

safe place policy

The FGCC Safe Place Policy is for the protection, safety, and well being of vulnerable persons and ministry workers in the life and ministries of this church. This policy applies to all workers, whether paid or volunteer, working in FGCC Ministries involving vulnerable persons.

PREVENTION & PROCEDURE

on-site

- The worker to youth ratio is 1:10.
- We strive to have at least two adults in any room with a minor. When only one adult can be in a room with a minor either keep the door of that room open or have an unobstructed window in the door.
- Before and after allotted program times, parents/guardians are legally responsible for their children.

injuries

- When a vulnerable person under your care gets injured, attend to the need of the minor and contact 911 if necessary (see below).
- Inform the youth ministry staff (or the coordinator in charge of the program) as soon as possible.
- Fill out an incident report.

visitors

- All helpers/visitors MUST be pre-approved by the youth ministry staff.
- Visitors cannot just show up on a Tuesday or a Friday expecting to be a part of the night. Depending on the situation, they may be asked to leave.
- They must be introduced and wear a lanyard as a "visitor".

transportation

- When transporting youth to and from events, you must have two or more individuals in a vehicle along with the driver.
- If it is not possible to have two or more people in the vehicle with the driver, the parent/guardian must be alerted of the minor's transportation arrangements.

off-site

- The youth ministry staff always needs to know the exact details of your gathering, whether that be one-on-one or as a whole small group. We provide a form to fill out for small group nights away from the church.
- All year waivers must be completed for all off-site activities which are planned as a GroveYouth event (ex. Small Group Nights Away, Late Nighter, retreats, etc.).
- A parent/guardian must be alerted of any situation in which you are meeting a student one-on-one for the first time outside of a scheduled youth event. Details on how to do this on the Communication page.
- When the gathering includes an overnight stay, extra diligence is required to ensure that abuse and false accusations do not occur.
- All in all, avoid situations where activities/conversations cannot be overheard, observed or documented.

PREVENTION & PROCEDURE

criminal record checks

- A criminal record check must be completed and renewed every four years BEFORE you attend your first program event.
- Checks can be done at the church free of cost (at least two weeks prior to the first program event you attend) or you can bring in a copy you currently have but it must have a "Vulnerable Sector Check" included.
- The GroveYouth Ministry Assistant will let you know if you need one. If so, bring your drivers license & health card to the next training date/youth night.

ministry application

- A ministry application must be completed for first-time volunteers at FGCC and every four years thereafter and/or if there is a break in service exceeding one year.
- Returning leaders (within the four years) will need to fill out a partial form for contact info, health/diet info, and involvement each year.
- If you are unsure which application to fill out, email contact the youth ministry staff.

equipment

- Automatic smoke detection system: hallways, classrooms, some storage rooms and emergency exit stairwells have smoke detectors. Emergency exits have alarms.
- Fire alarm control panel: in the main lobby entry and electrical room.
- Heat sensors are in the storage/utility rooms in the middle of the west corridor, in the lobby storage room and the security room.
- Manual fire alarm pull stations are located on the walls at each of the outside doors entrance/exits.
- Fire extinguishers are located throughout the building.
- The kitchen has an automatic fire suppression system.
- Automatic emergency fire doors are installed in approved locations in order to isolate fires and direct occupants to the safest evacuation route.

calling 911

- When a person is calling 911, the caller should say:
 - "This is (caller's name) at Forest Grove Community Church at 502 Webster Street. The situation is ... (ex. there is a fire, a bomb threat or other emergency situation). Please come immediately."

calling an ambulance

- To determine if an ambulance needs to be called, assess and collaborate with the emergency coordinator (the youth ministry staff).
- If they are able to answer, ask the person if they would like you to call an ambulance.
- If you are unable to contact or find the youth ministry staff and the person is in danger, just call an ambulance.
- Fill out an incident report if it's an event or activity of the church.

tornado procedure

- Go to an inside hallway in the church (or under a table if you are unable to get out of a room). The best place is by the main washrooms near the Welcome Centre.
- Stay away from electricity
- Assume curled position on the floor with hands behind your head to protect skull
- If you are outside, get into the building as soon as possible (don't go into/under a car).

PREVENTION & PROCEDURE

evacuation procedure

- The emergency coordinator (the youth ministry staff, or someone previously appointed) will give overall leadership to the safe evacuation of the building
- Make sure 911 has been called when you know it is a true emergency that exists
- Evacuate the building as quickly and efficiently as possible. The youth ministry staff will lead the evacuation procedure, however, you as ministry leaders will perform these duties:
 - Be familiar with the fire escape map near the door of the room you are in.
 - Take responsibility for evacuating the people in the room where you are.
 - Make note of people with special needs.
 - Report any missing people or other important information related to the emergency coordinator or fire department who will be at the command centre (in front of the welcome centre/main lobby doors facing Webster Street).
- Once out of the building, move away from the building to the Northwest corner of the property (near garbage bin).
- As you leave, staff and ministry leaders must check off the following areas of the church (close but do not lock doors): sanctuary (lower level and stage area), sanctuary balcony, lobby area, nursery, staff office areas, lounge and storage room, between the lounge and gym, gym, main level classrooms, washrooms on main floor (near main office, near gym entrance, handicapped bathroom off lobby), kitchen, family ministries room, second level classrooms, second level washrooms, elevator, hallways, second floor exit stairwells (two from central education wing, one from west education wing).
- Emergency coordinator will assign someone to grab the attendance clip board from the welcome centre. Take attendance.

lockdown procedure

- A lockdown procedure will be initiated by the youth ministry staff (or another appointed emergency coordinator) through a Remind text (more info on how to sign up for these on the Communications page).
- If you need to initiate a lockdown, contact someone from the youth ministry staff.
- **PARTIAL LOCKDOWN:** This is used when a serious incident is occurring somewhere in the neighbourhood and there is no immediate danger for leaders and students as long as they remain in the church building. All outside doors are locked and leaders are assigned to doors to monitor outside activity. Program continues as usual.
- **FULL EXTERNAL LOCKDOWN:** This is used for danger immediately outside the church. All outside doors are locked; provisions for police access must be made. Leaders are assigned to doors to monitor outside activity. All lights are turned off and blinds are drawn. Program is suspended. Students are moved to a secured area (the gym or sanctuary, depending on the threat) and on the floor if required.
- **FULL INTERNAL LOCKDOWN:** This procedure is used when there is an immediate threat to safety inside the church building. All outside doors are locked; provisions for police access must be made. Lights are on and blinds are open to allow for visual inspection by police and other emergency personnel. Program is suspended. Students are in a secured area (the gym or sanctuary, depending on the threat) and on the floor if required.

HANDLING DISCLOSURES

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

PHYSICAL

Any physical force or action which results in or may potentially result in a non-accidental injury; to omit to act as to result in physical injury to a vulnerable person.

EMOTIONAL

To act or omit to act so as to result in anguish through threats; coercion; degrading insults or humiliation.

VERBAL

The use of words that may undermine a person's perception of himself or herself or inflict emotional pain.

SEXUAL

Behaviour that may include touching of a sexual nature, sexual grooming, sexually degrading language, forced sexual acts, and sexual assault.

FINANCIAL

Intentional misuse of a person's financial/material possessions without informed consent of the person.

DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

allegations of abuse against a worker...

- When questionable conduct surfaces, which might pose a danger to the minor, steps shall be taken to prevent recurrence
- When an allegation surfaces, the worker shall be asked to step aside from duties
- In both cases, the safe place policy committee shall be notified to determine the next steps
- The safe place policy committee must determine if and when the worker can return to service
- If no resolution is reached at this point, the SK MB Conference shall be contacted

dealing with disclosure on abuse...

- The Saskatchewan Guidelines issued by the Province of Saskatchewan caution that while reporting of a child in need of protection is mandatory, some discretion is required in deciding on whether or not a child is or reasonably might be in need of protection.
- In any event, the duty to report applies even where the information was obtained through the discharge of professional duties or within a confidential relationship.

IF YOU FEEL YOU ARE A DANGER TO A STUDENT...

- Remove yourself from the situation immediately.
- Seek accountability by telling Chandra or Spencer.
- Steps will then be put in place to walk with you to health so that you are no longer a danger.
- We will make a plan to protect both parties.

IF YOU ARE EVER IN DOUBT ABOUT HOW TO FOLLOW THESE POLICIES, PLEASE CONTACT THE YOUTH MINISTRY STAFF AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

HANDLING DISCLOSURES



7 STEPS TO FOLLOW

1. LISTEN

- Provide privacy
- Stay calm - do not express shock or anger
- Do not promise that you will not tell
- Determine their immediate need for safety and any possible medical attention

2. COMFORT

- Express understanding of the person and their feelings
- Reassure them that they've done the right thing by coming to you with their concern
- Reassure them that the alleged abuse is not the fault of the victim

3. AFFIRM

- Acknowledge their feelings
- Convey that it's important to let people know when something of this nature has happened and it's right to talk about this
- Affirm them as cared for individuals
- Avoid telling them how they should feel or what they should say

4. AVOID LOOKING FOR A CAUSE

- Do not probe or ask "why"
- Do not make presuppositions - avoid being judgemental
- Avoid projecting your own reactions on to them

5. DO NOT ASK LEADING QUESTIONS

- Encourage a more detailed description or introduce more precise language
- It is not your job to investigate, use words like "can you tell me more about..."
- Any "help" in this area could negatively affect a prosecution if undertaken

6. ALLOW THE COMPLAINANT TO MAINTAIN AS MUCH CONTROL OVER THEIR SITUATION AS POSSIBLE

- Don't force them to keep talking if they don't want to
- Ask them if someone else can join the conversation

7. DOCUMENT

- Everything that happens between the worker and the minor should be documented as soon as possible
 - Document the involvement of other people in the situation including as much of the conversation as possible
 - Document only facts, not your own feelings
 - Documentation is confidential except in the event of legal action
- Complete the "Abuse Report File" that will be given to you by Chandra/Spencer