



CRESTWICKE BAPTIST CHURCH

(A Federal Corporation)
400 Speedvale Avenue East
Guelph Ontario N1E 1N9

ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY FOR YOUTH AND CHILDREN

*Mission Statement: Every child and every worker is of value to God.
The purpose of this policy is to help assure that every child, youth and
worker is treated with respect, interest and safety, both physically and
emotionally within our church facilities and all other church-related
activities.*

Approved by Board of Deacons: September 10, 2019
Approved by Church: June 19, 2019

Crestwicke Baptist Church

Abuse Prevention Policy for Children and Youth

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 Crestwicke Baptist Church has a spiritual, moral, and legal obligation to provide a secure environment for members and visitors of all ages and in particular for children and workers participating in church sponsored programs.
- 1.2 This document is intended to state the church's position on any forms of abuse that may occur during or as part of its programs.
- 1.3 The objectives of this policy are to prevent abuse of any kind and to appropriately deal with abuse or allegations of abuse, concerning children and workers/ volunteers in any church sponsored/ supported program.

2.0 Definitions

- 2.1 In this policy "abuse" is defined as:
 - 1) **physical abuse:** maltreatment and/or use of excessive physical force;
 - 2) **verbal and emotional abuse:** verbal insults, threats, bullying or bribes;
 - 3) **sexual abuse:** as defined below.
- 2.2 In this policy "sexual abuse" means:
 - 1) physical sexual relations between a worker/ volunteer and a child/ youth under his or her influence;
 - 2) behaviour or remarks of a sexual nature by a worker/ volunteer towards a child/ youth under his or her influence.
- 2.3 In this policy abuse also means any type of action or inaction that would cause a child to be a "child in need of protection" within the meaning of Section 37 of the *Child and Family Services Act* and as set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.4 In this policy a worker/ volunteer is a person involved in a Crestwicke Baptist Church supported/ sponsored program, which involves leadership, supervision, counseling or instruction - volunteered or employed.
- 2.5 In this policy, "under his or her influence" means a child/ youth who is being ministered to, or under the care or supervision of a worker/ volunteer.
- 2.6 In this policy, "children, child or youth" means a person who is less than 18 years old.

3.0 Statement of Principles

- 3.1 Abuse of any kind is sin.
- 3.2 Abuse is a breach of trust and is a criminal offense.
- 3.3 Abuse can cause enormous physical, emotional and spiritual harm to the abused person as well as to the church family. For this reason, a specific policy to prevent and effectively respond to abuse is warranted and contained herein.

4.0 Application (Onboarding) Process of Staff and Volunteers

- 4.1 All employees and volunteers who wish to work with children and youth must produce a Criminal Record Check that is not more than 3 months old, prior to commencing their service. This Criminal Record Check must be renewed every three years.
- 4.2 Before commencing service the new worker/ volunteer will review a copy of the Abuse Prevention Policy For Children and Youth. The new worker/ volunteer will be asked to sign a declaration stating that they have read the policy and agree to comply with the policy.
- 4.3 All declarations for workers/ volunteers working with children and youth will be kept on file alongside the worker/ volunteers Criminal Records Check.

5.0 Approval of Staff and Volunteers

- 5.1 Anyone identified as having participated in sexual activity with a child or with an adult without consent or who has been criminally convicted of any sexual crime will not be approved for a position of authority or trust.
- 5.2 Any person identified as having a criminal record or a history of illegal activity will not be approved for a position of authority or trust unless after full disclosure the individual's application is approved by a vote of the elders and deacons boards.

6.0 Abuse Prevention

- 6.1 Staffing
A church sanctioned event for children must be staffed by a minimum of two adults who meet the criteria set out in Sections 4 and 5 above.
- 6.2 Visibility and Accessibility
To ensure visibility and easy access to any room where children are in the care of staff or volunteers, doors will be kept open at all times unless there are two or more workers/ volunteers present.

6.3 Special Day and Overnight Events

Day events that occur off church property and all overnight events must be preplanned and approved by pastoral staff or deacons. Depending on the activity, written parental consent may be required. Each event will be supervised appropriately with a minimum of at least two adults who meet the criteria set out in Sections 4 and 5 above.

6.4 Transportation

Transportation during events will be arranged so that a driver is not alone with a child who is not part of his/her immediate family.

6.5 Counseling of a child

One-on-one counseling will always be prearranged with the knowledge of and presence of the parent, or a ministry related third party. The meeting will occur in a public place, or a place that allows for easy visibility and access. The adult will arrange the seating so as not to be between the child and the door. This allows the child freedom to leave the room at any time. The door will always be left ajar.

7.0 Reporting Child Abuse

7.1 Any person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been abused or is at risk of abuse or is a child in need of protection as set out in Appendix 1, shall forthwith report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to the Deacons' Board and Family and Children's Services (F&CS), without delay.

7.2 If there is reasonable suspicion that a volunteer or staff has abused or threatened to abuse a child, the volunteer or staff shall immediately be suspended from any duties or responsibilities in the children's ministry (with pay if employed), pending the outcome of the (F&CS) investigation or until otherwise notified by the Deacons' Board.

7.3 The church will offer support to all parties involved in the allegation/complaint and will offer to coordinate Professional Christian counseling.

7.4 Full disclosure of relevant facts will be made available to all parties involved including the accused, the victim and F&CS.

8.0 Sustainable Allegation of Abuse Against a Staff or Volunteer

- 8.1 If a sustainable allegation of abuse has been determined against a staff member during ministry duties, the staff member will be immediately terminated from their church employment. The most Senior Pastor or Chair of the Deacons' Board will send a written report of the facts to the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches office. A copy of this report will be kept on file. The most Senior Pastor or Chair of the Deacons' Board will ensure that other churches or persons inquiring about the character or conduct of the staff member is told of the findings of abuse and reasonable information about it.
- 8.2 If a sustainable allegation of abuse has been determined against a volunteer during ministry duties, the volunteer will be immediately terminated from volunteer ministry. The most Senior Pastor or Chair of the Deacons' Board will send a written report of the facts to the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches office. A copy of this report will be kept on file. The most Senior Pastor or Chair of the Deacons' Board will ensure that other churches or persons inquiring about the character or conduct of the volunteer is told of the findings of abuse and reasonable information about it. If the accused volunteer is willing to repent of their sin, then an offer to coordinate Christian counselling will be made.
- 8.3 A summary of the facts will be forwarded to the Deacon's Board and the Elders to evaluate if further supportive action should be taken towards the child and/or family involved in the abuse.
- 8.4 At the request of the victim or victim's family, the church will provide an environment for the child and family free from the abuser. The child and family's rights come before the abuser.
- 8.5 Full disclosure of relevant facts will be made available to the authorities during any subsequent criminal or legal proceedings that arise from sustainable allegations.

9.0 Non-Sustainable Allegation of Abuse against a Staff or Volunteer

- 9.1 Once allegations of child abuse have been appropriately investigated and it is determined that the allegation of abuse is not sustainable, then the accused staff or volunteer may be re-instated to their previous position of authority.
- 9.2 At the discretion of the accused the investigation findings may be shared with the church family in an agreed manner.
- 9.3 The accused will be offered support and Christian counseling if requested.

9.4 A summary of the facts will be forwarded to the Deacons' Board and the Elders to evaluate if further supportive action should be taken towards the accused.

9.5 The church will offer support to all parties involved in the non-sustainable allegation and will offer to coordinate Christian Counseling for the accuser.

10.0 Compensation and Assistance

10.1 Although compensation for abuse is the responsibility of the abuser, the church will try to assist any person injured by abuse. This clause does not in any way cause guilt or blame to be the responsibility of the church, its members, staff, directors or Board of Deacons. Nor does this clause imply any vicarious liability attaching to the church, its members, staff, directors or Board of Deacons.

10.2 The church will try to comfort, counsel and assist any person who has been abused within the church.

APPENDIX 1

37(2) CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ACT

37. (2) A child is in need of protection where,
1. The child has suffered physical harm, inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by or resulting from that person's,
 - i. failure to adequately care for, provide for, supervise or protect the child,or
 - ii. pattern of neglect in caring for, providing for, supervising or protecting the child.
 2. There is a risk that the child is likely to suffer physical harm inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by or resulting from that person's,
 - i. failure to adequately care for, provide for, supervise or protect the child,or
 - ii. pattern of neglect in caring for, providing for, supervising or protecting the child.
 3. The child has been sexually molested or sexually exploited, by the person having charge of the child or by another person where the person having charge of the child knows or should know of the possibility of sexual molestation or sexual exploitation and fails to protect the child.
 4. There is a risk that the child is likely to be sexually molested or sexually exploited as described in paragraph 3.
 5. The child requires medical treatment to cure, prevent or alleviate physical harm or suffering 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, the treatment.
 6. The child has suffered emotional harm, demonstrated by serious,
 - i. anxiety,
 - ii. depression
 - iii. withdrawal,
 - iv. self-destructive or aggressive behaviour, or
 - v. delayed development,and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the emotional harm suffered by the child results from the actions, failure to act or pattern of neglect on the part of the child's parent or the person having charge of the child.
 7. The child has suffered emotional harm of the kind described in subparagraph i, ii, iii, iv or v of paragraph 6 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, services or treatment to remedy or alleviate the harm.

8. There is a risk that the child is likely to suffer emotional harm of the kind described in subparagraph i, ii, iii, iv or v of paragraph 6 resulting from the actions, failure to act or pattern of neglect on the part of the child's parent or the person having charge of the child.
9. There is a risk that the child is likely to suffer emotional harm of the kind described in subparagraph i, ii, iii, iv or v of paragraph 6 and that 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, services or treatment to prevent the harm.
10. 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 parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, treatment to remedy or alleviate the condition.
11. The child has been abandoned, the child's parent 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 refuses or is unable or unwilling to resume the child's care and custody.
12. The child is less than 12 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.
13. The child is less than 12 years old 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.

APPENDIX 2
APPLICATION FORM FOR EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS
WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Date: _____

1. General Information

First Name: _____ **Last Name:** _____

Nickname or Preferred First Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **Postal Code:** _____

Home Phone: _____ **Cell Phone:** _____

Fax: _____ **Email:** _____

The Church may provide training for its staff members and volunteers working with children and youth. Are you prepared to attend training seminars or workshops on children's ministry prior to and during your responsibilities?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Have you read and understood Crestwicke Baptist Church's Abuse policy?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you ready to comply with this policy while serving in ministry?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Declaration

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. Should I be accepted as a staff member or as a volunteer, I agree to be bound by the constitution, policies, procedures, bylaws and discipline of Crestwicke Baptist Church. I agree not to abuse my positions of authority and/or trust. I will refrain from any conduct unbecoming in the performance of my responsibilities on behalf of the Church, respect the personal boundaries and dignity of others and pledge that my conduct will not include behaviour and/or offences that are defined by the Criminal Code of Canada.

Dated at _____, Ontario, this _____ day of _____, 20____

Applicant's Signature

Witness' Signature

Print Name

Print Name

APPENDIX 3

POLICY GUIDELINES

In order to help volunteers better understand the Crestwicke Baptist Church Abuse Prevention Policy for Children and Youth, these guidelines have been drafted. These guidelines are for reference and information only and in no way negate the abuse policy. All volunteers and staff must read and satisfy themselves that they understand the abuse policy, in its entirety. If these guidelines in any way appear to, or indeed do contradict the church policy, then the Abuse Prevention Policy for Children and Youth take precedence and will be followed. If any volunteer or staff member is unsure about any aspect of the policy they should contact the chairman of the Board of Deacons who will arrange for the policy and or these guidelines to be explained.

1. All church staff members and volunteers must undergo a police check. This police check must be delivered to the church prior to the volunteer or staff member commencing their duties.
2. Corporal punishment is not tolerated in Crestwicke Baptist Church.
3. No discipline which includes physical or mental humiliation will be tolerated (i.e. no taping of the mouth, wearing attire designed to embarrass or forced humiliating behaviour.)
4. Staff and volunteers may only intervene physically in accordance with their legal responsibility to prevent injury to young people or children or others (i.e. to stop fights or dangerous behaviour or to remove an individual who is threatening the well-being of others or the group as a whole).
5. Counselling must never be undertaken behind closed doors. Counselling one-on-one must be done by a counsellor of the same sex or in the presence of another adult witness. The door must always be ajar and the counsellor must not sit between the child and the door. The child or young person is allowed to leave at any time.
6. Written permission and a signed waiver of liability, signed by a parent or guardian must be received for all activities undertaken off church property.
7. No staff member or volunteer should drive individual children or youth (except members of their own family) to any event. If an event requires car travel, the express permission of a parent or guardian is required for all travel arrangements.

8. Crestwicke adopts a zero tolerance view of bullying. All bullying must be reported to the ministry co-ordinator who must initiate an investigation. This investigation must be undertaken in conjunction with the Board of Deacons and pastoral staff.
9. No child or youth must be released from an activity, except to a parent or guardian or to a person nominated, in writing, by the parent or guardian prior to the event taking place.
10. All staff members and volunteers may have personnel files and records kept by the church. Such records are under the strict control of the Board of Deacons.
11. All staff members and volunteers must be in agreement with the Abuse Prevention Policy for Children and Youth. They must acknowledge that they have read it and understood it. All questions with regards to the policy should be directed to their ministry co-ordinator or pastoral staff, prior to commencing work.
12. If anyone is disciplined in accordance with this policy, or is in breach with the policy, Crestwicke Baptist Church, its Board of Deacons and Pastoral Staff reserve the right to share information on all volunteers and staff with third parties, such as (but not limited to) the F&CS, the police, the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches, other churches and charitable organizations.