

# Abuse Prevention Manual 2019

(Updated July 2019)

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## 1. Introduction and Biblical Rational

In the Old and New Testaments, we see that God is concerned about the well-being of all people. More so, He reveals that He is particularly concerned about those who are vulnerable to mistreatment: the poor, the oppressed, the foreigner, the weak, the orphaned, and the widowed. God vows to be a defender of their cause and to love them.

Our attitude to the vulnerable, as towards all mankind, ought to be one defined by love. In 1 Corinthians 13 we learn what love is, "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres" (NIV).

As a community, we find God's call to love inconsistent with all forms of abusive behaviour – whether that abusive behaviour is physical, sexual, emotional, spiritual, neglectful, or harassing.

We at Heritage Park Alliance Church are committed to fostering a loving environment free from abuse in all its forms. We are committed to being deeply concerned about the wellbeing of all mankind in the same fashion and with the same passion as the God who creates, defends, and loves people.

## 2. Statement of Policy

It is the policy of Heritage Park Alliance Church to provide a consistently safe environment for children, youth and vulnerable adults and to maintain a zero tolerance for any abuse,

harassment or neglect perpetrated by a church employee, officer, volunteer, member or adherent.

A **vulnerable adult** is any adult who by virtue of physical or mental disability, age, or mental or emotional state may be susceptible to one or more types of abuse as defined below.

The purposes of this policy is to:

- Prevent harm to the children, youth and vulnerable adults in our programs.
- To protect our staff and volunteers from false or wrongful allegations.

### **3. Definitions of Abuse**

#### **Physical Abuse**

“Physical abuse is any deliberate physical force or action, by a parent or caregiver, which results, or could result, in injury to a child. It can include bruising, cuts, punching, slapping, beating, shaking, burning, biting or throwing a child. Using belts, sticks or other objects to punish a child can cause serious harm and is also considered abuse.”<sup>1</sup>

There is a strict zero-tolerance policy for any of the above-mentioned behaviours or behaviour of its kind. For further clarity, Heritage Park Alliance Church applies the same definition and zero-tolerance policy to interactions with youth and vulnerable adults.

#### **Sexual Abuse**

“Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used for the sexual gratification of an adult or an older child. The child may co-operate because he or she wants to please the adult or out of fear. It includes sexual intercourse, exposing a child’s private areas, indecent phone calls, fondling for sexual purposes, watching a child undress for sexual pleasure, and allowing/forcing a child to look at or perform in pornographic pictures or videos, or engage in prostitution”.<sup>2</sup>

In the context of our church there is a zero-tolerance policy for any of the above-mentioned behaviours with either a child, a youth or a vulnerable adult in any of our programs.

#### **Emotional Abuse**

“Emotional abuse is a pattern of behaviour that attacks a child’s emotional development and sense of self-worth. It includes excessive, aggressive or unreasonable demands that place expectations on a child beyond his or her capacity. Emotional abuse includes constantly criticizing, teasing, belittling, insulting, rejecting, ignoring or isolating the child. It may also include exposure to domestic violence.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies, 2019, [www.oacas.org](http://www.oacas.org).

<sup>2</sup> Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies, 2019, [www.oacas.org](http://www.oacas.org).

<sup>3</sup> Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies, 2019, [www.oacas.org](http://www.oacas.org).

In the context of our church we have a zero-tolerance policy for any of the behaviours mentioned above, whether with a child, a youth or a vulnerable adult. Instead, we shall “encourage one another and build each other up” (1 Thessalonians 5:11a) recognizing the God-given value of every individual.

### **Child Neglect**

“Neglect occurs when a caregiver fails to provide basic needs such as adequate food, sleep, safety, education, clothing or medical treatment. It also includes leaving a child alone or failing to provide adequate supervision. If the caregiver is unable to provide the child with basic needs due to financial inability, it is not considered neglect, unless relief has been offered and refused.”<sup>4</sup>

In the context of our church we must ensure that adequate supervision by an appropriate caregiver is being maintained any time that a child, youth or vulnerable adult is within our care.

### **Spiritual Abuse**

In the context of our church, Spiritual Abuse refers to the use of Spiritual Authority to manipulate, harass, or humiliate an individual for the purpose of achieving personal gain or personal ideological goals not held by Heritage Park Alliance Church or its governing denomination. Such abuses, which may include, but are not limited to, using a position of Spiritual Authority to coerce someone into a sexual act, will not be tolerated.

### **Harassment**

“Harassment is a form of discrimination. It includes any unwanted physical or verbal behaviour that offends or humiliates you. Generally, harassment is a behaviour that persists over time. Serious one-time incidents can also sometimes be considered harassment.”<sup>5</sup>

In the context of the church there is a zero-tolerance policy for any of the above-mentioned behaviours directed toward workers, members, or adherents of the church of any age.

### **Improper Touching/Discipline**

In the context of the church the following shall be seen as “Improper Touch”:

- Kissing a child or coaxing a child to kiss you
- Engaging in extended hugging and/or tickling (hugging from the side is the preferred method)
- Touching a child in any area covered by a bathing suit (except in cases of diapering or assisting preschoolers while adhering to the washroom policies outlined in Section 8.1 of this document)
- Carrying older children or allowing them to sit in an adult’s lap

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<sup>4</sup> Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies, 2019, [www.oacas.org](http://www.oacas.org).

<sup>5</sup> Canadian Human Rights Commission, 2019, [chrc-ccdp.gc.ca](http://chrc-ccdp.gc.ca).

- Holding a child's face when disciplining them
- Touching another individual in a manner that is known to or ought to be recognized as being unwelcome.

#### **4. Reporting Structure**

##### **Hearing of an Allegation or Suspicion of Abuse**

In order to protect our children, youth, and vulnerable adults, all allegations or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and reported to the proper authorities. Reporting will be done in conjunction with the ministry head and/or Lead Pastor.

Upon hearing of a potential abuse or allegation of abuse to a child, youth, or vulnerable adult, **the volunteer** in conjunction with the ministry leader will complete a Suspected Abuse Report Form (Appendix 1) and document all the pertinent information. The victim should not be asked any leading questions nor should the accused or any other parties be contacted at the time of completing the Suspected Abuse Report Form. All forms will be kept permanently unless directed otherwise by legal counsel.

##### **Reporting an Allegation or Suspicion of Abuse**

Once the Suspected Abuse Report Form is complete, the ministry leader, in conjunction with the volunteer, is required to report the matter to the Department of Social Services or the police. Reporting must be done orally by telephone or in person.

Anyone who knowingly fails to report in these circumstances is in violation of the law and may be found to have committed an offence and may be subject to disciplinary action. The Lead Pastor or designate must notify the church's insurance provider and seek legal counsel upon hearing of a suspected case of abuse.

The church will notify and work in conjunction with the C&MA leadership in any and all allegations or suspicions of abuse that may have happened in the context of church ministry. If the suspected abuse happened in the context of church ministry, a member of church leadership must notify the parents or caregivers of the victim unless otherwise prevented by legal authority.

##### **Assessing and Investigating an Allegation or Suspicion of Abuse**

No persons, including church leadership, are to assume the function of assessing, substantiating, or investigating the need for intervention or interpretation of suspected child abuse.

The church and its individuals must avoid interfering once a report of child abuse has been filed with the Department of Social Services or the police. The church should offer assistance in helping and supporting the investigation and the hurting child, youth, or vulnerable adult and their family or caregivers. The church should continue frequent communication and support with those who are suspected or guilty of child abuse as long as those persons exhibit a

willingness to listen, change and look to Christ for help. This does not exclude the possibility for hurting individuals from receiving professional counseling.

## **5. Response Structure**

### **Spiritual Response and Counsel for the Victim**

The suspected victim will be treated with dignity and respect. During this process, involved volunteers and staff will be committed to prayer and strive to remain calm and hopeful.

Confidentiality of the suspected victim must be maintained at all times. Details of the suspected abuse will not be shared except as people are drawn into the response and investigation. Church leadership will offer individual care for the abuse victim and their family or caregivers and determine if professional assistance is needed.

### **Biblical Response and Discipline for the Accused or Convicted**

The accused will be treated with dignity and respect. If the accused is paid staff, that person will be temporarily relieved of his or her duties until the investigation is completed.

Church leadership will exercise and practice church discipline as outlined in Matthew 18 and as stipulated by C&MA guidelines.

Church leadership will offer individual care for the accused and their family or caregivers and determine if professional assistance is needed.

Anyone accused of abuse to children, youth, or vulnerable adults will be prohibited from having access to this group until they are cleared of any and all charges. Clear written guidelines will be provided to the individual with restricted activities and areas of the church that they are not permitted to use.

Anyone convicted of abuse will be prohibited from having access to children, youth, or vulnerable adults. Church leadership may designate an individual to be responsible for and informed whenever the convicted person attends church activities and to accompany the convicted person while on church property. Clear written guidelines will be provided to the individual with restricted activities and areas of the church that the accused is not permitted to use.

### **Media Relations**

A spokesperson will be designated to speak on behalf of the church to the media and to the public in relation to the suspected child abuse case. All inquiries will be directed to this person and comments should not be made by anyone else unless they are given permission to do so. Public statements must be well prepared and presented under the guidance of legal counsel.

## **Ongoing Investigations**

Full cooperation will be given by all parties to civil authorities under the guidelines of legal counsel. At no time should church leadership or its individuals either engage in denial, minimization or blame, or admit responsibility, which could prejudice the case or cause increased liability to the church.

A confidential follow-up report with conclusions and action taken must be documented following a report of the abuse which should be kept permanently in a confidential file. Departments will inform others of any ongoing investigation strictly on a need-to-know basis.

## **6. Screening Procedures**

Volunteers and staff working directly with children, youth, or vulnerable adults shall meet the following requirements:

- Attend Heritage Park Alliance Church or another church of the C&MA for at least six months
- Teachers and primary leaders must either be a member or be willing to work toward membership.

In the case that a volunteer attends another church (and therefore will not become a member at HPAC), a pastoral reference will be required from the church they attend along with said volunteer's agreement to HPAC's Statement of Faith and Lifestyle Agreement & Morality Standard. Such exceptions will be made at the discretion of the pastoral staff.

In the case that a volunteer wishes to serve in a leadership capacity at HPAC but is not old enough to be eligible for membership, the volunteer will be required to show written agreement to HPAC's Statement of Faith and Lifestyle Agreement & Morality Standard. Such exceptions will be made at the discretion of the pastoral staff.

- Support in good conscience the leadership, doctrine, and by-laws of Heritage Park Alliance Church
- Seek to live a lifestyle that is consistent with Biblical values and standards for leaders as taught in 1 Timothy 3:1-10 as well as the rest of scripture.
- Submit a volunteer application for the prospective ministry (if applicable)
- If unknown by the ministry leader, submit three references from non-family members and complete an interview with the ministry leader
- Have approval from the ministry leader
- Complete and submit a Criminal Record Check if 18 years or older (CPIC and VSV) that is clear of criminal offence that is violent or sexual in nature. Heritage Park will reimburse the cost of police checks requested on our behalf.

Police checks are considered current (valid) for 5 years at which time a new check will be required.

- Complete the appropriate Abuse Prevention training.
- Certain leadership positions require compliance with the Lifestyle Agreement & Morality Standard (LAMS).

## **7. Operational & Emergency Procedures and Facility Modifications**

### **Operational Procedures**

With respect to ministries, groups or an event offering childcare or youth supervision at Heritage Park Alliance Church:<sup>6</sup>

- Any volunteer working with children must be screened and complete training to the standard set out for Children's Ministry workers in this policy.
- Any volunteer working with youth must be screened and complete training to the same standard set out for Youth Ministry workers in this policy.

### **Emergency Procedures**

Personal Injuries:

- First Aid kits are available in multiple locations within the church, including:
  - First Aid Room
  - Welcome Desk
  - Youth Room
  - Children's Ministries (Resource Room)
  - Backstage
- The staff member or volunteer should not attempt to handle any injury beyond what they have been trained for. Seek assistance.
- An incident report must be filled out for all accidents resulting in injury.
  - The volunteer should seek out a senior church staff member, obtain an incident report form from them and return the completed form to them.
- Any injuries involving blood shall be handled according to the following steps:
  - Separate the injured party from others. Isolate the area where any blood may have dropped on flooring, tables, toys, etc. The Pastor/Director or designate shall be notified.
  - To prevent bodily contact with blood, put on medical gloves available from the first aid kit and bandage the injury. Avoid contact with your mouth, ears and eyes.
  - Carefully wipe up all blood and bloody bandages and remove to a secure waste removal receptacle along with gloves.
  - Wash hands carefully with sterilizing soap.

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<sup>6</sup> This standard does not apply in the case where the facility has been rented to an independent third party for a private event not sponsored by or administered by Heritage Alliance Church.

## **Fire, Tornado, Dangerous Intruder, and Power Outage:**

### **Fire:**

- If the Fire alarm sounds, instruct and assist all attendees at your ministry to exit the building by the nearest safe exit and proceed to the common meeting area, which is the south-east parking lot (the corner of Sixth Concession and Alliance St.)
- Fire evacuation guides are posted in several locations throughout the building.
- The muster station is in the south-east parking lot (the corner of Sixth Concession and Alliance St.). Teachers and leaders will evacuate children and youth to the muster station where parents can meet them.

### **Tornado:**

- Instruct and assist all ministry attendees to move away from outside with windows into interior rooms or hallways.
- Remain in relocation area until “All Clear” is given.

### **Dangerous Intruder:**

- Volunteers and staff are to move attendees away from the doors and windows to interior corners or closets.
- Once relocated, instruct everyone to remain as quiet as possible.
- Remain in relocation area until “All Clear” is given.

### **Power Outage:**

- In the event of a power outage, the church has a back-up generator which powers adequate emergency lighting for all public areas of the building. Remain with your attendees and await direction from supervisory or facilities staff.
- In the event of an extended outage, certain ministry activities may need to be cancelled.
- Parents can pick up their children in the Centre and their youth in the Youth Centre.

## **Facility Modifications**

Our facility is intentionally designed with glass panels in the doors to all classrooms, meeting rooms and offices. All staff and volunteers should consciously avoid situations which put them alone with a child, youth, or vulnerable adult in a remote location not in public view.

## **8. Specific Operational Procedures**

**Section 8.1 Children’s Ministries**

**Section 8.2 Youth Ministries**

**Section 8.3 Underage Mentorship Operational Procedures**

## 8.1 Children's Ministries Operational Procedures

### Ratios:

The following established adult to children ratios must be maintained within the classroom and on off-site trips:

- 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

### Rules Applying to the Supervision of all Children:

- Two Leaders – Our best practice will be to have two leaders in any room with children. In cases where this is not possible, refer to the *Open Door Procedure*.
- Open Door Procedure – When only one adult leader is in the room, the classroom door must remain open. Window doors let ministry supervisors look in without interrupting the class.
- Family Protection – If immediate family members want to minister together in the same classroom, they will be counted as one volunteer for the purpose of child/teacher ratios. Refer to the *Open Door Procedure* if they are the only people in the room.
- Age Expectation – One adult volunteer age 18 or over is recommended.
  - Volunteers who are between the ages of 12 and 17 must be paired with an adult.
  - Teenage assistants (under the age of 18) will be screened but will not be required to provide a police clearance.
- Supervisors will visit the classroom regularly to ensure that the class is sufficiently staffed, and the above policies maintained.

### Check-in and Check-out Procedures:

- All families, including visitors, are required to check-in through the automated attendance system (new families can be checked in at the registration desk)
  - Checked-in children will receive a nametag and alphanumeric code. Children are to wear this nametag at all times.
  - Parents or guardians will receive a matching alphanumeric code. Leaders will confirm that children are picked up by a parent or guardian with the matching code
  - Class lists are accessible through the classroom tablet (via the automated attendance software). Teachers should always have the class list with them and make sure it is accurate
  - Teachers will sign children out on the tablet as they are picked up
- In the absence of the automated attendance system a manual sign-in and sign-out procedure will be used
- The Kid's Camp program will use a manual sign in/out procedure requiring parents or guardians to sign their child(ren) in and out.

**Identification:**

- All volunteers working with children must wear their HPAC nametag, which identifies them to parents and newcomers.
- All children shall also wear nametags.
- Nametags are used to indicate health concerns or food allergies.
  - A 140-character description can be found on the nametag
- Medical Alert Postings are posted in each classroom. The child's picture and details of pertinent health concerns are listed on each poster.

**Washroom and Changing Guidelines:**

- Nursery – Diaper changing stations must be visible by one other volunteer during a changing. All parental requests regarding diaper changing should be respected.
- Preschool – Please be sure to advise parents to take their children to the washroom prior to programming (signs shall be posted to remind all families and inform newcomers).
- Diapers shall not be changed in the preschool classrooms, if the need arises, parents must be contacted.
- The washroom door must be propped open when the volunteer takes a child to the washroom. The volunteer must wait for the child outside the door before leading the child back to class. The volunteer shall not be alone with a child in an unsupervised washroom. A volunteer may enter the washroom cubicle to assist a child if all of the following conditions are met:
  - A second adult is a witness
  - The outside washroom door is propped open and the adult is standing in the open cubicle doorway
- Elementary – Do not send children to the washroom alone, a volunteer shall go with them but need not enter the washroom.
  - If the child needs assistance a volunteer may enter the washroom cubicle with a child if all of the following conditions are met:
    - A second adult is a witness
    - The outside washroom door is propped open and the adult is standing in the open cubicle doorway

**Displays of Affection:**

Love can be easily communicated through physical touching 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 love:

- Making eye contact with the child and listening with your eyes as well as your ears
- Holding the child's hand when speaking, listening or walking them to an activity
- When comforting or quieting is needed, the volunteer may place their arm around the child's shoulder
- To show affirmation, pat a child on the head, hand or shoulder gently

- If you need to redirect a child's behaviour gently hold the child's shoulder, hand or chin to keep their attention
- It is permissible to hold a preschool child who is crying
- All touch should be done in view of others
  
- The following we consider inappropriate touch:
  - Kissing or coaxing a child to kiss you
  - Extended hugging and/or tickling
  - Touching a child in any area that would be covered by a bathing suit except when assisting a child with toileting as outlined previously
  - Carrying an older child or having them sit on your lap
  - Prolonged physical contact.

**Discipline and Classroom Management:**

God's idea of discipline is detailed in Hebrew 12:7-11. The word 'discipline' should not be synonymous with 'punishment'; rather its origin from the root word disciple implies the correct meaning: training that molds character, behaviour, and values. Rather than seeking to merely maintain control or keep children quiet, our goal in managing children's behaviour must be to shape their character in such a way that they will become disciples.

Preventative Discipline shall be used prior to inappropriate behaviour. The following actions are encouraged:

- Create a loving, caring environment
- Arrange the atmosphere for children and for learning
- Give respect
- Establish and communicate realistic expectations for the children
- Be sure the activities provided are meaningful and age- appropriate
- Be fair and consistent
- Be sure to focus on positive actions
- Be aware of children with special needs.

Remedial Discipline shall be used after the child exhibits inappropriate behaviour. The following actions may be taken:

- Deal with the problems individually
- Explain to the child why the behaviour is unacceptable
- Redirect the child to positive action
- Explain the consequences of unacceptable behaviour. Children may be given a 2-minute time out or the ministry leader may be summoned
- Any concerns regarding a child's behaviour shall only be addressed to the parents through the Pastor/Director of Children's Ministries or the Camp Director

**Architectural Precautions:**

- Windows and Doors – Parents and supervisors can easily see into the classrooms through door windows. Sight lines through these windows shall not be blocked.

- Plug covers must be used on all electrical outlets

#### **Health and Safety Guidelines:**

- 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 may be: unusual exhaustion or irritability, coughing, sneezing, runny nose and eyes, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, inflamed mouth or throat, or a known infectious disease.
- Medications – Should a child require any medication; the parents should administer the medication. The Pastor/Director of Children’s Ministries or Kids’ Camp should administer the medication if a parent is not available
- Be sure medication is not left in the classroom. Inform parents that medication must be left with the Pastor/Director of Children’s Ministries or Kids’ Camp.
- 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 Pastor/Director of Children’s Ministries or Kids’ Camp.
- Volunteers may apply baby powder and ointments during diaper changing if directed by the parents to do so.

#### **Emergencies:**

- All staff shall be kept current with various emergency policies (yearly review)
- One first aid kit is available in the Children’s Ministries Resource Room in the cupboard labeled emergency kit. The other first aid kit is available on the table outside the Large Group space.
- An incident report must be filled out for all accidents resulting in injury. The Pastor/Director of Children’s Ministries or Kids’ Camp shall inform parents. No attempt shall be made to handle anything more serious than the volunteer is trained for, seek assistance. Please make a note of materials used so they may be replenished.
- Incident reports can be received from the Pastor/Director of Children’s Ministries or the appointed Supervisor
- Any injuries involving blood shall be handled according to the following steps:
  - Separate the injured party from others. Isolate the area where any blood may have dropped on flooring, tables, toys, etc. The Pastor/Director or designate shall be notified.
  - To prevent bodily contact with blood, put on medical gloves available from the first aid kit and bandage the injury. Avoid contact with your mouth, ears and eyes.
  - Carefully wipe up all blood and bloody bandages and remove to a secure waste removal receptacle along with gloves.
  - Wash hands carefully with sterilizing soap.

#### **Fire, Tornado, Dangerous Intruder, or Power Outage:**

##### **Fire:**

- Teachers and staff are to assure the quick and orderly exit of all students and attendees.

- There are two emergency exits in Children’s Ministries. Refer to the map in your classroom for the exits nearest your class.
- Teachers must always have their tablet with them. Teachers and staff are to take classes to the muster station (south-east parking lot at the corner of Alliance St. and Sixth Concession). Classes are to line up according to the age/grade and behind the teacher.
- Once there, the teacher shall take attendance ensuring all students are accounted for. Report any unaccounted students to any leadership immediately.
- No one shall re-enter the building until the “All Clear” signal has been given.
- No student or child shall be released to a parent without the parent providing the matching alpha numeric code.

#### Tornado:

- Teachers and staff are to move students and attendees away from the outside classrooms with windows to interior classrooms or hallways.
- Teachers must always have their tablet with them.
- Once relocated, the teacher shall take attendance.
- Remain in relocation area until “All Clear” is given.
- No students or child shall be released to a parent without the parents providing the matching alpha numeric code.

#### Dangerous Intruder:

- Teachers and staff are to move students and attendees away from the doors and windows to interior corners or closets.
- Teachers must always have their tablet with them.
- Once relocated, the teacher shall take attendance and encourage the kids to remain as quiet as possible.
- Remain in relocation area until “All Clear” is given.
- No students or child shall be released to a parent without the parents providing the matching alpha numeric code.

#### Power Outage:

- Teachers and children shall remain in the classrooms and await direction from supervisory staff. Many times, the power will immediately return as we have a back-up generator. Flashlights and emergency lighting will be used.
- If an extended outage, upon notice from supervisory staff, teachers and staff are to move students and attendees to the Centre. Teachers must have their tablet with them.
- Any class that has had to relocate, teachers and nursery workers are required to take attendance. Report any unaccounted children to the Pastor/Director immediately.
- Parents in the main service will be advised of the evacuation location and will be released to pick up their children.
- No students or child shall be released to a parent without the parents providing the matching alpha numeric code.

## 8.2 Student Ministries Operational Procedures

### **Electronically Communicating with Students**

Leaders are asked to use discretion when communicating electronically with students. It is best to try to avoid private chat or texting, unless communicating information about HPAC programming. Do not delete your correspondence with a student. Using social media designed to conceal communication with a student (e.g Snapchat) is prohibited.

### **Body Exposure**

Staff and leaders are not to expose body parts normally covered by a bathing suit to a student.

### **Discipline**

Student behaviour resulting in the need for discipline is always handled between the Pastor of Student and Young Adult ministries and the parents or legal guardians. We never use or advise the use of corporal punishment.

### **Documentation**

All leaders (age 18 and older) are required to have a current criminal record check on file, which is to be renewed every five years.

### **Incident Reporting**

Leaders must immediately report all instances where a student has been physically hurt or where there is suspicion of abuse (as defined above) to the Pastor of Student and Young Adult Ministries. In instances where a student has been hurt an incident report form will be filled out and kept on file. In instances where there is suspicion of abuse please see the section entitled **Reporting Structure (p.4)** for our abuse reporting procedures.

### **Internal Audits of Staff and Leaders**

The Board of Elders of Heritage Park Alliance Church will appoint an individual or a team to conduct an annual audit of our abuse prevention implementation. Records of these audits will be kept on file.

### **Internet Access**

Leaders are not to provide unsupervised internet access to students.

### **Meeting with Students Outside of Regular Programming**

Meetings with students outside of regular programming will be handled on a case by case basis. In every situation, approval must be obtained from the Pastor of Students prior to making arrangements or having a discussion with the student(s).

If the meeting involves **multiple students** it must:

- Receive approval from the Pastor of Students
- Inform a parent or legal guardian

- Be logged by the Student Ministry Office
- Be overseen by at least two approved leaders
- At least one leader must be the same gender as the students
- Finish no later than 10 pm unless given special permission

If the meeting involves a **single student or a single leader** it must:

- Receive approval the Pastor of Students
- Inform a parent or legal guardian **and** receive written consent
- Be logged by the Student Ministry Office
- Occur in a public place
- Be between a leader and student of the same gender
- Finish no later than 10 pm unless given special permission

### **Overnight Events**

All overnight events must meet the following criteria:

- Separate sleeping areas for males and females.
- A single leader never sleeps alone with a single student
- Leaders and students have their own bedding (pillow, sleeping bag, sheets)
- Written Consent is obtained from a parent or legal guardian

### **Photography / Video**

Leaders and parents are not to capture a student's image on electronic devices, unless authorized by the Student Ministry Office.

### **Ratios of Leaders to Students**

On campus we will provide 1 leader to every 12 students

Off campus we will provide 1 leader to every 10 students

Overnight we will provide 1 leader to every 8 students

### **Transportation of Students**

Transportation of students must meet the following criteria (extreme medical emergency being the only exception, with reporting both before and after the event):

- Volunteer driver must have approval from the Student Ministry office
- Volunteer driver must be on an approved list which will require that:
  - The driver is at least 21 years old and has five years of driving experience
  - The driver annually submits their license and five-year abstract
  - The driver signs the document *Understanding of Safe Driving* (Appendix 2)
- Volunteer driver uses a vehicle that appears to be well maintained
- One of the following situations occur:
  - There are at least two leaders in the vehicle (one same gender as students)
  - There are at least two students in the vehicle the same gender as the leader
  - If there is only one student being transported by a single leader, a transportation log must be made in the Student Ministry Office. Under no circumstances will a

leader transport students of the opposite gender unless a leader of the same gender is present.

**Underage Leaders and Staff**

Leaders or staff under 18 years old serve under the supervision and direction of leaders 18 years and older as well as the Pastor of Student Ministries.

**Facility Modifications**

Our facility has been designed to prevent opportunity for the abuse of minors. Our facility is well lit. Our Student and Young Adult ministry center is a large open area. There are several offices designated for primary use by leaders and staff. These rooms have been fitted with windows to allow clear sight from the outside. Our facility is also designed to be accessible for persons with special needs.

## **8.3 Underage Mentorship Operational Procedures**

### **Electronically Communicating Mentees**

Mentors are asked to use discretion when communicating electronically with their mentee. When communicating electronically avoid any personal and private conversations. Limit your conversation to practical information (your next meeting, instructions about a book you are reading, a verse for the day, etc). Do not delete your correspondence with a student. Using any social media that was inherently designed to conceal communication (e.g Snapchat) is prohibited.

### **Body Exposure**

Mentors are not to expose any body part normally covered by a bathing suit in front of their mentee.

### **Discipline**

Mentors are not responsible for disciplining their mentee. Any behavioral concerns should be handled by their parent and/or the Pastor of Student Ministries.

### **Documentation**

All leaders are required to have a current criminal record check on file, which is to be renewed every five years.

### **Incident Reporting**

Mentors must immediately report all instances where a mentee has been physically hurt or where there is suspicion of abuse (as defined in the manual) to the Pastor of Student and Young Adult Ministries or his designate. In instances where a student has been hurt, an incident report form will be filled out and kept on file. In instances where there is suspicion of abuse, please see the section entitled **Reporting Structure (p.4)** for our abuse reporting procedures.

### **Internal Audits of Staff and Leaders**

The Board of Elders of Heritage Park Alliance Church will appoint an individual or a team to conduct an annual audit of our mentorship abuse prevention implementation. Records of these audits will be kept on file.

### **Internet Access**

Mentors are not to provide unsupervised internet access to mentees.

### **Meeting with your mentee**

Meetings with your mentee should always occur in public spaces. A public space is any place where other adults are present during the meeting. Some examples of public spaces would be the church lobby, a park, a coffee shop, or a walk through a community. Meetings should be completed no later than 10pm unless permission has been granted by the Student Ministries office at Heritage Park.

**Photography / Video**

Mentors are not to capture a mentee's image on electronic devices, unless authorized by the Student Ministry Office.

**Driving Mentees**

Mentors are not asked by Heritage Park to drive their mentees during weekly mentorship meetings. Mentors who transport their mentees, and parents / guardians who allow mentors to transport their youth, do so at their own legal risk.

**Mentor Ages**

Mentors must be at least 18 years old.

**Log Notes and Checking In**

Mentors are required to submit weekly log notes of their meetings which will be kept on file at Heritage Park. In addition to weekly log notes, periodic check ins will be conducted by the Student Ministries office throughout the course of the mentorship.

**APPENDIX 1**

**HERITAGE PARK ALLIANCE CHURCH  
SUSPECTED ABUSE REPORT FORM**

Name and age of suspected victim (a separate report is to be made for each person involved):

\_\_\_\_\_

Address and phone number of suspected victim: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name and Contact Information of Parent/Guardian of minor: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name and Contact information of Person filing report: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Pastor/Director Receiving Report: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person accused of suspected abuse: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship between suspected victim and suspected abuser: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of suspected abuse:  physical  sexual  emotional  spiritual  neglect

\_\_\_\_\_

**Please describe the circumstances of suspected abuse, giving dates, locations, and all persons present** (Use either the back of this sheet or a separate sheet of paper):

1. If based on personal observation, specify what was observed as factually as possible.
2. If based on statements of child, use the child's words to relate what was said.
3. If based on statements from another, identify the person(s) involved and relate what was said as accurately as possible.

**Please indicate to whom notification of the Incident has been given**

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Church Leaders: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Windsor-Essex Children's Aid Society (519.252.1171) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Others: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Making this report

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Pastor/Director Filing this report

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

The above information will be necessary if a formal allegation is filed with the police or other government agency. All information needs to be held in Strict Confidence.

## APPENDIX 2

### **UNDERSTANDING OF SAFE DRIVING DOCUMENT**

When I am transporting students on behalf of Heritage Park Alliance Church, I agree that it is my responsibility to operate the vehicle in a safe manner. Safe driving is defined as, but not limited to:

1. Ensuring that everyone in the vehicle is wearing a seat belt.
2. Following posted speed limits and obeying all street signs.
3. Understanding of and compliance with all driving laws.
4. Ensuring that the vehicle is maintained and safe to drive. Examples of good maintenance are: properly inflated tires, tires with sufficient tread, tires that are appropriate for the season / weather, sufficient wear left on the brake pads, regular oil changes, windows that are free from cracks, wipers that are in good condition, etc.
5. Eliminating or limiting potential distractions while driving such as texting while driving, eating while driving, and playing music.
6. No stunt driving: purposely swerving the car, fast starts, hard stops, drifting the car on slippery roads, burn outs, etc.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read this document and agree to practice safe driving at all times when transporting students to and from Heritage Park Alliance Church events.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date