

A PLAN TO PROTECT POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

**Highfield Street United Baptist Church
290 St. George Street
Moncton, New Brunswick E1C 1W5
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A PLAN TO PROTECT POLICIES & GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

Highfield Street United Baptist Church has a mandate to minister to people. Our mission statement is, “Highfield Street United Baptist Church exists to make disciples by winning people to Christ and nurturing people in Christ.” In our ministries, we stress the sanctity of human life and the worth of each individual in God’s sight.

We desire to provide reasonable protective care to children and youth attending programs and activities sponsored by Highfield Street United Baptist Church and to offer an environment consistent with the life of Christ as proclaimed in the Bible.

WHEREAS the Creator has made mankind in His image and sanctified human life with eternal destiny; and

WHEREAS the Holy Scripture declares children are a heritage from the Lord;

WHEREAS our Lord Jesus Christ received little children and clearly taught us that “of such are the Kingdom of Heaven,” and

WHEREAS both a severe warning against offending little ones and solemn commandments to protect, nurture and teach our children are evident throughout the Word of God;

THEREFORE Highfield Street United Baptist Church resolves to provide a safe and happy environment for children. We will accordingly adhere to the child protection policy that follows.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to :

- 1) define policies and procedures that ensure the protection of children and youth who participate in any church-sponsored programs and activities.
- 2) provide a protocol to deal with reported concerns and subsequent actions
- 3) reduce the risk against ministry workers from false allegations
- 4) reduce the risk of potential liability against Highfield Street United Baptist Church

STATEMENT OF SCOPE

This policy will apply to:

- All programs or activities sponsored by Highfield St. United Baptist Church where minors are present, including those which happen at locations other than Highfield St. United Baptist Church.
- All church staff, interns and summer students
- All volunteers working with minors

Quick Reference #'s:

Police 911; Victim Services 857-2400; Family and Community Services 856-2400; After Hour Abuse Emergencies 1-800-442-9799

Policy for Abuse Prevention

1. All persons desiring to work with children/youth through any ministry (current or future) of this church, must first meet the following qualifications:
 - a. To be a ***long-term worker*** one should be a member in good standing of Highfield Street United Baptist Church. To be a ***short-term worker*** one should either be a member in good standing or an adherent. (Exceptions may be made for those who are members in good standing at another evangelical Christian Church).
 - b. Complete an application form;
 - c. Authorize a criminal record check. A record suggesting the abuse of children will disqualify the individual from working with children or youth through this Church;
 - d. Attend training sessions designed for your ministry;
 - e. Regular check-in with ministry coordinator
2. All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that children will not be left in an individual's care behind closed doors or in an isolated and private location.
3. When teens are involved in children's or youth ministry, they will be supervised under the guidance of the Pastoral Staff or the pastoral designate.
4. When new teachers or leaders begin as Christian education workers, they will be assigned to an existing leader for a period of mentoring.
5. All classrooms will be modified so they are visually accessible from the hall.
6. The Christian Education Board will make periodic efforts (at least on an annual basis) to inform and educate the congregation of the dangers of child abuse and to remind them of the importance of strict adherence to this policy. The Board will also appoint a ***Child Protection Coordinator*** with a small committee to review and adapt the ***Abuse Prevention Policy*** of Highfield Street United Baptist Church as deemed necessary.
7. Individuals who work with children and youth will be reminded of the importance of avoiding potentially compromising situations in which an allegation of abuse could be made.
8. We will strive to ensure parents are made aware of the precautions being taken to protect their children. Parental consent forms will be used for all events, which take place off the church property (no matter how short), and for any event that requires an overnight stay.
9. In the event an allegation of abuse is made, it will be reported immediately to the pastor or staff member in accordance with our church policy and procedures. The process will be carefully documented, including dates, times, and content of all conversations pertaining to the alleged abuse. If the Pastor is accused of abuse, the Area Minister will be contacted and the guidelines contained in the Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches (CABC) Moral Failure document will be followed. To avoid any actual or perceived conflict on the part of the church, the church shall make appropriate arrangements for pastoral care from outside our local congregation to all parties involved until investigation and court proceedings are concluded.

Quick Reference #'s:

Police 911; Victim Services 857-2400; Family and Community Services 856-2400; After Hour Abuse Emergencies 1-800-442-9799

Expectations of Leaders in Christian Education Ministries

The goal of the Christian Education Ministries of our church is to see children, youth and adults receive Christ as their Saviour and be disciplined in their faith. Therefore, the following attributes in our volunteers and leaders are foundational to reaching this goal:

CHRISTIAN CONVERSION

Each leader must have received Jesus Christ as personal Saviour and Lord (Romans 10:9,10).

CHRISTIAN GROWTH

Each leader must have a desire to grow toward spiritual maturity in Christ. Regular attendance at worship services, daily Bible reading and prayer are an essential part of such growth (Ephesians 4).

CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE & LIVING

Each leader must desire to have a Christian approach to all of life and must be willing to apply Christian standards of conduct to every area of life so as to demonstrate a clear Christian witness as we find in the literal reading of Scripture (Romans 12:1,2).

CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY

Each leader must recognize that every person, while made in the image of God, is condemned by sin, and has no hope apart from the saving love of Christ. Therefore, each leader will, with Christian compassion, use any opportunity that arises to lead others to accept Christ and to assist them in their spiritual growth.

The following responsibilities represent a basic job description for all Christian Education Workers involved in *leading* programs sponsored by our Church. Should you require further information about your responsibilities as a leader, please contact the coordinator of the program you are helping to lead:

1. Prayerfully prepare each ministry while keeping the students' needs in mind.
2. It is of primary importance that we seek to use scriptures and model its truths in our ministries.
3. Know your students, including where they are spiritually, and their family background. This may be accomplished through home visitation, telephone calls or by letter.
4. Be sure to contact absentees.
5. Arrive early. If you need to be away, contact the coordinator of your program.
6. Attend all leaders' meetings and, where possible, take advantage of leadership training opportunities.

Quick Reference #'s:

Police 911; Victim Services 857-2400; Family and Community Services 856-2400; After Hour Abuse Emergencies 1-800-442-9799

Bathroom Care

Parents are to be encouraged to take their children to visit the washroom prior to each class or service. This recommendation is to be communicated in writing to parents at the beginning of each new school year, and throughout the year to newcomers.

1. Infants & Toddlers:

As a general rule, workers in the nursery will not be expected to change diapers. When the child is received into the nursery, workers are to ask parents for permission to change diapers, in the event it becomes necessary. If permission is given, the following rules will apply.

- Diaper changing must always take place in such a way that another nursery worker can easily see the child being changed, as well as the other children and workers in the room.
- Adult workers should perform the diaper change.

2. Toilet-Trained Children – 5 years and under:

- For preschool children, two adults will escort a group of children to the washroom. Where we do not have two adults available to take children to the washroom, hallway or safety monitors will be appointed to assist with washroom and security duties.
- If just one child must go to the washroom, the adult volunteer should escort the child to the washroom and prop the outside door open. The volunteer should then remain outside the washroom door and wait for the child before escorting him or her back to the classroom. The volunteer should call the child's name if they are taking longer than seems necessary.
- Never be alone with a child in an unsupervised washroom and never go into a washroom cubicle with a child and shut the door.
- When preschool children need assistance in the washroom, an adult may enter the cubicle to assist only when a second adult is within visual contact and/or the door is left partially open. If this is not possible, inform another adult when taking a child to the washroom and when returning.
- In the event a child has an "accident" and clean up of the child is required, it is recommended the parents be notified, if possible, and allow them to perform the clean up for their child. If this is not possible (if the parents are not in the building), then the leader may perform the clean up using the preceding guidelines as long as there is another adult able to assist present.

3. Children – 6 - 11 years:

- A child six years of age and up should not be sent to the washroom alone, but should be accompanied by an adult volunteer worker.
- The volunteer should call the child's name if they are taking longer than seems necessary.
- Never go into a washroom with a child/youth and shut the door.

Quick Reference #'s:

Police 911; Victim Services 857-2400; Family and Community Services 856-2400; After Hour Abuse Emergencies 1-800-442-9799

Specific Youth Volunteer Conduct and Guidelines

Because of who we are in Christ, the organization we represent, and the impressionable age, with which we work, each of us must be willing to pay the price of leadership in every area of our lives.

The following areas are *very important* if you are to maintain a good reputation that is above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2-3). We need your compliance in each of these areas for you to be a youth volunteer/leader at Highfield Street Baptist Church. Youth being defined as Grades 6-12, ages 11-18.

1. You must have a lifestyle that seeks to support clear, literal biblical principles.
2. All activities with students must have parental approval. Do not plan church activities without first dialoging with those appointed responsible for your area of ministry (Children's Minister, Associate Pastor, CE Board).
3. Attend church on a regular basis.
4. Do not date junior high youth.
5. As long as you are a youth volunteer, you **MUST** seek counsel/permission from the Associate Pastor to *even consider* dating a senior high youth. Such relationships will not be encouraged.
6. We want to speak well about any Christian church, staff, parents, or students in front of students.
7. Do not use illegal drugs. Do not get drunk or abuse alcohol. This applies at all times – not just around the youth.
8. When driving students you must obey all laws and use safe driving habits.
9. Students under 18 are not to drive other students during youth events.
10. Do not drive a student of the opposite sex home alone.
11. Male volunteers are expected to spend time primarily with male students, and female volunteers with female students.
12. Do not initiate touch with the opposite sex (back-rubs, hugs, piggy-back rides, etc.). If a student of the opposite sex *initiates* a hug you may adapt the moment into a one-arm-hug.
13. You **MUST** carry personal auto insurance. On your auto insurance we highly recommend that you carry a minimum of \$1,000,000.00 liability.

Quick Reference #'s:

Police 911; Victim Services 857-2400; Family and Community Services 856-2400; After Hour Abuse Emergencies 1-800-442-9799

Issues of Confidentiality

IMPORTANT: You should notify children and youth at the beginning of every “counseling”/sharing session that you cannot keep secrets and that any information shared that indicates that someone is at risk of harm (either themselves or someone else) **MUST** be reported to the appropriate parties and that you as the leader/volunteer are legally bound to do so (Family Services Act, NB).

1. If an informal counseling situation occurs, since counseling processes are confidential, you are **NOT** to share details with any person other than a pastor/staff for the purpose of gaining wisdom on how to best handle the situation. If there is an emergency that requires immediate police or child welfare assistance, and a pastor or staff member is not available call **911** and seek assistance/direction. You **MUST** fill out the **Reporting Abuse Form**.
2. We encourage men to build relationships with young men and women to build relationships with young women. Inappropriate displays of affection should be avoided. If a child or youth of the opposite sex confides a sensitive issue with you, please seek a trusted leader of the same sex of the child/youth to join your conversation.
3. You must fill out a Report Form and notify the Associate Pastor within **24 hours** if any of the following situations occur, *regardless* of whether the incident allegedly happened during a church event or not:

- Physical abuse reported to you (see page 10).
- Sexual abuse of *any* minor reported to you (see page 10).
- When a student tells you he/she is suicidal (take them seriously).
- When a student is in a life-threatening situation.
- When a minor (under 16) confesses pregnancy to you.
- If you become involved in a runaway situation.
- When a student confesses a felony to you, even one from years past.
- When you have reason to believe a student is going to commit a crime.

4. Once the initial report is passed into the pastor it will precede through the reporting flow chart included on page 15.

I have read the above and accept the volunteer CONDUCT AND GUIDELINES, as outlined in pages 1-8.

Name (Please print): _____

Volunteer's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Quick Reference #'s:

Police 911; Victim Services 857-2400; Family and Community Services 856-2400; After Hour Abuse Emergencies 1-800-442-9799

Safety and Accident Policies and Procedures

Safety Procedure

Highfield Street Baptist church expects each of the volunteers, regardless of his/her position with the church, to cooperate in every respect with our safety program. Some of the major points of our program require that:

1. All injuries and accidents are reported immediately to your supervisor and you are to obtain medical aid without delay.
2. All volunteers, where required, must wear personal protective equipment, like seatbelts or protective glasses. There will be no exceptions to this requirement.
3. Hazardous conditions and other safety concerns must be reported immediately to your supervisor.
4. Volunteers will follow all safety rules. Failure to follow the rules will result in disciplinary action or removal from the ministry.

Accident Policy

1. When there is a fellow volunteer or a student injured your first priority is for them to receive medical help. Apply immediate first aid and if it is serious, call **911** for help or bring the person to the hospital.
2. Let the supervisor know about the accident and explain the details.
3. Immediately call the parent(s) or guardian of the student and let them know about the injury.
4. Fill out a form located by Youth Office in a file folder labeled "Accident Report Form" and turn the form into our church office within 24 hours of the incident.

Quick Reference #'s:

Police 911; Victim Services 857-2400; Family and Community Services 856-2400; After Hour Abuse Emergencies 1-800-442-9799

Reporting Abuse:

Reporting child abuse or even *suspected* child abuse is the law [*NB Family Services Act*; 30(1), 30(3)]. You can be held responsible in the future if a victim informs anyone in authority that you were aware of the abuse and did not report it. If you need to report proven or suspected abuse, notify your supervisor immediately! The report **MUST** be made within 24 hours after you receive knowledge of the abuse.

Note: Never promise a student you will keep a secret if they confide in you.

- What are “reasonable grounds to suspect”?

You do not need to be sure that a child is or may be in need of protection to make a report to a children's welfare society. "Reasonable grounds" are what an average person, given his or her training, background and experience, exercising normal and honest judgment, would suspect.

Incidence of Abuse in Canada

An estimated 135,573 child maltreatment investigations were conducted in Canada in 1998. The primary reason of child maltreatment investigations was child neglect (40%), followed by physical abuse (31%), emotional maltreatment (19%), and sexual abuse (10%)

Canadian Incidence Study Of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect. Nico Trocme Ph.D. and David Wolfe Ph.D. Ministry of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2001.

Types of Abuse: The following are guidelines of how one can recognise abuse – these are not inclusive and should not be seen as such. Therefore, abuse includes, but is not limited to:

Physical: Bruises, welts, burns, scratches, or bite marks, which are often explained away as accidental. Marks will appear in peculiar clusters, such as patterns consistent with teeth or fingernails. Wounds may appear in various stages of healing. There may be reluctance on the part of the child to discuss the “suspected” abuse and tendency will be to hide the marks that are a result of the abuse.

Emotional and Psychological: Symptoms are less obvious than those of physical abuse. Symptoms are usually observed in the behavior of the child. The child may seem unusually adult or juvenile, hard to get along with in general, or even unusually submissive. (It is important to note that these behaviors either separately or simultaneously do not always indicate abuse. Some signs may occur as part of the maturation process of the child or the result of a different problem.)

Neglect: Child may be emotionally, psychologically or physically developmentally impaired. Medical and dental needs may be unmet. Child may be inappropriately dressed for the weather or activities. The child may have the ongoing condition of being unclean, tired or in trouble at school. Often, the student may be a “loner” and/or may steal or beg.

Sexual: Sexual abuse consists of any sexual exploitation of children under the age of 16. Sexual activity must be reported for children under 14 years old *even if* the child seems to be consenting. This form of abuse includes fondling, incest, rape, murder, assault, oral stimulation, genital or anal stimulation or non-violent sexual stimulation. Child sexual abuse can be inflicted in ways other than the physical assaults listed above. It can take such forms as witnessing adult sexual relations, indecent exposure, verbal sexual stimulation, peeping toms, exhibitionism, or obscene phone calls. Involving children in pornography or prostitution are also forms of child sexual abuse.

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Harassment Policy

We are committed to providing a ministry environment free of unlawful harassment. Government laws prohibit harassment because of race, religious creed, color, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation or any other protected basis includes, but not limited to, the following behavior:

- a. Verbal conduct such as derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted sexual advances, invitations or gestures;
- b. Visual conduct such as derogatory or sexually oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings or gestures;
- c. Physical conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, blocking normal movement or interfering with work because of sex, race, or any other protected basis;
- d. Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests as a condition of continued employment, or to avoid some other loss, and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favors;
- e. Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.

If you believe you have been unlawfully harassed, we urge you to report the incident immediately. Follow this reporting procedure so that your complaint can be resolved quickly and fairly:

1. When possible, confront the harasser and persuade him/her to stop.
2. Provide a written complaint to the appropriate ministry supervisor as soon as possible after the incident. Include details of the incident(s), names of individuals involved and the names of any witnesses. See “Reporting Flow Chart” included in the Child Protection Policy package.
3. Highfield Street Baptist will immediately undertake an investigation of the harassment allegations.
4. If the ministry determines that unlawful harassment has occurred, any employee or volunteer the ministry determines to be responsible for unlawful harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
5. Whatever action the ministry takes against the harasser will be made known to the person lodging the complaint. If deemed necessary, the ministry will take appropriate action to remedy any loss to you resulting from harassment.
6. The ministry will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint and will not tolerate or permit retaliation by pastors, deacons or co-workers.

We encourage all staff members and volunteers to report any incidents of harassment stated by this policy immediately so that complaints can be resolved quickly and fairly.

Quick Reference #'s:

Police 911; Victim Services 857-2400; Family and Community Services 856-2400; After Hour Abuse Emergencies 1-800-442-9799

IMPORTANT:

- ✓ The process contained on page 15 (Reporting Flow Chart) must be implemented as soon as possible after the allegation comes to light (within one hour is advised).
- ✓ A report of the incident must be filled out as soon as possible using a “Reporting Abuse Form” (page 14). These forms can be found by the Associate Pastor’s Office in a folder labeled “Report Abuse Forms”.
- ✓ Do not prejudge the situation, but take allegations seriously. Reach out to the victim and the victim’s family. Show care and support and provide whatever pastoral resources are needed. The care and safety of the victim is important. In some cases churches have responded in a negative and non-supportive manner to the alleged victim and his or her family. This can increase anger and pain, making future reconciliation more difficult and costly litigation more likely.
- ✓ Treat the accused with dignity and support. If the accused is a church worker, they should be relieved temporarily of their duties until the investigation is finished.

Quick Reference #'s:

Police 911; Victim Services 857-2400; Family and Community Services 856-2400; After Hour Abuse Emergencies 1-800-442-9799

REPORTING ABUSE FORM

Date: _____

Name of Child: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Name of Person Filing Report: _____

Name of Person Receiving Report: _____

Nature of suspected abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect): _____

Indications of suspected abuse: (including facts, physical signs and course of events where necessary): _____

Action taken (Including date and time of actions): _____

*The above information will serve as a guide and will be necessary if a formal report is filed with the police or appropriate government agency. All information will be kept **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**.*

Signed: _____ Signed: _____
(Person Reporting) (Ministry Coordinator)

Signed: _____ Signed: _____
(Associate Pastor) (Children’s Ministry Director)

If there were any witnesses to the above incident they should attach signed, dated statements.

Accident Report Form

Injured's name: _____ Age: _____

Sex/Gender: _____

Date and time of accident: _____ Location: _____

Date and time accident reported: _____

Who was notified? _____

Name(s) of witness(es): _____

Describe how the accident occurred: _____

Which part of the body was injured? _____

Describe the injuries in detail: _____

Date and time you sought medical attention: _____

Name of doctor and/or hospital: _____

Could anything be done to prevent accidents of this type? If so, what? _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) have been notified.

Signature of Volunteer _____ Date _____

Volunteer's Name (Print): _____