executive Minister of Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada will be notified, by the Board of Deacons.
4. Prayer support and pastoral care will be provided for all involved.  
In the event of an Allegation of Abuse see Child, Youth & Vulnerable Adult Protection Procedures and Protocols.

**Signed:**

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**Lead Pastor**

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**Church Moderator**

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**Chair of Deacons**

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**Chair of Christian Education**



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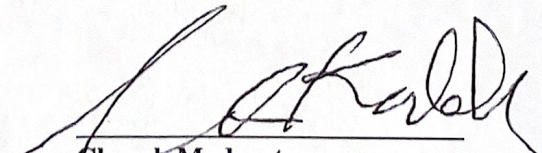
### Allegation of Abuse

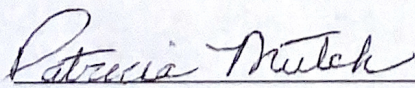
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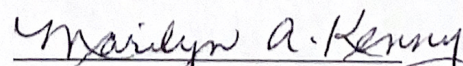
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**Signed:**

  
Lead Pastor

  
Church Moderator

  
Chair of Deacons

  
Chair of Christian Education

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## **1. Introduction**

Billtown United Baptist Church has a spiritual, moral and legal obligation to provide a safe environment for children, youth, and vulnerable persons participating in programs that are under the guidance and authority of the Church. Abuse is a violation of God's moral law within the context of a relationship of trust. It is a criminal act, as well as a violation of human conscience and dignity. It causes emotional, physical and spiritual trauma to victims, and has destructive consequences for the abusers themselves. The devastating effects on the credibility of a church's ministry and on the good name of Christ make it essential that we take all appropriate steps to prevent abusive incidences.

## **2. Defining Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults**

Vulnerable people include any child or adults who, because of his/her age, a disability or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent, is in a position of dependence on others or is otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by persons in positions of authority or trust relative to him/her. For the purposes of this document, the definition of children/youth is from birth to age 18 inclusive.

## **3. Duties of the Board of Christian Education**

- The Board of Christian Education will review the Protection Policy and Procedures annually and make changes as required and as programs and activities change and procedures evolve. Any changes will be approved by the church body at the following business meeting.
- The Board of Christian Education will ensure the Protection Policy and Procedures are reviewed annually with all child, youth, and vulnerable adult workers to remind them of the dangers of child abuse and to reinforce the importance of strict adherence to the Policy and Procedures.
- The Board of Christian Education will ensure that all workers are educated to recognize and identify the signs and symptoms of abuse and molestation.
- Violations of the policy and procedures will be addressed and are grounds for the removal of the worker by the Pastor, program coordinator, and in consultation with the Board of Christian Education

### **3.1 The Child Protection will be made available**

- On the Billtown Baptist Church website,
- To any parent or church member upon request, and
- At each annual meeting

### 3.2 Annual information Session

All child, youth and vulnerable adult workers will participate in a review of the Protection Policy and Procedures annually. A written record of attendance will be maintained by the Chair of the Board of Christian Education of this session. Any volunteer who is unable to attend is expected to schedule an appointment to review.

### 3.3 Protection Policy Review

The Protection Policy will be reviewed and discussed annually by the general congregation at the annual business meeting. Also, see duties of the Board of Christian Education.

## 4. Definitions of Abuse

Abuse is maltreatment of a child/youth/vulnerable adult including physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, as well as neglect or any other form of harm. Child/youth/vulnerable adult abuse involves the misuse of power. Misuse of power takes place when people take advantage of the authority or power they have over vulnerable people.

● **Physical Abuse** is deliberately using force against a child/youth/vulnerable adult in such a way that the child/youth/vulnerable adult is either injured or is at risk of being injured. It is more than reasonable discipline. Sometimes injury is caused by over-discipline. Injuring a child, youth, or vulnerable adult is not acceptable, regardless of differing cultural standards on discipline. Physical abuse may include:

- Beating
- Burning
- Pushing or shoving
- Slapping or hitting
- Tripping
- Spitting

● **Emotional Abuse** is a pattern of hurting a child/youth/vulnerable adult's feelings to the point of damaging their sense of self. It includes verbal attacks on the child, insults, humiliation or rejection. A child/youth/vulnerable adult who is emotionally harmed may demonstrate severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, aggression or self-destructive behaviour.

● **Sexual Abuse** occurs when a youth/child/vulnerable adult is used for sexual purposes. Sexual activity between youth/children may also be sexual abuse if older or more powerful youth/children take advantage of those who are younger or less powerful. Sexual abuse includes behaviour that involves touching and non-touching aspects. Examples of abuse that involve touching may include:

- Fondling
- Oral, genital and anal penetration
- Intercourse
- Rape

Types of sexual abuse that do not involve touching may include:

- Verbal comments
- Pornographic videos
- Obscene phone calls
- Exhibitionism
- Allowing children/youth/vulnerable adults to witness sexual activity

• **Neglect** is often chronic, and it usually involves repeated incidents. It involves failing to provide what a child needs for his or her physical/psychological or emotional development and well-being. For example, neglect may include failing to provide a child with food, clothing, shelter, cleanliness, medical care or protection from harm. Emotional neglect may include failing to provide a child with love, safety, and a sense of worth.

• **Psychological Abuse** includes attempts to dehumanize or intimidate children/adults/vulnerable adults. Any verbal or nonverbal act that reduces their sense of self-worth or dignity and threatens their psychological and emotional integrity is abuse. This type of abuse may include:

- Threatening to use violence
- Threatening to abandon them
- Intentionally frightening them
- Making them fear that they will not receive the food or care they need
- Failing to check allegations of abuse against them

• **Financial Abuse** encompasses financial manipulation of exploitation, including theft, fraud, forgery or extortion. It includes using an older adult's money or property in a dishonest manner, or failing to use an older adult's assets for their welfare. Anytime someone acts without consent in a way that financially or personally benefits one person at the expense of another it is abuse. This type of abuse against an older adult may include:

- Stealing their money, pension cheques or other possessions
- Selling their homes or other property without permission
- Wrongfully using a Power of Attorney

## 5. Symptoms of Abuse and Molestation

Church workers and staff should be alert to the physical signs of abuse and molestation, as well as to behavioural and verbal signs that a victim may exhibit. A one-time event would not necessarily constitute a potential abuse case. Sudden, unexplained changes, however, would warrant investigation. Some of the more common signs are summarized below:

Physical signs may include:

- lacerations and bruises,
- discomfort when sitting.

Behavioural signs may include:

- anxiety when approaching the Church building or the nursery area,
- nervous or hostile behaviour toward adults,
- sexual self-consciousness,
- "acting out" sexual behaviour, and
- withdrawal from Church activities and friends.

- Verbal signs may include statements such as the following:
  - “[Name of a particular person] ... does things to me when we are alone.”
  - “I don’t like to be alone with ... [name of a particular person].”
  - “[Name of a particular person] ... fooled around with me.”

## **6. Appropriate Discipline and Dealing with a Participants Behaviour**

Proper discipline is necessary in maintaining order and an effective learning environment in any program. If a leader is adequately prepared for teaching/leading, makes clear statements about expectations, and provides an engaging program, inappropriate behaviour may be avoided or reduced. It is essential to be careful regarding behaviour, language and physical contact when working with children/youth/vulnerable adults:

- Do not show favouritism when dealing with children/youth/vulnerable adults. Show a similar level of affection and kindness to all.
- Do not engage in or allow the telling of sexual jokes or behave in a way that promotes the sexual exploitation of others.
- Provide clearly stated consequences for inappropriate behaviour. Stop inappropriate behaviour early. Be fair, consistent and reasonable, matching consequences to the age and ability to the child/youth.
- Do not use corporal punishment such as hitting, spanking or strapping.

The following guidelines are recommended for leaders faced with disciplinary issues:

Acceptable forms of discipline may include:

- Tell or remind the child/youth what is expected.
- If it is necessary to speak to a child/youth in private, move to a quiet place in view of others.
- Seek supervisory help if needed and if available.
- Keep children/youth/vulnerable adults from harming themselves or others.
- If necessary engage another adult to help you remove the child/youth from the situation, in order to calm down.
- A reward program for good behaviour.
- Time outs, having the child sit out of an activity.
- Suspending a child/youth from participating in a program’s activities.
- Conferring with parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Advising the parent(s)/guardian(s) that a child will not be permitted to attend the program due to his/her unwillingness to abide by the rules.

**Do not use corporal punishment under any circumstances.**

### **6.1. Proper Display of Affection**

Touch is an essential ingredient in nurturing lives. Volunteers need to be aware of, and sensitive to, differences in sexual development, cultural differences, family backgrounds, individual personalities, and special needs. Physical contact with a child should be appropriate to his/her age and development. The following guidelines are recommended as pure, genuine, and positive displays of God’s love:



Appropriate Touch: Love and caring can be expressed appropriately by

- bending down to a child's eye level, speaking kindly, and listening to him/her carefully,
- taking a child's hand and leading him/her to an activity,
- putting an arm around the shoulder of a child who needs quieting or comforting,
- patting a child on the head, hand, shoulder, or back to affirm him/her,
- holding a child by shoulders or hands to keep his/her attention while redirecting behaviour,
- gently holding a child's chin to help him/her focus on what you are saying (important for children with attention deficit disorder),
- holding a child who is crying,
- taking both of a child's hands as you say something like "You did such a good job!" or "I'm so glad to see you!" or "We've missed you!"

Inappropriate Touch and Affection: You must avoid:

- kissing a child, coaxing him/her to kiss you, or extended hugging and tickling,
- touching a child in any area that would be covered by a bathing suit (except when assisting with toileting as outlined elsewhere),
- carrying an older child or having him/her sit on your lap.

## **7. Potentially Compromising Situations**

- All individuals under the age of 18 involved in children/youth/vulnerable adult's ministry will be supervised by an adult.
- No leader or helper is to meet with a child/youth/vulnerable adult alone unless he/she is in a room with a window in the door or the door must remain open.
- In the case of a coeducational group, effort will be made to have male and female leaders.
- At least two leaders must remain at a children's/youth/vulnerable adults program until the last participant has left.
- As much as possible, a "team" approach to child/youth ministries will be used.
- One-on-one, "out-of-program" contacts between children/youth/vulnerable adults and workers in non-public places are discouraged.
- Individuals who work with children/youth/vulnerable adults are reminded of the importance of avoiding potentially compromising situations in which an allegation of abuse could be made.
- The law views leaders as having a position of authority both on and off the job.
- When special circumstances require Church staff/volunteers to be alone with a child, they must obtain the consent of the child's parent or guardian.
- Staff/workers must also notify an appropriate Church leader of such a meeting in advance.
- It is also recommended that the person briefly document the event (date, time, reason, what transpired, who gave permission, etc.).

## **8. Washroom Guidelines**

Parents are to be encouraged to take their child(ren) to the washroom prior to each class or meeting. This recommendation is to be communicated to parents at the beginning of each new school year and throughout the year to newcomers.

- Nursery Children: As a general rule, nursery volunteers will not be expected to change diapers, however; if this becomes necessary diaper changing must always take place in a room with a window in the door by a screened worker.
- Children under the age of 5 who need to go to the washroom should be accompanied by a leader who escorts the child to the washroom and checks the bathroom for safety. No adult or teen helper is ever to be in a closed washroom stall with a child. If another adult is not available, a volunteer or teen helper may stay behind with the remaining children.
- Male personnel are not to accompany female children to the washroom.
- If there is an emergency bathroom situation, the parent and supervisor must be notified.

## **9. Nursery Guidelines**

- An adult leader will be partnered with another adult volunteer helper or youth (age 12 and up) when on duty in the nursery.
- Children are to be kept in the immediate nursery area.
- An adult should always remain in the nursery when a child is present.
- To enable the leaders to maintain order and provide the expected level of security, only parents/guardians and nursery workers should be in the nursery.
- Children are never to be dropped off in the nursery without a worker present.
- Doors are to be supervised so that children are not able to exit alone, and they cannot be picked up from the nursery without a worker's knowledge.
- Only a parent/guardian or those given consent may retrieve a child from the nursery.

## **10. Classroom**

Billtown Baptist desires to provide a safe, loving classroom where the child feels comfortable and learning can take place. Workers should always conduct themselves in a godly manner, being an example of obedience, respect and honesty to young believers. Therefore, the following standard shall apply:

- Pre-school – Grade 5 children to be released from the classroom to a Parent/Guardian or someone with known consent.
- No child should be dropped off without a leader present.

- Registration form 10.2 to be completed for each child at the beginning of every program to notify the leader of any medical information, allergies, or other useful information.

### 10.1 Student/Teacher Ratio & Classroom Set Up

Situation/ Student Age	<18 Months	18-24 Months	3-6 Years	7-12 Years	12-18 Years
Classroom	6:2	10:2	12:2	15:2	15:2
Group Outing	None	None	None	10:2	15:2

A two-worker rule is best practice and to be followed whenever possible (unrelated individuals)

- Additional workers may be youth volunteers
- Although it may not be possible to maintain the two-worker rule in all classroom settings this will be enforced for any field trips or overnight outings.
- When it is not possible for two adults to be in the classroom the following suggestions may be considered:
  - A screened floater in the building and available during activities.
  - The door must have a window in it or be left open.

## 10.2 Children and Youth Ministries Registration Form

### **Student Information**

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

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Parent/Guardian Contact Information**

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

Phone #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Medical Information**

Health Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Medical Information: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Emergency Contact Information**

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

Phone #1: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this person to be contacted prior to the above listed parent? YES NO

Do you consent for photos/videos of your child to be taken and shared?

Internally: On the screen during service, on bulletin boards, etc. YES NO

Externally: On the church website, on church social media, etc. YES NO

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **10.3 Off-Site Events**

When any group undertakes a field trip or leaves the Church property, the leaders must have an Event Permission Form signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) for each child under the age of 18.

The form must include the following:

- Specific location and details of the outing/event
- The use of volunteer drivers if applicable
- Date and time
- Signature of one parent or guardian
- Contact number at which parent(s)/guardian(s) (or some other appropriate designated person) can be contacted during the event
- Health Card Number

Parent/Guardian(s) should be notified at least one week prior to an outing.

### **10.3.1 Transportation of Children/Youth**

When transporting of children/youth is involved in an activity the number of persons per car must not exceed the number of seatbelts.

It is recommended that leaders and helpers not transport a youth/child unaccompanied. A minimum of 2 screened adult supervisors or 1 screened adult plus at least 2 other minors in the vehicle at all times.

- In an exceptional circumstance, if a leader has no alternative but to drive a child/youth home unaccompanied, then the leader should advise the parent(s)/guardian(s) that he/she will bring the child/youth home unaccompanied and give the parent(s)/guardian(s) an estimated time.
- If the driver is not a screened and trained volunteer the event co-ordinator and/or leader must review the vehicle and driver requirements with the driver (10.3.5.) prior to an event to ensure the guidelines are adhered to (ie. parents known to the Church or Church members that do not normally volunteer to work with youth/children).

### **10.3.2 Vehicle Requirements**

A volunteer using his or her privately owned vehicle is responsible for ensuring that:

- liability coverage is maintained at a minimum of \$1,000,000,
- the vehicle has a valid registration, inspection and appropriate tires,

### **10.3.3 Driver Requirements**

It is recommended that drivers used to transport child/youth/vulnerable adults meet the following criteria:

- minimum 21 years of age with at least 3 years driving experience,
- valid driver's license,
- appropriate license class,
- A Driver Volunteer form must be signed prior to driving(10.3.4.)

### 10.3.4 Volunteer Driver Form

Name of Driver: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate of Driver: \_\_\_\_\_

Years of Driving Experience: \_\_\_\_\_

**I, \_\_\_\_\_, qualify as a volunteer driver as per the requirements below and the vehicle I am driving meets the below requirements:**

**Driver Requirements:**

- Minimum 21 years of age with at least 3 years driving experience
- valid driver's license,
- appropriate license class,
- no at fault accidents and no more than 2 minor traffic violations in the past 3 years

**Vehicle Requirements:**

- Liability coverage is maintained at a minimum of \$1,000,000,
- the vehicle has a valid registration, inspection and appropriate tires,

Should any of the above information change it is your responsibility to notify the church office prior to driving.

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

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



## 11. Qualifications for Child/Youth Work

All persons desiring to work with children/youth (ages 0-18) or vulnerable adults through any ministry of this church must first meet the following qualifications:

- Be a member in good standing of Billtown United Baptist Church or another Christian church for a minimum of 6 months, or, at the discretion of the Christian Education Board, be interviewed by a committee composed of the Lead Pastor and at least two unrelated individuals holding leadership positions within the Church.
- If the candidate states that they have worked with children/youth in another church, effort will be made to verify this information.
- On occasion, parents/guardians or other volunteers may be used to help in specific areas of ministry (games, cooking, crafts, etc.). In these cases, the helper must be under supervision of a screened leader.
- New volunteers must complete an application for Children/Youth Ministry (12.1).
- New applicants may be interviewed by the pastor and/or program leaders.
- All existing ministry helpers will provide a mandatory Criminal Records check and a Vulnerable Sector check every 3 years. A record from the Vulnerable Sector check involving any abuse of children will, in all cases, disqualify the individual from ever working with youth, children or vulnerable adults through this church.
- Participate in an annual information session which will include the review of this policy.
- Sign a Covenant of Care stating that they understand and will uphold all policies and procedures.
- Records of applications, covenant of care signatures, and security checks will be kept by a pastor or designate.
- All youth volunteers (age 12-17) involved in children's/youth/vulnerable adult's ministry will be accompanied/supervised by an adult. It will be the responsibility of the ministry coordinator to assure that youth wishing to volunteer in their ministry are suitably qualified to do so; and to provide these youth volunteers with age-based training regarding appropriate interactions within that ministry.

## 12. Application Process

Volunteers will be recruited by the pastoral staff or volunteers helping to administer a particular program. Volunteers will need to complete:

- A volunteer application form with references
- Criminal records check and vulnerable sector check
- May need to participate in an interview
- A signed Covenant of Care (12.2.)

## 12.1 Volunteer Application for Children/Youth Ministries

### CONFIDENTIAL

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

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

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Which ministry are you looking to work in: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you agree to our statement of faith as presented in our bylaws? YES NO

Are you 18 years or older? YES NO

Membership Status: MEMBER PARTICIPANT OTHER

How long have you been attending Billtown Baptist? \_\_\_\_\_

List any previous experience with Children/Youth?

<u>Experience</u>	<u>Church/Organization</u>	<u>Years</u>
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List two unrelated people who have known you for at least 2 years, who may be contacted as a reference:

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

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing below, you declare the above information is correct and you agree to observe all church policies regarding work with children and youth.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## 12.2 Covenant of Care

### **The Covenant of Care for Billtown Baptist Church**

I promise, in all my relationships with children/youth/vulnerable adults, to follow appropriate action as defined by my training orientation.

I promise to use only the physical contact that is deemed appropriate by the document (Abuse Prevention Policy), which I have read and understand;

I promise to use appropriate language;

I promise to show no bias based on gender, ethnic background, skin colour, intelligence, age, religion, sexual orientation or socio-economic status;

I promise that I will not harass others;

I promise to respect confidentiality and privacy, unless a child, youth, or vulnerable adult is in danger, then I will report to a child protection agency or the police.

I have read and agree with the Covenant of Care.

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

Witnessed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Authorized person)

## **Child/Youth Abuse Allegation Procedure**

### **13. Reporting Allegations of Abuse**

**Any allegation of abuse should be reported immediately to the insurance company. The prompt reporting of incidents is extremely important, because it allows our insurer to intervene and help manage the situation.**

When a child, youth or vulnerable adult is upset or distressed about a situation, he/she may turn to a trusted adult for support or advice. They may be hesitant to discuss what happened due to common feelings of guilt or shame. The leader must stay calm and help them feel safe, be supportive and pay attention to what is said but be cautious about asking questions. Do not promise the person you will not tell anyone. Asking questions can invalidate future statement to police or child welfare authorities and can cause a case to be dismissed in court. Investigating is the responsibility of the police or protection agency.

In these matters it is important to keep the information restricted to those who need to be advised.

The only claim of confidentiality, which overrides the legal duty to report, is solicitor-client privilege.

Thus physicians, clergy, and others who consider their professional relationships confidential for certain purposes are not exempt from the duty to report child abuse or neglect.

Notify the pastor immediately and follow the procedures below:

#### **13.1 If You Suspect Abuse Outside the Church**

Everyone has the duty to immediately report any suspicion that a child under 16 may be in need of protective services. Reports may be made anonymously. Once a report is made, child protection social workers assess the information provided to determine an appropriate response.

- Report the allegation to the Pastor
- The person who saw or who disclosed the abuse along with the Pastor to report the allegation to Social Development and the RCMP immediately
  - Community Services: 1-888-992-2873
  - Local RCMP: 902-679-5555
  - In an Emergency: 911
- Fill out form for Suspected Child Abuse 13.8.
- Pastor to maintain confidential records and initiates any needed follow-up until the matter is concluded.

### **13.2 If There is an Allegation of Abuse within the Church**

- Report the allegation to the Pastor
- The Pastor or designated person is to report the allegation of abuse to our insurance company
- The person who saw or who disclosed the abuse along with the Pastor to report the allegation to Social Development and the RCMP immediately
  - Community Services: 1(888)992-2873
  - Local RCMP: 902-679-5555
  - In an Emergency: 911
- Fill out form for Suspected Child Abuse 13.8.
- Alleged abuser is removed immediately from all contact with children and youth
- A response committee shall be formed, consisting of:
  - the Pastor(s),
  - A representative of the Board of Deacons
  - the Chair of the Board of Christian Education, and
  - the program coordinator
    - If any of the above are implicated they will be excluded from the response committee and another board member may be appointed.
- This committee shall initiate and oversee the process outlined as per section 13.6.
- The Response Team will maintain confidential records until the matter is concluded.

### **13.3 Allegations Against the Pastor**

- Report to a current member of the Board of Deacons
- Alleged abuser is removed immediately from all contact with children and youth
- The designated person is to report the allegation of abuse to the church's insurance company
- The person who saw or who disclosed the abuse along with the Chair of the Board of Deacons will report allegations immediately to Community Services and the RCMP
- The Board of Deacons will be responsible for the response and course of action.
- The Board of Deacons will maintain confidential records until the matter is concluded.

### **13.4 Public Responses to Allegations of Abuse**

No one other than the Lead Pastor or designate will be the spokesperson for the Church. After consultation with the Church's lawyer the Lead Pastor will speak, as necessary, to the media and the congregation regarding the matter in a discreet, informed, truthful and diplomatic way.

### **13.5 Use of a Lawyer**

A lawyer representing the church should present while answering any investigative questions from the police or social services agencies. Full cooperation must be given to civil authorities under the guidance of the lawyer.

### **13.6 Responsibilities of Response Team**

If a conflict of interest exists for any member, a designate will be appointed.

The responsibilities of the response team:

- A general log of all incidents and their resolutions will be reported regularly to the Board of Deacons.
- An extensive record to be kept of all meetings, contacts and courses of action. These will be maintained in a secure location.
- Ensure the accused is removed from contact with children/youth/vulnerable adults.
- Determine the involvement of a lawyer.
- The Chair of the team liaises with Social Development and/or the police.
- Ensure that the Pastor, on behalf of the Team, communicates appropriately, and as deemed necessary by the Team, with the accused, alleged victim(s) and their families.
- Develop an intervention plan and implement. Such plan will address the needs of the following parties: The abused and his/her immediate family, the accused and his/her immediate family, and other parties emotionally affected by the situation.
- Ensure that the needs of those in the church family directly and indirectly affected are appropriately addressed.
- Participate in the development and implementation of a plan to address the spiritual and emotional needs of all affected parties in the Church. The plan will be cooperatively developed with all individuals involved or affected.
  - The goal of the plan will be to bring healing to
    - Each victim and their family,
    - Each abuser and their family, and
    - The church family.
  - Participation in the proposed plan will be voluntary. However, in the case of the abuser, participation in the plan may be required as a condition of:
    - Continued employment or participation
    - Subsequent restoration, if a temporary separation is required.

### **13.7 Disciplinary Action**

Any Church disciplinary action taken by the pastoral staff, Board of Deacons, Board of Christian Education, and/or congregation toward any staff member or volunteer involved in the abuse of a child/youth/vulnerable adult is to be in keeping within biblical guidelines and the provisions of the Church constitution.



### 13.8 Report Form for Suspected Abuse

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Filing Report: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number for Person Filing Report: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of suspected abuse (Physical, sexual, emotional, neglect): \_\_\_\_\_

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

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: Person Reporting

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: Person Receiving Report

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

## **14. Safety Issues and Reporting Injury or Property Damage**

Any injury, health, safety and /or sanitation issue giving concern for the safety or well-being of a person under care of Billtown Baptist Church shall be:

- Taken seriously
- Reported to the Lead Pastor, Deacons, Christian Education Chair, and Trustees
- Investigated promptly, and
- Be followed up by a brief, written report. 14.1

## 14.1 Incident Report Form

### CONFIDENTIAL

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Incident Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Child/Youth/Adult involved in the incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ (Not Necessary for Adults)

Name of Parent/Guardian (for Child/youth) or caregiver (for adult): \_\_\_\_\_

Has the Parent/Guardian or caregiver been notified of incident:      YES      NO

If Yes, date/time & name of who was notified: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of incident:

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Injuries Sustained:

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Direct quotes from child/youth/adult: (Note: if this is an abuse allegation, do not interview the child/youth but report only the comments they share with you.)

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Names/contact information of witness(s):

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Description of Action Taken: \_\_\_\_\_

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Additional Information you think is relevant: \_\_\_\_\_

Name, Position & contact # of person filing report \_\_\_\_\_

To the best of my knowledge, the information provided in this report is accurate

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: Person Reporting Incident

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: Person Filing Report