

Youth: This includes anyone 16 years of age and over but under the age of 19.

Adult: This includes anyone 19 years of age and over.

B) Terms denoting Abusive and/or Unacceptable Behaviour and Actions:

The following are unacceptable forms of behaviour.

Physical Abuse: Using physical force or action that results, or could result, in injury to a child or youth. It is more than reasonable discipline.

Emotional Abuse: A pattern of hurting a child's feelings to the point of damaging their self-respect. It includes verbal attacks on the child, insults, humiliation or rejection.

Sexual Abuse: Occurs when a child or youth is used by somebody else for sexual stimulation or gratification. It includes behaviour that involves touching (see improper touching below) such as fondling, sexual activity as commonly understood and rape. It also includes behaviour that has non-touching aspects, such as verbal comments, showing of pornographic material, exhibitionism or allowing children to witness sexual activity.

Improper Touching: This includes behavior such as kissing a child, coaxing a child to kiss you, extended hugging or tickling, touching a child in any area that would be covered by a bathing suit (except when assisting a child with toileting as outlined below), carrying older children or having them sit on your lap.

Neglect: Failure to provide and exercise reasonable care, such as leaving a child unattended, improperly supervising activities, or ignoring a child's physical needs.

Harassment: Conduct or interaction with another that makes them feel attacked, demeaned, intimidated or manipulated, particularly by someone stronger than they or relating to them from a position of authority or power leaving them helpless to resist.

Discipline: Proper discipline involves establishing clear boundaries of acceptable behaviour by children and youth. It includes informing them of these behavioural expectations and also maintaining them with firm and kind expressions of authority. Improper discipline includes yelling or screaming at children, threatening them, physically hurting them, and such like actions. Corporal punishment (spanking or any other form of physical punishment) is unacceptable in all cases.

Screening of Workers and Criteria for Ministry with Children/Youth:

1. All priests are credentialed by the Clergy Formation Advisor and the Bishop of the ANiC/ACNA. In securing credentials, it is required that candidates undergo a thorough screening process that includes references, interviews, reports from their theological training institution and as well a criminal record check. These records are maintained at the ANiC and ACNA offices.
2. St. Timothy's shall not appoint any person as a priest that have not been credentialed with and approved by the ANiC and ACNA. Any other person serving on the church staff in a non-priestly role, and who works in any capacity or proximity to children and youth, must undergo the screening process as indicated below.
3. St. Timothy's will screen all employees and regular volunteers who work with children or youth. Such shall be done by receiving a signed application with references listed, and by an interview with the Senior Priest (and other relevant leaders which may include Wardens and leaders of "G" teams),

who shall also check all references given as required and may exercise their discretion to seek out other references. The following forms (attached to this Plan) are to be used and permanently filed in the church records: Ministry Leadership Volunteer Application Form, Ministry Volunteer Interview Form, Suggested Script for Telephone Follow-Up, Record of Church Contact, and Initial Clearance Checklist.

4. Each person at or over the age of majority (16 years) applying to work with children/youth shall obtain and submit to the Senior Priest a criminal record check. Anyone with criminal child abuse violations will not be permitted to work with children/youth in any capacity. These criminal record reports shall be filed in the church records under the care of the Senior Priest (or appointed representative), who shall be responsible to maintain their confidentiality.
5. All workers approved shall sign a copy of the "St. Timothy's Covenant" form.
6. All workers with children/youth shall be given a training session by the Senior Priest or someone appointed by him and competent to conduct such, on the nature of child abuse, how to carry out the policies of this Plan to Protect, and instruction on how to report suspected incidents. Each person shall be given a copy of this Plan to Protect in that training session.
7. All workers with children/youth shall be required to have been adherents/members of St. Timothy's church for at least three months prior to ministry involvement. The only exception shall be for membership transfer in from another ANiC/ACNA church with a letter of recommendation by the Senior Priest of that church.
8. All workers must be approved by the Senior Priest. Notwithstanding any of the above, the Senior Priest shall have the right and authority to deny anyone the privilege of working with children or youth in St. Timothy's at his/her private discretion. Working as a volunteer in St. Timothy's is a privilege and not a right. Protecting the children of St. Timothy's is a duty of the Senior Priest. Any suspicion, cause for concern or discomfort on using any particular person shall be thoughtfully reviewed by the Senior Priest and his decision to use, not use or limit the use of any person in any ministry shall be binding and final. The Senior Priest shall not be required to give any explanation for the decision.

Sunday School Policy Overview:

1. **Program Maintenance:** A strategy for program maintenance will be developed and reviewed at the beginning of each ministry year to ensure training, the updating of files and the physical environment are compliant with policy. The results of these yearly reviews will be maintained on file.
2. **Child Registration:** All children attending Sunday School must be registered. Information should include: name, date of birth, address, phone numbers, parents names (and any legal or guardian stipulations), allergies or medical conditions, medical number and so on.
3. **Attendance Records:** Parents must sign children in and out each week. This record is to be kept along with names of teachers, volunteers and occasional visitors for ten years in church records.
4. **Teacher Identification:** All teachers and volunteers should be readily identifiable.
5. **Diaper Changing:** As a general rule, workers shall not be expected to change diapers. Where it might become necessary, it shall always be done by an adult worker and in such a way that another worker can easily see the child that is being changed.

6. Washroom: For children seven years of age and under, an adult worker shall escort a child to a washroom and prop the outside door open and wait for the child before escorting him/her back to the classroom. The worker must never be alone with a child in a washroom cubicle with the door shut. If the child needs assistance, the adult worker may enter the cubicle to assist only after a second worker is made aware of the circumstances. Female workers are preferred for assisting all children.
7. Sick Children: A child with a known communicable disease should not be received into a nursery or classroom.
8. Medications: No worker is to give any child medication; the parent must administer it. No medication shall be left with a child or worker. In extreme cases (i.e. life-threatening allergies, etc.) arrangements can be made with written instructions and a signed agreement between the parents and the worker assigning and accepting permission to administer emergency medications. The agreement shall be signed both by the parents and worker; it shall state that St. Timothy's is absolved from all liability; it shall be placed on file in the church records.
9. Oversight of Children: Children are not to be permitted to go to or leave a classroom unescorted. Supervision is to be maintained before, during and after an event until all children are in the custody of their parents or legal guardians. Children being left in nursery care shall be signed in and out by the parent.
10. Controlled Access: Only authorized workers are permitted in the nursery or classrooms, with the exception of parents caring for their own children (Occasional Observers who shall be documented on weekly attendance sheets). During such occasions when parents are present, they must be admitted by the permission of the supervising worker and at no time are the workers to vacate the room, leaving the other children in the care of the other parents present.
11. Field Trips, Special Events and Overnight Events: For all trips or activities outside St. Timothy's facility and for all St. Timothy's sponsored overnight events, a permission/waiver form shall be completed and signed by the parents. This form shall be created by St. Timothy's/Senior Priest for each such event and shall specify the particulars of the event/activity (date, location, activities, name of supervising worker). A copy shall be given to the parents for their information and the signed copy by the parents shall be placed on file in the church office.
 - a. All field trips or outside events shall be pre-approved by the Senior Priest; parents shall be notified at least one week in advance; all vehicle drivers must have a valid driver's license and current automobile insurance; the number of persons in a vehicle must never exceed the number of seat belts.
 - b. There shall also be completed a "Waiver & Medical Release Form" to be signed by the parent and placed on file in the church office.
12. Situations to Avoid: Avoid activities that could easily lead to allegations of abuse or harassment, such as individual photography of children, unsupervised internet access, vehicle transportation by workers alone with unrelated youth, or improperly supervised sleepovers.
13. Touching Guidelines: Positive encouragement and care shall be expressed in appropriate ways such as: bending down to the child's eye level in speaking, taking a child's hand to lead to an activity, putting an arm around a child to quiet or comfort, taking both a child's hands to praise him/her, patting a child on the head or hand or shoulder or back to affirm him/her, holding a child by the shoulders to keep his/her attention, holding a pre-school child who is crying.
14. Being alone: It is unacceptable for any adult leader or volunteer to be alone with a child. Other

unacceptable actions in relation to touching are described in the section "Definitions."

Sunday School Premises Operations and Requirements

1. Wherever there is a children's ministry or activity being conducted, the door shall always be left open unless there is a window between the room and hallway with an unobstructed view at all times into the room.
2. Supervisors of the church's ministry (pastoral staff, Christian Education leaders, etc.) shall circulate periodically from room to room to maintain surveillance of activities and persons.
3. Adequate lighting shall be maintained at all times in any room or place where children's or youth activities are being conducted.
4. All equipment, tools or any object that may pose harm to children shall be secured or placed safely out of reach.
5. All rooms and closets not in use during church services or other activities are to be kept locked.
6. Washrooms, classrooms, hallways and all premises shall be maintained in an orderly and clean manner, fully equipped with necessary items for personal use.
7. A fire evacuation plan shall be designed for the building and area, with the workers and children periodically informed.
8. A first aid kit shall be present and maintained on site and one carried on any field trip or outside event. It is desirable that one worker should always be present who has a valid and current certificate in first aid.
9. During any children's activity there shall be two workers present in the immediate area to reduce the risk of child molestation and to protect the workers from false accusations. One of these workers must be an adult. Where assisting workers are youth or children (none of whom may be under 12 years of age), they shall be under the immediate supervision of an adult worker. Where only two workers are present, it is desirable that they shall not be related. A ratio of workers to children shall be determined by the Senior Priest/Church Council and maintained that ensures reasonable and diligent oversight of the children in accordance with the number of children present, the nature of the activity or event, the type of facility or site used and the age of the children present.
10. Classroom settings must comply with established ratios for adults and children at all times. This includes off-site activities and trips. Established ratios are:
 - a. No child under 12 months shall be left in the nursery without a parent or guardian
 - b. One ministry personnel for every 4 – 5 toddlers or preschoolers
 - c. One ministry personnel for every 7 – 10 elementary-age children

Youth Ministry Policy Overview:

Life Style:

1. For the protection of our youth, ministry personnel are to be committed to maintaining a consistent spiritual life including prayer, Bible reading, attendance at youth events, planning meetings and worship services.
2. Ministry personnel are to be role models of integrity at all times. Ministry personnel are to refrain from activities

that are illegal or could be considered morally and biblically questionable.

Contacting opportunities:

1. Ministry personnel are encouraged to meet with youth in small group settings and in teams.
2. The Ministry Leader must pre-approve the conducting of any one-on-one mentoring with the information being documented and filed.
3. One-on-one mentoring must be done in public settings and only under the following conditions:
 - a.. The Ministry Leader is informed of the time and place of the meeting prior to the meeting, and,
 - b. Parental permission is granted, and,
 - c. When separate transportation is arranged

Open Doors:

Ministry personnel working with youth will not have a one-on-one or a small group meeting behind closed doors. It is required that the door remains open or that the meeting takes place in a room with an unobstructed window in the door.

Physical Contact:

Ministry personnel are aware of what constitutes appropriate touch:

- one-arm hugs
- shoulder-to-shoulder hugs
- touch on the back or shoulder

Ministry personnel must refrain from inappropriate touch at all times:

- chest-to-chest hugging
- extended hugging
- over exuberant affection
- lap-sitting
- kissing
- touching of thighs, knees or inappropriate spots of the body

Ministry personnel must be cognizant of conduct that could be misinterpreted:

- horseplay
- tickling
- extended backrubs

Dating

Ministry personnel working with youth may not pursue a dating relationship with a youth.

Youth Ministry Staffing Ratios:

Programs for youth must comply with established staffing ratios as follows:

- Junior High events – One ministry personnel for every 7 students
- Senior High events – One ministry personnel for every 10 students
- Overnight/Off-Site events – One ministry personnel for every 7 students

Overnight events with mixed genders must be accompanied by both male and female ministry personnel.

It is recommended that there be a 5 year gap between ministry personnel and the youth they serve.

Youth Ministry Authorization and Consent forms:

Each year, each student involved in St. Timothy's Youth Ministry must submit an authorization and consent form which will include all basic contact information and relevant health information. It will also include a general parental consent to

travel in cars, attend youth events, meet with youth leaders and medical treatment.

For overnight retreats or youth events special consent forms with details of the event will need to be signed by parents/guardians and submitted.

Reporting Procedures:

If you have any concerns regarding the safety of a child, you should report to the Senior Priest. He will then work with you in contacting the appropriate child protection agency. The priest will ensure that St. Timothy's legal advisor is contacted. Where a priest is involved in the allegation, the ANiC/ACNA office will also be advised (this will include the Network Leader and the Bishop).

Any person who has reasonable grounds to believe that a child (or children) is in need of protection is legally required to report the matter to a social worker in the local office of the Ministry for Children and Families. A person who knowingly fails to report in these circumstances is in violation of the law and may be found to have committed an offense.

Abuse or neglect need not have already occurred for a child to be in need of protection; it is not necessary to wait until a child has been harmed to intervene. When abuse or neglect can be reasonably anticipated and there are reasonable grounds to believe a child is in need of protection, the legal obligation to report applies.

Historical abuse or neglect, that is, abuse or neglect which occurred in the not very recent past, must be reported wherever there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child may be in need of protection. If the alleged offender is in regular contact with a child or children, irrespective of whether it is the same child or children abused in the past, there may be grounds to believe that the child or children are at risk based on the offender's past behaviour. It is particularly vital to report these cases where the alleged abuser is in a position of trust concerning children, such as a teaching position.

Discuss Suspicious Behaviour Immediately

Any inappropriate conduct or relationships between adult volunteer workers and a youth or a child must be confronted immediately and investigated. Prompt warnings must be issued when appropriate, and the situation monitored very closely. The adult worker's services should be terminated immediately for continued violation of sufficient gravity. Ministry Leaders should note when a youth or child appears aloof or withdrawn, or exhibits a marked personality change. This may indicate a problem that deserves attention.

Some conduct just deserves an initial comment.

Example: The church youth group is having a picnic at a local lake. Following a volleyball game, one of the male chaperones begins to massage the shoulders of one of the female youth members. They are seated at a picnic table surrounded by other students. A second adult chaperone discretely pulls the first one aside and comments, "You probably weren't aware, but giving massages falls outside of proper volunteer conduct."

Other conduct requires reporting.

Example: Same facts as the preceding example, but the volunteer worker walks the student to an isolated location and massages her shoulders while lying down on the ground next to her. A second volunteer sees what is happening and immediately reports it to the adult in charge.

Example: A male youth volunteer is seen kissing a female member of the youth group. The action is immediately reported to the Senior Priest.

When an Allegation Occurs

In the case of an actual allegation, follow these guidelines:

1. Document all your efforts at handling the incident.
2. Report the incident immediately to the Senior Priest or his designate (Warden) who may in turn draw in St. Timothy's lawyer if required. Do not try to handle this without professional outside assistance. The accused should also consider legal counsel.
3. If incident involves child abuse at home, Provincial Government authorities must be contacted immediately.
4. If the accused is a church leader, volunteer, staff or member, the Senior Priest will also inform ANiC Network Leader and Bishop. (At their discretion legal counsel for ANiC and ACNA may also be informed).
5. This process must be implemented as soon as possible after the allegation comes to light (within one hour is advised).

IMPORTANT:

As soon as possible after the incident comes to your attention:

Contact the appropriate child services government agency. Do not attempt an in-depth investigation. This should be left to professionals who are familiar with these cases.

Do not prejudge the situation, but take the allegations seriously and reach out to the victim and the victim's family. Showing care and support help to prevent further hurt. Extend whatever pastoral resources are needed. Remember that the care and safety of the victim is the first priority. In some situations, churches have responded in a negative or non-supportive manner to the alleged victim. This can increase the anger and pain of the victim and the victim's family. Future reconciliation will be more difficult. The possibility of damaging litigation increases.

Treat the accused with dignity and support. If the accused is a St. Timothy's worker, that person should be relieved temporarily of his or her duties until the investigation is finished. If the person is a paid employee, arrangements should be made to either maintain or suspend his or her income until the allegations are cleared or substantiated.

Confidentiality

In these matters it is important to keep the information restricted to those who need to be advised, therefore, all suspicions of abuse should be directed only to the Senior Priest. It is the responsibility of the Senior Priest to contact the local child service government agency.

The only claim of confidentiality which overrides the legal duty to report is solicitor-client privilege. Thus physicians, clergymen and others who consider their professional relationships confidential for certain purposes are not exempt from the duty to report child abuse or neglect.

Responding to the Child

When the child first comes to you, be sure to take his or her word seriously. Don't deny the problem, but stay calm and listen to the child. Give emotional support, reminding the child that he or she is not at fault. Tell the child that he or she was right in telling you about the problem. Do not promise the child you will not tell anyone.

Protection from Liability

St. Timothy' personnel are required to immediately report to the appropriate child services government agency any suspected case of child abuse. It is not a breach of confidence between church personnel and the child involved. No person is personally liable for anything done or omitted in good faith in the exercise of this responsibility. As church leaders, we are accountable to God to protect His little ones. Although it is our desire to protect the parents as much as legally possible from undue interference by outside authorities into their family, the protection of children from abuse is even more important. We want to follow the principles of submitting to governing authorities (Romans 13:1 ff) while at the same time helping parents to exercise child discipline that is consistent with the Scriptures, and in the best interest of the children.

As part of a child protection investigation, social workers are required under the Child, Family and Community Services Act to assess:

1. *the child's current state of health;*

2. *their sense of safety and their views of abuse*
3. *previous abuse, neglect or harm; and*
4. *the ability of the parent(s) to care for and protect the child.*
5. *The social worker will talk to people who have contact with the child and family. They may request records or other types of information. They are entitled to whatever information is needed to complete an investigation. If denied access to a record, they can seek a court order.*

When a Ministry Leader receives a request for information regarding a child attending our facility the following process should be followed at all times to assure the health and safety of the child in your care:

- Any request from a child protection social worker should be in person and the protection worker should carry and show you photo ID.
- On the occasions where there is an urgency and the child protection social worker is unable to visit the facility and show photo ID, the protection social worker may telephone you from their office.
- The social worker is to identify him/herself.
- They are to explain the information they are requesting and the process you are to follow. They WILL NOT ask for information at this time. You are NOT to give information at this time.
- The social worker will give you their name and their office phone number.
- You will check the number given with the phone number of the local offices listed in the local telephone directory to make sure they match.
- You may telephone the district supervisor of child protection to make sure this is a legitimate request.
- You will then call the number given by the social worker. At that time the social worker will ask for the information needed.
- You will provide the necessary information.
- You will then ask to be told what happens. This is very important. It becomes extremely important if the child continues to attend our facility.
- It is possible that a protection social worker may call from their cell phone. This is the least acceptable form of requesting information from a caregiver. The exact same process as a request by telephone with one additional stipulation:
- If it is after hours and the office cannot be contacted or the cell number confirmed, the caregiver is not to give out any information. They can request the social worker appear at St. Timothy's with photo ID.
- No information is to be given out if the request is from a pay phone, or for any other type of request.

Who Must Report

Any person who has reasonable grounds to believe that a child (or children) is in need of protection is legally required to report the matter as outlined in this document. A person who knowingly fails to report in these circumstances is in violation of the law and may be found to have committed an offense.

Social workers designated to receive reports are trained to investigate and assess the need for intervention. Other professionals must not assume this function. A professional who does so and fails to report commits an offense. The Act protects an individual when a report is made. No action would be taken against a person making a report unless it is made maliciously or without reasonable grounds for the belief.

Report Follow-Up

A confidential written report with conclusions and action taken should always be made by the Senior Priest following a child abuse report. These reports should be kept in a confidential personnel file.

Response to Allegations of Abuse

A) Be Prepared in Advance

Realistically, no practical prevention strategy is 100 percent effective. An accusation of child sexual abuse may occur in any church. St. Timothy's has a premeditated plan or strategy to respond to sexual abuse allegations. The church should not try to navigate a crisis situation without a compass to guide it. Wrong actions can multiply the pain and liability inherent in an abuse case.

B) An effective response strategy recognizes the following underlying principles:

- All allegations are to be taken seriously.
- Situations must be handled forthrightly with due respect for people's privacy and confidentiality.
- Full co-operation must be given to civil authorities under the guidance of our church lawyer.
- Adequate care must be shown for the well-being of victims.
- The victim should not be held responsible in any way.

Records

Always have adequate records of workers' applications, references and screening forms. They should be up-to-date and accessible. Records should be kept at least ten years.

Spokesperson

The Senior Priest or his designate will be the spokesperson for the church. He will speak to the media and the congregation regarding the matter in a discreet, informed, truthful and diplomatic way. (Often, the media will attempt to interview several of our leaders who have never given any consideration to responding to such inquiries. In such cases, conflicting and contradictory statements can abound, and the public will develop a negative impression of St. Timothy's. This is avoided when only one person is designated to speak for St. Timothy's in such cases). It is wise to seek the counsel of the ANiC Network Leader and Bishop before any statement is made.

Position Statement

In an allegation of abuse, the statement below is to be used for a public response until all of the facts are uncovered and the case reviewed:

"It is always tragic when children are abused or exploited. St. Timothy's is aware of the ever growing nature of child abuse. We have taken careful precautions to protect the children entrusted to our care. We are distressed by any accusation of child abuse. We will do everything in our power to address any needs in this situation. For the welfare of

those involved, all information has been directed to the (insert name of the appropriate local child services government agency.)*

This is a clear position statement of St. Timothy's regarding child sexual abuse. The policies and established safeguards are included. Having a carefully prepared statement is far superior to making no comment.

This is an opportunity to influence public opinion positively by emphasizing an awareness of the problem of child abuse, a concern for victims, and the extensive steps St. Timothy's has taken to reduce the risk and provide a safe environment for children. It lets the media know that this church takes the risk of child abuse seriously, and that we have acted responsibly. This is not the time for silence or "no comment." We will not surrender the pulpit to those who will criticize and condemn the church. St. Timothy's will not engage in denial, minimization or blame.

Often when confronted with an allegation of abuse, a church may respond in one or more of the following ways:

- Deny that the incident occurred, despite clear evidence to the contrary.
- Acknowledge that the incident occurred, but minimize it. For example, a church leader may say, "It only happened once," or "it wasn't that serious".
- Blame the victim or the victim's family.

These responses are all inappropriate and are to be avoided.

Don't be Accusatory

Avoid spelling out the details of an accusation in a public interview. **Use a Lawyer.** Always have St. Timothy's lawyer present while answering any investigative questions from the police or social service agencies. The accused should follow the same procedure with their lawyer.

Local Church Discipline Procedures

Discipline procedures shall be followed as detailed in the by-laws of St. Timothy's. It is possible that the child protection services do not follow up with an investigation of the allegation, or having done so, they determine not to press any charge, or having laid charges, no conviction is obtained for various reasons. This does not necessarily mean that the accused is innocent, nor does it replace or negate the necessity of St. Timothy's/Senior Priest doing an internal investigation. Where there is concern held by the Senior Priest because of the accusation, whether proven or unproven, he has both an option and obligation to act in accordance with that concern in determining whether someone may continue to exercise ministry with children in the church.

Training Manual and Forms

St. Timothy's has secured a copy of A Plan to Protect. This document will serve as a complete reference manual for abuse prevention issues and contains sample forms and documents which may be useful to you depending on your programs and ministries. In giving initial training to church workers with children and youth, as well as in the annual training session, the Senior Priest and Christian Education "G" Leaders shall review appropriate areas of A Plan to Protect Manual.

This Plan To Protect Policy shall also be reviewed with and a copy given to each worker.

See Appendices – all forms referred to in this Policy