

Christian & Missionary Alliance  
Canadian Pacific District

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# Youth Ministry Safety & Risk Management GUIDE

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2013 EDITION

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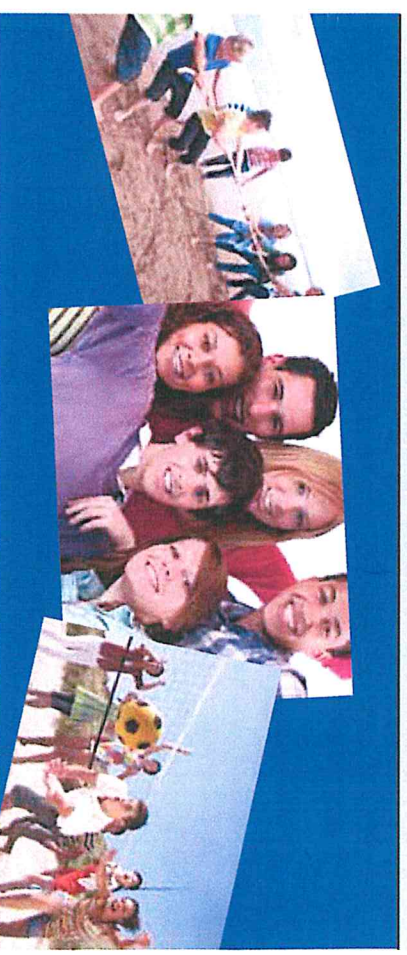


#101-17660 65A Avenue

Surrey, BC V3S 5N4

604.372.1922

Email [cpdoffice@pacificdistrict.ca](mailto:cpdoffice@pacificdistrict.ca)







5. Keep ongoing records:
  - Determine your record-keeping system as well as where the records shall be stored.
    - » Since legally, the Statute of Limitations does not apply to the ongoing protection of children, youth or the vulnerable sector, all Safety & Risk Management records shall be kept permanently, in a safe, secured location. It is acceptable to store these records electronically.
6. Implement your ongoing Safety and Risk Management Policy.

**\* RCMP Definition of Vulnerable Sector:**

"A vulnerable person is defined as a person who, because of their age, a disability, or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent is (a) in a position of dependence on others or (b) are otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by a person in a position of authority or trust relative to them." (This includes minors under the age of 19 in BC, disabled persons of any age or disability, and seniors)

## **POLICY: PART 2 SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT**

Prospective ministry personnel shall submit to the following recruitment and screening process:

1. Minimum of 6 months church attendance required prior to approval of application (some exceptions may apply).
2. Completion of a Ministry Application Form, including the C&MA Statement of Faith.
3. Minimum of two reference checks from non-relatives, preferably recent ministry leaders and/or employers.
4. Criminal Record Check, to be renewed every 3 years.
5. Face to face interaction or interview with the ministry leader or designate.
6. Annual training directed toward a clear understanding of the Safety and Risk Management guidelines.
7. Final approval.

**RATIONALE: (PiOP@ Manual pages 33-36, 38, 40)**

Having a clear recruitment and screening process in place is imperative for the protection not only of the children and youth, but also the protection of the workers, families, and the church itself. It clarifies the reasonable and consistent protocol to be followed. (PiOP Manual pages 33-36, 38, 40)

**PROCEDURE GUIDELINES:**

1. 6 month rule: The #1 protection! (PiOP@ Manual pages 37, 38)
  - » Perspective volunteers for youth ministries shall have attended our church consistently for six months, are considered to be in good

- » Reporting shall be made according to the protocol laid out by the Child, Family and Community Service Act
  - » The CP District Office shall immediately be notified regarding the report.
2. Confidentiality:
    - » Any allegation of abuse shall be taken seriously. The alleged victim(s), perpetrator(s), and the families involved shall be treated with confidentiality, respect and dignity.
  3. Handling the Allegation:
    - » One appointed spokesperson shall present a carefully prepared response statement for the church, public inquiries, media, etc. This is of high importance. ONE SPOKESPERSON ONLY!

- » In the event of an injury, the incident shall be dealt with swiftly and appropriately. The parents shall be contacted immediately.
- » 911 shall be called immediately for medical assistance if there is any doubt as to the severity of the injury.

#### **4. Incident Reporting and Follow-up:** (PtOP@ Appendix 16)

- » An Incident Report Form shall be completed and signed by both the worker involved and a witness to the incident.
- » It is advisable to have a binder with Incident Report forms located with the First-Aid kits.
- » Follow up of those affected by the incident shall continue at least until recovery.
- » It is important to carefully journal dates, times and conversations, re all incidents and ongoing contacts with the ministry leader, the injured, his/her family and anyone else who is party to the incident.

### **POLICY: PART 8 SUSPECTED ABUSE**

All incidents of suspected abuse shall be reported and followed up as per requirements of the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development.

The Senior Pastor or designate shall work with the person reporting the incident to ensure that the appropriate process is observed and shall immediately report the incident or alleged abuse to the CPD office.

Confidentiality of all persons involved shall be carefully protected.

**ONE SPOKESPERSON ONLY!** One appointed spokesperson shall present a carefully prepared response statement as needed.

**RATIONALE: Reporting is not only a legal requirement but also protects the church and all those involved in the allegation.**

#### **PROCEDURE GUIDELINES:**

**Reporting:** (PtOP@ Manual pages 147-167, Appendices 23-26, 29, 31)

##### **1. When to Report:**

- » Workers shall be trained to understand and recognize the indicators of abuse. (PtOP@ Appendix 23)
- » It is our legal duty to report any incident of suspected or known abuse to the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). Any person believing that a youth is in need of protection shall immediately report the situation to the MCFD.
- » The youth ministry team leader and Senior Pastor shall be informed of the report being made. They shall provide support to the person reporting the incident to the MCFD.

standing, and clearly support the doctrines and direction of our church.

- » Waiving the six month rule can take place only if the perspective volunteer comes from another evangelical church, is known and in good standing in that church for the year prior to coming, and has at least two affirming youth ministry references from the previous pastor and/or ministry leaders.

» Names of potential volunteers shall be brought to the pastoral staff or Safety and Risk Management team leader for consideration.

» A person for whom some concern is expressed, or who is new to our church shall be directed toward ministries not involving youth.

» Any person who has been accused or convicted of abuse of minors in any form or, for any other crime, shall not be involved with our youth in any way whatsoever.

#### **2. Application forms:** (Use the CPD Application Forms for Adult and Youth Volunteers, updated January 2013)

» Applications shall be completed by all persons seeking ministry to our youth.

» All application forms shall be considered confidential and filed in a permanent, secure location.

#### **3. Reference Checks:** (PtOP@ Manual pages 41, 42, Appendices 5-7)

» At least two of the three references shall be contacted. Referees shall be asked to affirm character qualities and their assessment of the applicant's ability to work with youth. Previous pastors, ministry leaders or employers provide the most insightful information.

» A record of each reference call shall be kept permanently on file and shall include the name of the caller, date of the call, and summary of conversation.

#### **4. Interview:** (PtOP@ Manual pages 43, 44, Appendix 8)

» A face-to-face interview or interaction with each potential volunteer shall be carried out prior to the applicant being placed in a ministry setting.

#### **5. Criminal Record Checks:** (PtOP@ Manual pages 45-47)

» A Criminal Record Check for all youth volunteers ages 15 and over, as well as paid workers, shall be carried out through the Local Police Department.

» The cost of this CRC is normally incurred by the individual, unless the church chooses to assist.

» The results of these CRC's shall be returned to the church and kept in the volunteer's confidential file.

#### **6. Training:** (PtOP@ Manual, Training Outlines pages 55-78)

» All applicants for Youth ministries shall receive S&RM Training, including instruction on safety, evacuation procedures, medical emergencies

and child abuse prevention.

» Further, annual S&RM training shall be required for all youth ministry volunteers

**7. Approval:** (PiOP@ Manual pages 50, 51)

» All ministry personnel shall be approved by church leadership prior to being placed in a ministry position.

**POLICY: PART 3**

**IDENTIFICATION AND SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS**

Ministry personnel shall be intentionally identified and supervised.

**RATIONALE:** Clearly identifying screened volunteers as 'go to' persons is an essential part of safety and risk management.

Supervision of volunteers raises visibility and reduces the risk of unsafe practices.

**PROCEDURE GUIDELINES:**

**1. Identification:** (PiOP@ pages 90-91)

» Ministry personnel shall be clearly identified.

**2. Supervision:** (PiOP@ page 126)

» Ongoing, proactive and intentional supervision of volunteers shall be carried out.

**POLICY: PART 4  
RECORD KEEPING**

Legally, the Statute of Limitations does not apply to the ongoing protection of children, youth or the vulnerable sector. Therefore, all Safety & Risk Management records are confidential and shall be permanently stored in a safe, secured location.

**RATIONALE:** All records shall be available indefinitely for scrutiny in the event that a legal question arises regarding an activity or the attendance of a specific child, youth or volunteer.

**PROCEDURE GUIDELINES:**

**1. Record Files:** (PiOP@ pages 45, 46, 86, Appendix 22)

» Criminal Record Checks of volunteers shall be updated every three years.

» Taking attendance of volunteers and youth is mandatory.

» Confidential records to be permanently and securely stored shall be, but not limited to:

**PROCEDURE GUIDELINES:**

**1. The meeting facility:** (PiOP@ Manual pages 99, 100)

» The facility shall be well-maintained, clean and safe.

» High visibility and clear sight-lines shall be provided via half doors or windows in doors of classrooms.

» The facility shall be regularly inspected for safety and cleanliness.

**2. Equipment:**

» Equipment shall meet up-to-date safety standards and be well maintained.

**POLICY: PART 7**

**SAFETY, FIRST AID & EMERGENCIES**

Safety and first aid procedures shall be in place, including but not limited to:

**1. Emergency evacuation plan:** lock-down procedures

**2. Injuries, infection, blood-borne pathogens, infectious disease control**

**3. Medical emergency response plan**

**4. Incident reporting and follow-up**

**RATIONALE:** Safety measures in all aspects are both expected and necessary.

**PROCEDURE GUIDELINES:**

**1. Emergency Evacuation Plan:** (PiOP@ Manual Appendix 27)

» Facility map and evacuation procedures shall be posted, visible at all exits; procedures shall be communicated to all staff, volunteers and program participants.

» Lock down procedures shall be clearly set out and communicated to all staff, volunteers and program participants. (The best resource for determining appropriate lock-down procedures will be one of the local school administrators).

**2. Injuries, infections, blood-borne pathogens, infectious disease control:** (PiOP@ Appendices 11, 12, 13)

» Steps in dealing with the above shall be followed as outlined in the PiOP@ Manual.

**3. Medical Emergency Response Plan, including Safety and First Aid:** (PiOP@ Manual pages 101-103, 130, Appendices 11-13)

» First-aid kits shall be kept up-to-date and conveniently available. It is advisable to place a small first-aid kit in each youth area.

» All incidents where an injury takes place shall be reported to ministry leadership.

**Forms to be completed and signed on a yearly basis are:**

- » Authorization and Medical Consent Form. (Appendix 14)
- » Emergency Information. (Appendix 20)
- » Driving Contract. (Appendix 21)

**Forms to be completed and signed for each off-site or overnight activity are:**

- » Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement and/or Permission Forms. (Appendix 15)
- » Off-site Activity Report Form. (Appendix 18)
- » Trips and Off-site Travel Form. (Appendix 19)

**10. Anti-Bullying Guidelines: (PiOP® Manual pages 110, 111)**

- » Bullying in any form shall not be tolerated.
- » Youth shall be treated with respect and dignity in a safe and inclusive environment.
- » Should a bullying incident occur, it shall be reported to both the parents of the perpetrator as well as the parents of the victim.
- » **G-R-A-C-E - a positive behavioural guideline:**
  - G - Use Godly language and actions**
  - R - Respect others**
  - A - Ask for help**
  - C - Control yourself, play fair**
  - E - Everyone deserves to be safe**

**11. Social Networking Guidelines: Extra caution needed!**

- » Caution shall be used when leaders are contacting youth via any social networking device.
- » As much as possible, parents shall be informed and/or included in these conversations.
- » Photos, videos and information shall not be used in any format without proper parental consent. (PiPIDA)

**POLICY: PART 6  
FACILITY**

The church leadership shall provide a safe physical environment, conducive to effective programming and supervision.

**RATIONALE: Clean, safe facility and equipment help provide an environment that is conducive to effective ministry.**

- » All records of attendance, either hard copy or digital, of children and volunteers
- » All volunteer applications, criminal record checks, reference checks, interview notes
- » All children's registrations, authorization and medical consents, acknowledgement/permission forms
- » All off-site event details, billing details, transportation and driver forms
- » All incident reports
- » All documentation re suspected and/or allegations of abuse

**POLICY: PART 5  
PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

Children and **YOUTH** shall be protected through intentional practices, including appropriate:

1. Leader/student ratios
2. Leader/student interactions
3. Display of affection guidelines
4. Safe receiving and dismissal procedures
5. Attendance records of students and volunteers
6. Bathroom procedures
7. Registration, Medical Consent, Acknowledgement/Permission Forms
8. Off-site activities, overnight and event procedures
9. Transportation guidelines
10. Anti-bullying guidelines
11. Social networking guidelines

**RATIONALE: Visibility and Supervision are KEYS to risk management!**

**"As risk increases, supervision must increase**

**Risk increases as isolation increases**

**Risk increases as accountability decreases**

**Risk increases when there is an imbalance of power, authority, influence or control between a potential abuser and a potential victim."**

**"Reducing the Risk" Training DVD, Christianity Today 2008**

**PROCEDURE GUIDELINES:**

**1. Leader/Student ratios: (PiOP® Manual pages 120, 125, 126)**

- » Wherever possible, at least two leaders, not related, shall be with

- groups of youth. This can include older youth (5-year age difference preferable) or parents. At least one worker shall be screened via the S&RM policy, and only that worker shall be placed in a position of trust.
- » Should it not be possible to have at least two screened workers present or if the workers present are related, an open door policy shall be adhered to.
- 2. Leader/Student Interactions:** (PloP@ Manual pages 119--122, 139)
- » Youth leaders shall not pursue a dating relationship with a teen, under the age of majority (age 19 in BC).
  - » Youth shall be encouraged and treated with respect in every situation.
  - » Counseling youth shall be carried out with awareness of and careful adherence to counseling ethics .
  - » Discipline shall be positive, patient and loving.
  - » Parents shall be informed and/or involved should disciplinary action be necessary.
- 3. Display of Affection Guidelines:** (PloP@ Manual pages 106-109, 121)
- » Appropriate and positive physical touch of youth shall always be given in view of others and in ways that cannot be easily misunderstood.
  - » Inappropriate touch includes extended physical contact such as hugging, tickling, kissing, carrying youth, having youth sit on your lap, touching an area that would be covered by a bathing suit, or making a youth uncomfortable in the presence of others.
  - » Being alone with a youth of either sex is strongly discouraged unless in clear sight of others.
  - » Note: It is decidedly inappropriate to be alone in a vehicle at any time with a youth.
- 4. Safe receiving and dismissal procedures:**
- » Procedures and parameters of church responsibility and parental responsibility re dropping off and picking up youth shall be clearly set out and clearly communicated to youth workers, parents and youth.
  - » Youth of any age shall not be left unsupervised at any time.
- 5. Attendance Records of students and volunteers:** (PloP@ Manual page 96)
- » Attendance of all volunteers and youth shall be recorded each time youth meets.
  - » These attendance records shall be kept permanently on file. (S&RM Policy Part 4)
- 6. Bathroom procedures:** (PloP@ Manual pages 97, 98, Appendix 10)
- » Wisdom and discretion shall be used in providing security.

- 7. Registration, Medical Consent, Acknowledgement/Permission Forms:** (PloP@ Manual pages 127, 128, Appendices 14,15)
- » Registration of all youth, including medical consent forms, shall be completed at the time of a youth's entrance into a program or activity. These records shall be kept permanently on file and updated as needed
- » Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement and/or Consent Forms shall be completed prior to an event or outing.
- Please note:** A properly completed Acknowledgment or Permission Form may be used in place of a Release Form.
- "An effectively drafted acknowledgement or permission form will provide both parental notice and informed consent, but not waive negligence".
- Permission or acknowledgement forms should include all details of the recreational activity or field trip, including, very importantly, transportation information. If the activity is off site, The document should contain a clear description of the activity along with a full explanation of the inherent risks. Higher risk activities should be objectively assessed as such. These documents do not seek to avoid responsibility for negligence, but to transfer to the participant all inherent risks of participation."
- "In BC, releases covering accidental injuries to minors are still valid. Releases covering negligent injuries are not. **Consequently, due diligence to avoid negligence is paramount!**" (CCCC bulletin, August 2010, used by permission [http://www.cccc.org/bulletin\\_article/297](http://www.cccc.org/bulletin_article/297) )
- » All information shall be received and kept in compliance with the Privacy Act (PIPEDA - the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act)
- 8. Off-site activities, overnight, and event procedures and...**
- 9. Transportation Guidelines:** (PloP@ Manual pages 131-138, Appendix 17 check list, Appendices 18-21, 30)
- » All special events and/or overnight trips shall be approved by church leadership.
  - » Mandatory Acknowledgement or Permission Forms shall be completed by parent/guardian prior to each off-site event.
  - » Every event or activity shall be adequately supervised.
  - » Plan to Protect@ manual, Appendix 17, shall be utilized as a check list to make sure all forms are filled out and bases covered.
  - » Drivers shall have at least a Class 5 license (not restricted by an "L" or an "N" rating).
  - » Prior to driving for any YM outing, drivers shall provide the YM leadership with an up-to-date copy of his/her "Driver's Abstract", provided by ICBC at no charge.
  - » Event, travel plans, driver information, Driver Abstract, and driver contract shall be photocopied, one copy provided for the event leaders and one copy left at church office.
  - » Transportation to and from special events as well as overnight billeting shall take into account safety of the youth as a primary concern and shall avoid inappropriate mixing of the sexes.