



SAFE CHURCH POLICY

2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preamble	3
Mandate of Safe Church Team	4
Requirements for Abuse Prevention	5
Definitions of Abuse	6
Symptoms of Abuse & Molestation	7
PROCEDURES:	
Procedures for Abuse Claim	8
Procedures for Care Team	10
Procedures for Nursery	12
Procedures for WonderKids	14
Procedures for WonderKids Shepherds	15
Procedures for Washroom Use for Nursery & WonderKids	16
Procedures for GEMS, Cadets, and Junior & Senior Youth	17
GUIDELINES:	
Guidelines for Social Media	18
Guidelines for Field Trips & Special Events	19
Guidelines for Volunteer Drivers	19
Guidelines for Overnight Events	19
Guidelines Billeting & Hosting	20
Guidelines for Discipline	20
Criminal Records Check	21
Ministry Covenant Agreement	22
Appendix A: Community Resources	23
Appendix B: Ministries Requiring Abuse Prevention Screening	24

PREAMBLE

Our world belongs to God, but because of brokenness through sin, we believe that Talbot Street Church has a spiritual, moral, and legal obligation to provide a secure environment for all people participating in church programs that are under the auspices and authority of the church.

We proclaim that people are created in the image of God. Abuse, most deeply, constitutes a violation of the image of God in another person, and it is therefore profoundly sinful. Talbot Street Church seeks to be a church that embodies Isaiah's prophetic words: "They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain." (Isaiah 11:9) Therefore abuse will not be tolerated at Talbot Street Church.

We understand that there are many underlying causes of abuse: low self-esteem, stress, unresolved anger, poor parenting skills etc. Therefore, we commit ourselves to promoting the spiritual welfare of the members of Talbot Street Church and all those who seek God here. The church will do this through preaching, teaching, ministry of small groups, and by offering resources to assist people in their relationships with each other. The members of Talbot Street Church will encourage each other to model peaceful conflict resolutions, as well as the heart and spirit of a servant with others.

We will combat abuse by implementing measures to prevent abuse from occurring within the context of our ministries and in our facilities, and by adopting the following procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse be it with children, youth, or adults.

Everyone who teaches, helps, or cares for children, youth, or adults under the auspices of Talbot Street Church is required to follow the guidelines and procedures as defined in this document. The Elder Board has reviewed and adopted them as official policy. This plan is designed to assist church leaders in recruiting volunteers and, to the greatest extent possible, provide for the safety of our community by these volunteers.

To Provide a secure and safe environment at Talbot Street Church, the Elder Board will establish a Safe Church Team (SCT) as a standing committee to oversee the implementation and continuation of the Safe Church Policy. Its actions will be guided by Synodical and Classical personnel (Anti-Abuse Denominational Coordinator, Classical Abuse Response Team) and decisions (see to date: Acts of Synod 1992, 1995 & 1997).

MANDATE OF SAFE CHURCH TEAM

The Safe Church Team will comprise 3-5 knowledgeable and aware members of the congregation with at least one member being a 'professional' within the meaning of the Child and Family Services Act (1985) (e.g. nurse, teacher, child/youth worker, social worker). The makeup of the Safe Church Team will consist of male and female members and those who are not in paid pastoral leadership positions within TSC.

The Safe Church Team is available to anyone who has concerns or suspicions of potential or possible abuse. The Safe Church Team will:

1. Oversee the education of the congregation, leaders and volunteers about the dynamics of abuse and thereby strive for abuse prevention.
 - a. This includes:
 - i. Annual Review of policies and signing of code of ethics with leaders/volunteers
 - ii. Participation/input in Abuse Training for all leaders/volunteers involved with a vulnerable sector.
2. Oversee, review and safely store all results of [Ministry Covenant Agreements](#), [Vulnerable Sector Checks](#), and program sign in/out and or attendance rosters.
3. Ensure that all members of the team take an oath of confidentiality.
4. Ensure that there is an annual review of all abuse policies, procedures and their requirements and make subsequent recommendations to the Elder Board.
5. Process all abuse allegations in accordance with the guidelines set out in this policy, making whatever necessary use of classical and denominational resources.
6. Be a resource and support to members and leaders of the congregation regarding concerns of abuse.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ABUSE PREVENTION

1. Staff, members of the Elder Board, Care Team workers, and all who are involved in a ministry with children (minors), seniors and vulnerable populations are required to annually review and adhere to the policies and procedures included herein, along with information about how to recognize the signs of abuse and inappropriate behaviour.
2. Every program at Talbot Street Church that involves minors is required to implement the operating procedures described in this policy.
3. So that all are protected and to help prevent abuse from happening, all members of the Elder Board, Care Team Personnel, and all adults, 18+ who are involved in a ministry with minors, seniors and vulnerable populations are required to pass and submit a Police Check or Vulnerable Sector Check every five years and annually review the Safe Church Policy. (refer to [Criminal Record Check](#) section on page 21)
4. The information gathered from these checks will be reviewed by the Safe Church Team and/or its appointee such as the Talbot Street Church Administrative Coordinator.
5. If failure to pass the Police Check, inappropriate behaviour or concerns arise regarding any volunteer or leader, the Safe Church Team will consult with the volunteer first and if needed then the Pastor of Youth & Discipleship or the Care Team Leader depending on which program the applicant wanted to volunteer with.
6. Members of the Safe Church Team will be made known in our faith community by announcements in the church bulletin and signs in bathroom stalls that includes the safe church email and safe church contact information. The safe church team is available to anyone who has concerns or suspicions of potential or possible abuse. The SCT is responsible for providing the options available in the policy. (see [Appendix A](#))

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Physical Abuse is the intentional use of force against a person without the person's consent. It can cause physical pain or injury that may last a long time. Examples include pushing, shoving, hitting, kicking, pinching, strangling, throwing objects, and/or locking someone in a room,

Emotional Abuse occurs when a person uses words or actions to control, frighten, or isolate someone or take away their self respect. Examples include: threats, put downs, name calling or insults, constant yelling or criticism, destroying belongings, threats to harm a person or someone else, bullying - through intimidation or humiliation.

Sexual Abuse includes sexual touching or sexual activity without consent, continued sexual contact when asked to stop, and / or forcing someone to commit unsafe or humiliating sexual acts.

Child Abuse includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. It also includes neglect, and any violence that children see or hear in their families or extended families, other people's homes, schools, community centres or places of worship.

Elder Abuse is any action, behaviour or failure to act, by a person in a position of trust such as an adult child, family member or caregiver that causes or risks causing harm to an older adult. It can include physical, sexual or emotional harm and/or damage to or loss of property or assets.

Definitions taken from Government of Canada: <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/fv-vf/about-apropos.html#sex>

SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE & MOLESTATION

Church workers and staff should be alert to the physical signs of abuse and molestation, as well as to behavioural and verbal signs that a victim may exhibit. Observing a one-time event does not necessarily constitute a potential abuse case; however, sudden unexplained changes warrant investigation. Some common signs of abuse are:

Physical signs may include:

- Lacerations, bruises (especially above the knees and elbows)
- Irritation, pain, or injury to the genital area
- Difficulty with urination
- Discomfort when sitting
- Torn or bloody underclothing
- STDs
- Injuries that are not consistent with explanation
- Presence of various injuries that are in various stages of healing

Behavioural signs may include:

- Anxiety when approaching church or nursery area
- Age-inappropriate play with toys, self or others displaying explicit sexual acts
- Age inappropriate sexually explicit drawing or descriptions
- Unusual sexual knowledge
- Seductive behaviours
- Cringing or flinching if touched unexpectedly
- Vacant stares in infants
- Extremely aggressive or extremely withdrawn
- Nightmares

PROCEDURES FOR ABUSE CLAIM

The following procedures apply in the event of an allegation or report of abuse involving a member or attendee of Talbot Street Church, on church property or within the context of its ministry. The church's response will follow the guidelines approved in Synod 1997, Article 65 pages 681-684.

1. **Involving Minors:** When an allegation of abuse is made and the alleged victim is a minor, the accusation must be reported to The Children's Aid Society (CAS). Only CAS and the police will investigate. ***It is not the responsibility of the reporting person(s) to substantiate the allegations before notifying CAS and the Police.***
2. **Involving Adults:** If the alleged victim is an adult, a report is not made to the police; that choice remains with the complainant (exceptions allowed in the case of disability and/or death).
3. **Involving Church Leader or Staff Person:** one or more of the following options must be used;
 - a. The alleged victim and alleged offender meet before witnesses (i.e. representatives from the Elder Board, Pastors or Safe Church Team) to discuss the alleged abuse incident.
 - b. Synod has encouraged the use of [Restorative Practices](#), which can be used in this situation, as well as in other situations which don't exactly fit the Advisory Panel Process. In addition, Restorative Practices may also be helpful after an Advisory Panel Process to foster healing.
 - c. Another alternative is to proceed with "informal means for resolution" as contemplated in the Preamble to the Judicial Code contained in the Supplement to Article 30-c of the Church Order. This would include meeting with "trained facilitators" or "mediators" or other "informal efforts."
 - d. A fourth alternative is the "formal hearing" described in the Judicial Code contained in the Supplement to Article 30-c of the Church Order (Articles 1-27). Here the Elder Board hears the testimony presented by the alleged victim and the alleged offender and their witnesses regarding the alleged abuse incident. This "formal hearing" is "intended to be a dispute-resolving mechanism of last resort."
 - e. The Elder Board reports the incident to the Classical Safe Church Team which will initiate an advisory panel process to evaluate the gravity of the allegations and the probable veracity of them.

4. When making a report to the Classical Safe Church Team, CAS or the police, a report must also be made to the Elder Board Chair who will inform the Elder Board so it will be recorded in the board minutes.
5. The Safe Church Team will ensure spiritual and emotional support of all involved.
6. **Spokesperson:** The Church Designate, assigned by the Elder Board, will be the sole spokesperson for the Church. He/she will speak to the media and the congregation regarding the matter in a discreet, informed, truthful and diplomatic way. All inquiries or media interviews will be referred to the Church Designate to avoid mis-information.

PROCEDURES FOR CARE TEAM PERSONNEL

The Care Team is made up of members from the congregation who have a heart for helping and caring for those within Talbot Street Church. It will consist of an executive team that will coordinate and oversee a Visiting Team and an Action Team. All team members are required to annually review the Safe Church Policy and must pass and submit a Vulnerable Sector Check.

1. All Care Team members are required to annually review The Safe Church Policy and must pass and submit a Vulnerable Sector Check.
2. All Care Team Personnel, including pastors, staff, and Elder Board members, etc. should avoid visiting members of the opposite sex alone. The following options are available:
 - a. Meet in a safe, private area of your home (office, kitchen) while another adult is at home. Ask your spouse or an adult to be in your home but to respect your privacy.
 - b. Meet at a public place such as a restaurant or coffee shop.
 - c. Meet in one of the offices of the church building during the day while the staff is in the immediate area, or in the evening while programs are running. Ensure that the meeting is in a safe and visible location and that others in the building are aware that the meeting is taking place.

Exceptions can be made, but the Care Team Leadership should be notified.

3. If a parishioner reveals an instance of abuse (physical, sexual, or emotional) involving a member or attendee of Talbot Street Church on church property or within the context of its ministry, you are obligated under the Safe Church Policy to report it to the Safe Church Team who will follow the procedures set out in the policy. If the instance of abuse involves a minor, a report must be made to the Police and Children's Aid Society (CAS). If a church leader is implicated, arrange for an advisory panel from the Classical Safe Church Team to be called (*if the claimant agrees*) gather facts and advise the Elder Board, which will adjudicate the matter.
4. Care Team Personnel should not meet more than three times with a parishioner(s) around challenging issues. The Care Team Leadership Team and the Lead Pastor will review unresolved issues. Upon review of the circumstances of ongoing and unresolved matters, an appropriate referral to a professional counsellor is advised.
5. If you are providing pastoral care /emotional support to an individual in marital discord and the spouse of that individual wishes to discuss the same issue with you, advise that you are currently ministering to the other spouse. To respect confidentiality, an offer should be made to connect the individuals with separate visitors.

6. You must not divulge anything that is brought to you in confidence (unless it involves abuse, then see #3 above). If you feel inadequately qualified to help or are uncomfortable, then you must consider one of the following;
 - a. Encourage them to meet with a professional counselor and provide counselling services contact information.
 - b. Ask for permission to share only the information they are comfortable with to a mutually acceptable individual who can help.
7. Alcohol should not be available during Care Team visits.
8. Be cautious with touch; while recognizing the power of touch, ask permission to hug. Use the shoulder to shoulder method or touch elbows.
9. All Care Team Personnel are required to complete the online Care Log after their visits.

Anyone not following these procedures must be reported to the Elder Board or Safe Church Team.

PROCEDURES FOR NURSERY

All teachers, leaders and volunteers aged 18 and older are required to annually review the Safe Church Policy and must pass and submit a Vulnerable Sector Check.

Receiving & Releasing Children

1. A mandatory registration sign in and out process is to be used.
2. Children are not to be dropped off in a classroom without an adult Nursery Volunteer present.
3. Babies and preschool children will only be released into the care of the child's parent or guardian utilizing a signature or by providing the registration label.
4. Parents and visitors are not to enter the Nursery or preschool classroom when picking up their child unless requested to do so.

Nursery Staffing

1. A minimum of two unrelated nursery Volunteers must be present for supervision, except in the event of an emergency.
2. Unrelated Nursery Volunteers between the ages of 12 and 17 must work alongside another Nursery Volunteer over the age of 18.
3. Clear lines of visibility must be in place and the windows and bathroom doors must remain open.
4. Nursery Volunteers have a clearly visible name tag identifying them to parents, children, and newcomers.
5. Nursery Volunteer to Child ratios:
 - One adult Nursery Volunteer for every three infants (birth-17 months)
 - One adult Nursery Volunteer for every five toddlers or preschoolers (17 months-age 3)

Diaper Changing/Bathroom Visits

1. Diaper changing must always be done by an adult Nursery Volunteer and take place in the nursery on the change tables in such a way that other Nursery Volunteers can easily see the child that is being changed, as well as the other children and volunteers in the room. Bathrooms are not to be used to change diapers.

Severe Allergies

1. Parents and caregivers are responsible for notifying the church of any known allergies which their children have. This information is to be noted on their registration form or label.
2. The notification of severe allergies will be posted in the Nursery or WonderKids classroom for high visibility, including a picture of the child, a list of his/her allergies and typical signs of reaction and Epi-Pen if necessary. Nursery Volunteers assigned to care for the child must be made aware of the allergy (from the parent or guardian) and must notify the parent if medication is needed. In case of an emergency call 911.
3. The Nursery is a chemical-free, peanut-free, and scent-free zone.

Anyone not following these procedures must be reported to the Program Leader or Pastor of Youth and Discipleship. In the case of either the Program Leader or Pastor of Youth and Discipleship not following the procedures, the report must be made to a member of the Safe Church Team or Elder Board.

PROCEDURES FOR WONDERKIDS

All teachers, leaders and volunteers aged 18 and older are required to annually review the Safe Church Policy and must pass and submit a Vulnerable Sector Check.

1. WonderKids Teachers & Helpers must wear a nametag identifying their name and the class they're teaching. This must also occur for other programs where there is not the opportunity to meet both the parent and the child prior to them being placed in the program.
2. Only approved unrelated young people can teach. They must have a reference from the Pastor of Youth and Discipleship and they must work in pairs.
3. Members of an immediate family cannot co-teach alone.
4. There should not be any need for one-on-one (student with a teacher) outings, but, if necessary, the WonderKids Teacher is required to notify the WonderKids Leader or Pastor of Youth and Discipleship and the parents with name, date, time, duration and purpose.
5. Children are not permitted to leave their classrooms without supervision. On Sunday mornings, there is a WonderKids Shepherd scheduled for the second and third floors to assist with supervision.
6. Children, age three through Grade 1 must remain in their classroom with the teacher until their parent or guardian arrives to pick them up.
7. Visitors who join a class will have their attendance recorded and kept on file. Adult visitors will be clearly identified and if they have not been screened and approved, they will not be placed in a position of trust with children who are not their own.
8. Review [Procedures for Washroom Use](#) (refer to page 16)
9. Review [Guidelines for Discipline](#) (refer to page 20)
10. It is recommended that there be an individual trained in First Aid/CPR present while programs are operating.

Anyone not following these procedures must be reported to the Program Leader or Pastor of Youth and Discipleship. In the case of either the Program Leader or Pastor of Youth and Discipleship not following the procedures, the report must be made to a member of the Safe Church Team or Elder Board.

PROCEDURES FOR WONDERKIDS SHEPHERD

All WonderKids Shepherds are required to review the Safe Church Policy and must pass and submit a Vulnerable Sector Check.

1. During each morning worship service at which WonderKids functions, two female adults, 18 or older, will be assigned the role of hall monitor; one on each floor.
2. The WonderKids Shepherd will have the general task of walking the hallways while church school is in session, making certain that the attendees are safe. This may include a variety of functions such as directing children who may be lingering in the hallways to where they need to go, sitting with children who may have been sent out of class, and ensuring adults who are not involved with church school programs make their way into the worship sanctuary, etc. If at any time the WonderKids Shepherd feels someone poses a risk to the children, using the walkie talkie that is provided, they should contact the member of the Safety Team who is on duty.
3. Review [Procedures for Washroom Use](#) (*refer to page 16*)
4. Review [Guidelines for Discipline](#) (*refer to page 20*)

Anyone not following these procedures is to be reported to the Program Leader or Pastor of Youth and Discipleship. In the case of either the Program Leader or Pastor of Youth and Discipleship not following the procedures, the report must be made to a member of the Safe Church Team or Elder Board.

PROCEDURES FOR WASHROOM USE FOR NURSERY & WONDERKIDS

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

Nursery Children

1. Diaper changing must always take place in the nursery on the change tables in such a way that another nursery worker can easily see the child that is being changed, as well as the other children and workers in the room. Bathrooms are not to be used to change diapers.
2. Only adult leaders are permitted to change infant's diapers.

Age Three & Four Years

1. Children aged three and four are not to go to the washroom alone. Two adults will escort a group of children to the washroom. When there are not two adults available to take children to the washroom, the WonderKids Shepherd will be appointed to assist with washroom and safety duties.
2. If just one child needs to go to the washroom, the adult volunteer should escort the child to the washroom and prop the outside door open. The volunteer should remain outside the washroom door and wait for the child before escorting him or her back to the classroom.
3. The volunteer should call the child's name if they are taking longer than seems necessary.
4. Never be alone with a child in an unsupervised washroom and never go into a washroom cubicle with a child and shut the door.
5. Always inform another adult when taking a child to the washroom and when returning.

Kindergarten - Grade 3

1. A child of this age should not be sent to the washroom alone, but should be accompanied by an adult volunteer, a WonderKids Shepherd.
2. If an adult volunteer accompanies the child, follow the guidelines listed above under "Age Three & Four Years"

PROCEDURES FOR WONDERCLUB and YOUTH GROUPS

All adult leaders, counsellors, and helpers (age 18+) are required to review the Safe Church Policy and must pass and submit a Vulnerable Sector Check.

WONDERCLUB

1. Leaders must be 18 years of age or older to work alone in a classroom of children. The door must remain open with another adult periodically checking in. It is recommended that there be at least a five-year gap between ministry personnel and the children they serve. Helpers must be 14-17 years of age, unrelated and assigned to work alongside an adult leader.
2. Refer to [Procedures for Washroom Use](#) (page 16) for children Grade 3 and under.
3. Under no circumstance should an adult leader be alone with a teen in a private space or vehicle. One adult leader may drive a vehicle with a minimum of two children. In case of an absolute emergency and only one child is in the vehicle, the driver must call the Pastor of Youth and Discipleship and the parent or guardian of the child.
4. Review [Guidelines for Discipline](#) (refer to page 20)
5. Visitors who join a class will have their attendance recorded and kept on file. Adult visitors will be clearly identified and if they have not been screened and approved, they will not be placed in a position of trust with children who are not their own.

JUNIOR AND SENIOR YOUTH GROUPS

1. It is recommended that there be at least a five-year gap between ministry personnel and the teens they serve.
2. Under no circumstance should an adult leader be alone with a teen in a private space or vehicle. One adult leader may drive a vehicle with a minimum of two teens. If a leader is driving from one end of the city and parents ask them to pick up their teens, to avoid having one leader and one student in a vehicle, the leader can set a designated pick up spot (either a public place or someone's home) where there are at least two teens to pick up. In case of an absolute emergency and only one teen is in the vehicle, the driver must call the Pastor of Youth and Discipleship and the parent or guardian of the teen.
3. Review [Guidelines for Discipline](#) (refer to page 20)
4. Visitors who attend any event will have their attendance recorded and kept on file.

Anyone not following these procedures must be reported to the Program Leader or Pastor of Youth and Discipleship. In the case of either the Program Leader or Pastor of Youth and Discipleship not following the procedures, the report must be made to a member of the Safe Church Team or Elder Board.

GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

The instantaneous ability to communicate electronically has significantly infiltrated our lives today and how we communicate. It is essential for the church to engage in this area and ensure we do so with integrity.

Definitions for the purpose of understanding the following context:

- **Normal:** Activity that happens on a regular basis, is typical.
 - **Pattern:** A repeated occurrence happening more than two times.
 - **One-Off:** Something done, or happening only once, not as part of a regular sequence.
 - **Closed Group:** It is known who is being communicated to. The communication involves at least two ministry leaders and the groups must be at least three people or more.
 - **Internal :** Communication or viewing remains within the church building.
1. **Onsite Digital Media Devices:** All onsite digital media devices e.g. computers, WIFI, are controlled with pass codes. Access is limited to staff and ministry leaders for the purpose of advancing church ministries. Any usage that does not glorify the Lord and His kingdom work is not permitted.
 2. **Communicating with Youth Texting:** Ministry leaders when using texting will normally contact youth in a closed group format. It is recognized that one-off communication can occur. If a pattern starts to develop where the communication is no longer a one-off, the Ministry leader will address the issue by informing a second Ministry leader. The youth will be made aware of alternative healthy ways of communication.
 3. **Emailing:** When emailing youth correspondence, it should be copied to the parent/guardian and Ministry leader.
 4. **Other electronic communication:** some examples but not limited to; blogging, TikTok, Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest or the next new thing. Youth Ministry leaders will refrain from using these as a form of personal communication.

Safe Practice Guidelines:

1. Communication normally should occur between 8 a.m. and 9 p.m.
2. Restrict content to facts, not feelings.
3. Questions should be kept simple, requiring only a "yes" or "no" answer.
4. All obscene or bad language, bullying, off topic discussions and discrimination is prohibited. Any concerns of such conduct will be addressed by the leadership.
5. Phone calls and/or face to face meetings are utilized when dealing with emotionally charged conversation, pastoral care, counseling and/or when issues are of a confidential nature.

GUIDELINES FOR FIELD TRIPS & SPECIAL EVENTS

1. Activities conducted away from the church property must be pre-approved by the Pastor of Youth & Discipleship.
2. Parents will be notified at least one week prior to the outing, including the exact location, emergency numbers and a list of adult ministry personnel attending the event.
3. Proper written consent and medical release forms are required for each child. These can be done once at the beginning of the season and must be kept on file.
4. Leaders of the trip/event should have emergency contact information for each child
5. All trips and outings must be supervised by a minimum of two approved, unrelated adult leaders.

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

1. All drivers must have, at minimum, a valid G license and have been driving for five years with a clean driving record or no more than two minor traffic violations. Any serious violations such as impaired, careless, leaving the scene, excessive speeding, or excessive accumulation of demerit points will prohibit a volunteer from driving others.
2. Ontario's auto insurance states that volunteers are covered by their own insurance.
3. Designated volunteer drivers must submit a picture of their driver's license and car insurance along with a drivers abstract every three years.
4. The vehicle should be well-maintained, preferably no older than ten years.
5. Under no circumstance will a leader be alone with a child or youth in a car. In the case of picking up or bringing home children, the last two children must exit the vehicle at the same house.

GUIDELINES FOR OVERNIGHT EVENTS

1. All overnight activities must be pre-approved by the Pastor of Youth and Discipleship.
2. Proper written consent and medical release forms are required for each child. These must be kept on file.
3. All overnight activities will have a minimum ratio of one leader for every five children or 6 youth and there should be a minimum of two leaders at all times. When only two leaders are required, they must be unrelated.
4. Each leader will have an assigned group for whom they will be responsible during the overnight event. All supervising adults must be approved volunteers and have passed a Vulnerable Sector Check. Female ministry personnel will be assigned to female children and male ministry personnel will be assigned to male children.

5. Youth attending retreats or overnight events are not allowed to leave the event. Any exceptions must have written permission by a parent/guardian.
6. During camping trips, adults will not sleep in the same tent with any child. Leaders may sleep in a large space (i.e. cabin or conference room) with a minimum of two or more children or youth.

GUIDELINES FOR BILLETING & HOSTING

1. For the protection of our youth, it is required that all adults residing in the home where billets are provided must complete the following screening process prior to hosting.
 - a. Recommendation from pastor or Safe Church Team
 - b. Vulnerable Sector Check
2. Information guidelines should be distributed to host homes no less than one week in advance of the youth arriving at their home.
3. Any allergies and medications for youth should be communicated to the host home prior to arrival, with clear directions on how to manage allergies and/or medications.
4. Where possible, youth should be billeted in teams or small groups of the same gender.
5. Youth should have distinctly separate sleeping arrangements (beds) from the other household members and should not be left alone in the home.
6. Curfews of 11.00 PM should be enforced when youth are being billeted.
7. All youth staying in host homes are informed of proper etiquette and curfews by program leaders.

GUIDELINES FOR DISCIPLINE

When a child/youth significantly disrupts a class or group, the following steps of discipline are to be followed:

1. In the class/group, let the student know that the behaviour is disrupting the group/class.
2. Whenever possible, leaders should try to avoid having to discipline a child/youth by choosing one or more of the following options:
 - Distract the child/youth with another activity
 - Help the child/youth focus on another more acceptable behaviour
 - Isolate the child/youth from others if another volunteer/staff is available to assist
 - For young children, time-outs should not last longer (in minutes) than the age of the child

3. If the behaviour persists, parents are to be informed and involved whenever a child/youth misbehaves beyond minor correction, or if a pattern of misbehaviour increases. If a parent is notified the Pastor of Youth & Discipleship will be notified as well.
4. Concerns about or the appropriate response to a child/youth's behaviour should be reported to the program supervisor.
5. If the behaviour continues to persist, the child/youth is removed from the class/group and is not readmitted until strong assurances are made that the behaviour will change.

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS

Any volunteer 18 years and older dealing with a vulnerable sector at Talbot Street Church will be required to:

1. Complete a criminal record check every 5 years to be kept on file.
2. Complete an Initial Screening option found in the chart below.
3. Every 5 years thereafter, complete a Re-Check option found in the chart below.

Definitions:

- **VSC:** Vulnerable Sector Check requested by volunteer through their local police services (**NOTE:** This is required only if a volunteer is born before January 1, 1986)
- **CPIC:** Canadian Police Information Check requested by volunteer through Canadian Police services
- **EPIC:** Electronic Police Information Check provided by a third party such as Sterling Talent Solutions or Plan to Protect

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK OPTIONS	
INITIAL SCREENING	RE-CHECKS
Adults born on or LATER than Jan. 1, 1986 CPIC or EPIC	Adults born on or LATER than Jan. 1, 1986 CPIC or EPIC
Adults born BEFORE January 1, 1986 VSC (Vulnerable Sector Check done through local police services)	Adults born BEFORE January 1, 1986 <u>If initial VSC in on file:</u> CPIC or EPIC



MINISTRY COVENANT AGREEMENT

At the beginning of each ministry year (September), all adult volunteers (18+) in the programs previously mentioned are required to complete a digital Safe Church Ministry Covenant Agreement with the following information.

First Name:

Last Name:

Email Address:

Home Address:

Phone Number:

VOLUNTEER'S STATEMENT

By checking this box, I acknowledge that I have reviewed the Safe Church Policy or attended a Safe Church Information Session, understand the Safe Church Policy of Talbot Street Church and will adhere to its regulations and mandates.

I realize that an allegation of abuse could result in suspension of my service within the church and that all allegations of abuse within the vulnerable sector age groups will be reported by the church and its leaders to the appropriate authorities (Children's Aid Services, Police, and/or the Classical Abuse Response Team). In checking this box, I acknowledge my understanding and agreement with this policy.

Date: _____

APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY RESOURCES

IN CASE OF SPOUSAL ABUSE:

Anova: 24 Hour Crisis Support Line	519.642.3000 or 1.800.265.1576
London Abused Women's Centre	519.432.2204

IN CASE OF SEXUAL ASSAULT:

Anova: 24 hr Crisis and Support Line	519.642.3000 or 1.800.265.1576
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IN CASE OF CHILD ABUSE:

Children's Aid Society	519.455.9000
After Hours Emergencies Only	519.858.5998

IN CASE OF SEVERE EMOTIONAL DISTRESS:

London and District Distress Centre	519.667.6711
Kids Help Line	1.800.668.6868

APPENDIX B: MINISTRIES REQUIRING ABUSE PREVENTION SCREENING

All adult (18+) volunteers in the following ministries are required to complete a Vulnerable Sector Check every FIVE YEARS.

- Pastor(s)
- Church Staff
- Elder Board Members
- Care Team Personnel
- Nursery Volunteers
- WonderKids Teachers
- WonderKids Shepherds
- WonderClub Leaders
- Junior Youth Group Leaders
- Senior Youth Group Leaders
- Collective Kitchen Volunteers

**Sanctuary London, as an independent registered charity, has their own requirements and procedures for abuse prevention even though their ministry takes place in Talbot Street Church's facility.*