FAMILY Ministries



Safe Place Ministry Report

Salem Church, Waldheim SK.

1. **Policy Intent and Purpose**
	1. The Church, existing and ministering in an environment of moral failure and increased legal action, must seek to provide a safe environment for its worshippers and be prepared to respond promptly and prudently when there are allegations of wrong-doing. This policy uses scriptural principles to provide guidelines and ideals in the development of practical methods to protect our congregation, our staff and our volunteers. It strives to honour and fulfill the following three-fold purpose:
		1. Protect our children and youth from physical, mental, or spiritual abuse;
		2. Protect our workers from unjust accusations or vulnerable situations;
		3. Protect our church body, staff and officers from detrimental legal liability or litigation and negative spiritual consequences.
2. **Definitions:**
	1. **Abuse**

 Abuse is to use wrongly, to maltreat or to injure. It is the misuse of power by a person in a position of trust. It may take various forms. Salem Church is committed to a policy of zero tolerance of any of these forms of abuse. No person at Salem Church shall be subject to any of these while participating in its ministries and programs.

* + 1. **Physical:**

 Any non-accidental form of injury or harm inflicted on a child by a caregiver.

* + 1. **Sexual:**

 The use, persuasion or coercion of any person to engage in sexually explicit conduct (or simulation of such conduct) for the purpose of producing a visual depiction of the same or rape, molestation, prostitution or incest with children.

* + 1. **Emotional:**

 A pattern of behaviour that attacks a child’s emotional development and sense of self-worth through excessive, aggressive or unreasonable demands that place expectations on a child beyond his or her capacity.

* + 1. **Child Neglect:**

 Failure to meet a child’s basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, sleep, medical attention, education and protection from harm. It includes abandonment, inadequate supervision and refusal or delay in seeking health care.

* + 1. **Harassment:**

 Repeated subtle or overt action, particularly by a person in a position of authority, which causes the recipient to feel attacked, demeaned, intimidated or manipulated.

* + 1. **Inappropriate Touch:**

 Touching which creates feelings of violation, confusion and isolation. It may include but is not limited to kissing a child, coaxing a child to give a kiss, touching a child in any area that would be covered by a swim suit, extended hugging or tickling anywhere on the body.

* + 1. **Improper Discipline:**

 No child at Salem Church shall be subject to corporal punishment (spanking, ear pulling, etc.) or emotional abuse (yelling, name calling, etc.) by a staff member or volunteer.

* 1. **People (Categories) or Personnel**
		1. **Paid Staff:**

 Paid staff are people who are employed by Salem Church and who receive remuneration for their work on behalf of the church.

* + 1. **Volunteers:**

 Volunteers are people who help carry out the ministries of the church but without remuneration. In this policy they may be referred to as “workers”, “substitutes”, “assistants”, “drivers”, “chairperson”, “coordinator” or simply as “volunteer”.

1. **Confidentiality:**

 Because Salem Church discourages the spread of harmful or embarrassing information while encouraging the voluntary sharing of needs, burdens, confessions, and loving confrontations for the edification and restoration of participants in our church life, the staff and leadership will handle with care any shared information. Those in charge of such information will store and treat with protective care all written or computerized information (including pictures) concerning any individual.

1. **The Care of our Children and Youth**

 Because we believe children are a gift from God, every possible means must be used to ensure that children and youth are cared for so that no harm comes to them while in the care of paid or volunteer workers for any church programs. The following measures will be taken by the children and youth ministries of Salem Church:

* 1. **Worker Recruiting :**

 Only assigned workers or approved substitutes will be used in children or youth ministries. They must have completed the following:

* + 1. Have attended Salem Church regularly for at least 6 months, OR have attended Salem Church regularly for 3 months AND have secured at least 2 letters of recommendation from their previous church. In the case of joint ministries with other local churches, workers from those churches must meet this attendance requirement in their home church.
		2. Filled out a Volunteer Application Form and submitted to the Director of Family Ministries.
		3. Have been screened and interviewed by the ministry department leader prior to any ministry with children or youth.
		4. Prospective workers, assistants and drivers will be asked to provide a criminal record check.
		5. Participated in the children and youth ministry workers orientation provided by Salem Church under the direction of the Director of Family Ministries. Such training may include, but is not limited to, such information as:
			1. Awareness of this Public Ministry Policy
			2. First Aid/safety information
			3. Recognition of clues of neglect and physical abuse
			4. Information on child care and safety procedures.
			5. The “Nashville Statement” – Salem’s foundation for biblical sexuality. – Approved by the Salem membership August 25th, 2019.

 Records of teacher/volunteer attendance at initial and ongoing training events is to be maintained

* + 1. Paid Staff:
		This screening process will also be applied to all hired staff who will be required to endorse this protocol and provide criminal record checks.
		2. Community volunteers:
		Community volunteers who participate in our club program as assistants and who do not regularly attend a local church, will be partnered with a person who has received clearance to work in the program.
		3. Occasional guest volunteers:
		An occasional guest volunteer who participates as an assistant will be partnered with a person who has received clearance to work in the program.
	1. **Supervision of Children/Youth**
		1. In order to ensure that classrooms are properly supervised, the chairperson or coordinator of the ministry in question will make regular visits to the children's and youth ministries.
		2. Salem Church leadership will endeavour to take every reasonable action to avoid abuse, by observing the following:
			1. Making every room in the facility accessible to view via windows and doors, etc., and ensuring that windows are not obscured with signs, notices, etc. The nursery will have a reflective window.
			2. Safeguarding property in order to reduce the risk of injury;
			3. Keeping furnace rooms and supply closets locked;
			4. Training and supervising workers involved with infants, children, and youth;
			5. Providing the following adult-to-child ratio;
				1. Infants - 1 caregiver for every 4 infants
				2. Toddlers - 1 caregiver for every 6 toddlers (1 – 3 year olds)
				3. Preschoolers - 1 caregiver for every 10 preschoolers (3 – 5 year olds)
				4. Elementary School-age and up - 1 caregiver for every 10 children.
			6. Ensure that someone regularly patrols the facility during the time that children and youth are present for church organized activities.
		3. Parents with children in classes up to and including age 5 will accompany their children to the classroom and pick them up after class. Only parents or an adult authorized by the parents may retrieve a child from the nursery or preschool classrooms. Staff will remain in their classrooms until the last child is dismissed.
		4. Two-person Rule: as much as reasonably possible, in all Nursery through Grade VI classes or activities, two workers, one age nineteen or older, and the other at least the age of twelve, must be present. In the case of youth (Junior & Senior High), two workers, one age nineteen or older and the other at least age sixteen.
		5. Immediate Family Rule: It is recommended that when immediate family members are working together, a third unrelated volunteer be present to help in the classroom.
	2. **Guidelines and Policies for Specific Situations**
		1. **Guidelines for Proper Display of Affection:**

 Touch is an essential responsibility in nurturing lives. The following guidelines are to be promoted for pure, genuine, and positive displays of God's love:

* + - 1. Hugs: One-arm side hugs or hand-to-arm hugs are positive contact. Full contact or body-to-body hugs are to be avoided.
			2. Lap-sitting: Appropriate lap-sitting may occur with children five years old and younger. Lap-sitting with school-age children is to be discouraged. Rather, they should be encouraged to sit next to a teacher.
			3. Casual Touch: Gentle contact during activities may be on children’s heads, shoulders, arms and hands. Children should not be tossed in the air, swung by their arms or legs, or tickled.
		1. **Guidelines for Restroom Assistance:**

 For the protection of our children and staff, we will observe the following:

* + - 1. Parents are urged to have their children use the restroom before class begins.
			2. Parents will be asked to indicate in writing (on the annual form to be completed at the beginning of the year) if their child will need assistance.
			3. If children needing assistance use the restroom during the session, the parents, or a person designated in advance by them, will be called in to assist them.
			4. Parents’ diaper changing preference will also be indicated in writing (on the annual form) at the beginning of the year.
			5. Whenever possible, workers are advised not to enter a restroom alone to assist a child
		1. **Child Counselling Guidelines:**

 Quite often children have questions or are eager to find help in spiritual matters. For this we are grateful and excited. However, any counselling by a children's worker with a child must be done within eyesight of a third person.

* + 1. **Church Outing Policy:**

 Annual consent forms wherein parents give written permission for their children or youth to participate in off-site Salem group activities will be completed and gathered at the beginning of each school year and kept on file. Special consent must be given for events which are organized less than a week in advance. Church-sponsored transportation requires duly licensed drivers 19 years of age or older who will fill out an annual information form prior to their first outing. This form will include information about liability (obligatory) insurance as well as the drivers’ licence numbers. Records may be checked if deemed necessary. All passengers must be in seatbelts, and drivers must follow all driving and safety regulations.

* + 1. **Overnight Policy:**

 Any Salem Church sponsored overnight activity, regardless of location, will be permitted as long as the following guidelines are met:

* + - 1. Overnight activities for children third grade and up (such activities will not be organized for those under the third grade).
			2. All overnight activities must have at least two (2) leaders present at all times and beyond that, a ratio of one (1) additional leader for every 7 children/youth. Each leader will have an assigned group of children that they will be responsible for during the duration of the overnight event.
		1. **Policy for dealing with body fluids:**

 When vomit and blood are present, caregivers must wear latex gloves. The janitor will be advised who must then ensure that the soiled area is cleaned up with bleach.

**7. Guidelines for dealing with gender situations which are outside of God’s original creation design:**

 a) The “Nashville Statement” will be used as the foundation for steps that will be taken.

b) The message will be conveyed that “our true identity, as male and female persons is given by God at our ‘birth’ and that all other gender expressions are not part of God’s beautiful plan”.

 c) The person in question will be treated in a loving and compassionate manner with the desire to bring them into wholeness in Jesus Christ.

* 1. **Reporting Alleged Abuses:**

The following must take place the same day as the alleged abuse is revealed and in the following sequence:

* + 1. The person who heard of the alleged abuse will inform a representative of the Board of Elders who will help determine how to proceed.
		2. The person who heard of the alleged abuse will then alert the competent authorities.
		3. If a child reports an alleged abuse to a worker, the worker will, with the child, report to a member of the church Elder Board. Then, with advice from the Elder, the worker will go with the child and the Elder to report to the competent authorities.
	1. **Allegations against a worker:**

 If an allegation surfaces against a worker, that person will take an immediate sabbatical from ministry until the issue is satisfactorily resolved.

**F. Evacuation Procedure:**

1. **Muster Point** – Located at the East side of the parking lot along the chain-link fence.

**2. Fire Safety/Emergency**

1. If a public meeting, instruction will be given from the pulpit.
2. Everyone is to go directly to the Muster Point. You will meet up with your family members at the Muster Point.
3. Ushers will do a check of the building.

Please DO NOT try to find your child or pick them up from Sunday School, Children’s Church or Nursery. Go directly to the Muster Point.

Policies and guidelines in this document also apply, whenever appropriate, to the church’s ministry to those who attend the Friends Class.

**OUR VISION STATEMENT**

We will seek to choose to be a church where everyone proclaims
the Gospel of Jesus Christ at every opportunity.

‘Becoming a Proclaiming People’