

“A Safe Environment for All”

Purpose

Camp Harding is a camping facility operated for the Qu’Appelle diocesan. For years it has been a haven for our children and adults to enjoy the beauty afforded to us by our loving God and a place to share together in friendship, fellowship and learning the teachings of our Lord. The intent and purpose of this policy is to ensure that Camp Harding remains a safe place for each of us. With the following guidelines and in conjunction with ongoing education, we will strive to:

- . Protect all children from any form of abuse,
- . Prevent injury in any way
- . Protect all leaders, camp staff and volunteers from false allegations of abuse or negligence.

Definitions

“Abuse” – includes physical abuse, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.

“Physical Abuse” – is a non-accidental act that violates the dignity of the image of God in another person, inflicting dehumanizing pain or injury. Physically abusive behaviour also includes physical neglect, which means not doing what one is supposed to be doing to meet the physical needs of someone in his or her care.

“Emotional Abuse” – is any attempt to control another person’s life through words, threats, fears, and/or deprivation in such a way that it impairs a person’s god given sense of self worth.

“Sexual Abuse” – is any sexual experience forced on one person by another which may or may not involve physical contact between people. Sexual abuse also includes any role-inappropriate sexual encounter, even if consensual at the time.

“Staff Members” – includes all staff members, paid or unpaid, ordained or lay members and participants, leaders or teachers, volunteers, consultants and employees in place during Camp Harding sponsored events. Without limiting this definition in any way, those transporting children and youth to and from camp sponsored events are considered to be staff members. During any events sponsored by area churches, individuals or other rental groups, the

responsibility for staff at Camp Harding's, falls upon the area churches, individuals or other rental groups utilizing the facility.

Policy Statement

Camp Harding is committed to providing a safe environment for all who participate in activities at or facilitated by Camp Harding.

Camp Harding will not tolerate, and will seek a means to eradicate any behaviour by its staff members that constitutes abuse.

Camp Harding will maintain a two-person policy so that at least 2 adults are present at activities.

Access to Information

All area churches in the Camp Harding District will be advised that this policy exists and will be forwarded a copy which can be held on their files. As well, a copy of the policy will be provided to any individual requesting it.

A copy of the policy will also be maintained at the Maple Creek Church Office where anyone attending the camp while staff members are in attendance, can request access to it for review.

Before Working with Children

All new staff members will review this policy and will sign an application form that includes a statement that they have read the policy (a sample is attached) and understand the contents.

All new volunteer staff member must have a police security check completed prior to the commencement of their duties. These forms will also be processed by the camp registrar on behalf of the camp board.

All Current and/or new paid staff members will have the same requirements as noted above except that all forms will be processed by the chairperson of the board/committee members. Camp Harding will assume the cost of processing any security checks for staff members.

Final approval or denial of the appointment of a volunteer staff member will take place after the camp registrar receives the results of the criminal history for any staff members. The results of any security checks will be held on file and considered valid for a period of two years. Reference checks must be completed yearly. All staff will require name tags.

Process if Abuse is alleged

When a child or youth comes forward with an allegation of abuse, it is important to take his or her word seriously. The following advice is given to any staff member who receives this information.

- . Do not deny the problem, stay calm and listen to the allegation from the child/youth
- . Give emotional support reminding the child/youth that they are not at fault and they were right in telling you the problem
- . Complete an incident form (see attached)
- . Notify the director of the camp or supervisor of the event

If abuse of any kind is observed or a direct disclosure is made or if it is suspected that a child is at risk, staff members, parents or concerned individuals will immediately speak to the director of the camp or the supervisor of the event regarding the issue. It is important to keep this information confidential at all times.

- . Whenever the camp director or supervisor of the event receives information regarding abuse, they are to apprise the chairman of Camp Harding or their designate.
- . If the accusation is against the camp director or supervisor of the event, the issue will be shared confidentially with the chairman of Camp Harding or their designate.
- . The action or response to an accusation is to be initiated by the chairman of Camp Harding or their designate. Both the accused and accuser will be separated from the group immediately and kept under supervision until authorities arrive.
- . Any child abuse or suspected child abuse will be reported to the Camp Director, who will in turn report to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police as required by law. Failure to do so is an offence. The chairman of Camp Harding or their designate will assist staff members in making this report.
- . If the person accused is a staff member, the procedures outlined below in this policy will be followed.
- . If a person serving under call is accused, the Policy on Sexual Misconduct of persons serving under all or appointment by Camp Harding will be followed.

Where Abuse is Alleged or injury occurs in Non-Abuse Situations

The chairman of Camp Harding or their designate will report the matter to a lawyer obtained by Camp Harding. The lawyer should be present when answering any instigative questions from the police or social service agencies.

Camp Harding staff should not attempt an in-depth investigation on its own. This should be left to professionals who are familiar with these cases.

GUIDELINES IN SUPPORT OF THE POLICY

Child Protection Procedures

Child Security

Staff members who work with children should ensure that these children are released only into the care of the child's parent or designate.

All staff members should avoid being isolated with only one child/youth of any age. If it appears that one child/youth may be left with the staff member in an isolated situation, where possible the staff members should ask the second last child and/or their parents to remain until the last child can also be released to their parents or designate.

When it is necessary that only one staff member is in a closed room with children, the door of the room should remain open at all times.

Any significant problem affecting a child must be reported to the child's parents immediately.

An emergency exit plan with maps and procedures should be visible in each area in which children and youth gather. All staff members should make themselves familiar with the emergency exit plan.

Transportation of Children/Youth

Anyone providing transportation to children/youth for Camp Harding sponsored events must:

- . Be 18 years of age or older
- . Carry adequate insurance coverage
- . Maintain the vehicle in good repair

- . Have a valid full driver's license
- . Have adequate working seat belts available for all passengers
- . Maintain an environment that provides for safe driving (e.g. no talking on a cell phone, controlling passengers so that they are not a distraction to the driver, maintaining appropriate speed, etc.)

Class guidelines – To apply where any group of children gather

Camp Harding seeks to provide a safe, loving space where each child feels comfortable and fellowship and learning can take place.

Staff members between the ages of 13 & 17 may supervise a group of children. When staff members in this age group are involved in supervision of any sort, it is:

- . Recommended that they do so under the supervision of a person 18 years of age or older.
- . It is important that the open door policy be enforced
- . It is preferable that at least two younger staff members work together

Family ministry teams often work well together. In order to protect such teams from false accusations: we recommend the presence of at least one other staff member not related to the family.

Children/youth should not leave their group except for illness, washroom visits or other compelling reasons. Staff members are to ensure that any child/youth that leaves the group should return promptly or be given over to the supervision of another staff member (e.g. staff nurse).

Discipline:

All discipline is to be carried out in love, not anger. The goal of discipline is to teach changed behaviour, never vengeance. The following guidelines apply for all programs involving children and youth.

When the behaviour of a child or youth is not appropriate, staff should try to:

- . Distract the child/youth with another activity or another more acceptable behaviour
- . Isolate the child/youth from others (time out)

Parents of a child are to be informed and involved whenever the behaviour of a child or youth is not appropriate, beyond a minor correction, or if a frequency of such inappropriate behavior increases.

No corporal punishment is appropriate in any circumstances (e.g. no spanking, hitting, slapping or other physical punishment).

Abusive verbal punishment, such as yelling and insults, is not permitted.

Washroom guidelines

No staff member should be alone with a child in an unsupervised washroom except as outlined in these guidelines. In no case should a staff member go into a cubical with a child and close the door.

Children requiring assistance in the washroom should be accompanied by two staff members: one to assist and one to oversee. The cubical door should remain open at all times.

Displays of Affection

Physical contact with children and youth should be age and developmentally appropriate. Staff members need to be aware of and sensitive to, differences in sexual development, cultural customs, family backgrounds, individual personalities and special needs.

To ensure that all displays of affection represent pure, genuine and positive display of God's love, the following guidelines are provided;

- . Bending down to a child's level and speaking kindly; listening to the child carefully
- . Taking a child's hand and leading the child to an activity
- . Putting an arm around the shoulder of a child who needs comforting and quieting.
- . Taking both of the child's hands as you affirm the child (e.g. "You did a great job"; "I'm glad to see you" etc.)
- . Patting a child on the head, hand, shoulders or back to affirm the child
- . Holding a child who is crying must be done openly

The following is inappropriate behaviour and should not occur:

- . Kissing a child/youth or coaxing a child/youth to kiss you, extended hugging or tickling

- . Touching a child/youth in any area that would be covered by a bathing suit (except when assisting with washroom visits as outlined above)
- . Carrying older children/youth (no piggy backing) or having them sit on your lap
- . Being alone with a child/youth

Youth Leaders or Counsellors

Youth leaders or counsellors will not date youth members attending at any Camp or event regardless of their ages.

Displays of affection among youth leaders or counsellors and participants of any camp or event should always take place in public and in the presence of other people and should be limited to actions such as:

- . A brief hug
- . An open arm around the shoulder
- . An open pat on the back
- . A handclasp or hand shake
- . A light touch to the forearm

Gift giving should be limited to small tokens given to all participants. Phone calls or letters of a personal nature should relate to matters that cannot be interpreted sexual or of a “courting” nature.

Games and activities

No games/activities/are to be used that would bring embarrassment or shame to any participant. Games and activities should not involve undressing or inappropriate touching or behaviour.

INCIDENT FORM

Who is making the complaint?

.Name _____

. Position (e.g. parent, pastor, person alleging abuse) _____

Alleged victim information:

. Name _____

. Age _____

. Sex _____

. Position within the Camping program (student, leader) _____

Alleged accused information: _____

. Name _____

. Age _____

. Sex _____

. Position within the Camping program _____

Date of alleged incident: _____

Time off day: Morning _____ Afternoon _____ Evening _____

Location of the alleged incident: _____

