



Omagh Bible School
Children, Youth & Staff
Protection Policy

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Introduction

The gospel of Mark records that when people brought little children to Jesus, He took them in His arms, put His hands on them and blessed them. As a camp, it is our desire to bring children to Jesus, too.

As a Christian camp, we recognize that we are a reflection of God's love to those in our care and we take our responsibility to them seriously. In our ministry to children, we must follow carefully when the scriptures teach:

- Avoid every kind of evil. (1 Thess. 5:22)
- But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. (Eph. 5:3)
- But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. (Matt. 18:6)
- If your brother sins against you, go and show his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan. (Matt. 18:15-17)

Section One – Purpose

Omagh Bible School has a spiritual, moral and legal obligation to provide a safe environment for children participating in camper programs which are under the auspices and authority of the Omagh Bible School Corporation.

At the same time, we are concerned about the safety and reputation of the adults and teens who volunteer to make these ministries possible.

Child abuse is a violation of God's moral law within the context of trusted relationships. It is criminal behaviour that causes emotional, physical and spiritual trauma to victims and has destructive consequences for abusers.

Devastating effects on the credibility of the camp's ministry and the name of Christ make it essential that the camp takes all appropriate steps to prevent abusive incidents from occurring.

Section Two – Definitions

Abuse	In relation to a child, means physical, mental, emotional, or sexual mistreatment of a child.
Adult	An individual aged 18 years or older.

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Board of Directors	Up to eleven (11) members selected by the Omagh Bible School Corporation members to administer Omagh Bible School (Camp Omagh).
Baseline Data	The basic information (name, address, parent's and designated alternate's name and emergency contact numbers) placed on file for each minor when he/she first enter a camp program and brought to the attention of those persons providing care or leadership for that individual
Camp	
Camp Manager	Staff member hired by the Omagh Bible School Board of Directors, to oversee the operation of the camp and the paid staff (lifeguards, office assistant, kitchen assistant etc.) for the summer.
Minor Child	Recognizing that the age of majority is 18 years old, a minor is any person between zero (0) and seventeen (17) years old, inclusive. For the purpose of this policy or document the following terms apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre-Camper Age Individual from birth to Camper Age• Camper Age Individual who is within the current program week's age range.• Youth Individual fifteen (15) to seventeen (17) years old.
Office Assistant	Staff member hired by the Omagh Bible School Board of Directors, to fulfill the registrar's duties on a day to day basis, under the supervision of the Registrar.
Omagh Bible School	Sometimes referred to as 'the camp' in this document.
One-on-one	Situations where a leader or volunteer has the potential of being alone with a child during a camp-offered program for children or youth, including transportation within such a program, or between the child's home and place of meeting.
Registrar	Staff member hired by Omagh Bible School Board of Directors, responsible for overseeing the registration and payment process, maintaining the camp database and volunteer records. They may be assisted by an office worker at the camp who may assume their role and responsibilities on a day to day basis during the camp season.
Parent	In relation to a child, this means the natural mother or father or legal guardian who has custody of the child.
Personnel & Program Committee	A committee comprised of a minimum of three, maximum of five, individuals to include at least two members of the Omagh Bible School Board of Directors.

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Two Adult Rule

This rule provides that two adults will be present during any activities performed by minors in order to increase the safety of each minor, and protect the credibility of our workers and our youth programs.

Visibility Rule

When a minor(s) is/are in a room, if there is no corridor window into that room the door(s) or upper half of a split door will be kept completely open and all those in the room will be in a clearly visible location. All rooms used for children/youth ministries are to have corridor windows.

Vulnerable Sector Check

Screening performing by local law enforcement agency to ensure an individual seeking to work with vulnerable persons has any previous convictions or suspensions.

Weekly Program Director

Workers

Section Two – Policies

1. Screening, Recruiting and Training

1.1 Full-Time Paid Staff, Weekly Directors and Volunteer Staff

A Personnel and Program committee comprised of a minimum of three, maximum of five, individuals to include at least two members of the Omagh Bible School Board of Directors will be appointed by the Board of Directors. This committee is to be responsible for screening all full time paid workers, weekly directors, and volunteer staff roles recruited by the camp (cook and care givers).

It is to include as appropriate in its duties but not limited to:

- Coordinating annual policy awareness and training session;
- Conducting interviews, reference checks and completing the associated paperwork;
- Soliciting and reviewing vulnerable sector record checks;
- Maintaining a master list of individuals accepted for volunteering at Omagh Bible School (Camp Omagh)
- Ensuring completed volunteer registration forms, records of training and related documents are stored securely in perpetuity in a central registry file;
- Maintaining the confidentiality of personnel records; and
- Handling incidents of abuse as they are reported, including communications with the police and media.

1.2 Weekly Program Volunteer Staff

Weekly Program Directors will be responsible for recruiting and screening the weekly volunteer staff (counselor, bible teacher, activity director, craft director etc.). All volunteer staff must either be personally known to the Weekly Program Director or be recommended by a least two references.

The Weekly Program Director is responsible for but not limited to:

- Contacting these references as well as conducting an interview with the volunteer candidate;
- Providing the Registrar or Office Assistant with a list of all staff who will be volunteering during the program.
- Communicating with their volunteers the requirement to complete a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) and volunteer registration form, and as required gathering the documents and forwarding them to the Registrar or Office Assistant.

1.3 Full-Time Staff, Volunteer Staff and Weekly Volunteer Staff Responsibilities

All full-time staff, volunteer staff and weekly volunteer staff, serving in children/youth ministries will be required to:

- Full-Time Staff and Volunteer Staff are to complete Full-Time/Volunteer Registration Form (Appendix ‘A’) in the form prescribed by the Personnel and Program Committee and submit it to the committee.

- Weekly Volunteer Staff are to complete Weekly Volunteer Registration Form (Appendix 'B') and submit it to the Weekly Program Directors, in turn filing the form with the Registrar or Office Assistant.
- Request and submit a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) from their local police department (minors are exempt from VSC);
- Participate in training as prescribed by the Personnel and Program Committee directed at issues of child abuse, identification and reporting obligations;
- Read resource material as prescribed by the Personnel and Program Committee directed at issues of child abuse and safety;
- Sign (insert name of acknowledgment) (Appendix 'C') of having participated in the training and understanding their responsibilities under the policy and related guidelines and agreeing to comply with them;
- This process will include Vulnerable Sector Check, minimal every two years, for their protection, as well as that of Omagh Bible School.

1.4 Individuals with History of Abuse

Individuals with a known history of having committed abuse as defined in this document or anyone with questionable references will not be permitted to work with minors.

1.5 Registrar and Office Assistant Responsibilities

The Registrar or Office Assistant will be responsible for ensuring that all volunteers have met the requirements to be present at camp:

- Completed either Full-Time/Volunteer Registration Form (Appendix 'A') or Weekly Volunteer Registration Form (Appendix 'B');
- Vulnerable Sector Check if eighteen (18) years or older;
- Completed the training session and signed (insert name of acknowledgment) (Appendix 'C') acknowledging their responsibility under the Children, Youth and Workers Protection Policy
- Complete a record of all volunteers present at the week, including their arrival and departure if not present for the entire length of the week.

2. Staffing, Supervision, Security & Identification

2.1 Two Adult Rule

Omagh Bible School will follow a basic "Two-Adult" rule which says that two adults (individuals aged eighteen (18) years or older) are to be present on camp property during any children/youth ministry program. This rule reduces the risk of child molestation, and the risk of false accusations of molestation by individuals seeking a quick legal settlement.

2.2 Classrooms, Offices and Storage/Utility Rooms

All classrooms, offices and hallways are to have windows or doors with windows, allowing for easy viewing by parents and supervisors. Sight lines through these windows are to remain unobstructed at all times.

All storage and utility areas are to be kept locked and made accessible only to those who have a need for access.

2.3 One-On-One

Workers are to avoid one-on-one situations with children/youth, except in parentally pre-approved counselling situations where the adult has a legitimate reason to be alone with a child.

2.4 Counselling

A second adult should be in the immediate area with the door open to the counselling room. (For the protection of the family unit, we recommend the second adult be unrelated).

2.5 Identification

Names and addresses of parents, children and youth, the name(s) of any alternate approved by the parent, and any special concern (i.e. allergies) will be carefully maintained.

3. Field Trips, Special Events & Transportation

3.1 Field Trips

Activities conducted away from the camp property are to be pre-approved by the Omagh Bible School Board of Directors Executive to ensure that potential risks have been addressed, with the exception of day hikes into the conservation lands surrounding the camp.

3.2 Written Consent and Medical Release

Parents are to be notified at registration and proper written consent/medical release forms are required for each child/youth participating in the event.

3.3 Supervision

All trips and outings must be supervised by a minimum of two approved adult workers, including day hikes into the conservation land.

3.4 Transportation

When the transportation of children/youth is involved in an activity, all drivers must be at least eighteen (18) years of age, have a valid driver's license and current automobile insurance. The number of persons per car must never exceed the number of seat belts.

4. Allegations of Abuse & Incident Reporting

4.1 Reporting Procedure

Concerns for child's safety are to be reported in accordance with procedures prescribed in this policy

4.2 Allegation Standards

Omagh Bible School will not engage in denial, minimization or blame. The response strategy will be based on the following underlying principles:

- All allegations will be taken seriously;
- Situations must be handled forthrightly with due respect for people's privacy and confidentiality;
- Full cooperation must be given to civil authorities under the guidance of legal counsel;
- Adequate care must be shown for the well-being of victims. The victim should not be held responsible in any way.

5. Policy Implementation, Monitoring & Amendments

5.1 Acknowledgement

Camp Omagh will take seriously our policies to prevent abuse and the enforcement of this policy.

5.2 Implementation

The Personnel and Committee will work with Weekly Directors to implement and monitor this policy.

5.3 Amendments

Amendments to this policy will be approved by the Omagh Bible School Board of Directors.

Section Three – Child Protection Guidelines

1. Child Security

All Omagh Bible School programs must provide a sign-in sheet and maintain an accurate sign-in procedure including child's name, parent's (or alternate's) name and contact information during the week and any special needs.

1.1 Registration

A registration form must be completed for each camper that includes a signed release from the parent or guardian of the child

1.2 Release of a Child or Children

A child will be released to a parent or approved alternate only on the basis of personal identification or signature

1.3 Camper Drop Off

Children are never to be dropped off at Camp without the weekly director and counsellors present.

1.4 Visitors

Visitors to Camp are to sign in at the office upon arrival and departure. All visitors are required to leave before lights out. Visitors are not to disrupt the program and must leave if the weekly director feels they are causing a problem.

1.5 Camper Sign-Out

Parents are not to remove their child from Camp without signing them out, even if they are only leaving for a short time (i.e. doctor's appointment or sports activity). It is important the departure and expected return of the child are clearly communicated to the weekly director, responsible counsellor and/or office assistant.

2. Staffing & Supervision Guidelines

Programs that involve children and youth must always include adequate supervisory personnel. Supervision should also be maintained after the program until all children are in the custody of their parents or legal guardians. This means an adequate number of counsellors and the weekly director must remain until all children have departed.

2.1 Ratios/Age Expectations

Camp counsellors should be at least 15 years of age and at least 3 years older than the oldest child in their care. Counsellors in Training (CIT) will be at least 12 years of age and 2 years older than the oldest child in their care.

- 2.1.1 Workers will avoid being alone with children, except in the event of an emergency situation
- 2.1.2 Ideally, there will be a minimum of one counsellor for every 9 campers age 11 and up. For children under 11 there will be two counsellors and one CIT or other staff member for every 8 campers.
- 2.1.3 Non-camper children are the responsibility of their parents.
- 2.1.4 During Family week, children are the responsibility of their parents.
- 2.1.5 Workers with non-camper children may choose to leave their children in the care of another worker or adult they feel is responsible and Omagh Bible School does not take responsibility for this choice.

2.2 Unobstructed Windows

Classroom windows are to remain unobstructed at all times to allow program supervisors to look in occasionally without interrupting the teaching process and to provide for worker security when there is only one worker in the classroom.

2.3 Program Supervisors

The program supervisors should make regular visits to classrooms to make sure the classes are properly staffed and supervised.

2.4 Family Protection

Family teams work well together and should be encouraged as a method of staffing. However, for the protection of the family unit, we recommend the presence of at least one other person not related to the family.

3. Proper Display of Affection

Touch is an essential responsibility in nurturing lives. Volunteers need to be aware of, and sensitive to, differences in sexual development, culture, family background, individual personalities, and special needs. Physical contact with children should be age and developmentally appropriate, with consent where possible. The following guidelines are recommended as pure, genuine and positive displays of God's love.

3.1 Appropriate Touch

Love and caring can be expressed in the following appropriate ways by:

- Bending down to the child's eye level and speaking kindly; listening to them carefully.
- Taking a child's hand and leading them to an activity
- Putting an arm around the shoulder of a child who need quieting or comforting.
- Taking both of the child's hands as you say, "You did such a good job!" or "I'm so glad to see you" or "We missed you."
- Patting a child on the head, hand, shoulder or back to affirm them
- Holding a child by the shoulders or hand to keep their attention while you redirect the child's behaviour
- Gently holding a child's chin to help them focus on what you are saying
- Holding a preschool child who is crying

3.2 Inappropriate Touch

Scenarios to be avoided include but not limited to:

- Kissing a child, coaxing a child to kiss you, extended hugging and tickling
- Touching a child in any area that would be covered by a bathing suit
- Carrying an older child or having them sit on your lap
- Being alone with a child
- Prolonged physical contact
- Opposite sex piggyback rides
- Seductiveness or suggestive contact
- Any physical contact of any kind that is done for the pleasure or satisfaction of the care provider
- Any touching used to express power or control over a child

4. Discipline and Classroom Management

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 work disciple, which means training that molds character, behaviour and values. Rather than seeking to merely maintain control or keeping a child quiet, our goal in managing a child's behaviour should be to shape their character in such a way that they will become disciples.

4.1 General Guidelines

- 4.1.1 Every camp program should have clearly defined rules and discipline procedures. Children may help establish some rules; teenagers should be involved in setting rules for their week.
- 4.1.2 Children and parents should be made aware of established rules and discipline procedures.
- 4.1.3 Ongoing discipline problems are to be brought to the attention of the Weekly Program Director.

4.2 Preventative Discipline

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

4.3 Remedial Discipline

- Try to 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 by defining the correct way to behave as well as the result of wrong behaviour
- Offer choices that are acceptable to both you and the child

4.4 Classroom Rule Suggestions

- One voice talking at a time
- Quiet hands get answered
- Use "indoor" voices
- Obey directions the first time
- Use good manners
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself

- Respect each other
- Be friendly
- Visit the washroom before class begins

4.5 Appropriate Discipline

Some examples of appropriate discipline at Camp might include

- Praising specific behaviour you would like to see (i.e. “good listening”, “thank you for waiting”)
- A firm gentle voice addressing and redirecting the behaviour (i.e. “you are running; walk please”)
- Age appropriate “time outs” or withdrawal from activity
- Discussion of the behaviour with the weekly director
- If required a phone call to the parents and potentially withdrawal from the program

4.6 Inappropriate Discipline

Some examples of inappropriate discipline at Camp might include, but not limited to

- Corporal punishment of any kind
- Any words or tone that would cause a child to think that they are the problem rather than a specific behaviour being addressed (i.e. screaming at a child)
- Any words that could cause feeling of condemnation or shame in a child about any aspect of their person – including derisive reference to anything physical, emotional, mental or position (station) in life (i.e. “Are you a strong boy? Strong boys don’t cry.” Or “Shame on you”)
- Withholding of food, water, snacks or tuck.

5. Washroom and Shower Guidelines

5.1 Camper Washroom Use

- 5.1.1 Campers are to use the public washrooms in the office building unless they require the use of an accessible washroom, which is located in the dining hall. Campers are not to use the bathrooms in the McKerlie house without permission.
- 5.1.2 Campers are to inform their counsellors or another staff member before going to the washroom building and report back to them when they are finished. Staff members must work with the campers to ensure that this takes place and take action if someone is gone for an unreasonable length of time.
- 5.1.3 If there is an issue in the washrooms it should be handled as privately and discreetly as possible by at least two staff members. The weekly director should be informed of the incident as soon as possible.

5.2 Counsellor and Staff Shower Use

Staff should use the shower facilities in the McKerlie House. Staff should never be alone in the shower area alone with a camper.

5.3 Changing Rooms and Showers

Two counsellors or other staff members should supervise the change room before and after swim time. If during swim a camper requires access to the change room they must let their counsellor know and the counsellor should ensure they return in a timely manner.

6. Health and Safety Guidelines

6.1 Sick Children

A child who is ill and could therefore expose other children and workers to illness should not be registered into the camp. Some signs of illness could include unusual fatigue or irritability, coughing, sneezing, runny nose and eyes, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, inflamed mouth and throat. Any child with a known communicable disease should not be registered into the camp.

6.2 Emergencies

- 6.2.1 Workers are not to give or apply any medication unless trained to do so. If a child need medicating it should be done by the Caregiver. No medication will be left in the classroom or the cabin, with a worker or a child. All medications will be stored as prescribed on the label and locked in the camp hospital. In extreme case (i.e. peanut allergies, ventilators etc.) where medication must be with the child at all times, arrangements should be made with written instructions and the permission of the child's parent.
- 6.2.2 Procedures will be reviewed annually for fire/evacuation emergencies. These procedures are posted in each classroom/area and state the planned route of escape. Weather permitting, a fire drill will be held each week.
- 6.2.3 First aid boxes are located in the camp office, kitchen and camp hospital. The Camp Manager is to be notified when supplies are used so that they may be restocked and will check contents at the beginning of each week. Contents are to be reviewed annually by a representative of the Personnel and Programs Committee

6.3 Procedures for Cuts or Injuries Involving Blood

- Separate the injured child from other children. Isolate the area where any blood may have dropped (i.e. carpet, toys etc.) Apply first aid measures and send someone to locate the Camp Caregiver
- If other children have had contact with any of the blood from the cut or injury, parents should be informed.
- Put on latex gloves (available at the Camp Hospital or first aid kits) and bandage the injury, avoiding contact with mouth, ears and eyes.

- Carefully wipe up all blood and bloody bandages and remove to a secure, inaccessible waste removal receptacle
- Any blood on the floor or toys must be washed away using a solution of one-part bleach to ten parts water
- Remove and properly dispose of latex gloves. Wash carefully with sterilizing soap.

6.4 Cleanliness

Cabins are to be cleaned daily. This can be done by the campers under the coordination of the counsellors. At the end of every week the cabins should be cleaned thoroughly by the counsellors and inspected by the weekly program director before they leave camp. Food should not be stored in the cabins, as this can encourage infestation of pests.

Classrooms should be cleaned daily by the teachers and cleaned thoroughly at the end of each week.

Washrooms are to be cleaned by the lifeguards at least daily, and more often if required. Campers may be enlisted to help with the cleaning as appropriate under the supervision of their counsellor.

The dining hall will be cleaned after each meal. Tables will be washed and sanitized, floors will be swept. Campers may be enlisted to help with the cleaning as appropriate under the supervision of their counsellor.

7. Field trips, sleep-outs & offsite hikes

7.1 Section Two Article 3 of Children, Youth and Workers Protection Policy

Approval, parental notification, supervision and staffing ratios as stated in the policy – Section Two, Article 3 are to be followed

7.2 Separate Release Form

Any camp activity that will involve campers leaving the property must have a separate signed release form filled out by a parent or guardian at the time of registration. Day hikes into the conservation land adjoining camp are the only exception to this rule.

7.3 Group Assignments

Each worker should have an assigned group of children or youth for whom they will be responsible for while in the community, on a hike or during an overnight event.

7.4 Ratios

A 1:8 ratio is ideal with a maximum of 1:10 ratio of adult to youth ratio should be maintained while in the community

7.5 One-on-One Situations

Special attention should be given to ensure that the groups stay together and no worker or child is in an unsupervised one-on-one situation.

7.6 Transportation

Transportation to and from camp programs should normally be provided by the parent(s). In the event that a camp staff member or volunteer must provide transportation for a child, one-one child to adult ratios are to be avoided.

7.7 Camp Provided Transportation

Where the camp is providing the transportation, the policy as stated in Section Two, Article 3 is to be followed.

8. Suspicious Behaviour

Some conduct deserves counsel and advice from a supervisor while other conduct requires reporting. See Incident Reporting Procedures in this policy should a legitimate allegation occur

8.1 Inappropriate Conduct or Relationships

Any inappropriate conduct or relationships between camp staff, volunteers or visitors and a child or youth must be confronted immediately and investigated.

8.2 Warnings

Prompt warnings must be issued when appropriate, and the situation monitored very closely.

8.3 Awareness

Camp staff should note when a child or youth appears aloof or withdrawn, or exhibits a marked personality change. This may indicate a problem that deserves attention. See Symptoms of Abuse in this policy.

Section Four: Understanding Child Abuse

1. Abuse – Definitions & Behaviours

Child abuse is defined as follows:

1.1 Physical Abuse

The use of physical force or action that results, or could result in injury to a child or youth. It is more than reasonable discipline. Sometimes injury is caused by over-discipline. Injuring a child or youth is not acceptable, regardless of differing cultural standards on discipline.

Note: In the context of the camp, it is not permissible to strike a child.

“In 97 per cent of reported cases of physical abuse, parents are the perpetrators. The perpetrator of physical abuse is approximately 1.5 times more likely to be male than female.” Wolfe, David. Child Abuse Implications for Child Development and Psychopathology. Newbury Park, California: Sage, 1987 P.20

1.2 Emotional Abuse

A pattern of hurting a child or youth’s feelings to the point of damaging their self-respect. It includes verbal attacks on the child, insults, humiliation or rejection. A child or youth who is emotionally harmed may demonstrate severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, self-destructive or aggressive behaviour.

1.3 Sexual Abuse

When a child or youth is used by somebody else for sexual stimulation or gratification. Sexual activity between children or youth may also be sexual abuse if older or more powerful children or youth take sexual advantage of those who are younger or less powerful

1.3.1 Child sexual abuse includes behaviour that involves touching and non-touching aspects

1.3.2 Types of abuse that involve touching include but not limited to

- Fondling
- Oral, genital and anal penetration
- Intercourse
- Forcible rape

1.3.3 Types of abuse that do not involve touching include but not limited to

- Pornographic videos
- Obscene phone calls
- Exhibitionism
- Allowing children to witness sexual activity
- Verbal comments

1.4 Neglect

The failure of those responsible for the care of the child to meet the physical, emotional or medical needs of a child to an extent that the child’s health, development or safety is endangered.

2. Understanding & Reducing the Risk

2.1 Mandate of Ministry

Camp Omagh has a mandate to minister to individuals, families, adults, youth, and children. In the context, the camp stresses the sanctity of human life and the importance and worth of each individual as a child of God

2.2 Commitment to Reasonable Protective Case

The disturbing and traumatic rise of physical and sexual abuse of children has claimed attention of our nation and society. Unfortunately, camps that have children's programs are not insulated from this alarming trend. In response to this trend, it is Camp Omagh's commitment to provide reasonable protective care to all children and youth attending any programs sponsored by Camp Omagh. The Camp is compelled to establish guidelines for the prevention of child abuse. The Camp recognizes that formal guidelines and procedures will help prevent the opportunity for abuse to arise.

2.3 Childhood Innocence

The Camp believes that childhood innocence is a gift given by God. Children readily place their faith in adults who care for them. It is our task as a camp to safeguard that trust.

2.4 Molestation Incidents

Incidents of molestation can occur in any camp – including Camp Omagh. Camps have traditionally accepted the services of anyone expressing an interest in working with children or youth. Camps can be trusting and unsuspecting institutions. Asking sensitive questions of those who are giving their time and talent can be seen as distasteful by camp leaders. No one wants to offend potential workers, especially long time camp volunteers with a history of good service. These qualities can make a camp susceptible to incidents of child molestation.

2.5 One Incident Can Cause Devastation

A single incident of child molestation can devastate a camp and divide the community. Stakeholders become outraged and bewildered. Parents question whether their own children have been victimized. The camp's youth and children's programs are jeopardized and camp leaders face blame for allowing the incident to happen.

Such incidents often result in massive media attention, sometimes on a national scale. Television stations conduct live interviews from camp property on the evening news. Front page stories hit the local paper. Community residents begin to associate the camp with the incident of molestation. But far more tragic is the emotional trauma to the victim and the victim's family, and the enormous potential legal liability the camp faces. If a trial ensues, the issue stays alive in the media for months, sometimes even years.

3. Symptoms of Abuse and Molestation

3.1 Physical, Behavioural and Verbal Signs

Camp volunteers and staff should be alert to the physical signs of abuse and molestation, as well as to behavioural and verbal signs that a victim may exhibit. A one-time event would not necessarily constitute a potential abuse case; sudden unexplained changes, however, would warrant investigation. Some of the more common signs are summarized below

3.1.1 Physical Signs

- Lacerations and bruises

- Nightmares
- Irritation, pain or injury to the genital area
- Difficulty with urination
- Discomfort when sitting
- Torn or bloody underclothing
- Venereal disease

3.1.2 Behavioural Signs

- Anxiety when approaching camp areas
- Nervous or hostile behaviour toward adults
- Sexual self-consciousness
- “Acting Out” sexual behaviour
- Withdrawal from activities and friends

3.1.3 Verbal Signs

- “I don’t like (names a particular person)”
- “(Particular Person) does things to me when we’re alone”
- “I don’t like to be alone with (particular person)”
- “(Particular Person) fooled around with me”

4. The Effects of Child Sexual Abuse

4.1 Effects

Child sexual abuse robs children of their childhood and can potentially scar its young victims for life. Too often in the past, the effects of abuse were minimized or dismissed. Children were viewed as being resilient. Recent research has shown that children can suffer significant pain from even a single abusive incident. Camp Stakeholders must be aware of the pain and long term suffering that can accompany such abuse. Abused children can display a wide range of negative symptoms in the aftermath of abuse. Abuse can result in abnormal fears, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), aggressive behaviour, sexual “acting out”, depression, diffused sexual identity, and poor self-esteem. Ksendall-Tackett, Williams and Finkelhor, 1991

The incidence of sexually transmitted disease is also a possible outcome.

4.2 Degree of Damage

The degree of damage depends upon several factors including the intensity, duration and frequency of the abuse. In addition, the relationship of the perpetrator to the child matters. If the abuser is a known and trusted authority figure in the child’s life, the degree of impact increases dramatically

4.3 Consequences

Consequences of child sexual abuse can plague victims into adulthood. Outcome studies of adult survivors of child sexual abuse suggest the following effects: sexual dysfunction, eating disorders, substance abuse, promiscuity, disassociation from emotions, and possible perpetration of sexual abuse on others. When trusted leaders perpetrate the abuse, lifelong religious confusion and deep feelings of enmity toward God and the church can occur.

5. The Profile of a Child Molester

5.1 Typical Child Molester

Researchers in the field of child sexual abuse currently indicate that no one profile fits the various perpetrators of abuse. Camp leaders can become preoccupied screening stereotypes, while not suspecting the real molester could be an active adult or teen in the camp.

If abuse occurs at Camp Omagh, a respected member will most likely be the molester. Emphasis upon “stranger danger” will leave Camp ill prepared. While it’s uncomfortable even to consider this, the most likely assailants include teachers, counsellors, caregivers, volunteers and hired staff members. Trusted adults – male or female – can easily mislead children and most incidents of child sexual abuse take place in the context of an ongoing relationship between the abuser and the child.

Section Five: Understanding Camp Omagh’s Legal Vulnerability

1. Why Camps Are Susceptible

Camps have unique features that can make them susceptible to incidents of child molestation. This risk increases dramatically for overnight activities.

1.1 Access

The Boy Scouts, Big Brothers/Sisters, and similar organizations have instituted comprehensive programs to reduce the risk of child molestation. Child molesters are attracted to an institution in which they have immediate access to potential victims in an atmosphere of complete trust.

1.2 Need

Most camps struggle to get adequate help for children and youth programs. Recruiting camp counsellors, for example, can become an unending effort. Turnover among volunteer workers is also high. A willing volunteer worker provides welcome relief.

Camps need to understand the extent of their liability. Camps are not “guarantors” of the safety and well-being of children. They are not absolutely liable for every injury that occurs on their premises or in the course of their activities. Generally, they are responsible only for those injuries that result from their negligence. Victims of molestation who have sued a camp often allege that the camp was negligent in not adequately screening applicants or for not providing adequate supervision

2. The Civil and Legal Liability of Camp Omagh

Increasingly and often more dramatically, the camp and its personnel (i.e. staff, directors, board members and volunteers) are being held accountable for the acts of individual abusers within the camp even though neither the camp, nor its leaders were aware of the abuse or condoned it. Camps

are being sued in Civil Courts for damages sustained by victims and their families. Those victims and their families are attempting to hold camps accountable by alleging that:

- the camp is vicariously liable for the acts of its personnel, be they paid or volunteer staff, regardless of whether the camp was itself negligent or even knew of the abuse,
- the camp was negligent in its hiring or accepting personnel, whether paid or volunteer, and
- the camp was negligent in the supervising or monitoring of its personnel, volunteers and visitors.

Section Six: Incident Reporting Procedures

“Any person who has reasonable and probably ground to believe that a child is in need of protective services shall forthwith report the matter to the local police authorities for intervention.” – Unknown

“Those of you who work with children are the front line in defending their right to grow up in a caring environment. Your early and supportive intervention can prevent child abuse and further family dysfunction.” – Unknown

Anticipated Abuse:

Abuse or neglect need not have already occurred for a child to be in need of protection; it is not necessary to wait until a child is harmed to intervene. When abuse or neglect can be reasonably anticipated and there are reasonable grounds to believe a child is in need of protection, the legal obligation to report applies.

Historical Abuse:

Abuse or neglect that occurred in the not very recent past, must be reported wherever there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child may be in need of protection. If the alleged offender is in regular contact with a child or children, irrespective of whether it is the same child or children abused in the past, there may be grounds to believe that the child or children are at risk based on the offender’s past behaviour. It is particularly vital to report these cases where the alleged abuser is in a position of trust concerning children, such as a teaching position.

1. Reporting of Concern

1.1 Who Should Report

Any person has any concerns regarding the safety of a child(ren) it should be reported immediately to the Weekly Program Director.

1.2 Confidentiality

In these matters it is important to keep the information restricted to those who need to be advised. Suspicions of abuse should therefore only be reported to the weekly program director. It becomes that person’s responsibility to contact the local police authorities, who are best equipped to handle such issues.

The only claim of confidentiality, which overrides the legal duty to report is solicitor-client privilege. Thus physicians, clergymen and others who consider their professional relationships confidential for certain purposes are not exempt from the duty to report child abuse or neglect.

1.3 Reporting

The weekly program director will work with the informant to document the concern, noting all efforts at handling the incident (Appendix B). This report will be forwarded to the executive of the Camp Omagh Board immediately (i.e. preferably within the hour).

1.4 Assessment

The weekly program director, Camp Manager, and head of personnel and program committee will assess the incident to determine if it requires reporting

1.5 Staff Member Involvement

Where a staff member, volunteer or paid, is involved in the suspicious behaviour or allegation, the executive of the Camp Omagh Board is to be immediately advised.

2. When a Legitimate Allegation Occurs

2.1 Communication with Camp Contacts

The personnel and program committee chair (or designate) will continue to communicate with those who need to be informed at the Camp (i.e. the weekly program director, Camp Manager and Executive Members of the Camp Omagh Board)

2.2 Communication with Authorities & Legal Representative

The personnel and program committee chair (or designate) is also responsible to contact and report the incident to the local police authorities and Camp's legal representative – such an incident is not to be handled without outside professional assistance.

2.3 Staff Member Involvement

If the incident involves a camp staff member, volunteer or paid, a team of three members to include two board members and the person with "reasonable grounds" shall interview the person suspected of child abuse. Immediate suspension of duties shall result when a camp staff member is suspected of child abuse and reasonable evidence exists as to their alleged involvement until a complete investigation and decision has been made. The executive of the board will make a decision to maintain or suspend their income until the allegations are cleared or substantiated.

2.4 Cautionary Notes

Do not attempt an in-depth investigation. This should be left to professionals who are familiar with these cases.

Do not prejudge the situation, but take the allegations seriously and reach out to the victim and the victim's family. Showing care and support will help to prevent further hurt. Extend whatever support is possible. Remember that the care and safety of the victim is the first priority. In some situations, camps have responded in a negative or non-supportive manner to the alleged victim. This can increase the anger and pain of the victim and the victim's family. Future reconciliation will be more difficult. The possibility of damaging litigation increases.

Treat the accused with dignity and support.

3. Response to the Child

3.1 Every Report Is Serious

When the child or parent of the child first comes, be sure to take their work seriously. Do not deny the problem, but stay calm and listen to the child or parent.

3.2 Give Support

Give emotional support, reminding the child that they are not at fault. Tell the child that they were right to disclose the problem.

3.3 Do Not Promise

Do not promise the child that no one will be told.

3.4 Do Not Interview or Suggest Anything

Workers should never interview the child in detail or suggest to the child that they have been abused.

4. The Child Welfare Report

The chairperson of the Personnel and Program Committee is required to immediately report to the local police authorities any suspected case of child abuse. It is not a breach of confidence between the camp personnel and the child involved. No person is personally liable for anything done or omitted in good faith in the exercise of this responsibility. Camp leaders, aware of their accountability to God, acknowledge their responsibility to defend and protect God's little ones. It is also the desire of Camp Omagh to protect the parents as much as legally possible from undue interference by outside authorities into their family. We want to follow the principles of submitting to governing authorities (Romans 13:1) while at the same time helping parents to exercise child discipline that is consistent with Scripture, and in the best interest of the children.

4.1 Contents of the Report

As part of a child protection investigation, social workers are required under the Child Welfare Act to assess:

- The child's current state of health
- Their sense of safety and their views of abuse
- Previous abuse, neglect or harm; and

- The ability of the parent(s) to care and protect the child

The social worker will talk to people who have contact with the child and family. They may request records or other types of information. They are entitled to whatever information is needed to complete the investigation. If denied access to a record, they can seek a court order

4.2 Responsibility and Process

Within the camp, all requests for information regarding a child are to be referred to the Personnel and Program committee chairperson. The following process should be followed at all times to ensure the health and safety of the child.

- 4.2.1 Contact the local police authorities' office to report that an incident has occurred.
- 4.2.2 A worker will then contact the camp
- 4.2.3 Any request from a child protection social worker should be in person and the protection worker should carry and show photo ID.
- 4.2.4 If the request is urgent, and the child protection social worker is unable to visit the facility and show photo ID, the protection social worker may telephone from their office.
Note:
 - a. The social worker is to identify themselves
 - b. They are to explain the information they are requesting and the process to be followed
 - c. They will not ask for information at this time. Do not give information at this time
 - d. Verify the social worker's identification by calling the agency, checking with the telephone directory for the agency office number etc.
 - e. Once identification has been established, provide whatever information is requested
 - f. Ask to be kept informed of future developments in the case.
- 4.2.5 If identification of the social worker cannot be confirmed the Personnel and Programs committee chairperson is not to give out any information. Request a personal meeting, and have the worker bring photo ID.

Be extra careful with calls by cell phone and do not respond to calls from a pay phone.

Social workers designated to receive reports are trained to investigate and assess the need for intervention. Other professionals must not assume this function. A professional who does so and fails to report commits an offence. The Act protects an individual when a report is made. No action would be taken against a person making a report unless it is made maliciously or without ground for belief.

5. Camp Follow-up and Discipline

5.1 Staff Involvement

If it is found that child abuse by a staff member of the camp has taken place, this staff member will not be permitted on the camp grounds or at any camp activity.

5.2 Parent Protection

The camp should protect parents as much as legally possible from undue interference by outside authorities into their family life.

5.3 Support for Victim & Families

The camp should ask the local policy authorities if it could assist in helping the hurting family.

5.4 Support for the Accused

The camp should maintain frequent communication and supportive relationships with those suspected or guilty of child abuse as long as these persons exhibit a willingness to listen, change and look to Christ for help.

5.5 Professional Counselling

These actions do not exclude the need for hurting individuals to receive professional counselling.

6. Public Relations

6.1 Camp Spokesperson

The Personnel and Program committee chair (or designate) should serve as the only spokesperson for any allegation.

6.2 Identity of Spokesperson

Everyone involved in any part of the ministry of the Camp should be made aware of who this person is, and make no comment but refer all inquiries to the chairperson of the Personnel and Program committee. They will speak to the media and the camp community regarding the matter, if required, in a discreet, informed, truthful and diplomatic way.

6.3 Initial Comment

The following statement will be used and any further comments will be decided with legal counsel. A “No comment” statement is not to be made. This is the opportunity to influence public opinion positively by emphasizing an awareness of the problem of child abuse, a concern for victims, and the extensive steps taken by the Camp to reduce risk and provide a safe environment for children.

It is always tragic when children are abused or exploited. Camp Omagh is aware of the ever-growing nature of child abuse. We have taken precautions to protect the children entrusted to our care. We are distressed by any accusation of child abuse. We will do everything in our power to address any needs in this situation. For the welfare of those involved, all information has been directed to the appropriate agencies and authorities.

6.4 Inappropriate Responses

Often when confronted with an allegation of abuse, the camp may be tempted to:

- Deny that the incident occurred, despite clear evidence to the contrary;
- Acknowledge that the incident occurred, but minimized it (i.e. “It only happened once” or “It wasn’t that serious”)
- Blame the victim or the victim’s family

All these responses are inappropriate and are to be avoided.

Section Seven: Recruiting & Training Procedures

1. Recruitment of Paid Staff and Volunteers

1.1 Application Form

To protect minors in our care and to be protected from liability, the camp must take reasonable action in screening and supervising the workers involved in any children’s work. A court can find the Camp legally liable if it is less than systematic and therefore negligent in screening volunteers. By having everyone fill out an application form and keeping them on file, the Camp greatly reduces the potential for child abuse and the resultant liability. Our staffing and child protection policies and guidelines also serve to protect workers from accusation

1.2 Volunteer Staff Submission

Weekly Program Directors will submit names of all proposed staff members to the Camp Registrar

1.3 Volunteer Registration Form

The Volunteer Registration Form should be submitted by the volunteer to the Camp Registrar. The registrar will then supply the volunteer with a letter authorizing a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) on behalf of the Camp.

1.4 Communication

The Camp Registrar will work with the Weekly Program Director to ensure that all volunteer staff members have completed their application form and VSC prior to arriving at Camp.

1.5 List of Approved Volunteers

Each Weekly Program Director should keep a list of workers approved to work in the program.

2. Reference Check

2.1 Personal References

Two personal references are requested on the volunteer registration form. Please do not use relatives or employers. Minors may use parents or teachers as one reference. Suggested references are:

- Minister or church leader
- Other individuals who have served with the individual in children or youth work and who have sufficient strength of relationship to comment on the individual's personal habits and character
- Try to include one reference from inside the church

2.2 Contact of References

References will be contacted and asked to affirm the appointment of the volunteer as appropriate. The person making the contact will use a suggested script, and the name of this individual, the date and a summary of the reference's comments will all be recorded.

2.3 Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the weekly director to check the references for all volunteer staff they recruit who are not known to them personally (counsellors, bible teachers, activity directors etc.) If there is any doubt, ask for and check references. It is the responsibility of the Personnel and Program committee to check the references of the volunteer and staff they recruit (paid staff, kitchen volunteers, caregivers etc.)

3. Interview

3.1 Purpose of an Interview

An interview provides the recruiter with opportunity to review the important items from the application form in a personal setting. This allows them to ask follow up questions and to enhance their knowledge of the applicant. The interview will also allow the potential staff member the opportunity of asking questions about various children's ministries and the reason's behind our child, youth and worker protection procedures. The interview will be conducted by the Weekly Program Director for their weekly volunteers or by the Personnel and Program committee for staff and volunteers they recruit.

4. Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC)

4.1 Request Letter

Each approved volunteer or paid staff member will be provided with a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) request letter, instructions for obtaining from their local police authority, and a Verification of Request form to immediately submit to the screening committee if there is not sufficient time to complete the check before the camp session.

4.2 Ineligibility

Any individual who will not submit to this procedure will be ineligible to be involved with children on behalf of the camp.

4.3 Cost

The cost of any VSC requested by Camp Omagh will be borne by the Camp.

4.4 Exemption

Volunteers under eighteen (18) years of age are exempt from the VSC

4.5 VSC Expiration

VSC's are required, minimally, every two years. The volunteer or paid staff member will be notified by the Camp Registrar when an update is required.

4.6 Verification of Request Form

New volunteers or paid staff members may begin working for the camp after the Verification of Request form has been submitted to the screening committee. This grace period will not extend past the current camp season

4.7 VSC Submission

The VSC is to be picked up from the local police authority by the volunteer or paid staff member and the original or a copy may be submitted to the Camp Registrar's office in an envelope marked 'CONFIDENTIAL' with their name on the outside, to the attention of the screening committee

4.8 VSC – No Record

If there is no criminal record of any sort, the volunteer may be considered for ongoing service in the Camp.

4.9 VSC – Record

If there is a record or information that raises some concern, a member of the personnel and program committee and weekly program director will meet to discuss the matter.

If the offence is other than child or sexual abuse, the volunteer may proceed with ministry in the Camp provided both the chair of Personnel and Program Committee and the Weekly Program Director involved agree. The following are criteria to consider when evaluating the information:

- The number of convictions
- The age and circumstances of the offender at the time of the offence
- The length of time between past criminal activity and the present
- The conduct and circumstances of the individual since the offence
- The likelihood of the individual repeating the offence

If the offence to abuse of minors or of a sexual nature, the worker may not be involved in ministry with minors on behalf of Camp Omagh.

5. Camp records

5.1 VSC and Application Forms

All screening records, including the initial VSC and the completed volunteer registration form, will be sealed in an envelope on completion of the screening process and placed in the individual's confidential screening file by the Camp Registrar or Office Assistant

5.2 Review Notes

Information pertinent to the supervision or involvement with age groups other than that initially screened for should be recorded on a separate file memo and made privy only to those on a need to know basis (i.e. Personnel and Program committee, weekly program directors, or other appropriate senior staff such as the board of directors)

5.3 Security

Screening records will be maintained in a locked cupboard or cabinet in the Camp administration offices.

5.4 Permissions

Only those listed in Article 5.2 above and the individual themselves will be permitted access to the screening file.

5.5 Access of Files

Two people should be present each time a record is accessed and the file access log must be completed. During Camp Season the files will be overseen by the Camp Registrar or Office Assistant

5.6 Length of Records

Screening files should be kept for seventy-five (75) years.

6. Training

6.1 Training and Acknowledgement

All volunteers and paid staff members will be equipped with training regarding child safety and child abuse prevention. Each worker must sign an acknowledgement (Appendix C) indicating they have been trained or have read through this policy. That record will be kept in the individuals screening file.

7. Disqualifying Criminal Convictions & Religious Conversion

7.1 Disqualifying Criminal Convictions

A criminal conviction for a sexual offence involving a minor would certainly disqualify an applicant. In the case of pedophilic behaviour (molestation of a pre-adolescent child) such a conviction should disqualify an individual no matter how long ago it occurred, because of the virtual impossibility that such a condition can be 'cured'. Other automatic disqualifiers would include but not limited to incest, rape, assaults involving minors, murder, kidnapping, child pornography and the physical abuse of a minor.

7.2 Should religious conversion make a difference for a worker who has been guilty of child molestation in the past?

Occasionally, such persons freely admit to a prior incident, but insist that they have since had a conversion experience and that they now present no risk whatever. The safest course would be to encourage such an individual to work in the camp but in a position not involving access to children or youth. This is a reasonable accommodation of the individual's desire to serve Camp Omagh. Any camp that permits such an individual to work with children or youth, on the basis of the professed religious conversion, will have a virtually indefensible position should another incident of molestation occur. A defence – that the molester claimed to have been converted – would likely be viewed with derision by a civil court. Putting a known child molester in a position involving access to children is take a huge risk.

Section Eight: Implementation Procedures

The topic of child abuses and our prevention policies will create a variety of reactions among corporation members, volunteers and stakeholders. Many will be in favour of the concept. Others will have questions and reservations. It is important for leadership to continually provide prospective workers and vested interested groups the need for such a policy then give them opportunities for providing feedback. The topic can be presented at the Annual General Meeting. Camp Omagh's Screening Committee will be available to answer concerns and provide specific answers about this particular aspect of the camp's policies.

1. Presenting this Policy

1.1 Key Points

The following key points should be made:

- Child sexual abuse can happen in our camp
- One incident can devastate a child, a family and the camp
- The legal liabilities can be enormous
- Camp leaders may be held liable
- Prevention program can reduce risk through relatively simple procedures

1.2 Access

This policy shall be made freely available on the Camp website. Other training documents on this policy may be posted on the website as required, as well as links to videos and websites related to this topic

1.3 Periodic Reminder

It is important to periodically inform the corporation of the key issues pertaining to child sexual abuse and why a decision was made to establish a prevention plan. This will continue to nurture an emotional commitment within the corporate membership to maintain a safe camp environment for all children and youth.

1.4 Presentation Climate

The climate in these presentations should not be one of sober reflection but of hope. Camp wants the people to realize that the Board of Directors are taking action to minister to this need. The focus should be upon the great responsibility God has given to us to care for the children and youth in the care of Camp.

2. Monitoring of Policy

2.1 Board of Director Responsibilities

The board of directors should thoroughly review this policy and its procedures as part of their preparation for the Camp season.

2.2 Constant Review

After initial emphasis on the policy begins to wane, volunteer and staff may begin to ignore basic policy (i.e. The Two Adult Rule). Attention must be given to periodic monitoring that examines the following:

- Have all volunteer and paid staff been trained regarding these policies?
- Are volunteer and paid staff following the required policies and guidelines?
- What obstacles exist in complying with the policies?
- What is the level of cooperation?
- Do sufficient materials exist for training and information?
- Are the policies printed and available?

2.3 Weekly Program Directors

Thoroughly discuss each policy and procedure with weekly directors. Work through all concerns. If problems exist in the policies, they should be brought to the attention of the Policy Review Committee. Consider revisions, but changes must not sacrifice the integrity of the program. Work at developing a sense of unity before educating volunteers and paid staff.

3. Educate Volunteer and Paid Staff

3.1 Routine and Training Materials

Routines must be established for the training of all new volunteers and paid staff who serve the Camp. Training materials for each camp season should be prepared and approved by the Personnel and Programs Committee. Other training materials like videos, quizzes and discussion questions may be used as well.

3.2 Training Sessions

Training sessions should be scheduled before the start of each program week to ensure all weekly staff understand and comply with the policy. This session should involve reading and reviewing the training material approved by the Personnel and Program Committee. Other resources like quizzes, multimedia and discussion groups can be used as required.

3.3 Individuals at a Later Date

Individuals who begin at a later date should meet with a designated person to review the policies and procedures and to complete the screening form. These individuals should review the same training materials as used in the training session.

4. Screening Volunteers and Paid Staff Already Serving

Those who are scheduled to serve in at the Camp Omagh prior to December 31, 2020, and who have served in at Camp Omagh in the past will not be routinely interviewed or have references checked. They will however be required to complete the screening application form and obtain a Vulnerable Sector Check. Final decision will be made on the review of application.