

**WENTWORTH BAPTIST CHURCH  
PROPOSED CHILD CARE POLICY (Fall, 2015)**

**i. PURPOSE**

This policy outlines precautions taken in order to protect children in our care. Recognizing that we cannot completely remove risk, this policy attempts to make every effort to minimize the risk faced by the children and volunteers involved in our programs. While some flexibility is necessary, these policies help Wentworth Baptist Church to be professional in our oversight of volunteers as well as paid staff.

**ii. RECRUITING, SCREENING, TRAINING**

**a. Recruiting:**

1. After participating as an adherent of Wentworth Baptist Church for at least 3 months, potential volunteers may ask a staff member, or another member of the church about becoming involved in children's ministry.
2. All names of potential volunteers should be brought to a Pastor before those individuals are approached about ministry involvement. If a Pastor knows of any reasons why an individual would not be suitable for children's ministry involvement, further investigation will take place and final approval or denial will be made by the Pastoral Team.

**b. Screening:**

1. Any volunteer engaging in contact with children must have a valid criminal records check.  
Including, but not limited to: assisting with after-school programs, teaching KidzChurch, working in the nursery, leading at day camps, VBS, camping trips.
2. If a criminal records check indicates a criminal history the Pastoral Team will consider the information and decide whether or not that person should be involved in ministry with children.
3. A criminal check will be considered valid for five years or until a break in service/relationship occurs. If, after a break in service/relationship occurs, the individual would like to return to involvement in ministry with children, they will be required to have a new criminal records check completed.

**c. Training:**

1. All potential volunteers will receive a copy of the WBC Volunteer Handbook, which will include a copy of the Wentworth Baptist Church Child Care Policy. This Handbook will be read, signed, and returned, with an opportunity to meet with a Pastor for questions or clarifications.
2. Annual training sessions will take place for all volunteer leaders involved in children's ministry.

iii. **SAFETY PROCEDURES**

Whenever a program is taking place within the church, or as an extension of the church's ministry, certain guidelines are to be followed for the protection of each person involved.

**a. At least two people at all times**

1. In any room there are children present, there should also be two people who have completed all steps of the screening and training processes, except in the case of extreme emergencies
2. Even in larger areas, it should be made a priority to be within the line of sight of another person.

**b. Restrooms**

1. A preschool or primary age child should not be sent to the restroom alone. A volunteer should accompany the child to the restroom, check to ensure restroom is empty and then remain within earshot. In the case of older children, another child should be sent to accompany.

**c. Discipline Guidelines**

1. Any sort of physical rebuke (hitting, slapping, striking, squeezing) is prohibited.
2. Insults and 'name-calling' are also to be completely avoided.
3. All other disciplinary action should be discussed ahead of time & agreed upon by the Ministry Supervisor(s).

**d. Volunteer Leader Behaviour**

1. Everyone working with children is expected to conduct themselves in a God-honouring manner.
2. Behaviours such as extended hugging, inappropriate touching, tickling or being alone with a child are not permitted.

**e. Record Keeping**

1. Lists of names, addresses and emergency phone numbers should be carefully maintained by Ministry Supervisors.
2. Any major injuries should be documented on an *Incident Report*.
3. A parent or guardian should be notified of any major injury or conflict.

**f. Medication**

1. Volunteer Leaders are not to give or apply medication. If a child needs medication, the parent must administer it.

**g. Building Requirements**

1. All classrooms and office doors should have windows so that activities can be visible when doors need to be closed for safety or confidentiality reasons

**h. Trips and Special Events**

1. When events take place at locations other than the church property, such as the homes of volunteers, retreat centres, etc., all of the above procedures must be practiced.
2. Signed consent forms are also required.

iv. **GUIDELINES & PROCEDURE RELATING TO DISCLOSURE AND ABUSE**

This portion of the policy defines and describes types of abuse and their indicators. It also outlines what steps are to be taken if child abuse or neglect is suspected by, or reported to, a volunteer leader.

**a. Types of Abuse**

1. *Physical Abuse* is any deliberate physical force or action by a parent or caregiver that results, or could result, in injury to a child. It can include hitting, shaking, burning, etc.
2. *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 can also include a caregiver's failure to provide their child(ren) with love, emotional support, and guidance.
3. Sexual Abuse occurs when a child is used for the sexual gratification of an adult or older child. Coercion (physical, psychological, or emotional) distinguishes sexual abuse. Sexual abuse can take many forms including fondling, sexual intercourse, or exposure to sexual activity.
4. Neglect is the failure to meet a child's basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, sleep, medical attention, education, and protection from harm. It can also mean a failure to provide for the child's emotional needs, attention, and supervision.

**b. Symptoms of Abuse and Neglect**

Children will not always be comfortable to disclose abuse that has happened, or is happening, to them. It is important, therefore, for volunteers to be familiar with the indicators of abuse. While one of these indicators might not be enough to form reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect (not all symptoms of poverty constitute neglect, and poverty is a reality for many marginalized children and their families), it should be reported if the child is exhibiting a variety of indicators.

If ever a volunteer leader is unsure of whether something constitutes reasonable suspicion, they should speak to a Pastor.

**c. Obligation to Report**

Any person who has reasonable grounds to believe that a child (or children) is in need of protection is required by the Child and Family Services Act to report the matter directly to the Children's Aid Society of Hamilton-Wentworth (phone number listed below). **Failure to report in these circumstances is an offence which could result in court action.**

**d. Protection from Liability**

No person is liable for anything done or omitted in good faith in the exercise or purported exercise of the powers of the Child and Family Services Act of Ontario. This act protects the reporter from liability if the report is not malicious and is based on reasonable grounds. — CFSA s. 72(7)

**e. Reporting Abuse**

Duty to report is initiated when one has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is, or may be, in need of protection, or if abuse or neglect is disclosed. A volunteer must then follow the procedures outlined below:

**1. Allow the child to talk openly and away from other children.**

- i. It is important that the child feels safe and listened to rather than feeling questioned or interrogated.
- ii. You must avoid the use of leading questions.  
(eg. "did 'so and so' do this?" or "did they mean to hurt you?").
- iii. You are encouraged to use *a few* information gathering questions in order to make sure you understand what is being shared.  
(eg. questions that start with who, what, where, when, why, how)

**2. Write down what is told to you (as soon as possible).**

- i. Be sure to include exact words, if at all possible.

**3. Explain to the child that you must share what you've been told.**

- i. It is never a good idea to tell a child you can keep his / her secret.
- ii. Try to explain to the child that the people you will tell will be people who want to help and that this is not his or her fault.

**4. Report the incident immediately to a Pastor.**

**5. Complete *Incident Report & Record of Disclosure Forms***

- i. Highlight as many specific details as possible regarding the disclosure. Return completed *forms* to your Ministry Supervisor
- ii. If for any reason these forms cannot be immediately filled out, *skip this step* and return to it at a later point.

**6. Call CAS, working with a Pastor if possible.**

- i. It is important to ensure that the report is made while the child is still in our care and *prior* to any contact with the parents or guardians.
- ii. CAS will advise whether it is safe to send the child home or not.
- iii. **Hamilton CAS: 905-522-1121**  
**CAS After 5pm: 905-522-8053**

**f. *If the disclosed abuser is a church member or volunteer:***

- i. Steps 1 through 6 of Reporting Abuse are followed as outlined.
- ii. The matter will immediately be reported to all Pastoral Staff.
- iii. The accused will be removed from all church-related responsibilities.
- iv. A Pastor or Deacon will contact CBOQ for guidance and support.
- v. An investigation will be completed by the CAS and/or Hamilton Police Services. It is not the job of the church to complete the investigation. Wentworth Baptist Church will seek to assist the proper authorities in their investigation however possible.

**g. *If the disclosed abuser is a Pastor or a paid staff member:***

- i. Steps 1 through 6 of Reporting Abuse are followed as outlined.
- ii. The matter will immediately be reported to Chair of the Board of Directors.
- iii. The accused will be removed from all church-related responsibilities.
- iv. A Pastor or Deacon must immediately contact the CBOQ. The CBOQ has policies & protocols that guide the denomination and individual congregations through these cases (See: “CBOQ Discipline Protocol”, Part III.)<sup>1</sup>
- v. An investigation will be completed by the CAS and/or Hamilton Police Services. It is not the job of the church to complete the investigation. Wentworth Baptist Church will seek to assist the proper authorities in their investigation however possible.

**h. *After Reporting Abuse***

1. The duty to report is ongoing, which means that if you have made a report about a child and suspect further abuse or neglect, you must report to the CAS again.
2. Reporting child abuse should be a confidential matter and only be discussed with Pastoral Staff. Upon their discretion, and the guidance of CAS, the issue may be shared with other members of the Pastoral Team or the Board of Directors.
3. Parents may approach for information about a report but they must be referred to the local children’s aid society. Any interaction may compromise an investigation or impact the child.
4. At no time should the person who is being accused of abuse be sought out or contacted by the reporter.

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<sup>1</sup> As of the publication of this policy (Fall, 2015), the CBOQ Discipline Protocol can be found at: [http://baptist.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Discipline\\_Protocols\\_-\\_December\\_2010.pdf](http://baptist.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Discipline_Protocols_-_December_2010.pdf)

**i. Church Discipline & Pastoral Response**

1. If it is found that child abuse by a member of Wentworth Baptist Church has taken place, we will practice discipline according to Matthew 18:15-17 and in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec. We will maintain frequent communication and supportive relationships with those suspected or guilty of child abuse so long as these persons exhibit a willingness to listen, repent, and look to Christ for help.

# WENTWORTH BAPTIST CHURCH INCIDENT REPORT

<input type="checkbox"/> NO INJURY	<input type="checkbox"/> INJURY
<input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous Situation <input type="checkbox"/> Disclosure	<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid <input type="checkbox"/> Injury <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

## SECTION 1: TO BE COMPLETED BY INDIVIDUAL REPORTING INCIDENT

YOUR LAST NAME	YOUR FIRST NAME	AGE
PHONE #	ADDRESS	
MINISTRY/PROGRAM	AFFILIATION (select one) <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	

## SECTION 2: TO BE COMPLETED FOR INDIVIDUAL INVOLVED IN INCIDENT

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	AGE
PHONE #	ADDRESS	

## SECTION 3: DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT

LOCATION OF INCIDENT	DATE OF INCIDENT (DD/MM/YYYY)	TIME OF INCIDENT
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**DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT:** Please be as detailed as possible, including specific area and size of potential injuries, events leading up to the incident, etc. If more room is needed, please use the back side of page. If you are completing a **DISCLOSURE**, you must also complete *Record of Disclosure* form.

**WERE THERE OTHER WITNESS' TO THE INCIDENT?**  
If so, please list their name(s) and contact information below.

**PLEASE HAND IN FORM TO YOUR DIRECT MINISTRY SUPERVISOR**

**DATE RECEIVED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE RECEIVED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **LEAD PASTOR or DIRECTOR SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

WENTWORTH BAPTIST CHURCH  
**RECORD OF  
DISCLOSURE**

**PLEASE NOTE: IF YOU HAVE NOT COMPLETED AN INCIDENT REPORT, YOU MUST DO SO IN TANDEM WITH THIS FORM!**

**SECTION 1: TO BE COMPLETED BY INDIVIDUAL REPORTING INCIDENT**

YOUR LAST NAME	YOUR FIRST NAME	
CHILD LAST NAME	CHILD FIRST NAME	AGE

**SECTION 2: RECORD OF DISCLOSURE**

LOCATION OF DISCLOSURE	DATE OF DISCLOSURE (DD/MM/YYYY)	TIME
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**WHAT INFORMATION DID THE CHILD SHARE WITH YOU?**

Be as specific as possible. If more room is needed, please use the back of this page.

**DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE CHILD?**

*This may include: names of parents, home address, sibling names and ages, etc.*

**WHAT STEPS DID YOU TAKE IN RESPONSE TO THE DISCLOSURE YOU RECEIVED?**

Please be as specific as possible, including date and approximate times.

**WERE THERE OTHER WITNESS' PRESENT FOR OR DURING THE DISCLOSURE?**

If so, please list their name(s) and contact information below.

**PLEASE HAND BOTH FORMS IN TO YOUR DIRECT MINISTRY SUPERVISOR**

**DATE RECEIVED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE RECEIVED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **LEAD PASTOR or DIRECTOR SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_