



Abuse Prevention Newsletter

FOR CHURCHES AND CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS

The issue of physical and sexual abuse remains the number one concern for organizations and institutions entrusted with the care and safety of children. The sad truth is that Canadians are no longer shocked by almost daily stories in the media uncovering instances of abuse committed against children while in the care of boys' and girls' organizations, sports associations, day cares, schools, campgrounds, churches, orphanages, shelters and group homes. Pedophiles and others guilty of abuse include priests and ministers of many religious denominations, Sunday school teachers, choir leaders, coaches, girl guide and boy scout leaders, foster home parents and a variety of other individuals given power and authority over children.

The emotional, psychological and spiritual trauma and upheaval caused by child abuse is devastating, affecting not only the innocent victims throughout their

entire lifetime, but also their families, communities and the organizations in which such incidents have taken place. Likewise, allegations against ministers, teachers, other staff and volunteers who have been wrongly accused have destroyed reputations, careers and relationships. In financial terms the consequences have also been staggering, including substantial civil damages being awarded against institutions and their leaders for negligence in not showing reasonable care and diligence in establishing and maintaining appropriate abuse prevention measures.

Despite the potential costs, damages and suffering, many Christian organizations continue to be reluctant to implement effective prevention and screening procedures. Those in leadership have perceived it as inconvenient, unnecessary and even insulting to insist on screening longtime ministers, children's ministry staff and volunteers. Some argue that since they are faith-based organizations, they

need only place their trust in God's protection and that there is no need for any prevention planning. Furthermore they insist that these types of incidents "can never happen" in their church or organization.

However in the absence of proper planning and responsible leadership, this rationale for not addressing prevention can lead precisely to the type of environment that allows abuse to take place. As other organizations and agencies in society that work with children and young people tighten up their screening procedures, Christian ministries who do not screen may unintentionally be making themselves easy targets by providing pedophiles with unrestricted access to the children in their care.

**Contrary to commonly held belief...
"More children are sexually abused
in Protestant churches, by
volunteers, than by priests in Roman
Catholic institutions."**

— Christian Ministry Resources, April 2002

Why are churches vulnerable?

TRUST: Churches generally strive to provide an atmosphere of trust;

LACK OF SCREENING: Often we allow individuals who have only very recently come to our churches and who we know very little about, to be involved in children's or youth ministries. Because some churches struggle with getting adequate help and often experience high turnover in youth workers, they may not screen potential volunteers as carefully as they ought; and

OPPORTUNITY: Unsupervised nurseries, children's time, and youth events (especially overnight events), are all potential risk situations.

Because of a lack of intentional preventative policies, most churches are extremely vulnerable to any charge of abuse, whether it proves true or not... It cannot be overstated that clear policies and procedures will serve to protect not only the children and youth, but also those who work with them and the church as a whole.

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Unfortunately, Robertson Hall is now aware of 43 multiple or individual cases of documented abuse at churches within evangelical Christian circles in Canada...37 of these have occurred in smaller congregations or at churches in rural communities!



Children are vulnerable to the abuse of power and trust and it is important that we recognize that these conditions exist within the context of all churches and organizations that seek to serve children, youth and vulnerable adults. We must recognize the need to strike a balance between paranoia and the temptation to do nothing at all.

The Bible in fact does have much to say about the duties of Christian leaders and it is evident how these scriptural references relate to keeping children in our care safe from harm.

What do the scriptures say about...

REACHING OUT TO CHILDREN

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them."

MARK 10:14

PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM HARM

"Stumbling blocks are sure to come; but woe to him by whom they come! It would be better if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to stumble."

LUKE 17:1-2

"Love... always protects."

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7

THE NEED FOR JUSTICE AND PROTECTION FOR THE VULNERABLE

"What does the Lord require but to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God?"

MICAH 6:9

"Can he who hates justice govern?"

JOB 34:17

OUR OBLIGATIONS TO SOCIETY

"For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord, but also in the eyes of man."

2 CORINTHIANS 8:21

ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

"But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people."

EPHESIANS 5:3

NOT DEALING WITH ABUSE PROPERLY

"...and from prophet to priest, everyone deals falsely. They have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace."

JEREMIAH 6:13-14

AVOIDING UNNECESSARY RISK

"Avoid every kind of evil."

1 THESSALONIANS 5:22

ON PROPER PLANNING AND RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP

"...preserve sound judgment and discernment, do not let them out of your sight; they will be life for you, an ornament to grace your neck. Then you will go on your way in safety, and your foot will not stumble."

PROVERBS 3:21-23

Good risk management practices including abuse prevention guidelines don't detract from Christian ministries, they help your organization and leaders in promoting and advancing your ministries by:

- Better protecting the children, young people and adults in your care,
- Avoiding situations where your volunteers and employees are placed in adverse situations and safeguarding them with procedures to defend against false allegations,
- Providing a positive testimony to your community by adhering to standards that are equal to, or exceed society's requirements,
- Demonstrating that your organization's leaders (i.e. board members and staff) have exhibited due diligence and care in accordance with their fiduciary duties and statutory legal obligations, and
- Avoiding unnecessary litigation that can drain your organization's time and resources and tarnish your reputation and ministries.

If your organization has not yet already implemented a prevention plan, or is reviewing the adequacy of its existing protocol, we sincerely hope that the information and resources contained on the following pages will help to reinforce the importance of abuse prevention and will assist your leaders in establishing and maintaining policies and procedures that will effectively address the risks associated with your children's ministries and youth activities.



Recent Commentary

on the ISSUE of ABUSE

“Churches are natural targets for sexual predators. They have large numbers of children, a shortage of willing workers, and a culture of trust that no Christian could be suspect of such exploitation...What is really needed is a healthy suspicion of human frailty, our own as well as others.”

– Bob Harvey, *Faith Today*
July/August 2002



“Churches need to understand that there are people who prey on children and they do not look different than anyone else... the sexual, physical and emotional abuse of children and youth in the church is a reality with which we must deal – it can happen in any church. No organization is immune... the church has a responsibility to protect its children and youth and to offer an environment that is consistent with the Word it is teaching.”

– Rev. M. McCormick / Dr. L. Mitchell,
United Baptist Convention
of the Atlantic Provinces



“The majority of experts have concluded from the beginning that child molesters cannot be cured. At best they can be managed but they should never again be in a position of responsibility for children.”

– From an article entitled,
“How congregations can keep young
members safe from abuse”,
The Philadelphia Inquirer, April 7, 2002.



“Children have neither power nor property. Voices other than their own must speak for them. If those voices are silent, then children who are victims of abuse may lean their heads against window panes and taste the bitter emptiness of violated childhoods.”

– Justice Francis T. Murphy,

Supreme Court of Canada

“I urge all Christian leaders to be proactive and ensure that all things are done in agreement with Paul’s advice to the Corinthians “For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of man.” Christian ministries must be a model for the world in how we handle the potential for abuse.”

– John Pellowe, CEO
Canadian Council of Christian Charities



“Allegations of past abuse by employees and volunteers of non-profit organizations are one of the fastest growing areas of civil litigation...making sexual abuse claims the greatest threat to the Canadian insurance industry in this decade.”

– Elizabeth Cummins Seto, D.P.A., FCIP,
LL.B., Specialist in Civil Litigation



“Sexual abuse is such a hot issue today that claims payments for abuse incidents now exceed settlements for burned buildings and broken limbs.”

– Senior Vice-President of
Church Mutual, the largest
U.S. church insurer



“The availability of liability coverage for abuse is rapidly drying up and the impact of recent Supreme Court rulings in Canada will seriously jeopardize the remaining sources of coverage, especially for organizations that lack formal prevention plans and procedures.”

– Abuse Litigation And Its Impact on
Future Charitable Work
Facing The Risk, August 2000

“It’s very disheartening...right now I don’t go to church and it makes me wonder if I even want to bring up my child in a church.”

– A Concerned Mother,
Quoted from *Reducing the Risk II:
Making Your Church Safe From Child
Sexual Abuse*



“As I travel from coast to coast, there are a couple of disturbing trends I am noticing...churches that are ignoring the need to implement an abuse prevention protocol, and those that have implemented a protocol but have become careless in maintaining its requirements.”

– Rev. Al Saunders
Family Life Seminars



“Our ability to reach people is directly related to how well we care for their children.”

– Rev. Bill Hybels,
Willow Creek Community Church



“We believe that childhood innocence is a gift given by God. Children are naturally trusting. Children readily place their faith in adults who care for them. It is our responsibility as a church to safeguard that trust. Childhood innocence is a gift that we must plan to protect.”

– Carol Wiebe,
National Children’s Ministry Facilitator
The Christian and Missionary Alliance



“Trust in God...screen all others!”

– Safe Church Organization



Abuse Prevention Plan Checklist

The following seven (7) items are generally acknowledged by experts as essential elements in establishing an effective formal abuse prevention plan and are required by insurance companies in order to qualify for abuse coverage:

1 STATEMENT OF POLICY formally approved, implemented and periodically reviewed under the direction of your board members. It should confirm your organization's commitment to providing a safe environment for children and declare zero tolerance for abuse, harassment or neglect committed by any children's or youth ministry worker, including employees, members and volunteers. This policy should be expressed in terms of your organization's statement of faith, scriptural standards and the duty of care owed to children in our society. The declared purpose of the policy should be clearly expressed; that is, preventing harm to the children, youth and vulnerable adults in your programs and protecting your staff and volunteers from false or wrongful allegations.

- All board members, elders, deacons, trustees, directors and officers
- Designated monitors and care staff

Effective screening for these individuals must include the following procedures:

- Targeted recruitment of personnel
- Employee and volunteer applications
- Background reference checks
- Criminal/police record checks for all workers over 16*
- Personal interviews
- Minimum waiting period for new volunteers prior to eligibility to work with children (6 months or more)

***Checks should be done every three years and include the most comprehensive screening available in your jurisdiction (eg. vulnerable sector, child abuse registry, etc.). 10.7% of Canadians have a criminal record!**

2 DEFINITION of abuse and related issues so that all of your workers will clearly understand and be able to identify unacceptable behavior, including:

- PHYSICAL ABUSE
- SEXUAL ABUSE
- EMOTIONAL ABUSE
- CHILD NEGLECT
- HARASSMENT
- IMPROPER TOUCHING AND DISCIPLINE

3 SCREENING all children's and youth ministry workers to a degree that is appropriate with their interaction with children in your organization's care. Proper screening and guidelines should also apply to personnel who have management authority and power over other staff with respect to career advancement and performance review in order to discourage harassment. The following staff and volunteers must be subject to mandatory screening:

- All staff including paid and unpaid ministers and lay pastors
- All volunteers working with children, youth and vulnerable adults/seniors

4 OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES should be outlined in a written manual summarizing your organization's specific guidelines for preventing abuse and harassment, including:

- Establishing advance protocol and guidelines for designated individual(s) to satisfy mandatory reporting requirements, confidentiality and an appropriate response to incidents of alleged abuse or harassment
- "Team" approach to children's/ youth ministries
- Volunteers age 16 or younger may assist only under qualified adult supervision
- Any "off-premises" contact or mentoring programs between your workers and children/youth should be subject to signed parental permission and a "two-adult" rule at all times
- Prohibiting corporal punishment
- Identifying permissible and unacceptable forms of touching and disciplining of children/youth

- Addressing health, safety, sanitation issues and documenting the receiving and releasing of infants and toddlers in nursery programs
- Avoiding 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, and sleepovers, camping or other overnight events, unless all supervisors and volunteers are fully screened.
- All workers should sign a ministry covenant confirming they have read, understood and are willing to comply with policies and procedures
- Keeping documentation on file indefinitely for all workers
- Obtaining signed parental consent and permission for off-premises or overnight events
- Sufficient qualified supervision of children outside and in public places (eg. parks, playgrounds, libraries, amusement parks, etc.) at all times
- Incident reporting forms must be completed for all cases of injury or suspected abuse

5 PREMISES modifications or alternations of your facilities which can assist in preventing and discouraging abuse incidents, including:

- Windows in classrooms and/or open door policy for Sunday School and boys' and girls' clubs
- Designated monitors circulating periodically from room to room for surveillance and to protect against false allegations
- Controlled access/entry and signing infants and pre-Grade 1 age children in and out of sponsored activities
- Adequate lighting inside and outside of building where children's activities take place
- Appropriate design of washroom and shower facilities
- Locking rooms and closets when not in use during children's programs

6 TRAINING for all staff members and volunteers who regularly work with children to assist in the prevention of abuse through the following means:

- Circulation of a staff handbook containing the organization's policies and procedures

- Formal abuse prevention training through the presentation of resource materials, videos, "in-house" seminars, etc.
- Educating workers about their legal obligation to report suspected abuse and to recognize and identify the signs and symptoms of abuse and molestation
- An initial period of intensive training for all children's workers at the time of the launch of your prevention plan
- Follow-up with periodic refreshers and reassessment of your plan on an annual basis (usually each August or September prior to the startup of your Fall children's and youth ministry programming)
- Reviewing the ongoing suitability of existing workers

7 RESPONDING to all allegations or complaints of abuse in an appropriate manner, including the appointment of individual(s) designated to respond to allegations in the following manner:

- Completing incident reporting forms for suspected abuse or injury
- Satisfying statutory legal obligations by reporting all cases of suspected abuse to police authorities and/or child protective agencies
- Consulting a lawyer for advice
- Without admitting legal liability, express your organization's concern to the complainant and their families and assure them of your commitment in assisting the investigation
- Assuring confidentiality for the benefit of both the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator
- Immediately suspending the alleged perpetrator from children's or youth ministry duties without presuming guilt, pending outcome of police investigation
- Avoiding public statements to individuals, the media or from the pulpit, without obtaining legal counsel
- Contacting your insurance agent or broker to report the incident in order to satisfy the statutory conditions of your liability policy and to avoid jeopardizing any available coverage response

FAQ

The 10 Most Frequently Asked Questions about Abuse Prevention

Question #1

HOW DO WE GET STARTED?

A. Unlike a decade ago, there are now many abuse prevention resources available to churches and para-church ministries. These include sample prevention plans that can be modified for your organization's particular programs and premises; training materials such as videos, DVD's, reference guides and training manuals; sample screening applications and incident reporting forms; and even experienced qualified consultants who can assist in reviewing your organization's operations, implementing an effective prevention plan, and educating and training your children's ministry workers. Please check the Resource Directory at the back of this newsletter, or with your denominational head office and other churches and organizations in your community, for practical and valuable tools to assist in establishing your own prevention plan.

Question #2

WHY ARE CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS REQUIRED?

A. Criminal record checks, vulnerable sector screening and child abuse registry screening all have limitations. Until Canada has a truly national criminal record and child abuse data base shared by all municipal, provincial and federal jurisdictions, convicted pedophiles will continue to slip between the cracks. Keep in mind that criminal record checks are valid only at the time they are conducted, and they also do not identify unconvicted pedophiles or individuals with violent tendencies. That is the reason why other screening procedures such as background reference checks and minimum waiting periods are so important. However, criminal record checks do perform two critical and necessary roles in any effective abuse prevention plan by:

1. Identifying those who are not suitable for a position of trust by virtue of the nature of past criminal convictions and by raising a "red flag" for individuals who refuse to submit to a check.
2. Demonstrating due diligence by the organization and its leaders, thereby making a legal defense possible in the event of an abuse claim and civil damage lawsuit.

Question #3

WHAT KIND OF CRIMINAL CHECKS SHOULD WE HAVE DONE?

A. The answer is simple...the most comprehensive available! In some provinces this may mean a standard criminal or police record check; in others it might include vulnerable sector screening; and in some provinces it might also include child abuse registry screening. Society's expectations and the duty of care required by civil courts of the leaders of organizations entrusted with the care of children, youth and vulnerable adults is exceedingly high. Check with your local

or regional police authority and child protection agency for information about the best available screening for your organization.

Question #4

SHOULD WE SCREEN OUR BOARD MEMBERS, MINISTERS AND EMPLOYEES?

A. Key personnel in your organization may not actually be teaching Sunday School, leading youth groups or ministering to special needs adults or the elderly; however as leaders they are always in a position of trust in the eyes of those around them. Board members, elders, deacons, pastoral staff and executive directors should voluntarily submit themselves to screening in recognition of the trust placed in them. It also sets a positive example to their organization's workers and volunteers who are asked to submit to background applications, reference checks and criminal record checks...it is just good leadership!

Question #5

SHOULD A PAST CRIMINAL CONVICTION DISQUALIFY AN INDIVIDUAL FROM YOUTH WORK?

A. Past convictions may not automatically disqualify someone from serving in all types of ministry. However a conviction for child pornography, or a sexual offense, physical abuse or assault involving a minor, or other violent criminal acts such as rape, incest, murder, kidnapping, child pornography, etc., should permanently disqualify an individual from being placed in a position of trust, no matter how long ago it occurred! Individuals with pedophilic and violent behavioral tendencies have a high propensity for committing repeat offenses. Those professing religious conversion should be granted forgiveness and may even be encouraged to serve in Christian ministry, but not in a position involving minors or vulnerable adults. Forgiveness and trust do not go hand in hand, and parents who place children in your organization's care have the right to expect a safe environment. Any church or organization that permits such individuals to hold a position of trust with children or youth on the basis of professed religious conversion will have a virtually indefensible legal and moral position should a future incident of molestation or violence take place.

Question #6

HOW LONG SHOULD OUR ORGANIZATION STORE SENSITIVE DOCUMENTS SUCH AS EMPLOYMENT OR VOLUNTEER APPLICATIONS AND CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS?

A. The recent introduction of federal and provincial privacy legislation (such as PIPEDA) aimed at regulating the collection, use and storage of financial, health and other

sensitive personal information has created a great deal of confusion about the length of time that the contents of files for paid and unpaid personnel should be kept. One of the key purposes of screening personnel is to demonstrate that the organization and its leaders have demonstrated reasonable due diligence when placing individuals in positions of trust. Since sexual and physical abuse claims and lawsuits often only arise many years, or even decades, after alleged incidents take place, the only way organizations can defend themselves effectively in a future lawsuit is with documentation. Therefore these records should be kept indefinitely! However, to satisfy the provisions of privacy legislation and the reasonable and prudent expectations of common law, we recommend the following:

1. Disclose the reasons for collecting and storing this information on each application.
2. Protect sensitive material in a locked and secure location to ensure confidentiality and to avoid misplacing or allowing the wrongful abstraction of documents.

Question #7

OTHER THAN CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS, WHAT IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT PROCEDURE IN SCREENING WORKERS?

A. Child abuse is a crime of trust and opportunity. Pedophiles are looking for the softest target in their community in order to gain easy access to children, whether it be a public place, a school, a boys' or girls' club, a sports association or a church. Organizations that are chronically short of volunteers to run their programs, and who give the green light to new applicants without careful consideration only serve to place the children in their care at greater risk. In many cases the most effective practical screening procedure to weed out unacceptable volunteer candidates is to impose a minimum waiting period of 6 to 12 months before eligibility to serve in a position of trust. Individuals who are relatively unknown to the organization, who do not have a track record and/or who may have only recently moved from another community should never have immediate access to children. A minimum waiting period allows the organization and its leaders to observe these individuals in other volunteer roles, membership and regular attendance for an extended period of time. Exceptions should only ever be made in circumstances where the volunteer candidate has transferred from another church of the same denomination in which they have been long-time members and children's ministry workers in good standing (with background references from at least three individuals, including one from their previous minister or children's ministry director). New and returning counsellors, supervisors or volunteers in seasonal Christian ministries such as Summer camping programs and short-term missions should only be approved if they are fully screened and can provide at least three background references, including at least one from their current home church minister, or the executive director at an organization where they previously served in children's ministry and to whom they have been well known for a period of at least one year.

Question #8

WE DO NOT OPERATE A NURSERY, SUNDAY SCHOOL, CAMP OR OTHER YOUTH PROGRAM; DO WE NEED AN ABUSE PREVENTION PLAN?

A. The answer to this question really depends on another fundamental question... is your organization comfortable without any insurance protection for liability suits arising out of incidents of actual or alleged abuse, molestation and harassment committed by staff, volunteers, other participants or complete strangers, whether on your premises or during sponsored off-premises events? If there is absolutely no risk of such incidents, then you might decide it is acceptable for your organization to operate without a prevention plan or insurance. However if abuse, molestation and harassment are possible and insurance protection is important, it will be necessary for your leaders to implement abuse prevention procedures appropriate to your ministries and operations in order to qualify for liability coverage from the very few remaining insurance companies prepared to offer such protection.

Question #9

WHAT ABOUT VULNERABLE ADULTS IN OUR CARE?

A. While children and youth (minors) are the main focus of abuse prevention, there are other persons who may be vulnerable to physical or sexual abuse, harassment and neglect. They include adults with diminished physical, mental or emotional capacities, seniors with assisted living or special needs, and other adults in your care receiving counselling and support services because they are going through marital, family, bereavement or other life crisis situations. If your organization offers supervised programs or special care for vulnerable adults, it is important that staff and volunteers in positions of trust be fully screened and adequately supervised.

Question #10

YOUTH MENTORING SERVES A REAL NEED IN OUR COMMUNITY...HOW DO WE RUN THIS TYPE OF PROGRAM SAFELY, EFFECTIVELY AND WITHOUT UNNECESSARILY EXPOSING OUR VOLUNTEER MENTORS TO FALSE ALLEGATIONS?

A. Encouraging long-term, one-on-one relationships which provide positive adult role models can make all the difference in the world for a young person with a difficult family background. However, mentoring programs modeled after Big Brothers and Big Sisters are also one of the most challenging activities to manage and monitor from an abuse prevention standpoint. These programs should only be contemplated by organizations fully committed to comprehensive ongoing screening protocol and strictly documented and enforced procedures, including formal parental consent, choosing public locations, team mentoring, "two adult" rule (i.e. two unrelated screened adults at all times including in automobiles) and clear guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable discipline, touching and displaying of affection.

Abuse Prevention: A Resource Directory

Many church denominations and Christian umbrella associations have already established risk management initiatives to assist local church congregations and member organizations in implementing abuse prevention plans. Following is a sampling of suggested resources that may be of assistance to your organization in establishing an effective prevention plan:

ABUSE PREVENTION TRAINING

Reducing the Risk II Making Your Church Safe from Child Sexual Abuse

A complete and practical guide for prevention and risk reduction, including a reference book, training manual and six training modules on DVD. Very highly recommended as a resource and training tool. Published and produced by Christian Ministry Resources, www.reducingtherisk.com. Available in Canada through the Pioneer Clubs Canada, P.O. Box 5447, Burlington, ON, L7R 4L2. Tel. 1-800-465-5437, www.pioneerclubs.ca (click on Quality Resource Materials).

TRAINING CONSULTANTS

Al Saunders, Plan to Protect
P.O. Box 93089, Burlington, ON L7M 4A3
Tel. (905) 319-1798
www.familylifeministries.net

Barry K. Sweeting, Reducing the Risk II Seminars, 4047 Jarvis Cres., Burlington, ON L7M 4M6, Tel. (905) 335-8983
barrysweeting@cs.com

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

Canada's Law on Child Sexual Abuse
Communications & Public Affairs, Department of Justice Canada, Ottawa, ON K1A 0H8
Tel. (613) 957-4222

Taking the First Step...Understanding Volunteer Screening

Volunteer Canada/Ontario Screening Initiative, 430 Gilmour Street, Ottawa, ON K2P 0R8, Tel. (800) 670-0401, www.volunteer.ca

DEVELOPING A PLAN

Recommendations Concerning the Development of a Church Policy for Child Abuse Prevention and A Child Abuse Prevention Sample Policy.

Prepared by Rev. M. McCormick and Dr. L.P. Mitchell for the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces and available on their website at: www.baptist-atlantic.ca/articles/abuseprevention.htm

Harassment and Abuse: Developing A Prevention Plan,

by William R. Appleby and David Amy Amy, Appleby and Brennan, 372 Erb Street West, Waterloo, ON, N2L 1W6
Tel. (519) 884-7330, Fax (519) 884-7390
email: aab-lawoffice@rogers.com

Abuse Prevention Position Paper

The Free Methodist Church in Canada
4385 Village Centre Court, Mississauga, ON
Tel. (905) 000-0000, Fax (905) 000-0000
www.fmc-canada.org/scod%20Pages/Scod_sexualabuseprevention.htm

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS

Vulnerable Sector Screening and Child Abuse Registry checks are available through your local municipal, provincial or federal (RCMP) police jurisdictions, or with the assistance of private organizations such as:
BackCheck - Toll Free 1-866-882-7139

SAMPLE PREVENTION PLAN

Plan to Protect

A recommended abuse prevention plan to protect the children, youth and leaders at your church, available from:

- The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada, 30 Carrier Drive, Suite 100, Toronto, ON M9W 5T7, Tel. (416) 674-7878, email: info@cmacan.org (English and French versions available), or;
- The Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada, 130 Fergus Avenue, Kitchener, ON, N2A 2H2, Tel. (519) 894-9800
www.emcced.ca/upload/documents/EMCCPlanToProtect.doc
- The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, 2450 Milltower Courn, Mississauga, ON, N2A 2H2, Tel. (905) 542-7400

OTHER WORTHWHILE WEBLINKS

Youth Ministries...

www.elca.org/youth/helpsheets/safebound.html

Camping Ministries...

"Camping Standards Manual" available through www.united-church.ca or 1-800-288-7365

Support Services...

www.capss.com or 1-866-745-2151

Abuse Prevention System...

www.protectingchurchandchild.com

Additional Resources...

www.rca.org/disciples/children/resources/abuseprevention.html

BOOKS, PUBLICATIONS

Preventing Child Abuse, A Guide for Churches (2nd Ed. 2003)

by Beth Swagman

How can a church prevent child abuse from occurring in its facilities and among its members? This informative handbook will help you set in place a comprehensive child abuse prevention program. Available through Faith Alive Christian Resources, an alliance member of Gospelcom. Tel. 1-877-279-9994 or www.crcna.org/abuse/resources.asp

The Season of Hope: A Risk Management Guide for Youth-Serving Non-profits and Criminal History Record Checks

These and other articles of interest are available on the website of the Nonprofit Risk Management Center, 1001 Connecticut Avenue, 1130 Seventeenth Street SW, Suite 210, Washington, D.C. 20036, Tel. (202) 785-3891
www.nonprofitrisk.org

Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church

by Joy Thornburg Melton

It Should Never Happen Here: A Guide for Minimizing the Risk of Child Abuse in Ministry

by Ernest Zarra

Safe Place: Guidelines for Creating an Abuse-Free Environment

by Marvin Parker

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DISCLAIMER: This resource directory is not intended as a complete listing of the abuse prevention plans available for Christian ministries. Many other valuable resource materials and sample prevention plans are available through various church denominations, professional associations, umbrella organizations, governmental agencies, law offices and consultants in Canada and the United States. Although Robertson Hall Insurance Inc. is making this directory of worthwhile resources available to its client organizations, we do not recommend any one particular plan. If you have not already done so, we strongly urge your organization and its leaders to research, develop, implement and maintain a formal abuse prevention plan that is appropriate for your particular children's and youth ministries and activities.

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