

Southdale Bible Chapel

ABUSE PREVENTION. TRANSPORTATION, SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

Updated: May 2019

Reference Material

These policies and procedures were adapted from “Robertson Hall Insurance Inc. - March 2013 Edition- Abuse Prevention Newsletter to Churches and Christian Organizations.”, specifically:

- Ten Commandments of Youth Abuse Prevention
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Abuse Prevention Plan Checklist

Southdale Bible Chapel will be referred to as “SBC”.

Abuse Prevention Policy

For detailed definitions of abuse and reporting procedures, refer to Appendix “A” Detailed SBC Abuse Prevention Procedures. The following policies exist at SBC regarding abuse prevention:

- **Screened Adults and Youth Supervisors:** All adults and youth supervisors must be fully screened (police checks) and a minimum two-adult rule maintained always. Signed parental permission and informed consent must be obtained for each participant prior to participation in any off-premises activity or event.
- **“Two Adult” Meeting Rule** – Make every effort possible to have at least two screened unrelated adult leaders present when interacting with one or more teens, whether on premises, having a coffee together or during some other off-premises activity, event or mentoring program.
- **Avoid activities** that could easily lead to allegations of abuse or harassment, such as individual photography of children.
- **Open Door Counselling** – During any counselling session between an adult ministry leader and youth, the best practice is to keep the door of the counselling room open for the entire session. Ideally, the session will be conducted at a time when others are nearby. Consider counselling in a group setting whenever possible, where witnesses to the conversation and interaction are present.
- **Recommended appropriate washroom protocol** for children in our care:
 - Pre-Grade One Age Children – should only be taken to the washroom or infants have their diapers changed by a parent or guardian. If not possible, then the screened worker should do so in the presence of at least one other unrelated screened worker.
 - School Age Children – requiring assistance should be accompanied to the door of the washroom, which the worker should open to make sure no one is hanging around in the washroom and then wait outside the door in the hallway in case they are called for help or hear anything suspicious. Helpers under the age of 16 should not be authorized to take children to the washroom unaccompanied by a screened adult worker. Older children may go on washroom breaks using the buddy system unaccompanied by a supervisor if your hallways and washrooms are checked regularly (every 15 to 20 minutes) by a screened hall monitor who is trained regarding what to look for in terms of suspicious activity, including strangers (adults or teenagers) lingering in halls or washrooms.

Southdale Bible Chapel

ABUSE PREVENTION. TRANSPORTATION, SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

Updated: May 2019

- **Sign-in/Sign-out procedure** - If you have children in your programs that are pre-Grade 1 age (SK, JK or Daycare) it is important to have a signing in and out policy, just as with elementary schools and daycares. Parents bring their children to these institutions directly, not just leaving them on the premises unattended. At the end of the day these children are not released into the general population of students and often have separate dismissal times. Younger children should always be released by a parent directly to the teacher or supervisor and your organization should keep a record of this in a sign-in log initialed by the parent or guardian. A sign-in/sign-out procedure for this age group provides you with formal confirmation that children are released to the right person, especially in this age of child custody issues, assuring safety for the children and protection for your organization and its volunteers. Any deviation from this procedure i.e. allowing a substitute to sign-in and sign-out the child must be authorized in writing by the Parent(s) with the Parent's signature and date. An eligible substitute designated by the parent(s) on the list would preferably be another adult (18 yrs. and up, but no younger than 12 yrs. old). As an authorized substitute, the individual would need to include their child's name, and, sign and date the list of substitutes they use, and update it as necessary. Lists for substitutions must be kept on file with the teacher(s), supervisor(s) (Awana, or Nursery) who have custody of the children.
- **Corporal punishment is absolutely prohibited.**
- **Inappropriate touching, affection or discipline is absolutely prohibited.**
- **Provide adequate lighting where children/youth activities take place.**
- **Inappropriate Verbal Interaction is prohibited** - Avoid any form of name calling, adults having sexually orientated conversations with teens, involving youth in the personal problems of leaders, having secret elements of any relationship with youth, compliments related to physique or body development, cursing, off-colour or sexual jokes, shaming, belittling, derogatory remarks or harsh language that might frighten, threaten, or humiliate.
- **Encourage Appropriate Verbal Interaction**-Includes positive reinforcement, appropriate fun, encouragement and praise.
- **Prohibit Child Neglect**- Child neglect refers to an act that deprives a child of essential items such as food and shelter as well as his rights. Child neglect may be physical through excessive punishment and abandonment, educational through failure of enrolling him to school or emotional through failure to provide needed psychological care. Severe child neglect may result to depression hence causing death.
- **Prohibit Inappropriate Displays of Affection Between Adults and Youth**-Even if in fun or "horseplay", it is not acceptable for adults to engage in full frontal hugs, kisses on the mouth, touching bottoms, chests or genital areas, showing affection in isolated areas of the building, touching knees or legs, male/female and/or one-on-one wrestling. piggy back rides, massage or any other form of affection unwanted by the youth. What is "inappropriate touching"? The clinical definition of sexual abuse is inappropriately exposing or subjecting a child to sexual contact, activity, or behaviour. An easier way to think of it- and to teach children about it- is by contrasting "good touches" and "bad touches." A bad touch can be explained as the kind you don't like and would want to stop right away, such as hitting, kicking, or touching, private parts.

Southdale Bible Chapel

ABUSE PREVENTION, TRANSPORTATION, SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

Updated: May 2019

- **Encourage Appropriate Touching**-A good touch can be explained as a way of people showing they care for each other and help each other. EG. Hugging, holding hands, or a parent changing a diaper. Appropriate Displays of Affection between Adults and Youth include side hugs, shoulder-to-shoulder hugs, pats on the head, pats on the shoulder or back, handshakes, high-fives, arms around shoulders, touching hands, faces, shoulders, and arms.
- **Social Media**-With the emergence of social media, please refer to the separate Social Media Policy below.
- **Address health, safety and sanitation issues** for infants and toddlers in nursery programs, including protocol for illnesses, infections and emergencies, cleanliness of change tables, washrooms and floor surfaces and safety of toys, cribs, etc.

For detailed definitions of abuse and reporting procedures, refer to Appendix "A" Detailed SBC Abuse Prevention Procedures. For specific policies regarding billeting, see Appendix "B" Transporting and Billeting Youth.

Transportation Policy

The leadership at "SBC" do not coordinate, approve, nor endorse the transportation of children/youth that are not of your own family. Such activity is at the sole discretion of the individuals, parents / guardians of these children/youth.

Vehicular Transportation re: off-premises activities/events:

The best situation is when a minimum of 2 unrelated screened adult supervisors are in the vehicle at all times with minors. Where this is not possible, at a minimum, 1 screened adult plus 2 other minors in the vehicle. Driving records need to be checked (no at-fault accidents and not more than 2 minor traffic violations in the past three years) and minimum 21 years of age.

This policy applies to usual ministry activities of SBC where *Non-Owned private passenger vehicles are used to transport passengers to sponsored church programmes, activities and events. Failure to meet the following requirements set out below will disqualify an applicant from being a driver or being included on a pool of approved drivers.

*(Vehicles not owned or leased by SBC)

Driver Requirements:

- Minimum age 21 years (preferably 25 years of age)
- Minimum 5 yrs. licensed and driving experience
- no more than 2 minor traffic violations in past 3 yrs.
- no at-fault accidents in past 5 yrs. (confirmed by provincial MVR)
- all authorized drivers must sign a "Safe Driving Statement"

Safe Driving Statement

- drive with extreme care with safety first
- confirm all safety equipment is in good working order, including seat belts and air bags

Southdale Bible Chapel

ABUSE PREVENTION. TRANSPORTATION, SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

Updated: May 2019

- avoid all distractions (including excessive volume of music, eating, use of cell phone and texting)
- personally, accept all responsibility for traffic and parking violations and immediately notify the proper authorities of any accident
- provide proof that the vehicle being driven is fully insured per provincial legislation including Third Party Liability coverage (recommended minimum limits \$2,000,000)

Vehicle Requirements

- well maintained mechanically (including but not limited to steering, brakes, tires) with no unrepaired accident damage (cracked windshields etc.)
- no missing safety equipment

Driving Requirements

- must obey all traffic signs and laws
- must avoid all distractions per iii above, under Driver Requirements

Special Driving Events

- including but not limited to car rallies, amazing races, scavenger hunts etc.-must not be timed events (posted speed limits must be obeyed along with other rules for the road...seat belts must be worn by driver and passengers).
- no exiting the vehicle until it has come to a full stop.

Names of Authorized Drivers

- available for transporting passengers for ministry at SBC:
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

Ministry Leader(s) must provide each driver with a copy of the "Safe Driving Statement" for completion. The Leader(s) must retain these records on file.

For specific policies regarding billeting, see Appendix "B" Transporting and Billeting Youth.

Social Media Policy

Because information can be misconstrued, misinterpreted, or inappropriate for age, workers and volunteers can get themselves and the church into trouble. The requirements are set out below for SBC.

Communicating electronically with Minors for Workers (youth work, Awana, Sunday School etc.)

- Acceptable use for media including Facebook would involve communicating directions to access Facebook or the church website for information about programmes and events. The website would include time, date, and location for special events and ongoing ministries.
- Chapel workers involved in ministry activities should not be encouraged to directly communicate with minors using social media networking including mobile text messages,

Southdale Bible Chapel

ABUSE PREVENTION. TRANSPORTATION, SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

Updated: May 2019

Facebook posts, tweets, etc. However, if text messaging is used with minors, it should only provide information and announcements promoting upcoming events, and only by written formal permission given by parents/guardians.

- Keep text messages simple with questions communicated requiring only "yes" or "no" answers. (i.e. inquiries about attending an event, or transportation needed).
- Avoid "pastoral" or counselling through text messaging.
- Volunteers helping workers in various ministries must not communicate directly with unrelated children or students using text messages.
- For communicating electronically with minors, a preferred method would be sending information to the parents' e-mail address. The parents would be responsible for making sure their children have the information (either verbally or electronically).

Website Content

- Images/photos showing faces of members, guests, etc. must not be recognizable
- Use "far away" shots for group activities if a closeup shot is needed, use a stock image of a program participant
- Photography of an individual used on a website must be with the express written permission of the individual and kept on file (incorporate consent into the chapel's signed registration forms or parental permissions.
- Leadership should review links to other websites, music, video, or anything to be reproduced on the chapel's website for appropriate content (some material could be illegal, immoral, or injurious to the chapel).

Managing Streamed Media

- Audio streaming and podcasts of sermons and teaching have the potential for libel, slander, defamation, and invasion of privacy as they are not regulated or edited.
- Extra caution must be taken to manage live content
- Leadership must ensure that speakers and guests not make remarks that would be hurtful to individuals or identifiable groups in society.
- Avoid closeup images of people in the congregation and guests who have not consented to public use of these images.

Securing of Wireless Networks

- no open internet access for unsupervised children or youth
- only by use of a strong password should the network be made available
- change password on a regular basis.

Southdale Bible Chapel

ABUSE PREVENTION. TRANSPORTATION, SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

Updated: May 2019

Appendix "A" Detailed SBC Abuse Prevention Procedures

Introduction and Background

God intends that all human beings enjoy a full life free from abuse and injustice. (Micah 2: 1-2, 2:8-9) SBC acknowledges its responsibility to protect those who are affiliated with the Chapel - attendees, volunteers and employees. SBC will not tolerate and will actively seek to eradicate behaviour which constitutes sexual abuse (sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, sexual misconduct, sexual assault) or child abuse. In this effort, prevention will be the primary objective - achieved through pre-screening of persons appointed to any position where sexual abuse or child abuse may be opportune: achieved through awareness training: achieved through ensuring that people know their rights related to acceptable versus unacceptable behaviour. If an incident occurs, the process whereby a recipient of sexual abuse or child abuse may initiate a complaint will be known.

SBC advocates processes which protect the vulnerable, stop the abuse and promote restoration/healing. It is acknowledged that while civil authorities may need to be involved in the incident, that within the Christian community opportunities will occur which allow for the truth to be spoken and believed, for any violation to be acknowledged, for accountability to be exercised and for compassion to be demonstrated in ways that serve justice.

It is also hoped that these processes will call the offender to repentance and reconciliation. In appropriate cases, a referral will be made to civil authorities to be dealt with according to law.

Definitions:

Sexual Abuse- Demeaning/exploitive behaviour of a sexual nature ranging from jokes, to unwanted touching, to forced sexual activities. It may also include the threat of such behaviour. Sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation and sexual misconduct are forms of sexual abuse.

Harassment- covers a wide range of behaviours of an offensive nature. It is commonly understood as behaviour intended to disturb or upset, and it is characteristically repetitive. In the legal sense, it is intentional behaviour which is found threatening or disturbing.

Sexual Harassment- Any attempt to coerce an unwilling person into a sexual relationship, or to subject a person to unwanted sexual attention or to punish a refusal to comply, or to reward compliance. (SBC)

Sexual Exploitation- A concept which may incorporate sexual harassment, assault or abuse, and pastoral misconduct. It focuses on the power of the perpetrator in relation to the vulnerability of the victim and refers to taking advantage of such vulnerability for one's own pleasure/gain. (SBC)

Sexual Misconduct- For ministry personnel, misconduct is defined as sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or any other sexual activity or conduct in which the person takes advantage of the vulnerability of such a person under his/her spiritual care. (SBC)

Sexual Assault- Formally defined only in terms of the Criminal Code of Canada but is generally understood to be any form of assault involving some sort of sexual activity, e.g.. kissing, sexual contacts, fondling, or sexual intercourse without his/her consent.

Southdale Bible Chapel

ABUSE PREVENTION. TRANSPORTATION, SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

Updated: May 2019

Child Abuse-Is the misuse of power by someone who is in the position of authority over a child.

There are four types of abuse of children:

- Physical - includes shaking, beating, burning, depriving the child of necessities.
- Verbal - includes excessive yelling, belittling, unkind teasing.
- Emotional - includes coldness, withdrawal, failure to provide loving attention, supervision or normal living experiences.
 - Emotional Abuse-is characterized as a general pattern of abusive behaviour that includes aggressing, denying, and minimizing. It is a behaviour that deliberately hurts another person's feelings and can lead to emotional trauma.
- Sexual - includes incest, rape, or other sexual intrusion. Remember: Reporting suspected abuse to authorities is LAW! (Please be vigilant and keep a sharp lookout for these signs).

What Are Instances of Child Abuse?

The Child and Family Services Act, Section 85 (1) (b) states that a child has suffered "abuse" in any of the following circumstances:

1. The child has suffered physical harm either inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by that person's failure to adequately: care for and provide for the child, or - supervise and protect the child.
2. The child has been sexually molested or sexually exploited by the person having charge of the child or by another person where the person having charge of the child: - knows or should know of the possibility of sexual molestation or sexual exploitation, and - fails to protect the child.
3. The child requires medical treatment to cure, prevent or alleviate physical harm or suffering, and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child: - does not provide the treatment, or - refuses to provide the treatment, or - is unavailable to consent to the treatment, or - is unable to consent to the treatment.
4. The child has suffered emotional harm, demonstrated by: - severe anxiety, or - severe depression, or - severe withdrawal, or - severe self-destructive or aggressive behaviour, and the person having charge of the child: -does not provide services or treatment to remedy or alleviate the harm. - refuses to provide the treatment, or - is unavailable to consent to such services or treatment, or - is unable to consent to the treatment.
5. The child suffers from a mental, emotional or developmental condition that, if not remedied, could seriously impair the child's development, and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child: - does not provide the treatment, or - refuses to provide the treatment, or - is unavailable to consent to the treatment, or - is unable to consent to the treatment.

Failure to report is an offence under the Child and Family Services Act, Section 85 (1) (b).

Southdale Bible Chapel

ABUSE PREVENTION. TRANSPORTATION, SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

Updated: May 2019

Where abuse is suspected (Accusation)

Child Abuse and/or Sexual Abuse Any incident that occurs during a SBC Activity or Program that involves an accusation of suspected child abuse or sexual abuse will be brought to the attention of the Elders, who will be responsible for reporting to the local Children's Aid Society if warranted. This is a legal requirement and cannot be ignored as a procedure for handling a situation where a legal minor has been abused - physically, verbally, emotionally or sexually.

Complaint can be made to one or more of the Elders.

Investigation of Complaint - Designated Elders will obtain information pertinent to the complaint and undertake any discussions, counselling, actions which are deemed appropriate. If necessary, the Elders may be convened to review the findings and advise/consult on the plan to resolve the situation.

Reporting of the Outcome - At the Elder's meeting following the complaint, the Chair will advise the Elders on the occurrence. Information will be provided which permits the Elders to exercise their accountability. Details of the occurrence including names of those involved may be withheld if confidentially warrants nondisclosure of this information.

The Elders will document the facts of their investigation and follow-up. This information shall be sealed and kept with the Chair's files. Access to this information is only made in further follow-up or if needed as background information in another incident which is related to it.

Civil Intervention - The victim, accused and/or SBC representatives may contact civil authorities at any time through the incident. The civil authorities which may be involved include Police, Crown Attorney, Human Right's Commission, Ontario Labour Board. Where formally involved, the processes required by the legal process involved shall supersede any internal processes.

Notification of insurer - When an incident has been reported, the Insurer shall be notified forthwith and any requirements from the Insurer will be followed.

Furthermore,

1. Every suspected or alleged incident of child abuse that occurs during a SBC activity or Program must be reported immediately, Failure to report is an offence under the Child and Family Services Act, Section 85 (1) (b).
2. A SBC incident investigation report must be filled out immediately.
3. If a report is filed, the insurance carrier must be informed immediately.
4. Workers suspecting abuse must report and consult with the Elders immediately.
5. Elders must provide guidance as to whether a report should be made to the Children's Aid Society. A phone call to police does not constitute a report.
6. Elders must inform reporting workers whether the incident has been reported or not.
7. If the person suspected of child abuse is a worker, the Elders must be informed.
8. If the person suspected of child abuse is a worker they must immediately be isolated from any further contact with SBC children until the case has been investigated.

Southdale Bible Chapel

ABUSE PREVENTION. TRANSPORTATION, SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

Updated: May 2019

9. If there is no intent to cause mischief (which is against the law), anyone reporting child abuse is protected under the law.
10. Workers include Awana, Sunday School, Youth Group, but is not limited to these groups.

Adult Sexual Abuse Policy For SBC

1. Every alleged or suspected incident of sexual harassment, abuse or assault that occurs during a SBC activity or program must be reported to the elders.
2. A SBC incident investigation report must be filled out immediately.
3. If a report is filed, the insurance carrier must be informed immediately.
4. Elders must provide guidance as to whether a report should be made to the police.
5. The person suspected of sexual abuse or harassment should immediately be isolated from further contact with people as far as SBC activities and programs are concerned until the case has been investigated.

Preventing Child Abuse and Adult Sexual Abuse

The major components of prevention include:

Worker Selection

The process for selection of the worker involves screening procedures, including:

1. A personal interview
2. Reference checks
3. Police checks

Worker Supervision / Protection

1. Use a team approach where possible. When meeting with youth/children, at least one adult must be in the same room always when students are present. Periodic checks will be made by a leader when children are present. When meeting with members of the opposite sex, two workers should always be present. If this is not possible, the meeting should be conducted with open doors, and not in a location that is hidden from view.
2. Discuss suspicious behaviour. Alleged suspicious behaviour or misconduct on the part of any personnel should be confronted and investigated immediately, with appropriate documentation.
3. Discuss potential criminal sanctions with workers. All personnel should be aware that sexual relationships with minors can lead to a felony conviction and imprisonment. Also, unwanted sexual relationships with or advances to adults can lead to criminal charges.
4. Classrooms must be Easily Viewed when working with youth/children-Doors and windows with shatterproof glass.

Worker Awareness

Ensure that all workers are familiar with the Child/Adult Sexual Abuse policy.

Southdale Bible Chapel

ABUSE PREVENTION. TRANSPORTATION, SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

Updated: May 2019

Response to Allegations

The following principles form the basis of our response plan:

All allegations must be taken seriously.

1. Situations must be handled directly with due respect for people's privacy and confidentiality.
2. The insurance carrier must be notified immediately.
3. Full cooperation must be afforded to civil authorities under guidance of legal counsel.
4. Adequate care must be shown for the wellbeing of victims, as well as for those accused of yet unsubstantiated charges of abuse.
5. Where the Elders have determined that child abuse or sexual abuse or assault has occurred, or where abuse is alleged to have occurred, the Elders will take the following steps: In most cases the worker shall be suspended from duties with or without pay pending a full and complete investigation. If it is determined that child abuse or sexual abuse or assault has occurred, the worker shall be dismissed from all duties for a period of up to ten years, and may thereafter reapply for work. Such application will need to be fully reviewed to determine what counselling and other steps have been taken to deal with the problem.

Southdale Bible Chapel

ABUSE PREVENTION. TRANSPORTATION, SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

Updated: May 2019

Incident Investigation Report

Contributing factors: _____

Medical Treatment by: _____

Location of Treatment: _____

Witness: _____ Age _____

Address: _____

Witness: _____ Age _____ Address: _____

Witness: _____ Age _____ Address: _____

Action taken to Prevent Recurrence: _____

Insurance Carrier Notified? _____ Name: _____ Address: _____

Legal Counsel Notified? _____ Name: _____ Address: _____

Investigated by:

Signature:

Reviewed by:

As part of The SBC Abuse Policy, a mandatory annual review of “The Abuse Prevention Training and Procedure Guidelines” is required by all Ministry Leaders and Workers.

Southdale Bible Chapel

ABUSE PREVENTION. TRANSPORTATION, SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

Updated: May 2019

Appendix “B” Transporting and Billeting Youth

Billeting is normally provided during our annual winter youth conference.

Screening

The safety and protection of youth and hosts from abuse or potential allegation is paramount. All host families must have completed the SBC screening process prior to hosting. This includes: a Police Records Check, the people offering billeting must be known and trusted attendees of the SBC.

Billet Group

- Youth will be billeted in groups; all individuals will be same gender.
- Group means two or more youth staying together in a host home.
- Each billet has asked to billet as part of registration, and understands they are staying in private home as part of the event. They have each signed a Youth Weekend Waiver.

Transportation

- Transportation to billet homes can be provided by host family.
- A screened single driver may transport the billet group of two or more to the host home. This would be in keeping with the “GOOD” guideline provided by from Robertson Hall and apply only to the youth weekend.
- All drivers would sign a “Safe Driver Statement” in keeping with SBC Abuse policy.

Other information

The contact information (telephone number, address) of the individual with whom the youth will be billeted will be given to visiting youth group leader. Group leaders are asked to have contact information also for their individual group members.

All Youth staying in host homes will be informed of proper etiquette and curfew guidelines prior to dismissal. Guidelines should be distributed to hosts by a program leader. Guideline below.

Guideline for Hosts

Thank you for providing accommodation for young people this weekend. Please read the following and sign your agreement below.

- All aspects of the SBC Abuse policy as it applies to the home environment will be adhered too.
- All drivers would sign a “Safe Driver Statement” in keeping with SBC Abuse policy.
- Any allergy / medical information for billeting youths will be communicated to you the hosts with clear directions and contact information in the event of an incident.
- All youths should have distinct sleeping arrangements separate from other household members
- A curfew should always be enforced when youths are being billeted. We ask all youth to be in sleeping area and quiet by _____.

Signature: _____ Date: _____