

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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### 1. Background and purpose

It is our aim that all staff and volunteers representing Canadian Baptist Women of Ontario and Quebec (CBWOQ) live and work with the highest integrity and professionalism, in genuine love for God and others. In any of our work with children, we are committed to provide safe, affirming care.

This policy document is intended to:

- Protect the children in our care;
- Protect volunteers and staff who work with children in our care;
- Provide a basis for educating volunteers and staff;
- Meet legal and insurance requirements.

This document is based on three sample documents posted by Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec. It is consistent with the policy of Canadian Baptist Ministries and with advice from our insurance provider Robertson Hall. It was reviewed by one of our female clergy responsible for Children and Family Ministry. It has been reviewed by all current staff and will be presented to the CBWOQ board on December 6, 2014.

## **2. Screening Volunteers**

Before a person can be selected to serve in children's ministry, the following steps are necessary:

- Review of the completed application form
- Completion of a Police Check, including a Vulnerable Sector Screen and check of the Pardoned Sex Offender's Database, for any adult who might be alone with a child under 18 years of age
- Applicants, who are unknown to the organizer, must be interviewed and a separate reference check must be completed.

Applications and supporting documents are to be kept in a locked cabinet. A copy of the Application Form is in the Appendix.

When a reference is contacted, the contacting person must complete a "Reference Contact Form", and the form becomes part of the applicants file. A copy of "Reference Contact Form" is in the Appendix.

All staff and volunteers working with minors must read and sign this policy.

## **3. Caregiver behaviour**

Caregivers must always be above reproach in their words and conduct.

To ensure the safety of children/young people from each other as well as their surroundings, at no time should any child or children be left unsupervised (Principle of continuous care by a caregiver).

Leaders must not be involved in any of the following activities with children: extended hugging, kissing, inappropriate touching. Workers must not have older children sit on their lap. Adult and child interactions must be visible.

In the event that a child approaches an adult leader with the intent to hug or kiss, or unexpectedly does so, the adult leader should accept the affection, but should as quickly as possible, in a non-rejecting manner, encourage a more appropriate form of physical contact. Appropriate expressions for ages 0-3 include picking up the child, comforting the child, holding the hand of the child. Appropriate physical contact for ages 4+ could include a handshake, pat on the back, quick hug of encouragement with hands on the shoulder area and a 'high five'.

Workers must model kindness, be calm, set age-appropriate limits and teach children to solve problems with words. Under no circumstances may children be humiliated, neglected, slapped or spanked.

#### **4. Safe and secure environment**

##### **Supervision ratios**

Our goal is to provide an environment of safety and acceptance where learning can take place. Room allocation is geared to the needs and size of a particular group or class. No fewer than two leaders will be present for all group meetings for children. At least one leader will have a completed criminal clearance check on file.

##### **Nursery**

The following guidelines are in place to make the nursery a safe place for young children.

There will be a minimum of one adult and one helper in the nursery when children are in the room. The second nursery worker may be a teenager or an adult. When there are only two workers in the nursery, they will not be from the same family. If there are more than 3 infants or 5 toddlers, additional helpers are to be recruited.

Children using the nursery/toddler area must be signed in and signed out of the area by a pre-authorized adult. When the child is being signed in, the worker must record any particular medical information that is needed for the child. (i.e. asthma, food allergies, etc.)

Nursery toys should be inspected and either replaced or repaired if damaged. Toys, furniture and bedding should be cleaned at regular intervals.

When toddlers require trips to the washroom, a caregiver must supervise the children in the washroom (parents or guardians are encouraged to take their children to the washroom before leaving them in the nursery).

The change table will be located where the child being changed can be easily seen by another nursery worker.

##### **Sick Children**

Children who are not feeling well should not be received into the nursery department or classroom. Some signs of illness are unusual fatigue or irritability, coughing, sneezing, runny nose and eyes, vomiting, diarrhoea, inflamed mouth and throat, complaining of sore ears or throat, and rash (other than diaper rash). Children with these or similar symptoms should be returned to their parent(s) or guardian(s).

## 5. Emergencies

Caregivers are not to give or apply any medication to children except for bandages for minor cuts/abrasions, ice packs for bumps, etc. No medications will be left in the nursery department or any classroom with the following exception: children who carry inhalers for asthma or medication for serious allergies (including Epi-pens).

Emergency procedures in the event of a fire, including escape routes and gathering places must be clearly indicated. First aid boxes will be kept on hand.

Activities off Church Premises (Parties and Field Trips):

Precautions/waivers/ etc. are done at the time of the event, and are specific for the particular event.

## 6. Reporting Accidents/Injuries

Occasionally during the course of regular program activities, injury occurs. These may be minor or major in nature. Appropriate support and assistance must be given immediately to the injured child or leader, while maintaining the safety of the other children. If the injury is significant, or could be so, the child's parent is to be contacted right away. Minor injuries (scrapes etc.) should be reported when the parent comes to pick up the child.

Once equilibrium is restored, the staff person or volunteer should fill out a written Incident Report. A description of the incident, contributing factors and the treatment given are to be noted. Witnesses to the incident will be listed with addresses and phone numbers for follow-up purposes. The Incident Report should be reviewed by CBWOQ staff and recommendations made to prevent a recurrence of the accident. These Reports are to be kept on file.

## 7. Child abuse prevention and procedures:

### Definitions

**Physical Abuse:** This is the use of physical force by the caregiver, which results in any injury to the child. Health professionals sometimes describe this injury as a non-accidental injury.

**Physical Neglect:** This is the chronic or episodic withholding of necessary or essential physical care from the child with resulting injury or damage to the child.

Necessary physical care can include food, nutrition, shelter, clothing, medical care, safety, supervision, or sensory stimulation (particularly to young infants).

**Emotional Abuse:** This is the acting out by the child's caregiver of his or her negative or ambiguous feelings towards the child, resulting in some degree of emotional damage to the child. This kind of behaviour may consist of constant chastising, belittling, verbal tirades, ridicule, humiliation, undermining the child's sense of self-worth and dignity.

**Emotional Neglect:** This is the chronic or episodic withholding of necessary emotional care and support from the child which results in some degree of emotional damage to the child. This kind of neglect might consist of withholding affection and love from the child; or withholding of affirmations of the child's self-worth. In extreme forms, emotional neglect can involve the complete withdrawal of any verbal and/or non-verbal interactions with the child, manifesting the complete rejection of the child.

**Sexual Abuse:** This is the sexual exploitation of a child by a caregiver or other family member, or any adult, resulting in damage or injury to the child sexually, either psychologically or physically. Forms of sexual exploitation include behaviour of a sexual nature, touching of a sexual nature and sexual intercourse.

## **8. The Responsibility to Report**

The Children and Family Services Act requires that each person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is, or may be, in need of protection shall promptly report the belief and the information upon which it is based, to The Children's Aid Society (CAS).

In addition, the person shall also report the occurrence to the Executive Director of CBWOQ.

No investigation is to be conducted by CBWOQ staff or volunteers, in circumstances where a report has been made to The Children's Aid Society, until civil authorities authorise such action.

**Public responsibility to report a child in need of protection ADAPTED FROM CFSA s.72(2)**

Every person who believes or suspects on reasonable grounds that a child is or may be in need of protection must report promptly the belief and the information upon which it is based to a Children's Aid Society

### **Professional confidentiality ADAPTED FROM CFSA s.72(3),(7),(8)**

The professional's duty to report overrides the provisions of any other Provincial statute, specifically, those provisions that would otherwise prohibit disclosure by the caregiver. That is, the professional must report abuse even when the information is supposed to be confidential or privileged.

### **Protection from liability ADAPTED FROM CFSA s.72(7)**

Should civil action be brought against a person who made a report, he/she will be protected unless he/she acted maliciously or without reasonable grounds for his/her belief or suspicion.

### **What constitutes 'abuse' for the purpose of professional reporting? ADAPTED FROM CFSA s.72(1)**

#### **A child suffers 'abuse' in any of the following circumstances:**

- the child has or is at risk to likely suffer physical harm or there is a pattern of neglect either inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by the person's failure to adequately:
  - care and provide for the child, or
  - supervise and protect the child;
- the child has been or is at risk to likely be sexually molested or sexually exploited by the child's caregiver, or by another person where the child's caregiver:
  - knows or should know of the possibility of sexual molestation or sexual exploitation, and
  - fails to protect the child;
- the child requires medical treatment to cure, prevent or alleviate physical harm or suffering, and the child's caregiver does not provide, or refuses, or is unavailable, or unable to consent to those services or treatment;
- the child has or is likely to suffer emotional harm or there is a pattern of neglect by the child's caregiver, demonstrated through the actions of the child as:
  - serious anxiety, or

- severe depression, or
- serious withdrawal, or
- serious self-destructive or aggressive behaviour, or
- seriously delayed development

and the child's caregiver child does not provide, or refuses, or is unavailable, or unable to consent to those services or treatment;

- the child suffers from a mental, emotional or developmental condition that, if not remedied, could seriously impair the child's development, and the child's caregiver child does not provide, or refuses, or is unavailable, or unable to consent to those services or treatment.

- the child has been abandoned, the child's parent or guardian has died, or is unavailable to exercise his or her custodial rights over the child and has not made adequate provision for the child's care and custody, or the child is in a residential placement and the parent or guardian refuses, or is unable, or unwilling to resume the child's care and custody;

- the child is less than twelve years old and has killed or seriously injured another person, or caused serious damage to another person's property, services or treatment are necessary to prevent a recurrence and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, or refuses, or is unavailable, or unable to consent to those services or treatment;

- the child is less than twelve years of age and has on more than one occasion injured another person or caused loss or damage to another person's property, with the encouragement of the person having charge of the child, or because of that person's failure or inability to supervise the child adequately.

## **9. How to report**

### **Reporting abuse: Alleged victim eighteen years of age or older.**

The individual who receives the information will encourage the alleged victim to access counselling and protection through the local police and pastoral or counselling services. No one will be informed of the allegations without the consent of the alleged victim. CBWOQ will listen to and support the alleged victim but will not take action outside of CBWOQ on his/her behalf; that is, the alleged victim must be the individual to lay charges with the police, but CBWOQ will provide physical and emotional support during this time if requested.

If the incident involves alleged perpetrator acting on behalf of CBWOQ, the alleged victim will be informed of the policy to assess the appropriateness of the alleged perpetrator continuing in his/her role with CBWOQ. This assessment will be made at a meeting of the

Executive Director and President, and the board. With the knowledge of the alleged victim, one of the above people will be informed for the purpose of contacting the remaining people and coordinating a meeting.

**Reporting abuse: An alleged victim less than eighteen years of age, and alleged perpetrator not acting on behalf of CBWOQ.**

Any report of abuse by a child to a volunteer or staff of CBWOQ will be reported to the local Children's Aid Society (CAS). The report will be made immediately by the person who was initially provided with the information. If there is doubt as to the validity of the information, the report will still be made to the CAS. The decision to investigate the report will be made by the CAS.

When a volunteer, staff, or any other member of CBWOQ has reasonable ground to suspect that a child may be suffering from abuse or is at risk to suffer abuse, the person who suspects the abuse will report to the CAS with the information immediately. The decision to investigate will be made by the CAS.

**Reporting abuse: An alleged victim less than eighteen years of age, and alleged perpetrator acting on behalf of CBWOQ**

Any report of abuse within CBWOQ will be reported directly to the Children's Aid Society immediately by the person who receives the information. If there is doubt as to the validity of the information the CAS will be notified and the decision to investigate will be left there.

**10. Responding to an allegation of abuse against someone acting on behalf of CBWOQ**

Should an allegation of abuse be received, the Executive Director and President of the Board shall review and respond, in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Allegations must be taken seriously and handled promptly with due respect for privacy and confidentiality of all persons involved. Do not engage in denial, minimization, or blame. Do not be accusatory.
2. Document all efforts in handling the allegation and ensure the records are kept up to date and confidential.
3. Ensure reporting to required local authorities, (i.e. Police, Children's Aid Society, etc.) has been carried out.
4. Do not handle the allegation without professional assistance. Report the matter immediately to CBWOQ's Lawyer and Insurance Company. Do not



- attempt an in-depth investigation, as this needs to be left to professionals who are familiar with these cases.
5. Obtain legal advice to determine the obligation to notify parents.
  6. Do not confront the accused until the safety of the victim is secured. Police should be available to deal with this situation.
  7. Reach out to the victim and the victim's family, as adequate care must be shown for the well being of the victim. Be careful not to pre-judge the situation.
  8. Treat the accused with dignity and support. If the accused is a worker, that person should be suspended from any duties or responsibilities in the nursery/children/youth ministry pending the outcome of the investigation. If the accused is a paid employee, arrangements should be made to either maintain or suspend his/her income as directed by our legal counsel.
  9. Use a prepared statement, as directed by legal counsel, when providing information to the media and the congregation. The privacy and confidentiality of all those involved must be safeguarded.

CBWOQ APPLICATION FOR CHILDRENS MINISTRY WORKERS

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

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

Telephone Number: Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

A. Ministry

What area(s) would you like to become involved?

\_\_\_\_\_  
Are you open to participate in relevant training? yes / no

B. Experience

What previous experience have you in children/youth ministry? (Be specific.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
C. Personal Data

Are there any conditions or personal circumstances which would hinder you from performing certain types of activities in the position(s) for which you are volunteering? (e.g. allergies, asthma, diabetes, fainting, seizures, unable to lift children, etc.) \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
D. References:

List two persons not related to you who can comment on your suitability for this ministry.

Name	Address	Telephone	How long known?
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Please read and sign the following statement.

I have read and agree to adhere to the best of my ability, the Policy and Procedures Regarding Child Safety.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

# CBWOQ REFERENCE FOLLOW-UP

1. NAME OF APPLICANT \_\_\_\_\_

2. NAME OF REFERENCE CONTACTED (identify the organization and the person if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_

3. DATE OF CONTACT \_\_\_\_\_ TIME OF CONTACT \_\_\_\_\_

4. METHOD OF CONTACT: telephone\_\_\_\_, letter\_\_\_\_, face-to-face\_\_\_\_

5. RELATIONSHIP OF REFERENCE TO APPLICANT (i.e. employer)\_\_\_\_\_

6. HOW MANY YEARS HAS REFERENCE KNOWN APPLICANT-\_\_\_\_\_YEARS

*My name is (reference checker). I am phoning to obtain a reference for (volunteer's name) who has expressed an interest in the volunteer position of \_\_\_\_\_for Canadian Baptist Women of Ontario and Quebec.*

*He/she has given us your name as someone who would be familiar with his/her qualifications for this position.*

7. WHAT KNOWLEDGE DO YOU HAVE OF THIS PERSONS COMMITMENT TO CHRIST?

8. WHAT CHARACTERISTICS WOULD ENABLE THIS PERSON TO FULFILL THIS POSITION?

9. DO YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS RELATING TO THIS PERSON BEING INVOLVED IN THIS MINISTRY?

10. DO YOU HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGARDING THE SUITABILITY OF THIS PERSON FOR THIS MINISTRY?

11. NAME OF PERSON PERFORMING THE REFERENCE CHECK: \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print)

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_



(DATE)

To whom it may concern:

Canadian Baptist Women of Ontario and Quebec has appointed the following individual to (POSITION).

(NAME)

We require that (NAME) get a vulnerable sector screening police security check. We would also request a check be made of the pardoned sex offender's database. Any assistance you can give is greatly appreciated.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

(Name)  
(Position)  
(phone and email)

NOTE: SEPARATE REPORT REQUIRED FOR EACH INJURED PERSON

## CBWOQ INCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORT

NAME OF INJURED \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF ACCIDENT \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TIME OF ACCIDENT \_\_\_\_\_ APPROX. AGE \_\_\_\_\_ MALE \_\_\_ FEMALE

TELEPHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ ON MEDICATION \_\_\_ YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ UNKNOWN

### DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

TYPE OF ACCIDENT: \_\_\_ PROPERTY DAMAGE \_\_\_ BODY INJURY \_\_\_ OTHER \_\_\_ SLIP \_\_\_  
FALL \_\_\_ TRIP \_\_\_ OTHER

EXACT PLACE WHERE ACCIDENT OCCURRED (be specific)

\_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE INJURY/DAMAGE:

\_\_\_\_\_

WEATHER CONDITIONS: \_\_\_ SNOW/ICE \_\_\_ SLUSH \_\_\_ RAIN \_\_\_ FOG \_\_\_ CLEAR \_\_\_ BRIGHT SUN \_\_\_  
EXTREME COLD \_\_\_ OTHER (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### ACTION TAKEN

WAS FIRST AID PROVIDED? \_\_\_ YES \_\_\_ NO. IF YES, BY WHOM \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE FIRST AID  
GIVEN: \_\_\_\_\_

WAS MEDICAL/POLICE ASSISTANCE REQUESTED? \_\_\_ YES \_\_\_ NO IF YES PROVIDE  
DETAILS:

WAS INJURED PERSON TRANSPORTED TO HOSPITAL? \_\_\_ YES \_\_\_ NO

IF YES, GIVE DETAILS (i.e. how, where, when):

DID INJURED PERSON REFUSE ASSISTANCE? \_\_\_ YES \_\_\_ NO  
COMMENTS MADE BY INJURED PERSON: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

WAS INJURED PERSON TAKEN HOME? \_\_\_ YES \_\_\_ NO  
WAS INJURED PERSON LEFT: \_\_\_ ALONE \_\_\_ WITH FAMILY MEMBERS

**WITNESSES:**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_

**REPORT COMPLETED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_



**For CBWOQ leadership**

**Reviewed by (Name)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Action taken to prevent a reoccurrence:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AGREEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read the CBWOQ Child Protection Policy in its entirety and commit to following it.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature