



“Abuse Prevention”

The Gathering Church Windsor

Children’s and Youth Ministries Program Training Manual:

For Volunteers working with Children Nursery thru Grade 12

Introduction:

Why do we need Abuse Prevention Training at our church?

As a church, we have a Scriptural obligation to our little ones:

“But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to stumble, it is better for him that a heavy millstone be hung around his neck and that he be drowned in the depth of the sea.” (Matthew 18:6 NAS)

The Church must uphold an Ethical and Spiritual mandate:

We understand that we should strive to be a manifestation of God’s love on earth. Little ones in our care will be respected and protected. We must take this responsibility seriously. Micah 6:8:

“He has shown you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

Micah suggests that the Lord requires three things of us.

To act justly - We work for justice, seeking to promote the truth and to speak out on behalf of the vulnerable.

To love mercy - Compassion needs to be the bedrock of all our work.

To walk humbly with our God – Our personal and professional lives need to be marked with humility and righteousness. We need to recognize our limitations, but with that do our best to act with integrity “

You step out of your home and lock the door after setting your alarm system. You unlock your car door and buckle up before heading to work. You password-protect your online information. You practice small acts of security on a daily basis without even thinking about them. But you must also consciously pass these practices to our most precious gifts from God; our children.

Justice Francis T. Murphy of the Supreme Court of Canada said:

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

Unfortunately, child abuse is a very real issue that must be addressed. We mention this primarily because a child’s well-being is everyone’s responsibility. We also want to address the issue because our workers must be protected as well should they ever face false accusations. Finally, we will discuss abuse because we care about Christ’s church and want to protect it from any potential scandal.

The distribution of this literature by no means suggests that we do not trust our workers. Rather, we want volunteers to see this as a statement of our standards of conduct. It is a statement that is in accordance with Provincial legislation which was designed to protect children from abuse. This legislation requires “every person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is or may be in need of protection must report promptly the belief and the information upon which it is based to the Children’s Aid Society”. [CFS 5.68(2)]

If you have any questions regarding these guidelines or would like more information or literature on this subject, please contact Lauri Robert.

Recruitment:

Recruitment will be approved by our pastoral and ministry leadership so that all necessary precautions are taken. Volunteers should meet the following criteria: possess a testimony of faith in Jesus Christ; have sufficient time to dedicate to the ministry; leaders (Directors, pastors), must be church members. Teachers and assistants must have regular church attendance for at least six (6) months prior to serving.

1. Ministry Volunteer Application Form

You must fill out a Ministry Volunteer Application Form which will be kept on file at least five years.

2. Reference Check

On the Ministry Application Form, two personal references will be required. Please do not refer to relatives. At least one reference must be from outside the church.

3. Interview

After completing the Ministry Volunteer Application, the volunteer may be interviewed by the appropriate staff member. The interview will allow the potential volunteer to ask any questions about children's or youth ministries and about our child protection procedures.

4. Conviction or Criminal History Check

Each volunteer 18 years of age and over, must obtain a Police Clearance with a Vulnerable Sector Search from their local Police Services. The cost of the Police Clearance will be the responsibility of the volunteer. Police Clearances are normally good for Five Years.

5. "Abuse Prevention" Training

The church will provide training for volunteers regarding child safety and child abuse prevention. Each approved volunteer will complete a Quiz indicative of this training and the record will be kept in the volunteer Placement File. This training is required yearly.

Policies: The Gathering Church Windsor has adopted an Abuse Prevention Policy with the intent to prevent harm (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, harassment or improper touching/discipline) to the children, youth and vulnerable adults participants in worship services and program/activities and to protect our staff and volunteers from false or wrongful allegations.

Established adult to children ratios comply both within the classroom and off-site trips and activities:

- One ministry personnel for every 3 infants (birth to 17 months)
- One ministry personnel for every 4-5 toddlers and preschoolers
- One ministry personnel for every 7-10 elementary-age children
- One ministry personnel for every 10-15 secondary-age youth

Child Protection Procedures:

Safety and security are primary concerns for the children and families who attend our church. At the same time, we are also concerned for the adults and teens that volunteer to minister to children. We need to work towards providing a safe environment for effective ministry to children. In light of this goal, we have developed these procedures for the protection of our children and our volunteers.

Classroom Staffing and Supervision Guidelines:

God directs us to behave in a holy way by being an example of obedience, respect, and honesty to those in our care. We want to provide a safe, loving classroom where children are comfortable and can easily learn.

1. Two Leaders

At least two leaders will be present in any room with children at all times. The only exception to this rule would be in the event of an emergency or if an adult must accompany a child to the washroom. This may mean certain grade levels will be combined. One of the team members must be an adult. An alternative to the two adult guideline is the open door policy.

2. Open Doors

When only one adult leader is in the room, the classroom door should remain open. Window doors let ministry supervisors look in without interrupting the class.

3. Family Protection

If immediate family members want to minister together in the same classroom, another volunteer who is not a family relation should be in the classroom as well.

4. Age Expectation

One adult volunteer age 18 and over is recommended. Volunteers who are between the ages of 12 and 17 must be paired with an adult. Teenage assistants will be screened but will not be required to provide a police clearance.

5. Supervisory Staff

Supervisors will visit the classroom regularly to ensure that the class is sufficiently staffed and supervised.

Child Security:

Each local church, regardless of size, must appreciate the need to maintain child security. When parents leave their children in our care, we are then responsible for their safety until the parents return. Children should attend the appropriate class for their age, grade, or developmental level.

1. Volunteer Identification & Registration

All volunteers working with children must wear their nametag or Gathering T-shirts which identifies them to parents and newcomers. All leaders and assistants are required to be in their classrooms 15 minutes prior to start time.

2. Receiving and Releasing of Children:

Visitors: All visitors are encouraged to complete a Kids Gathering Registration form (available at the check in desk). Once that is completed, the worker at the desk will create a hand-written label for each child. All visitors must be signed in on the Visitor section of the attendance sheet provided in each class. Please double check spelling for accurate records and encourage parents to leave their telephone number. This is important as we may have to contact them (in case of flu, outbreaks, chicken pox, etc).

LABELS FOR VISITORS:

Visitor Tags are provided at the check in desk. Is it important that the number on the visitor tag is listed beside the child's name on the attendance sheet. This will serve as another level of security if/when we need to use the paging system to get the attention of the parent/guardian, and if a child happens to remove their tag etc.

Registered Children: Nursery to Grade 5

Registered families will sign their children in with the worker(s) at the check in desk. Each child will receive a name tag which is to be worn during class/activity time. Parents/guardians will receive a parent label for each child as well. This is to be viewed as a "receipt" for check out purposes.

Class Lists: All classes are provided with an Attendance Book that contains a class list. Teachers must always have their Attendance Book with them, especially when leaving their classroom.

NOTE: Children should never be dropped off in a classroom without a teacher present. If only one teacher is present, the door must be left open.

Signing Children Out: All children can only be released into the care of the child's parent or authorized guardian. Teachers, we depend on your diligence with this policy as the safety of our children is of primary concern. All children must remain in the classroom until the parent or other authorized individual comes to pick them up. Parents/guardians must present the parent label to pick up each child. If they somehow lose/misplace their label, we require valid ID and signature to release the child to them. **NO EXCEPTIONS**

Specific procedures for each class is outlined in the attendance binders and summarized below:

Check in:

Kids Worker at check in desk opens Google Chrome on laptop.

Click "Breeze Check in" bookmark at top of the screen

Sign in **Username: kidsgathering Password: Gathering9**

Select Event = current date

Type child's last name

Locate appropriate name; click the check mark box on the right

*****Child and Parent labels will print IMMEDIATELY*****

Tear off labels in a downward motion

Child's label sticks to child's shirt (done by parent/guardian)

Parent label is used for check out at end of service

Kids Gathering workers should provide assistance where needed, especially with visitors. All visitors will be encouraged to fill out a Kids Gathering registration form.

Check out:

At the conclusion of the worship service, the parent/guardian comes to respective class door with their “receipt” label

The Parent/Guardian can then enter the Nursery, hand in their “receipt” tag to a Kids Gathering worker, and only then, can they receive their child and leave the nursery.

For the Toddler and Primary classes, parents/guardians are encouraged to remain outside of the class and form a line by the doorway/along the wall.

In an orderly fashion (maintained by Kids Gathering workers), the parent/guardian can present their “receipt” tag to Kids Gathering worker. Once that tag has been received by the worker, the parent/guardian can receive their child and leave the area.

Kids Gathering workers should provide assistance where needed, especially with visitors.

If additional assistance is required, please find the Associate Pastor or Kids Gathering Coordinator

Medical Alert/Allergy Postings: **Updated Medical Alert/Allergy Information will be located inside the attendance binders as well as posted on the class room wall.** Teachers must be familiar with the faces of each child with a medical alert issue -photos are helpful.

Washroom and Changing Guidelines:

1. Nursery

- a) Diaper changing stations must be visible by one other volunteer during a changing.
- b) Adult volunteers will be given diaper changing priority over teen volunteers.
- c) All parental requests regarding diaper changing must be respected.
- d) It is strongly advised that only female volunteers serve in the Nursery.

2. Preschool

Please be sure to advise parents to take their children to the washroom prior to service. Parents will be reminded of this procedure by announcement at the beginning of each new school year. Newcomers will be informed as well.

- a) The washroom door must be propped open when the adult volunteer takes a child to the washroom. The volunteer must wait for the child outside the door before leading the child back to class. If the child takes longer than needed, the volunteer may call the child's name.
- b) You cannot be alone with a child in an unsupervised washroom. Never go into the washroom cubicle with a child.
- c) If children need help in the washroom, an adult may enter the washroom cubicle to assist under the following circumstances:
 - (i) A second adult should be a witness.
 - (ii) The outside washroom door must be propped open and the adult must stand in the open cubicle doorway.

- (ii) It is suggested that only women help both girls and boys in the washrooms. It would be wise for men to avoid helping boys or girls in the washrooms in order to avoid false accusations.
- (iv) Diapers cannot be changed in the preschool classrooms. If the need arises, parents must be contacted.

3. Elementary

- a) Do not send children to the washroom alone. Please send an adult volunteer with them.
- b) The adult volunteer must accompany the child to the washroom and prop the door open. The volunteer should then stand outside the washroom and wait for the child. If the child takes longer than needed, the volunteer may call the child's name.
- c) You cannot be alone with a child in an unsupervised washroom. Never go into the washroom cubicle with a child. If extra assistance is required, please use the paging system to notify parents/guardians.

Kids Gathering Paging System Procedures

We use a three-digit paging system to notify parents/guardians if we require their attention or assistance. Each child will receive a randomly generated three-digit number code each Sunday. This code will be on the child's label as well as the parent/guardian label. The code will appear in RED on a small screen beside the large TV in the worship centre.

Plug keypad in to turn on

Display screen will say, **"Ready"**

Enter number on child's name tag and push, **"Enter"** (Orange button)

The number will appear on the display and the screen in the worship centre

When the parent/guardian comes to the room and shows their tag to address the issue, you will need to cancel the number.

Push **"Cancel"** (Red button) and then enter the child's number

Push **"Enter"** (Orange button) and within 3 seconds, the number will be removed from the display.

Multiple Numbers:

This paging system can display up to 20 different numbers. They will rotate, showing for 5 seconds each.

To display multiple numbers follow the above procedure for entering one number.

For any additional number, enter the number and push **"Enter"** (Orange button)

Note: You will have to cancel each number separately otherwise they will continue to display in the worship space

Multiple Keypads:

The Keypads are synced to the display screen via radio signal. They will not cancel each other out. For instance, you can enter 10 different numbers on each keypad and all 20 numbers will display on the screen in rotating fashion.

One keypad will be permanently fixed in the Nursery. The second keypad will be in The Gathering Place

Architectural Precautions:

1. Windows and Doors

- a) Parents and supervisors can easily see into classrooms through door windows. Sight lines through these windows should never be blocked.
- b) Plug covers must be used on all electrical outlets in the Nursery and Toddler rooms.

Health and Safety Guidelines:

1. Sick Children

A child who is sick and could infect other children and workers should not be accepted into the nursery or classroom. Some signs of illness might be:

- . unusual exhaustion or irritability,
- . coughing, sneezing,
- . runny nose and eyes,
- . fever, vomiting, diarrhea, inflamed mouth and throat.
- . any child with a known infectious disease should not be received into the nursery or a classroom.

Guidelines from the Windsor Board of Education will be used as a means of reference.

2. Medications

- a) Should a child require any medication, the parents should administer the medication. If a parent is not available, then it should be administered by the Associate Pastor or his designate (a list of medically trained individuals in our church is located by the ushers booth).
- b) Be sure medication is not left in the classroom. Inform parents that medication must be left with the ministry supervisor.
- c) In cases where Epi-pens and puffers are needed for allergies or asthma, arrangements should be made with written instructions from the parent, to The Associate Pastor.
- d) Volunteers can only apply baby powder and ointments during diaper changing if directed by the parents to do so.

Emergencies:

- a) All staff must be kept current with various emergency policies. A floor plan of the current site is attached to this manual for reference in case of evacuation or severe weather.
- b) Each classroom should have a first aid kit.
- c) An incident report must be filled out for all accidents. Please make a note of materials used and attached with incident report so it can be replenished.
- d) Any accident resulting in injury should be reported to the ministry leader in charge. Parents will then be notified. Do not attempt to handle anything serious or questionable on your own. Send someone for help.
- e) Incident reports can be found in the back of the Class Attendance binder.

Procedures for Dealing with Cuts or Injuries Involving Blood:

A compilation of guidelines on dealing with blood borne pathogens and infectious diseases is provided for your information.

- a) Separate the injured child from the other children. Isolate the area where any blood may have dropped on carpet, toys, etc. Parents should be contacted at this time.
- b) Check to ensure that no other children had contact with any of the blood from the cut or injury.
- c) Put on the nitrile gloves available in the first aid kit and bandage the injury, avoiding contact with mouth, ears and eyes.
- d) Carefully wipe up all blood and bloody bandages and remove to a secure waste removal receptacle. Clean up of blood or other potentially infectious materials should be followed with the use of household bleach diluted between 1:10 and 1:100 with water.
- e) Remove gloves with proper procedure so as not to touch any part of the glove that has been in contact with infectious material. Dispose of the nitrile gloves
- f) Hands should be washed with soap and warm water as soon as possible. In the event that there is no hand washing facility close by, a hand sanitizer may be used and soap and water as soon as possible afterwards.
- g) Child should only be returned to classroom if the injury is not severe otherwise the parent should take the child after the incident report has been completed and signed by the Associate Pastor

Proper Displays of Affection:

1. Appropriate Touch

Love can be easily communicated through touch such as a hug, but our volunteers need to remain professional and know where physical boundaries begin and end. It's important to consider differences in sexual development, cultural differences, family backgrounds, individual personalities, and special needs. Contact with children must be age and developmentally appropriate. We consider the following to be positive displays of God's love:

- a) Make eye contact with the child and listen with your eyes as well as your ears.
- b) Hold the child's hand when speaking, listening or walking him or her to an activity.
- c) When comforting or quieting is needed, put your arm around the child's shoulder.
- d) To show affirmation, pat a child on the head, hand, shoulder or back.
- e) If you need to redirect a child's behaviour, gently hold the child's shoulder, hand or chin to keep his or her attention.
- f) Hold a preschool child who is crying.
- g) All touch should be done in view of others.

2. Inappropriate Touch

The following types of touch must be avoided:

- a) Kissing or coaxing a child to kiss you.
- b) Extended hugging and tickling.
- c) Touching a child in any area that would be covered by a bathing suit except when assisting a child with toileting as outlined previously.

- d) Carrying older children or having them sit on your lap.
- e) Being alone with a child.
- f) Avoid prolonged physical contact.

DISCIPLINE AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT:

God's idea of discipline is detailed in Hebrews 12:7-11.

“Discipline is not something you do to a child; it is something you do for a child.

The word discipline does not mean punishment. It comes from the root word disciple, which means training that shapes character, behaviour and values. Rather than seeking to merely maintain control or keep children quiet, our goal in managing children's behaviour should be to shape their character in such a way that they will become disciples.”

1. Preventative Discipline

- a) Create a loving, caring environment.
- b) Arrange the atmosphere for children and for learning.
- c) To gain respect, you must give respect.
- d) Establish and communicate realistic expectations for the children.
- e) Be sure the activities that you provide are meaningful and age-appropriate.
- f) Be fair and consistent with all children.
- g) Be sure your focus is on positive actions.
- h) Be aware of children with special needs.

2. Remedial Discipline

- a) Try to deal with the problems individually.
- b) Explain to the child why the behaviour is unacceptable.
- c) Redirect the child to positive action.
- d) Explain the consequences of unacceptable behaviour by explaining the correct way to behave as well as the result of the wrong behaviour. Children may be given a 2 minute max time out or the ministry leader may be called. The ministry leader must be apprised of behavioral difficulties.
- e) Offer options that are acceptable to both you and the child.
- f) Notify parents/guardians via the paging system and explain the situation to them. If the unacceptable behaviour affects another child (hitting, biting, etc.), a behaviour incident report should be filled out by the workers and signed off by parents/guardians of the child(ren).

Note: Any concerns regarding a child's behavior will only be addressed to the parents through:

- The Associate Pastor or his designate

Classroom Rule Suggestions:

- a) One voice talking at a time.
- b) Quiet hands get answered.
- c) Use inside voices.
- d) Obey directions the first time.
- e) Use good manners.

- f) Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
- g) Respect each other.
- h) Be friendly.
- i) Visit the washroom before class begins

SPECIAL EVENTS AND OVERNIGHT POLICIES:

Field trips, special events and overnight activities are an occasional aspect of Children's and Youth Ministries. The following safety measures need to be taken with these activities.

Field Trips and Special Events

- a) Off-campus activities must be pre-approved by the church leadership. Parents must be given a week's notice about any special events.
- b) Written parental consent and medical release forms are needed for each child participating in special events. The leader must keep these forms during trips and events.
- c) All trips and outings should be supervised by a minimum of two approved, unrelated adult leaders, preferably male and female.
- d) Volunteer drivers for special events must have a valid driver's license and current auto insurance in agreement with the church insurance policy and have a minimum of five years driving experience. The number of occupants in the vehicle should not exceed the number of seat belts. Seat belts must be worn. Never leave any children unattended in the vehicle.
- e) We prefer that parents drop off and pick up their children for local special events. For out of town events, it is recommended that a commercial vehicle be used.
- f) Any one-on-one appointments with children should be conducted in a public place with parents dropping the children off and picking them up.

Overnight Events:

Church-sponsored overnight activities are acceptable as long as the following criteria are met:

- a) All overnight events must be pre-approved by the church leadership.
- b) Written parental consent and medical release forms are needed for each child participating in special events. The leader must keep these forms during trips and events.
- c) There must be a ratio of two leaders for every ten children for overnight events. Leaders should have an assigned group of children for whom they will be responsible during the overnight event.
- d) All trips and outings should be supervised by a minimum of two approved, unrelated adult leaders, preferably male and female.

Emergency Procedures

Emergency Procedures to be used in case of fire are as follows:

WORSHIP CENTRE EMERGENCY PLAN

Emergency Situation: (Fire Alarm, Severe Weather, General Evacuation Condition, Power Outage)

The ushers on duty, along with the Pastoral staff shall initiate a STOP & WAIT status of the congregation, and coordinate situational response. All ushers not on duty but in the congregation shall report to the rear of the sanctuary and put on their respective name tag.

The Preaching Pastor on duty shall designate two (2) ushers to go and investigate the emergency condition and report back to the Pastoral staff. Upon determining the actions required, Two (2) ushers shall report to the Children's Program to initiate the appropriate response (see below). One (1) usher will report to the nursery to initiate appropriate response as well. NO ONE is to leave the sanctuary without having the direction to do so. A designated usher will be instructed to call 911 to solicit emergency services (see next section).

FIRE ALARM OR GENERAL EVACUATION:

All persons in the worship centre are to leave the church in an orderly manner respective to the primary (or secondary) routes of the Fire Safety Plan (attached). All persons are to proceed to the designated meeting space (see site map) to permit emergency vehicle access and to retrieve children from their classes. Ushers will be the last to leave the building along with Pastoral staff. ALL ROOMS (including washrooms) shall be checked without endangering your life or the lives of others. If anyone is trapped, it must be reported. During evacuations children are to stay with their teachers for headcount accountability to ensure all persons are accounted for. During any evacuation, parents will be permitted to be reunited with their children outside, but must stay with the Children's Ministries program classes until headcount and attendance is verified.

SEVERE WEATHER (DAMAGING WINDS / TORNADO):

All persons in the sanctuary, and kids spaces are to move to inner enclosed areas of the church building away from windows. Children in the children's program are following the guidelines of that Program (attached). If parents wish to gather their children up, they may do so but remain in a designated safe area until the "ALL CLEAR" is given after the event. No outside, peripheral rooms are to be occupied. Ushers are to ensure all peripheral areas are not occupied. Where possible all utilities should be turned off. The following areas are considered to be shelter areas for the church (note all doors are to be closed to perimeter rooms):

- **Worship Centre**
- **Conference Room**

POWER OUTAGE:

The "STOP & WAIT" status of the congregation will be issued. The on duty preaching pastor will designate two (2) ushers and a member of the Deacons with general access keys to proceed to the Electrical Room to investigate the event. If

a breaker needs to be reset or if another issue is readily apparent (or not), and no one from the investigating team is qualified to perform the associated duty of restoring power, then an usher shall return to the congregation to report. The Pastoral Staff will request the services of someone in the congregation qualified to assess the condition. If an emergency condition is present, the above EVACUATION procedure is initiated. If the situation cannot be resolved without delay and no safety concerns are apparent, then the building will be vacated by normal means.

The church's emergency lighting system will activate in all areas (on map) in the event of power failure.

Emergency Services Access: (Paramedic, Police or Fire)

In the event emergency services are required, the ushers on duty are responsible for situational coordination. Calling 911 is the responsibility of the ushers, pastoral staff or Directors, Deacons or other medical professional on hand in the situation. Routing those services to the appropriate entrance is the responsibility of the ushers, to the driveway entrance, driveway fork, parking lot area, and at the entrances of the church, rear entrance, patio entrance, main entrance front, kids ministry entrance front. The entrance spotter is required to escort emergency services to the location of the need.

No driveways are to be blocked with parked vehicles in the event an emergency occurs. If you notice a vehicle is parked in a thoroughfare, notify the owner to move the vehicle to another location.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES EMERGENCY PLAN

FIRE:

- 1. Teachers and staff are to assure the quick and orderly exit of all students and attendees.***
- 2. The attached floor plan shows route for evacuation and training is provided for evacuation. An annual drill is conducted by the Deacons and/or staff.***
- 3. Teachers must always have their attendance book with them. Teachers and staff are to take classes to the designated meeting site in the parking area following the route on the site map. Classes are to line up according to age and grade and the students will line up behind their teacher. Once there, the teacher shall take attendance ensuring all students are accounted for. Report and unaccounted students to the pastor or leadership team member immediately.***

- 4. NO ONE shall re-enter the building until the “All Clear” signal has been given.***
- 5. No student or child shall be released to a parent without the parent signing for the child.***

TORNADO:

- 1. Teachers and staff are to move students and attendees from the classrooms with windows to the Worship Centre.***
- 2. Teachers must always have their attendance book with them.***
- 3. Once relocated, the teacher shall take attendance.***
- 4. Remain in relocation area until “ALL CLEAR: is given.***
- 5. No student or child shall be released to a parent without the parent signing for the child. Parent release forms will be provided.***

POWER OUTAGE:

- 1. Remain in classrooms and await direction from supervisory staff. Many times, the power will immediately return. All class rooms and hallways are equipped with batter operated emergency lighting packs and flashlights are also provided in each kid’s room.***
- 2. If it seems to be an extended outage, upon notice from supervisory staff, teachers and staff are to begin releasing students to their parent/guardian. Teachers must always have their attendance book with them.***
- 3. Any class that has had to relocate, teachers and nursery workers are required to take attendance. Report any unaccounted students to the pastor immediately.***
- 4. Parents in the main service will be advised of the evacuation location and will be released to pick up their children.***
- 5. No student or child shall be released to a parent without the parent signing the child out.***

Important information about Child Abuse

“Child abuse refers to an act committed by a parent, caregiver, or a person in a position of trust which is not accidental and which harms or threatens to harm a child’s physical or mental health, or a child’s welfare.”

Abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional, or involving neglect.

Physical Abuse

Involves a physical force or action that results, or could result, in an injury to a child. It is different than what is considered reasonable discipline.

Sexual Abuse

When a child is used for the sexual gratification of an adult or older child. This can take many different forms.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is a pattern of behaviour that attacks a child’s emotional development and sense of self worth.

Neglect

Failure to meet a child’s basic need for food, clothing, shelter, sleep, medical attention, education, and protection from harm.

What to do when abuse is suspected:

1. Report any suspicion of abuse to a Pastor.
 - a. In Canada the Child and Family Services Act states that anyone with a reasonable suspicion of child abuse has a legal responsibility to report the suspicion.
 - b. Observable signs of abuse have to be reported within 24 hours of receiving a report of abuse.
2. Do not ask the potential victim any questions, or contact the parties involved to complete any report forms. It is best left to professionals to prevent any influencing of the parties or victim involved.
3. Protect the confidentiality and dignity of the victim and the accused.

Abuse is a very serious allegation, and it needs to be approached with caution.

Additional Kids Gathering Information

First-Aid Kit Locations:

We have four First-Aid kits. One in each class room. They are located either in or on the white cabinets. The First-Aid kit in the Nursery is located in the brown change table.

When are Kids Gathering classrooms open?

All Kids Gathering rooms will be supervised and ready to receive children at 9:45am. No child should be left unsupervised by a parent/guardian/adult before this time.

Classroom Curriculum:

1. Nursery – The Nursery has no specific curriculum at this time. Workers can play optional Veggie Tales videos but are encouraged to interact with the infants as much as possible. Workers should sing songs, read stories, and play with the infants.
2. Toddler – The Gathering has chosen to use the LifeKids curriculum which can be accessed from www.lifekids.tv This curriculum is video-based and each session is roughly 15 minutes long. Each session contains a song or two, a “Bible Adventure” with recurring characters, and a memory verse to learn. The DVD for the class should be either in the DVD player or in a small basket on the table right beside the large cabinet. For more information, please speak to Becky Dagley
3. Primary – The Gathering uses the Gospel Project curriculum by *Lifeway*. It is not video-based but occasionally will have a short video or game to add to the lesson. For more information, visit www.gospelproject.com/kids or speak to Pastor Phil.

Partnering with Parents:

At The Gathering, we want to come alongside parents to support them as they seek to raise godly children. Parents/guardians should be notified of any and all potential changes within the Kids Gathering. As a worker, make a point of not just getting to know the children, but their parents as well. If a parent/guardian desires to observe the lesson in the Toddler or Primary room, they are welcome to do so. Feel free to follow up with them after the class and seek to answer any questions they might have.

While parents are welcome to observe a lesson, we also want to maintain a teaching environment with minimal distractions. Parents/guardians are not permitted to open classroom doors simply to ‘check’ on their child during the lesson. Workers should keep classroom doors closed during a lesson in order to maximize safety.

Worker Huddle Information:

Every Sunday at 9:35am, the scheduled workers for that day will gather in the SK to Grade 2 room with either the Kids Gathering Coordinator or a Pastoral staff member for a “huddle” time. The huddle is used to go over any last minute details, answer questions, remind workers of why we serve, and to pray for each other. We also review our goals and responsibilities as workers in the Kids Gathering.

Goals: Ensure Safety, Teach the Bible, Have fun

Responsibilities:

Show Love – smile, remember names, be patient

Show Passion – serve/teach with enthusiasm

Show Jesus – saturate everything with the gospel

Point of Contact Information:

In the event that you require additional assistance or have a question that this manual doesn’t address, please speak to a Point of Contact. Our current Point of Contact individuals are: Pastor Phil – Staff member over Kids Gathering, and Mariette Prinsloo – Church Admin Assistant.

COVID-19 PROCEDURES

We have all been impacted by the pandemic and we must all do our part to act responsibly and keep safety a top priority for everyone who attends our church. We are hoping to reopen the Kids Gathering on Sunday, January 10.

We will only offer classes from age 2 up to grade 2 at the start. Lord willing, we will be able to return to our full Kids Gathering soon.

- All workers will be required to sanitize their hands as they enter the building.
- All workers will be required to wear masks while serving
- Since we will only offer classes for ages 2 to grade 2 at the start, we will not require children those ages to wear a mask. We will respect parent/guardian decisions on this matter.
- All children will be required to sanitize their hands as they enter the building

Classroom Limits

Starting January 10, we will aim to offer three classes on Sunday mornings: Toddler (Age 2-3), JK-SK, and Grade 1-2. We recognize that enforcing physical distancing for these young ages will be incredibly challenging. In light of this reality, parents accept the potential risk of having their children attend the classes. We will also have a strict limit of how many children can be in a specific class on Sunday.

Toddler room: max number of children – 8

JK-SK room: max number of children – 12

Grade 1-2 room: max number of children – 12

Registration

Parents will be required to register their children online for the classes. A link to the registration will be on our church website – www.thegatheringwindsor.com

If a family does not register online in advance and arrives on a Sunday morning and space is available in a class, their children may check in and join. If the classes are full, they will be encouraged to sit with their parents in the Worship Centre.

Temperature Checks

We have two thermometers on site and will have them at the Kids check in desk if needed. As of today, we will not require a mandatory temperature check for each child. We will ask the parents/guardians to check their child's temperature at home prior to coming to our building as part of their home screening process. All safety information will be emailed to parents and will be posted on our website.