

**Water Street Christian Reformed Church
287 Water Street
Guelph, Ontario
N1G 1B6**

Safe Church Policy

of Water Street Christian Reformed Church Guelph, Ontario

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1. Preamble

Introduction

As a family of believers, Water Street Christian Reformed Church of Guelph shares the responsibility to care for and protect one another. The Bible tells us that humans are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27, 5:1, 9:6, James 3:9). Through our creation, therefore, God bestowed upon us an inherent dignity. This dignity implies the right to safety and respect for all people. Jesus shows a special concern for children and the vulnerable members of society (Matthew 18:6, 10, 14).

Although we cannot hope to eliminate abuse in the church by writing a policy statement for the care of one another, Water Street Christian Reformed Church of Guelph is committed to implementing preventative measures that demonstrate a zero tolerance commitment for abuse and neglect. Through diligently observing these measures, we can keep our church a place where children/youth/vulnerable adults are able to learn about the love of Jesus Christ in safety. We will also provide an environment for teachers, nursery attendants, pastors, and all those involved with ministering to others that will allow them to do their work without the threat of false accusations or suspicion.

Mission Statement Reference

“Water Street Christian Reformed Church of Guelph is called to be a “unified community of Christians who love and worship God ... who love and care for each other...” (Mission Statement, Water Street Christian Reformed Church of Guelph).

“We will love, care for and enfold in living fellowship with God, our members and all others we reach through our ministries” (Vision Statement, Water Street Christian Reformed Church of Guelph).

The members of the church are accountable to one another in their doctrine life and have the responsibility to encourage and admonish one another in love (Church Order, article 79-a 1996).

“This is my command: Love each other” (John 15:17).

Authority

The council of Water Street Christian Reformed Church of Guelph accepted the original Safe Church policy in 1997. Changes and updates to this policy are made periodically and are reflected in the revision status of this policy.

2. Purpose

Our church should be a safe place for all those participating in its programs, services and events. It should also be a beacon for the community, serving as a good example for healthy relationships, and teaching what God's intention is for our behaviour.

All members and participants are encouraged to help create and maintain a safe, respectful, caring, loving environment that will foster healthy relationships and lead to a positive influence in our church and within our greater community.

Church leaders have a special responsibility in reducing the risk of all forms of abuse. Church leaders must be educated about abuse, aid in its prevention and respond appropriately when required. Additionally, church leaders should be aware of the resources that are available for guidance in difficult situations.

This policy contains the guidelines for creating and maintaining church programs that nurture worship and faith while minimizing risk to all participants.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Reduce the possibility of abuse, making the church a safer place;
- Protect church Leaders from false allegations; and
- Outline the necessary procedures in case of an allegation of abuse.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. Child - any child who is, or appears to be, under the age of 18 years in accordance with the provisions of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017* (CYFSA).
- 3.2. Child in Need of Protection - any child who is or who appears to be suffering from abuse and/or neglect as outlined in section 74(2) of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*. See the Act for a complete list of suspicions that must be reported forthwith to a Children's Aid Society.
- 3.3. Council / Council Board – Council is the governing body for the Water Street Church of Guelph. Council has the delegated responsibility for matters relating to vulnerable members of the congregation.
- 3.4. Emotional and Verbal Abuse - any attempt to control another person's life through threats, fear, and/or deprivation in such a way that it impairs a person's God-given sense of self-worth. Excessive criticism, ridicule, yelling, and the threat of physical abuse or centering out the individual for public humiliation is unacceptable.
- 3.5. Harassment means any improper behaviour by another that is directed at and is offensive to a child/youth/vulnerable adult, and which that person knew or should reasonably have known would be unwelcome. It comprises objectionable conduct, comments, or displays made on either a one time or continuous basis that demeans,

belittles, or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment to a child/youth/vulnerable adult.

- 3.6. Improper Touching - subjecting a child or vulnerable adult to unwanted physical and/or sexual touching by an adult leader.
- 3.7. Improper Discipline - the application of corporal punishment or abusive discipline (see Appendix A - Discipline Policy for clarification).
- 3.8. Leader – anyone having a role that puts them in authority over or in a supervisory role of a particular ministry. This may include paid staff, volunteers, teachers, helpers or coordinators
- 3.9. Physical Abuse/Child Neglect - any intentional act that results in physical pain or injury regardless of whether an obvious physical symptom such as a wound or bruising results. Physical abuse also includes physical neglect, which means not doing what one is supposed to be doing to meet the physical needs of someone in his or her care. Physical abuse may be a single event or a chronic pattern of behaviour. Physical abuse is often followed by a request or threat to the victim not to tell anyone what happened, not to report the discipline, or not to show anyone the mark or bruise.
- 3.10. Reasonable Grounds - the information that an average person, using normal and honest judgement, would need in order to decide to report an incident.
- 3.11. Sexual Abuse - any sexual action taken by one person against or in the presence of another who is an unwilling participant or observer to such an action. Physical contact is not a necessary element of sexual abuse. Suggestive speech, pornographic material, public exposure of genitals, and requests for sexual contact all represent forms of sexual abuse that do not involve physical contact. Sexual abuse includes any inappropriate sexual encounter role, even if consensual at the time (e.g. between parent and children, teachers and students, pastors and counselees). All sexual activity between an adult and a child is sexual abuse regardless of whether or not the adult participant believes that the child has consented to the activities and regardless of the intentions of the adult participant.
- 3.12. Supervisor – the recognized ‘head’ of a church ministry or program (i.e. Sunday School Superintendent, Head Counsellor of GEMS or CADETS).
- 3.13. Vulnerable Person – In accordance with s. 6.3(1) of the Criminal Records Act, means any person who, because of his or 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 a position of authority or trust relative to them.

4. General

- 4.1. Council shall ensure that the Safe Church Policy is available to all members of the church.
- 4.2. All persons involved in ministry leadership with children, youth and vulnerable adults are expected to read and understand the Safe Church Policy.
- 4.3. Council shall ensure that the Safe Church Policy is reviewed annually. The results of the review shall be reported to Council and the policy shall be updated annually as required.

5. Staff / Leader Selection Screening and Education

- 5.1. Prospective leaders of any church ministry involving children, youth or vulnerable adults, as well as the minister, paid staff, pastoral workers and deacons will be screened and require the approval of Council to serve. (*Appendix A: Screening for Leaders*).
- 5.2. Prospective leaders of a church ministry involving children, youth or vulnerable adults, *who are age 18 and over*, will obtain a Police Record Check (VSS - Vulnerable Sector Screening) prior to the commencement of their duties and every five years thereafter for those holding long-term positions.
- 5.3. Prospective leaders of a church ministry involving children, youth or vulnerable adults, *who are under age 18*, will be screened with the exception of a Police Record Check. Leaders under 18 may assist with a church ministry or program, but only while enough adult leaders to provide supervision are also present.
- 5.4. If a Police Record Check (PRC) indicates the subject of the check is a known sex offender, the person will be deemed inappropriate for service in any church ministry involving children, youth or vulnerable adults, and the prospective leader's application will be rejected.
- 5.5. Should a police check indicate a conviction or any charges that may compromise the appropriateness of an application to serve or a continuation of service, the person *may* be rejected as a leader.
- 5.6. The Education and Discipleship team will review the list of leaders and staff of church ministries involving children, youth or vulnerable adults on a yearly basis to determine who is required to renew their Police Record Check.
- 5.7. Prospective leaders of a church ministry will receive orientation training in the Safe Church Policy and will sign a document confirming that they have read, understand and are willing to comply with the policy.
- 5.8. The Education and Discipleship Team will provide yearly training / information sessions about the Safe Church Policy for all leaders and staff, including providing instruction on:
 - a) The responsibilities of teachers and support people;
 - b) Appropriate forms of discipline;
 - c) How to prevent and recognize abuse situations (*Appendix C: Detection of Abuse*)

6. Duty to Report

- 6.1. Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. (s.125 CYFSA)
- 6.2. A person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection must promptly report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to the Children's Aid Society. S.125 of the Act describes the specific circumstances that must be reported.
- 6.3. The duty to report applies to any child who is, or appears to be, under the age of 16 years. A professional, or a member of the public, who is concerned that a 16- or 17-year old is or may be in need of protection may, but is not required to, make a report to a society.
- 6.4. Where a report is made to a Children's Aid Society or police regarding a member of Water Street Church or a participant in a church program, the person making such a report is also encouraged to contact the Council Chairperson or Vice Chair of Water Street Church. This should be done as soon as practicable after the report to CAS/police.

7. Response to a Report

- 7.1. Upon becoming aware of a suspected case of child abuse or neglect, or of a report made to the Children's Aid Society involving a member of the church or a program participant, the response of Council will be according to Ontario legislation and policy as described in *Appendix D: Response to a Report*.

8. Safe Church Facilities

- 8.1. The church will provide adequate lighting in all areas, both inside and outside the building, where ministry activities take place.
- 8.2. The nursery and classrooms where ministry activities take place will have a window in the door or an unobstructed view from the hallway.
- 8.3. The church will have a Hall Duty Monitor, whose duties are described in *Appendix F*, circulating on the premises during church services.

9. Discipline Policies

- 9.1. Physical discipline is unacceptable in all circumstances.
- 9.2. Verbal behaviour or discipline that is or may be perceived as abusive is unacceptable. This includes but is not limited to yelling, insults, threatening and making degrading or humiliating comments.
- 9.3. Forms of discipline will reflect a child's age and level of comprehension and may include: verbal warnings, distraction with another activity, helping the child / youth to focus on another more acceptable activity, and isolating the child / youth from others if another leader is available to assist (time-out).

- 9.4. A parent or guardian will be informed whenever a child / youth misbehaves beyond minor correction, or if a pattern of misbehaviour requiring correction increases.
- 9.5. Leaders will report concerns about a child's behaviour or the appropriate response to a child's behaviour to the ministry supervisor.
- 9.6. Physical restraint is acceptable when necessary to prevent harm to the person being restrained or to others. If a leader determines that physical restraint is necessary, the child's parent or guardian must be notified immediately.
- 9.7. Leaders will report incidents of restraint and discipline beyond minor correction to the ministry supervisor. The ministry supervisor shall;
 - a. obtain the particulars of the incident or activity in question, and encourage the reporter to fill out an Incident Report (*Appendix E*);
 - b. complete an Incident Report if the ministry supervisor is unable to obtain an Incident Report from the leader.
- 9.8. A child / youth may be denied the privilege of participating in a ministry program for the reasons of repeated incidents of misbehaviour, or an incident that required restraint to ensure the safety of others.
- 9.9. The Church's discipline policy applies to all church ministries involving children and young people.

10. Transportation Policy

- 10.1. A Ministry Information and Permission Form (*Appendix F*) will be obtained from the parent or guardian of each minor participant in a child or youth ministry prior to transportation being provided.
- 10.2. Adults providing transportation for a child, youth or vulnerable person will be fully screened.
- 10.3. A minimum of two unrelated and screened adult leaders should be present in the vehicle when transporting minors.
- 10.4. Drivers will be 21 years old or older.
- 10.5. Drivers will possess a valid driver's licence for the class of vehicle they are operating.

11. Nursery

- 11.1. There must be a minimum of two (2) adult leaders, who are not related to each other, in the nursery. A leader who is a minor may assist in the nursery provided that adult supervision is present.
- 11.2. The nursery facilities will have controlled access. Gates to the nursery will remain closed when children are in the nursery to prevent a child from getting out.
- 11.3. Leaders will not remove a child from the nursery facilities.
- 11.4. Children utilizing the nursery will be signed in and signed out by a parent or guardian (*Appendix G: Nursery Procedures*)
- 11.5. Only adult leaders may assist children with bathroom needs.
- 11.6. An adult leader in the nursery may assist a child to the bathroom, but they shall remain outside the bathroom and request the assistance of the child's parent or guardian if help in the bathroom is needed.
- 11.7. A leader in the nursery will not diaper an infant or toddler but will seek the assistance of the child's parent or guardian if diapering is required.

- 11.8. A parent or guardian will be informed if a child is injured while in the nursery. The parent or guardian of any child requiring medical attention must be notified as soon as possible.
- 11.9. Leaders will report any injury that is more than transient and trifling in nature to the ministry supervisor. The ministry supervisor shall;
 - a. obtain the particulars of the incident or activity in question, and encourage the reporter to fill out an Incident Report (*Appendix E*);
 - b. complete an Incident Report if the ministry supervisor is unable to obtain an Incident Report from the leader.
- 11.10. The ministry supervisor shall maintain attendance records for nursery leaders and children, which shall be submitted to the Church office for retention.

12. Sunday School

- 12.1. Windows in classroom doors will be kept clear of all obstructions, or the door will remain open, so that the activities within are clearly visible from the hall.
- 12.2. At least two screened leaders will be present when children's worship or church school is in session.
- 12.3. An adult leader of Sunday School may assist a child to the bathroom, but they shall remain outside the bathroom and obtain the assistance of the child's parent or guardian if help in the bathroom is needed. If the child's parent or guardian is not available or able to assist, a child who requires assistance in going to the bathroom shall be taken to a washroom by 2 screened adult leaders and assistance may be provided while 2 screened leaders are present.
- 12.4. Leaders of the Sunday School ministry will ensure that a Ministry Information and Permission Form is signed by a parent or guardian at the start of the program (see Appendix G – Ministry Information and Permission Form).
- 12.5. The ministry supervisor shall maintain attendance records for nursery leaders and children, which shall be submitted to the Church office for retention.

13. GEMS and Cadets

- 13.1. Counsellors will seek to provide adequate supervision of ministry participants. Each GEMS/Cadets function will be supervised by at least 2 adult leaders.
- 13.2. GEMS / Cadets should not arrive more than 10 minutes before the start of a session.
- 13.3. GEMS / Cadets should not enter the church facility before a session, or remain alone in the church, without at least 2 leaders being present.
- 13.4. A parent or guardian will be informed if a youth is injured while participating in a GEMS / Cadet activity. The parent or guardian of any child requiring medical attention must be notified as soon as possible.
- 13.5. One-on-one discussions between a GEM / Cadet and a counsellor during a regular meeting will take place within sight of other people.
- 13.6. Private meetings between a GEM / Cadet and a counsellor apart from at regular meetings must occur in a public place and require parental permission.
- 13.7. When planning GEMS / Cadets activities away from the church facility, out of town or overnight, they shall be conducted in compliance with this policy. A signed parental permission form must be received in advance for each GEM / Cadet who attends (*Appendix H*)

- 13.8. While the appropriate display of affection between GEMS/Cadets counsellors and their charges is often part of conveying support and encouragement to one another, such displays can be misinterpreted. For that reason, displays of affections should be limited to such actions as a brief hug, an arm around the shoulder, an open-hand pat on the back, a handclasp, or a light touch on the forearm. Any showing of physical affection should only be done in an open populated area. A counsellor's or charge's right to refuse any of these must be respected.
- 13.9. Leaders of the GEMS/Cadets ministries will ensure that a Ministry Information and Permission Form is signed by a parent or guardian at the start of the program (see Appendix G – Ministry Information and Permission Form).
- 13.10. The ministry supervisor shall maintain attendance records for nursery leaders and children, which shall be submitted to the Church office for retention.

14. Youth Groups and Catechism

- 14.1. Youth Group / Catechism leaders may meet one on one with a Youth Group / Catechism member once or twice and thereafter only with the permission of the young person's parent or guardian. Any such meetings shall occur in a public place.
- 14.2. Regardless of the relative ages, dating relationships between a Youth Group or Catechism leader and a program participant are prohibited.
- 14.3. Youth Group / Catechism leaders will seek to provide adequate supervision of ministry participants. Youth Group functions should be supervised by at least 2 leaders. Catechism classes are to be scheduled when other activities are also scheduled in the church building.
- 14.4. When planning Youth Group and Catechism activities away from the church facility, out of town or overnight, they shall be conducted in compliance with this policy. A signed parental permission form must be received in advance for each young person who attends (Appendix H)
- 14.5. While the appropriate display of affection between Youth Group and Catechism leaders and their charges is often part of conveying support and encouragement to one another, such displays can be misinterpreted. For that reason, displays of affections should be limited to such actions as a brief hug, an arm around the shoulder, an open-hand pat on the back, a handclasp, or a light touch on the forearm. Any showing of physical affection should only be done in an open populated area. A leader or charge's right to refuse any of these must be respected.
- 14.6. A Youth Group leader shall not direct gifts, phone calls or letters of a personal or inappropriate nature to a Youth Group member.
- 14.7. Leaders of the Youth Group / Catechism ministries will ensure that a Ministry Information and Permission Form is signed by a parent or guardian at the start of the program (see Appendix G – Ministry Information and Permission Form).
- 14.8. The ministry supervisor shall maintain attendance records for nursery leaders and children, which shall be submitted to the Church office for retention.

15. Vacation Bible School

- 15.1. All Vacation Bible School (VBS) classes and activities will be conducted with at least two adult volunteers/staff. Volunteers/staff should not meet alone with a child without another adult or leader within visual range.
- 15.2. Children shall not be permitted to leave their classroom except in case of illness, to use the bathroom or other compelling reasons.

- 15.3. VBS children not needing assistance in going to the bathroom will be escorted by an adult leader as far as the bathroom door only.
- 15.4. If a child in VBS requires assistance in going to the bathroom, a leader shall first seek to have the child's parent or guardian help. If the child's parent or guardian is not available or able to assist, VBS children who require assistance in going to the bathroom shall be taken to a washroom by 2 screened adult leaders and assistance may be provided while 2 screened leaders are present.
- 15.5. Classroom activities held at off-site facilities will adhere to the same safety considerations and abuse policy requirements as activities held in the church building.
- 15.6. Leaders of the VBS ministry will ensure that a Ministry Information and Permission Form is signed by a parent or guardian at the start of the program (see Appendix G – Ministry Information and Permission Form).
- 15.7. The ministry supervisor shall maintain attendance records for nursery leaders and children, which shall be submitted to the Church office for retention.

Appendix A: Screening Procedure for Leaders

1. Prospective leaders shall be professing or baptized members of Water Street Christian Reformed Church of Guelph for at least 6 months before being considered to become a leader.
2. When a person is willing to volunteer for a child/youth/vulnerable adult ministry position, the following procedure should be followed:
 - a) The ministry supervisor nominates the prospective leader to be approached for initial review/approval by the Council.
 - b) The ministry supervisor interviews the prospective leader to establish that the person is willing and suitable for the position.
 - c) The ministry supervisor discusses the **Personal Information and Statement of Commitment form (Appendix B)** with the prospective leader and has the person complete and sign this document. First-time applicants will provide the names of two references. References may include employers, friends and colleagues.
 - d) The prospective leader obtains a Police Record Check (PRC) from the Police Service having jurisdiction over the area where they normally reside. Checks will be completed prior to the commencement of their duties and every 5 years thereafter.
 - e) The prospective leader presents the original PRC to the church office. The church office will take all reasonable precautions such that the information will only be used for the purpose of screening volunteers for a child / youth / vulnerable adult ministry position. Failure to provide a PRC form will disqualify the candidate from the process.
 - f) The church designate provides all the forms to the Council Chairperson or Vice-Chair.
 - g) A representative of Council will make any necessary checks or inquiries based on the information in the forms provided. All references of first-time applicants will be contacted by the Council representative.
 - h) The names of all applicants approved by Council will be provided to ministry supervisors.
 - i) The church designate will create a file folder for the prospective leader and will enter his/her name into its tracking database. Volunteer and staff files will be retained on a permanent basis. Old files may be archived electronically provided all information is retained (i.e. pdf files).

If the prospective leader is not a professing or baptized member of Water Street Christian Reformed Church of Guelph, the following additional step must be taken in addition to the above screening steps:

1. The prospective leader must be recommended by a professing member of the Water Street Christian Reformed Church of Guelph.

This additional step applies to all church programs, not only children's programs.

All permanent staff members shall be screened regardless of being directly involved with a child/youth/vulnerable adult ministry.

Appendix B – Personal Information and Statement of Commitment Form

Appendix C – Detection of Abuse

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CHILD ABUSE:

Children rarely exhibit just one sign that they are the victims of abuse. Some symptoms may also represent typical developmental changes or the after-effect of traumas in their lives other than abuse. Conversely, it is possible for abuse to be taking place without the appearance of noticeable symptoms because of the child's/youth's ability to mask or deny what would otherwise be very confusing and painful to acknowledge. Generally, several signs observed over a period of time suggest that a child/youth may be suffering from abuse. This highlights the need for training among leaders. If reasonable concerns are identified as per these sections, please complete a copy of Appendix E – Incident Report Form and forward it to Council.

INFANTS AND PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN:

1. Regression to an earlier stage of behavioural development such as baby talk, thumb sucking, or bed-wetting
2. Change in social behaviour—excessive crying or clinging, or becoming aggressive or withdrawn—that is not associated with normal development stages
3. Physical manifestations such as loss of bowel control, bed-wetting, frequent urination, headaches, stomach aches, breathing difficulties, sore throats accompanied by gagging, stains in child's underclothes
4. Exhibiting signs of fear around a family member or a familiar person, or fears of a familiar place or object
5. Fear of being touched, shying away from physical contact, resistance to being diapered or assisted in the bathroom
6. Use of explicit language or sexual behaviour that is beyond the child's comprehension or life experience
7. Attempting sexual behaviour with other children or attending adults
8. Unexplained injuries and/or bruises; repeated injuries blamed on the child's carelessness; multiple bruises sustained in one event or bruises to the child's midsection, back, head or back of thighs; signs of scalding, burning or distinctive bruising, such as in the shape of a belt buckle; multiple bruises in various stages of healing
9. Name-calling toward other children, bullying behaviour, sulking/brooding
10. Fascinations with fires; plays with matches or lighters

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE IN SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN:

1. Physical manifestations as above with the addition of complaints of pain, irritation, soreness, redness on the child's bottom; smearing feces on walls or objects
2. Pattern of injuries, multiple injuries, injuries about the face or neck; failure to complain about or explain an obvious physical discomfort
3. Unusual fears: a familiar person, a particular room, a particular object, or fear of new experiences
4. Poor concentration in the classroom

5. Exhibiting adult-pleasing behaviours, striving for perfection, acting miserable if failing
6. Engaging in self-injury, engaging in excessive masturbation or masturbation in a public setting
7. Acting enraged and out of control, expressing anger through destruction
8. Shyness about physical touch
9. Exhibiting sexual behaviour beyond comprehension or maturity level, behaving in a sexual manner with other children or adults
10. Exhibiting signs of needing to be in control of others or situations, bullying others
11. Hostility and distrust of adults, mood swings and irritability, violent disruptions
12. Acting out, including hoarding food and toys; lying, stealing, assaulting
13. Frequent absences from school or other scheduled events either because of being punished or to hide bruises
14. Low self-esteem, particular sensitivity to criticism
15. Hyper-vigilance—excessive and suspicious watching of other people, is easily startled
16. Pre-occupation with fire and setting fires

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE IN ADOLESCENTS:

1. Eating disorders, use of laxatives, unexplained and dramatic changes in weight
2. Changes in sleep patterns, including excessive sleeping; sleeping during the day and insomnia
3. A plunge in school performance
4. Perfectionist behaviour, excessive self-criticism, attempting to please adults, overreacting in any form of criticism or complaint
5. Sexually provocative or sexual behaviour, denial of body changes and sexual development; for females, seeking affection from older males
6. Experimentation with drugs and alcohol
7. Self-abusive behaviour including cutting oneself, preoccupation with danger and weapons, suicide attempts
8. Truancy from school
9. Cruelty to animals, bullying younger children
10. Emotional numbness, inability to be emotionally supportive to others
11. Having few friends, changing friends often
12. Depression and other signs of withdrawal and avoidance
13. Pregnancy
14. Refusing to attend to basic hygiene
15. Rectal and vaginal infections
16. Hyper-vigilance—excessive and suspicious watching of other people, is easily startled

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF NEGLECT:

1. Appears to be underfed, constantly hungry, underweight for size and age
2. Begging for food, stealing food, hoarding food
3. Lack of supervision, an underage child supervising another child/children
4. Chronic absenteeism from school, unattended educational needs
5. Unattended medical or dental needs

6. Consistent or frequent lack of hygiene, poor hygiene, or lack of cleanliness resulting in odours
7. For infants, failure to grow and advance/develop through normal child stages.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT IN PARENTAL BEHAVIOUR AND HOME LIFE:

1. Not attending meetings about the child, not showing an interest in the child, critical of the child, uncomplimentary
2. Constantly putting the child down, using harsh words to describe the child, using threats and unflattering language
3. Describing the child as an underachiever; complaining that he/she lets people down, is unmotivated, achieves less than his/her brothers and sisters
4. Speaking of the child in a way that sounds romantic, too grown-up, too sugary, or too perfect
5. Hostile, closed-minded, overprotective, isolating, doesn't let others in the house, won't participate in activities with other parents, makes excuses about failing to do tasks, talks about things not being good at home
6. Reports of past/other suspicious behaviour, reports that an older brother or sister may have been mistreated
7. Chemical dependency by one or both parents
8. Sudden and dramatic changes in the family's financial security

Appendix D: Response to a Report of Abuse

GENERAL

1. At no time will any members of Council interfere with the rights of any victim or a person making any report.
2. At no time will any members of Council interfere with the lawful investigation of a complaint by CAS or police.
3. Where required, members of Council shall cooperate fully and openly with any lawful investigation.
4. Council shall contact their insurance company to provide proper notification.
5. Council shall also seek legal advice where required.
6. No public statements of any nature shall be provided without first seeking legal advice.

DUTY TO REPORT – “CHILD IN NEED OF PROTECTION”

1. Upon becoming aware of a suspected case of child abuse or neglect, or of a report made to the Children’s Aid Society involving a member of the church or a program participant, the Council Chairperson or Vice Chair shall;
 - a. if the matter has not already been reported to the CAS, ensure that the suspicion and the information upon which it is based is promptly reported to the Children’s Aid Society;
 - b. attempt to obtain the particulars of the incident or activity in question, and where possible, they shall encourage the reporter to fill out an Incident Report (*Appendix E*);
 - c. share all pertinent information with the other members of Council as soon as practicable and in a confidential manner.
2. If the Council Chairperson or Vice Chair is unable to obtain an Incident Report from the reporter, the Council Chair or Vice Chair shall complete an Incident Report as possible.
3. Council shall undertake to the extent possible, appropriate steps to ensure the safety of all other members of the congregation.

DUTY TO REPORT – CHURCH LEADER IMPLICATED

1. Upon becoming aware of a suspected case of child abuse or neglect, or of a report made to the Children’s Aid Society regarding a **LEADER** of a church program or ministry, the Council Chairperson or Vice Chair shall;
 - a. if the matter has not already been reported to the CAS, ensure that the suspicion and the information upon which it is based is promptly reported to the Children’s Aid Society;
 - b. attempt to obtain the particulars of the incident or activity in question, and where possible, they shall encourage the reporter to fill out an Incident Report;
2. If the Council Chairperson or Vice Chair is unable to obtain an Incident Report from the reporter, the Council Chair or Vice Chair shall complete an Incident Report as possible.
3. The Council Chairperson or Vice Chair shall share all pertinent information with the Pastor (if not implicated), and other members of Council as soon as practicable and in a confidential manner. This will also include whether the alleged abuse occurred on church property or was related to a church program or sanctioned event.
4. Council may seek assistance from the Classical Safe Church Committee of Classis Huron to form an advisory panel concerning allegations by a church leader.

5. Council shall undertake to the extent possible, appropriate steps to ensure the safety of all other members of the congregation.
6. When considering steps to ensure the safety of other members or program participants, Council shall:
 - a. Prohibit the alleged offender from having contact with any child or vulnerable person while on Church property or at any church sanctioned program or event and
 - b. Suspending the alleged offender from their office, position or duty (without pay where applicable) and without prejudice, pending the outcome of any investigation or court process.
7. Where the alleged offender and the victim are not from the same church, each church should appoint a designated person. These individuals should maintain contact throughout the investigative process and share pertinent information where appropriate.
8. Council may conduct their own investigation after the CAS/police have completed theirs.
9. When criminal proceedings have concluded, Council should promptly revisit the matter, whether the result was a conviction, an acquittal or the charges were dropped. Where appropriate, Council shall contact their legal counsel, their insurance carrier, the police, the child protection authorities and/or the Classical Safe Church Committee for further guidance or direction.
10. No person suspended from a position outlined in 4(b) above shall be re-instated to their previously held position until a full review has been completed and Council is satisfied it is safe and proper to re-instate the individual.

Appendix E: Incident Report Form

After notifying the Police Service or Family & Children's Services, the following form should be used to report an incident of suspected abuse.

The following form should also be used to report and file a record of all occurrences of illness, injuries, accidents, first aid treatment/advice, complaints or concerns about behaviour, altercations, or any situation in which a person feels physically, emotionally, or sexually threatened or injured while within the parameters of First Christian Reformed Church of Guelph's programs or activities.

Please enter as much information as known at the time. The completed form shall be forwarded to either the Council Chairperson or Vice-Chair.

Date of Incident:

Date of Report:

Name of Person Reporting: _____

Witness (es): _____

Church Program or Activity: _____

Action Taken: _____

Appropriate Parent or Guardian Informed: _____(name)

Program Head Informed: _____(name)

Others Consulted or Informed: _____(name)

Describe Other Actions Taken: _____

Name of Person Completing This Form: _____

Description of Incident:

Appendix F: Hall Duty Guidelines

1. Be present 15 minutes before the service
2. Pick up identification badge and 2-way radios. Equip yourself and your backup person (upper floor usher). Make sure you have a key for locked doors to ensure no one is inside.
3. Go to nursery and Sunday school classes and introduce yourself as the hall monitor for the morning.
4. Familiarize yourself with the location of all fire alarms, fire extinguishers, telephones and first aid boxes.
5. As the service begins, ensure:
 - a) The sanctuary level doors are unlocked
 - b) The office level entry doors are locked
 - c) The office doors are locked
 - d) The emergency escape doors from the gym and the downstairs exit door near the kitchen are free of obstructions and are working.
 - e) Mechanical room doors near the elevator are locked. Also make sure the janitors room door is locked.
 - f) The door to the cadet work room is locked. The two gym storeroom doors are locked.
6. As the teachers and Sunday school children leave the sanctuary, position yourself in the area of the Fireside room in such a way that the teachers and children see you and know that you are available to assist them as needed.
7. Patrol the downstairs corridors and meeting rooms and check that no one is in the unused rooms. Continue to make rounds through the morning. Monitor the bathroom area.
8. As the congregation is singing the last song, unlock the office level exit doors. Stay in the area until the parents are downstairs and have picked up their children.
9. Fill out the hall monitors report and place in the secretary's mail slot. Return badges and radios.

Appendix F2: Hall Monitor and Back-Up Report Form (ERP 12-02)

Date: _____ Day: _____ 20__

Begin time: _____ Time ending: _____

Name of Hall Duty Person: _____

Name of Back-Up Person: _____

Did you receive the instructions for Hall Duty Monitors? _____

Did you instruct the Back-Up Person? _____

List the areas you inspected on duty, including possible defects.

Upstairs _____

Downstairs _____

List any irregularities during your duty _____

List any used or defective equipment _____

If more writing space is needed use back of this form.

Appendix G: Nursery Procedures

CHECKING IN AND OUT

Check In:

- Parents bring child to nursery.
- A name tag is put on the child (if a visitor does not have their own name tag, a blank visitor's tag is used with the child's name on it).
- Any special need for a child will be identified by SN (Special Need) on the child's name tag. The actual special need will be identified in the nursery attendance logbook when the child is first enrolled in the nursery program.
- Whiteboard is filled in with child's name along with any instructions for the attendants.
- Diaper bag is hung on one of the available hooks.
- Parent takes tag, which is numbered. This tag is required for the pickup of child.

Pick Up:

- Children in the nursery are picked up from the half wall in the nursery. Procedures regarding doors marked "In" and "Out" must be followed to avoid confusion.
- Parents hand the tag to the attendant.
- Attendant will lift the child over the half wall to the parent.
- Name tag is removed from the child.

HEALTH

We have asked our nursery attendants to find a replacement for themselves if they have an active cold, flu or any other contagious illness. Out of concern for your child and all the others we ask that you not bring children who have any kind of illness that can be passed onto others. The nursery team leader may refuse entry of an obviously sick child.

Our change tables are disinfected weekly. Crib sheets that have been used are washed weekly. All toys are cleaned and disinfected weekly.

COMFORT AND DISCIPLINE

We will hold and rock any small baby that has a hard time settling down. If your child needs that "special touch from Mom or Dad" we will contact you within fifteen minutes of your child's crying and fussing.

If your child should receive a bump or bruise from another child we will make a note of it happening and tell you about it after the service. If it is anything more serious, we will come and get you.

If your older child hits or hurts another child or one of the nursery attendants we will try to distract him/her with another toy, story, or situation. We will not spank or shake your child or use strong negative language. If he/she will not settle after the incident, we will come and get you. In each of these cases, if your child is settled down, he/she may be brought into the nursery again.

The Discipline Policies apply to the nursery program. A copy can be found posted on the bulletin board in the nursery, in the nursery attendance logbook, and in the church administration office. A copy is also provided to all church leaders when programs commence in the fall. 2-3

EMERGENCIES

There are several members of First Christian Reformed Church who have had recent CPR training. They are a resource to us in the nursery. Should any situation or accident arise where your child is injured or in danger, we will call 911 immediately and then notify you.

If there is a fire alarm please do not come down to the nursery. We will evacuate your child from the nearest exit. Please use the exit nearest you and then come around the outside of the building to pick your child up.

All of us care for each other's children in trust. Please feel free to voice any concerns or suggestions you may have about the care of your child or any practices or procedures you may notice in our nursery. Your feedback may be directed to our Nursery Coordinators. Thank you for entrusting your child to our care.

Appendix H – Event Permission Form

Appendix I – Resource List

Women In Crisis	(519) 836-1110 Office line (519) 836-5710 Crisis line or 1-800-265-SAFE (7233)
Marianne’s Place (Women’s Shelter)	(519) 836-6831 Office line (519) 836-5710 Crisis line or 1-800-265-SAFE (7233)
Rural Women’s Shelter	(519) 836-5710 Crisis line
Guelph	(519) 836-1110
Drayton	(519) 343-5192
Erin	(519) 833-9696
Fergus	(519) 843-6834
Rockwood	(519) 856-2191
Sexual Assault Center	(519) 823-5806 Office line (519) 836-5710 Crisis line 1-800-265-7233
EARS (For male victims of abuse)	(519) 570-3277
Senior Peer Advisory Service (Elderly Abuse Program)	(519) 763-9456 Office line 1-800-461-5279
Distress Center of Wellington County	(519) 821-3760 Distress line (519) 821-0140 Crisis line (519) 821-5469 Youth Support line (519) 767-6594 Emergency Shelter Support
Kids Help Phone	1-800-668-6868
Family and Children’s Services Of Guelph and Wellington County	(519) 824-2410
Beginnings Crisis Pregnancy Center Accusation	(519) 763-7980
Salem Christian Mental Health	(905) 528-0353
Guelph Duty Counsel	1-866-641-8867

