



Leading with Care

*A Policy for Ensuring a Climate of Safety for Children,
Youth and Vulnerable Adults in The Presbyterian Church
in Canada*

Guide to Implementation of the Policy at Parkwood Church

Part 1: Preamble: Extracts from the Leading with Care Policy of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Part 2: Policies and Procedures for Reducing Risk in Parkwood Church Activities.

The Policy Statement

It is the policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada that all persons, and in particular all children, youth and vulnerable adults, who participate in the denomination's programs/ministries and/or use the denomination's facilities will be cared for with Christian compassion and will be safe.

PART 1- PREAMBLE (Extracts from PCC Policy)

01.1 Reasons for the *Leading with Care* Policy

The *Leading with Care* policy is not about us as individuals. It is about us as a body of Christ — a denomination — trying to ensure the highest quality of ministry by offering our best to Christ and working to make sure that the worst does not happen. It is a time for entering the age of lost innocence, whether real or imagined.

All would agree that we should care for children/youth/vulnerable adults and follow the ways of Jesus. So, why is this policy necessary? Because children, youth and vulnerable adults are precious to us and we want to ensure that their teachers and leaders are equipped and trained in the best ways to nurture their faith journey. We also want to assure them, their parents and guardians that there is safety in our programs.

While we believe that religious institutions are supposed to be safe places, public media reminds us that it has not always been so. Despite careful procedures, abuse and unsafe practices have occurred in congregations where no one would expect it by people no one would question. To say “It can’t happen here” is not supported by what some people have heard, seen or experienced.

We also know that when vulnerable people are taken advantage of, it dishonours the name of Christ and the church. It dishonours the good work that many faithful servants have contributed over many years. Fifty years of faithful ministry could be seriously undermined by the act of one person. Therefore, our task is to uphold the name of Christ and to protect the work that has been achieved in our congregations. One way to protect is to make sure we have policies and procedures in place that, as best we can, provide a safe environment. The Presbyterian Church in Canada is committed to providing safe environments for all persons, including children, youth, vulnerable adults, and those who minister to and with them. The church’s ministry includes times of worship, service, study and play in all milieus (e.g. church courts, congregations, camps) that fall under the jurisdiction of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. All staff, both volunteer and paid, must support this policy.

The following action statements describe both the reasons for this policy and The Presbyterian Church in Canada’s active commitment to it:

- We will **prevent** abuse of children/youth/vulnerable adults. Prevention includes having good processes in place in order to prevent opportunities for abuse, neglect and harm from arising.
- We will **protect** the vulnerable in our midst. The Presbyterian Church in Canada affirms that the protection of all children, youth and vulnerable adults is a spiritual, ethical and legal imperative.
- We will **report** incidents of abuse, neglect and harm. Such incidents, wherever and whenever they are encountered, will be reported immediately to the minister, the police, and the appropriate agencies in accordance with civil law requirements and the policies of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.
- We will **train and support** our teachers and leaders. Many congregations already have in place a process for recruiting, training, supervising and supporting teachers and congregational leaders. One of the reasons for this policy is to provide ways for congregations to begin, continue and/or improve on this process so that teachers and leaders are well trained and equipped for their ministry tasks.

1.2 History of the Policy

The Presbyterian Church in Canada, through its *FLAMES* Initiative, focused on children, youth and young adults in 2000. In that year, national staff and the national advisory committee for children and youth (Covenant Community with Children and Youth) began to draft a policy for the protection and care of children and youth. This policy arose from an awareness of the biblical imperative to follow the example of Jesus in assuring that the young, weak and vulnerable in our midst are cared for, cherished and protected. It also arose from a variety of practical questions directed to church offices and the national committee over the years such as these: Does our church have a policy around youth being billeted in private homes? Do church programs have appropriate ratios of leaders to children? Does the church have national regulations about sleepovers in church facilities?

The process of developing a draft protection policy began in 2000 and continued to 2005. The committee and staff for children and youth talked with the Experimental Fund administrator, the congregation of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Lakeshore, which was drafting a comprehensive congregational policy and other congregations in Canada which had drafted their own congregational protection policies. In addition, they looked at protection policies of other denominations. In 2002, an insurance concern arose when the insurance broker (Marsh Canada), which covers approximately 200 of our congregations, required more extensive implementation than was anticipated. In 2002, a draft of a policy and implementation was prepared by Education for Discipleship staff at national office and circulated to 100 readers. Further revisions were made and another draft was circulated, by permission of the 129th General Assembly (2003), to all congregations and presbyteries. Throughout 2004 changes were made to the draft policy following legal consultation and after noting some inconsistencies. The latest draft was always available on the church's website (www.presbyterian.ca/documents) and was clearly labelled and dated. Comments were received at church offices by January 31, 2005. Over 100 congregations and presbyteries responded with many suggestions and comments, which caused the policy to move in the direction of its present form, a more pastoral response to the issue of ensuring safe environments.

1.3 The pastoral heart of the policy

This policy is titled *Leading with Care* because:

- our Lord modeled for us how to lead with care as he healed the sick and infirm, and welcomed the young, the weak, and the vulnerable
- it is our awareness that some people in our church need special protection
- it affirms our commitment to training and supporting teachers and leaders in our churches so that children/youth/vulnerable adults will grow in faith and the love of Christ in a climate of safety.

In *Leading with Care* there is a dual focus of safety and prevention, and training and support of teachers/leaders. In creating a safe environment, the church protects people, prevents abuse, and, if necessary, reports abuse. Through training, support and evaluation, ministry is enhanced, enriched and strengthened in The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

In addition to enriching ministry, the policy is also part of our church's outreach and evangelism. Having this policy in place will be very reassuring to newcomers. While everyone in the congregation may know each other, a new person entering may not know anyone. He or she will wisely ask, "Is this a safe environment for my child? What signs do I see that tell me that safety procedures are in place?" Creating a safe environment must be part of the outreach plan of a congregation.

Some smaller congregations may object to this policy because they say, "We know everyone in our congregation." That may be true. But should we know everyone in our congregation? We would not be able to do that if we were constantly reaching out to new people. As new people enter our congregational life and want to get involved, we should have a way of matching their skills and abilities to the ministries we provide. Without some policy in place, there is no way of knowing whether or not we are placing our children in a safe setting.

Those of us who are established and/or long-time leaders in the congregation must model for others our willingness to enter a screening process. We cannot expect new people to go through a screening process that we ourselves are not willing to go through.

Since the intent of this policy is pastoral, not punitive, governing bodies in The Presbyterian Church in Canada should be guided by the following procedures:

- Ministers and elders will set an example for the rest of the congregation by actively supporting the implementation of the policy.
- Ministers and elders will model to the rest of the congregation their commitment to safety and prevention by agreeing to a Police Records Check if their ministry involves one-on-one counselling or visiting.
- If confidential matters arise in putting the policy into place, the session should handle that information with the same careful respect its members have for all confidential congregational matters.

1.4 Biblical and theological foundation

Our concern for the protection and care of all children, youth and vulnerable adults is firmly grounded in scripture and in our Presbyterian/Reformed view of justice. God calls the church to seek and establish a climate of justice because it reflects the divine righteousness revealed in the Bible.

*Show, O heavens, from above,
And let the skies rain down righteousness;
Let the earth open, that salvation may spring up,
And let it cause righteousness to sprout up also:
I the Lord have created it. (Isaiah 45:8)
By myself I have sworn,
From my mouth has gone forth in righteousness
A word that shall not return:
"To me every knee shall bow,
every tongue shall swear."
Only in the Lord, it shall be said of me,
Are righteousness and strength. (Isaiah 45:23-24a)*

Even as he lay dying, King David describes his role as leader as grounded in justice. “The spirit of the Lord speaks through me, his word is upon my tongue. The God of Israel has spoken, the Rock of Israel has said to me: One who rules over people justly, ruling in the fear of God, is like the light of morning, like the sun rising on a cloudless morning, gleaming from the rain on the grassy land.” (2 Samuel 23:2-4)

Our Church is called to deal fairly with each other, protect the rights of others and protest against things that destroy human dignity. Our church’s sense of justice is about both rights and responsibilities.

In addition to our sense of biblical justice, the second main reason we have as Christians for a policy such as this is the desire to bear witness in our tradition to valuing people in a holistic way in our homes, churches and in the world. The Bible gives us examples of the importance and primacy of family life — the nuclear family and the extended family (Genesis 1:27; Luke 15:11-32; 2 Timothy 1:3-5). In our churches we strive to find a place of significance for all children, youth and vulnerable adults. Children and youth are not seen as “the church of the future,” but are the “church of today”. As adults we acknowledge the valuable gifts they contribute to the community of faith. Concerning this, Living Faith declares, “The church is the family of God. Here all should be valued for themselves. We are one body in Christ: together rejoicing when things go well, supporting one another in sorrow, celebrating the goodness of God and the wonder of our redemption.” (*Living Faith: A Statement of Christian Belief*, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1984, section 8.2.6)

Third, we are called to provide a protective environment and care for the young and vulnerable because we believe this is what Jesus would have us do. As Christians we imitate the example of Christ and aim to stay rooted in his love in all our relationships. The gospels contain many stories of times when Jesus met and healed children (Matthew 9:18-19, 23-25) and portrayed them as examples for others (Matthew 19:10-14; Mark 9:33-37). The gospels have many stories, too, of Jesus’ care for vulnerable adults. In Mark’s gospel we read about Jesus healing a man possessed by evil spirits (Mark 1:21-26), a man with leprosy (Mark 1:40-42), a crippled man (Mark 2:1-12), a dying girl and a sick woman (Mark 5:22-43), sick people in Gennesaret (Mark 6:53-56), and a deaf man (Mark 7:31-35). We read about Jesus feeding the hungry (Mark 8:1-9), healing a blind man (Mark 8:22-26), and commending a poor woman’s generosity (Mark 12:41-44). In his Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1-11), Jesus exhorts us to care for and love strangers, prisoners, and the naked, hungry, thirsty and sick of the world; these words of Christ himself constitute, as declared in *Living Faith*, “a call to help people in need and to permeate all of life with the compassion of God.” (*Living Faith: A Statement of Christian Belief*, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1984, section 9.1.3)

1.5 Definition of terms used in the policy and implementation

Child/youth: a person who is under 18 years of age. Some Canadian provinces/territories classify children/youth as 16 years of age and younger. However, for the purpose of this policy, child/youth means a person under eighteen anywhere in Canada or in a ministry under the purview of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Event: an occasional or one-time event run by a congregation. Examples: a yearly concert, tea or picnic.

Leading with Care committee: a group of persons responsible for ensuring that the policy is put into place. The *Leading with Care* committee may be the session, part of the session or governing board of a ministry, or the session/board may appoint a committee of respected people specifically for this task.

Ministry position: a leadership role in which there is expected to be direct interaction with children, youth or vulnerable adults. Examples include: the positions of Sunday school teacher, youth group leader, elder, pastoral care worker, camp counsellor.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada: for the purposes of this policy, this shall include The Presbyterian Church in Canada and all related courts — sessions, presbyteries, synod and General Assembly — and the programs/ministries they oversee and sponsor.

Program/ministry: a structured series of similar activities or events governed and run by The Presbyterian Church in Canada which spans a period of weeks or months and in which the level of risk is expected to remain constant. Examples: weekly Sunday school; the routine pastoral visitation of an elder in the home of a frail, elderly person; weekly youth meeting at the church; operation of the Sunday morning nursery; an out-of-the-cold program.

Risk assessment: the process by which programs/ministries are rated according to risk factors. High risk ministries require special attention.

Teacher/leader: a lay person of at least 18 years of age who devotes significant portions of his/her time and energy in faithful church service and who has gone through a time of orientation and training, in order to hold a ministry position. Examples of teachers/leader includes: Sunday school teacher, youth leader, pastoral care visitor, leader of a group for developmentally challenged adults. Paid staff, clergy and other professional church workers are also considered teachers/leaders.

Note: It is common practice in many of our congregations to use volunteer helpers who are between the ages of 12 and 18. Youthful leadership is to be encouraged and supported. However, it should be noted that when leaders and teachers are mentioned in this policy, we are referring to people of at least 18 years of age. Nevertheless, leaders under the age of 18 are expected to follow the policy when acting as leaders or volunteer helpers.

Vulnerable adult: a person who, because of his/her age, a disability or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent, is in a position of dependence on others or is otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by persons in positions of authority or trust relative to him/her. (Definition used in Bill C-7, proclaimed by the Government of Canada, August 1, 2000.)

Volunteer helper: lay person who is involved peripherally in ministry with children, youth or vulnerable adults but has not chosen to become a teacher or leader. Examples includes: someone who delivers cookies to a children's program, someone who collects and presents socks to homeless people at a shelter, or someone who collects and distributes food bank items to families.

1.6 Relationship of this Policy to the Church's Policy on Sexual Abuse and/or Harassment.

In 1993 the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada approved for use in the denomination a policy for dealing with sexual abuse and/or harassment. All presbyteries, sessions, the General Assembly offices, colleges and other institutions with The Presbyterian Church in Canada are required to follow the policy or an equivalent policy if they have different governing structures.

With its dual focus of safety and prevention, and teacher screening, orientation, training and support, ***Leading with Care*** is primarily a prevention document. If careful steps are taken in leading, teaching and supporting, incidents of harm can be prevented.

If, however, despite good prevention practices, an allegation of sexual abuse and/or harassment is made, the Policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for Dealing with Sexual Abuse and/or Harassment outlines procedures for both sessions and presbyteries. There is a different procedure for criminal or non-criminal allegations. The procedures include discovery, intervention, investigation, adjudication, communication, and aftercare.

Copies of the Sexual Abuse and Harassment Policy may be obtained (\$6) from The Presbyterian Church in Canada national offices (1-800-619-7301). The policy may also be downloaded from The Presbyterian Church in Canada website (www.presbyterian.ca). See the menu on the left side of the home page. Under "Resources," click on "Church Documents." Under "PCC Papers," see "Sexual Abuse and Harassment Policy." Each presbytery and synod clerk also has a copy of the policy.

Parkwood Presbyterian Church - Leading with Care Policy and Procedures

PART TWO

Policies and Procedures for Reducing Risk in Parkwood Activities

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Parkwood Presbyterian Church - Leading with Care Policy and Procedures

PART TWO

Policies and Procedures for Reducing Risk in Parkwood Activities

Section 1: Policies and Procedures

- 1 **Leading with Care Implementation Group.** The Leading with Care Implementation Group is responsible to Session for the implementation and application of the Presbyterian Church in Canada Leading with Care Policy at Parkwood Presbyterian Church. The Group consists of representatives from the Policy and Planning Team, the Pastoral Care Team, the Christian Education Team (normally the Director of Logos and the Church School Coordinator), the Finance and Maintenance Team, the Minister and the Director of Youth Ministries. Representatives from other Ministry Teams may be added as required. The Group will elect its Convenor.

- 2 **Ministries Identified as High Risk.**
 - 2.1 High risk ministries include, but are not necessarily limited to, all in which the following conditions apply:
 - Teacher/leader is alone with person being served;
 - Teacher /leader has no supervision in role;
 - Activities of teacher/leader are in a place where activities are not observed or monitored; teacher/leader has access to personal property or money of the persons served;
 - The ministry involves touching persons served

 - 2.2 The following ministries at Parkwood have been identified as high risk: Pastoral visiting (minister, elders and Pastoral Care Team); In-home assistance and transportation of vulnerable adults (Pastoral Care Team); Youth Ministry; Sunday School (including nursery); LOGOS; Drama/Music Camp, Preschool care (Pre Kinder Corner); Gracefield camping leaders; Music leadership (if one-on-one) (Organist/Choir Director, Pianist/ Praise Ensemble Director); Counselling Courses/Support Group leaders; Financial management (Treasurer); Computer data/ information management (Office administrator).

- 3 **Volunteer Screening and Police Records Check for High Risk Ministries**
 - 3.1 Teachers and leaders will have a recruitment screening interview and will receive orientation training in the Leading with Care Policy. Guidance for conducting interviews is found in the PCC LWC Policy document. After orientation on the policy, leaders/teachers will be asked to sign a Covenant of Care Form. (Annex C).

 - 3.2 One of the ten steps in Volunteer Canada's Safe Steps screening program is the Police Records Check (PRC). PRCs have become a standard and accepted part of institutional and organizational procedures for those working with children,

youth and vulnerable persons in schools, hospitals, communities and religious groups. PRCs are mandatory for all persons over 18 years of age in high risk ministries in The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

- 3.3 ***Since it will not always be possible to have more than one leader or teacher present with children, youth or vulnerable adults, all those involved at Parkwood in the high risk ministries identified above will be asked to apply for Police Records Checks.*** Application forms will be provided by the Leading with Care Implementation Group member for the program concerned.
- 4 **Training.** In addition to the ministries identified above, some others involved in programs should be familiarized with Leading with Care policies and procedures, even though they do not require records checks. These include ushers, helpers under 18 years of age, and those involved in local missions or outreach programs.
- 5 **Confidentiality of information collected.** Sensitive personal information collected in connection with this policy will be treated with strict confidentiality. A copy of the Police Records Check, and other sensitive information, is held in the church office in a locked filing cabinet, the combination to which is held only by the Minister, Administrative Assistant, Convenor of the Leading with Care Implementation Group and Clerk of Session. The teacher/leader may retain the original copy of the police records check.
- 6 **Policy Review and Evaluation.** Session will review the policy and procedures annually as of May 1st. Group leaders /teachers/elders should submit any recommendations or comments to the Leading with Care Implementation Group at any time.

Risk Reduction Measures

- 7 **Classroom procedures.** (All Groups involving Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults)
 - 7.1 At the beginning of each class, attendance must be recorded and the attendance book must be picked up and taken to a central location. The location will be decided by the Church School Coordinator. In the event of a fire, this helps ensure that all children are accounted for.
 - 7.2 Where possible, more than one teacher/leader will be present in each room in which activities are taking place.
 - 7.3 If only one teacher/leader is present, the activity is to take place in a room with a window in the door through which activity can be observed, OR the door to the room must be left open.
 - 7.4 A supervisor (Church School Coordinator, LOGOS leader, etc.) should periodically observe activities in rooms.

7.5 One on one situations (one teacher-one child) should be avoided if possible. If only one child appears for a Sunday School class, for example, the teacher, with the concurrence of the Coordinator, could decide to place the child in another class of the closest age group. If this is not feasible, a parent or another person from the congregation could be asked to join them. Alternatively, the teacher might provide some pencil and crayon activities for the child and the two of them may rejoin the congregation.

7.6 One-to-one contacts, if necessary, between a volunteer/staff and child/youth are to take place in a public area (either inside or outside the church) where both people can be seen by others. Parents should be notified before a proposed one-to-one contact with a child/youth (e.g., in a mentoring relationship) and parental permission for the meeting obtained.

8 **Washroom procedures (small children).**

8.1 Ask parents of preschool children to take their child to the washroom before class.

8.2 Children under six who need to go to the washroom should be accompanied by a teacher/leader who escorts the child to the washroom and checks the bathroom for safety. No adult or teen helper is ever to be in a closed washroom or cubicle with a child. If another adult is not available, the adult who accompanies the child should position him/herself in plain view at the open door of the washroom. A volunteer or teen helper may stay behind with the remaining children. If there is no one to assist, it may be necessary to take the whole class to the vicinity of the washroom.

8.3 Children six and over may go to the washroom with a “buddy.”

8.4 If there is an emergency bathroom situation, the parent or supervisor *is to* be notified immediately.

8.5 Hand sanitizers are available outside washrooms and children should be instructed in their use.

9 **Washroom Procedures (Vulnerable Adults).** If vulnerable adults need assistance in the washroom, and a family member is not present, two adults of the same sex as the person needing assistance should provide the necessary help. Vulnerable adults may need special bathroom aids: assist bars, and so on. It may be necessary to ensure that cleanliness follows use.

10 **Health and Safety**

10.1 *Allergies.*

10.1.1 *Enrolment forms for children and youth ministries must ask that parents or youth identify any food or other allergies.* This information is to be posted where food is being prepared and must be provided to the teacher/leader

concerned. Teachers/leaders should maintain a list of allergies in their group. If your program serves meals or snacks, post the menu so the parent/caretaker can see it.

10.1.2 *It is the policy of the Session of Parkwood that food containing or prepared with nuts or nut products NOT be brought into the church.*

10.1.3 Popcorn can be dangerous for young children.

10.2 *Infectious Diseases.* Teachers/leaders must ask parents/guardians to not let their children and youth attend church programs if they have symptoms and diseases which are known to be infectious, such as: diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, rash, open sores, skin or eye infection, scarlet fever, measles, mumps, chicken pox, whooping cough, head lice.

10.3 *First Aid and CPR Training.* Ideally, at least one teacher or leader in each activity should have first aid training and/or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training. The identity of trained people should be known to all leaders present. If no leader present with the group has first aid training, the group leader should attempt to identify if anyone else present in the church has such training. The LWC Group will arrange for training opportunities.

10.4 *General Safety .* Teachers and leaders must monitor games, etc. to ensure that there is no undue risk of injury. If activities are taking place outside the church, there must be sufficient supervision to prevent children from running into streets or other dangerous situations.

10.5 *Injury.* If a participant is injured while participating in a program/ministry or activity, the teacher/leader must arrange to get the person to medical care. If a parent is present in the building, he or she should be contacted immediately. If necessary, call 911. If the child/youth/vulnerable adult is bleeding, the teacher/leader should protect himself/herself and all others from the blood. For all injuries, even if the person does not need medical attention, a leader must complete a general incident report and report the incident to the injured person's parent/guardian/caretaker. General incident reports will be given to the group leader for storage in the Leading with Care locked metal cabinet.

11 **Fire Safety and Evacuation Measures.**

11.1 Instructions for Action in the Event of Fire, and the Building Evacuation Plan, are published separately. All leaders and teachers must be familiar with them. Fire Orders and the Evacuation Plan are posted in various locations in the Church and all teachers and leaders must be informed where they are located.

11.2 In the event of fire, the person discovering the fire is to shout "Fire" several times, and ring the fire alarm if the alarm is nearby.

- 11.3 The person discovering the fire is to phone 911 and report the fire and the address of the church - 10 Chesterton Drive, Nepean. If it is not practicable for the person discovering the fire to place the 911 call, they are to ask someone else to do so.
- 11.4 Persons near the fire should initiate measures to extinguish the fire to the extent possible. ***Do not use water on an electrical fire.***
- 11.5 Fire exits must be marked and exit routes clearly marked or shown on diagrams located in prominent locations as defined in the Building Evacuation Plan.
- 11.6 All teachers and leaders must be familiar with the building evacuation plan in case of fire, and must know the location of fire fighting and first aid equipment. Each class must be informed of the location of fire exits and what to do in the event of fire.
- 11.7 Ushers must be familiar with the evacuation plan and with their responsibilities in case of fire or other emergency, as established in the Building Evacuation Plan.
- 11.8 In winter, children's outdoor clothing should be brought to the classroom so that they can be put on quickly should evacuation be necessary.
- 11.9 Only adults are to use stoves or other electrical kitchen appliances. Teen youth group members may use kitchen facilities under supervision of a leader.
- 11.10 Candles or other open flames may only be used with adult supervision.
- 11.11 At the time of enrolment, inform parents that, in the unlikely event of a fire or other emergency during worship/Sunday school time, they are not to go in search of their child/youth, unless the child is in the nursery. The children/youth will all be taken outside as a group to a designated gathering place. Parents of children in the nursery will be instructed to go to the nursery to pick up their children, because the nursery supervisor might not be able to evacuate a number of infants.

12 **Considerations when dealing with Elderly or Vulnerable Adults.**

- 12.1 Pastoral Care Team members should complete the Ottawa Pastoral Care Training Program.
- 12.2 If transporting a person with mobility difficulties, an additional person should accompany the driver if possible.
- 12.3 Frail seniors should be visited with a partner, especially in circumstances where misunderstanding, for example due to language or literacy problems, or mental confusion, could occur.

13 **Transportation.** A teacher/leader who drives children/youth/vulnerable adults must have a valid driver's license and valid insurance. The vehicle must have one seatbelt and/or approved car seat per person in the vehicle and each person must wear a seat belt. Adults responsible for the transportation of children, youth and vulnerable adults should, if possible, have another adult to assist. Only screened volunteers or paid staff should transport children/youth /vulnerable adults in a one on one situation. In some circumstances, if there are concerns about safety or the ability of volunteers to deal with situations which might arise, liability might be transferred by opting for a professional bus service to transport children/youth/vulnerable adults. (Permission for this must be obtained from the Session Team responsible for the activity).

14 **Approval for Off-Site activities and Activity Waivers.**

14.1 Special outings, day trips, service projects and weekend camps are an important part of children/youth/vulnerable adult ministry. They help people grow physically, emotionally, and spiritually, give youth a chance to learn social and leadership skills, and provide social opportunities for vulnerable adults.

14.2 All activities for children or youth outside the church premises must have the approval of the appropriate Session Team to which the group reports - e.g. Christian Education. In the case of Youth Ministry activities, the authority may be delegated to the Youth Ministry Support Team. The guidelines in the following paragraphs must be observed and Activity Waivers must be signed by the appropriate persons (See paragraph 18).

15 **Day excursions**

15.1 A teacher/leader must assess the risk of the activity and submit that assessment in writing to the appropriate Team for approval prior to the activity.

15.2 Parents/guardians/caregivers must be notified prior to the outing.

15.3 Written consent and medical release forms are required for each child/youth/vulnerable adult participating in activities/events (see 4.5).

15.4 One teacher/leader should have a cell phone and the phone numbers of where the parents of the children/youth can be contacted during the excursion. The teacher/leader should have a copy of the completed consent forms with them.

15.5 All daytime excursions must be supervised by a minimum of two teachers/leaders. Additional support workers might be necessary to accompany vulnerable adults.

15.6 When transportation of children/youth/vulnerable adults is needed for an activity, all drivers must have a valid driver's license, valid automobile insurance and must be screened volunteers or paid staff. The number of persons per vehicle must

never exceed the number of seat belts or car seats and each passenger in the vehicle must wear a seat belt.

15.7 Ideally, one teacher/leader should have First Aid training.

16 **Overnight activities/events.** Follow all requirements listed in daytime excursions plus the following:

16.1 Each children/youth/vulnerable adult is required to follow preestablished codes of conduct signed by the parent/guardian/caregiver and the child/youth/vulnerable adult.

16.2 If the group is comprised of children/youth/vulnerable adults of both genders, teachers/leaders of both genders must be present.

16.3 Each leader should have an assigned group of children/youth/vulnerable adults for whom they will be responsible during the overnight event.

16.4 All facilities in which an overnight function is housed must be equipped with smoke detectors and inside release doors. All members of the group should be made aware of fire exits and fire procedures as required by provincial/regional standards. No adult should be alone with a single child/youth/vulnerable adult.

16.5 If a day or overnight includes trips to a pool, lake or hot tub, all municipal/provincial/federal regulations regarding safety and supervision must be adhered to.

17 **Billeting youth in private homes.**

17.1 Children under 14 years of age should not be billeted.

17.2 The people offering billeting must be known, trusted members of the congregation.

17.3 Billet youth in groups of at least two.

17.4 The contact information (telephone number, address) of the individual with whom the youth will be billeted must be obtained by the group leader.

18 **Teacher/leader and participant ratios.**

18.1 The activity and age of children/youth affects the ratio of children/youth to staff. The management of the program as well as concern for safety, care and social interaction are some of the factors to take into account when establishing adequate ratios. If there are not enough teachers/leaders and adult volunteers, the program/ministry or activity should not be held. (Unscreened volunteer helpers may work under the supervision of a screened, trained volunteer).

18.2 *Suggested Ratios of Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults to Teachers/Leaders.* Here are the suggested child/youth/vulnerable adult ratios to teachers/leaders in a regular program, but additional adults can be helpful if one adult needs to leave the program temporarily because of illness or a family problem. Note that these are suggested ratios only, it might not be possible to achieve them in every circumstance.

0-18 months-	2 adults to 6 children
18 months- 2 years -	2 adults to 10 children
2-5 years	2 adults to 10 children
Ages 5-14	2 adults to 15 children
Ages 15-18	2 adults to 15 children
Vulnerable adults	2 adults to 10 vulnerable adults

18.3 *Suggested Ratios for Day excursions and overnight outings.* Here are the recommended participant ratios to teachers/leaders/volunteers on day excursions and overnight outings. If these ratios cannot be met, Session approval for the outing must be obtained.

Ages 5 or under	Day- 2 adults per group of 10. Overnight excursions not recommended
Ages 6-8	Day: 2 adults per group of 12. Overnight excursions not recommended for age 6.; Overnight four adults for 20 children for ages seven & eight.
Ages 9-10:	Day - 2 adults for every 15 children; Overnight 2 adults for every 10 children
Ages 10-14	Day - 2 adults for every 15 children. Overnight 2 adults for every 10 children
Ages 15-18	Day - 2 adults for every 15 youth. Overnight- 2 adults for every 10 youth
Vulnerable adults	Day: 2 adults per 10 vulnerable adults. Overnight- 2 adults per 10 vulnerable adults.

19 **Activity Program Waiver and Medical Release** . Parents/guardians/adult participants will be asked to sign an Activity Program Waiver and Medical Release prior to outings organized by Parkwood. The form is attached.(Annex A) **Note: Before an activity, the teacher/leader stores a copy of this waiver in a safe storage area and takes another copy on the outing.**

20 **Other Users of the Church Facilities**

- 20.1 *Insurance* It is a Session policy that all groups (other congregations, community groups, AA, etc.) who use the facilities of Parkwood on a regular, ongoing basis must provide proof of their own insurance coverage if they are not covered under Parkwood's insurance policy.
- 20.2 *Terms of Use Contract.* Session will ensure that a "terms of use" contract is drawn up with each regular, ongoing group who use church premises.
- 20.3 *Occasional users of church facilities.* In addition to ongoing, regular community groups, other groups may occasionally use the church facilities, such as for weddings, community events, etc. Session must also ensure that these occasional uses are covered by the congregation's insurance policy or have their own insurance.
- 20.4 *Other User's Protection Policy.* Parkwood church representatives will meet with each community group using church facilities to explain the Leading with Care policy. If the group does not have its own safety/protection policy they will be given a copy of this document and asked to consider implementing a similar policy.

Section 2: Information Sheets for Teachers/Leaders.

(Extracts from Leading with Care pp 54-61)

- 21 **Physical contact.** It is essential to be careful regarding behaviour, language and physical contact when working with children/youth/vulnerable adults:
- 21.1 Do not show favouritism when dealing with children/youth/vulnerable adults. Show a similar level of affection and kindness to all.
 - 21.2 Do not engage in or allow the telling of sexual jokes or behave in a way that promotes sexual exploitation of others.
 - 21.3 Provide clearly stated consequences for inappropriate behaviour. Stop inappropriate behaviour early. Be fair, consistent and reasonable, matching consequences to the age and ability of the child/youth.
 - 21.4 Do not use corporal punishment such as hitting, spanking or strapping.
- 22 **Appropriate and inappropriate touching.** A touch can convey a multitude of positive messages and communicate care, comfort and love; however, it is important to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touching. It is also important to be aware of, and sensitive to, differences in interpretation to touching based on sex, culture or personal experience.
- 22.1 Some examples of **appropriate touch**: Love and care can usually be expressed in the following common sense ways:
- holding or rocking an infant who is crying
 - affirming a participant with a pat on the hand, shoulder or back
 - bending down to the child's eye level and placing a hand gently on the child's hand or forearm
 - putting your arm around the shoulder of a person who needs comfort
 - taking a child's hand and leading him/her to an activity
 - holding hands for safety when changing locations
 - shaking a person's hand in greeting
 - holding a child gently by the hand or shoulder to keep his/her attention as you redirect behaviour
 - anointing a person with oil on the head
 - holding hands in a circle prayer or song
 - providing comfort with a wet, warm cloth.
- 23 Some examples of **inappropriate touch**:
- kissing a child/youth/vulnerable adult or coaxing them into kissing you
 - extended cuddling
 - tickling
 - piggy-back rides

- having others sit on your lap (except for babies/young toddlers)
- touching anyone in any area covered by a bathing suit (except changing infant's diapers)
- hand holding, except for the examples listed above
- stroking a child/youth's hair
- hugging, where an adult knows or ought to have known that hugging is inappropriate.

24 **Dealing with a participant's inappropriate behaviour.** The best approach to dealing with inappropriate behaviour is thoughtful prevention. If a teacher/leader has prepared for teaching/leading, makes clear statements about expectations and provides an engaging program, inappropriate behaviour will be avoided or reduced. If, however, a child/youth/vulnerable adult's behaviour is unacceptable, these practices must be followed:

- Tell or remind the child/youth/vulnerable adult what is expected.
- If it is necessary to speak to a child/youth/vulnerable adult in private, move to a quiet place in view of others. Seek supervisory help if needed and if available.
- Keep children/youth/vulnerable adults from harming themselves or others.
- If necessary, engage another adult to help you remove the child/youth/vulnerable adult from the situation to calm down.
- Discipline with children and youth must be limited to talking and time out. Correction to a vulnerable adult must be limited to talking to a vulnerable adult or his/her guardian.
- Provide a 'time-out' space for younger children on one side of the room until they are ready to rejoin the group. The 'time-out' should be no longer than one minute for each year of the child's age.
 - Inform the parent/guardian of the problem and work co-operatively with them. They may have good ideas of how to deal with particular situations.

Do not use corporal punishment (such as hitting, spanking or strapping) under any circumstances.

25 **Washroom procedures** (see pages 2 and 3 of this Part).

26 **Child/youth abuse**

26.1 This policy has zero tolerance for abuse in any form. This includes abuse that happens to a child/youth/vulnerable adult by a church staff member or volunteer. There is also a need for adults in the church to be sensitive to incidents of abuse that may be happening in the home or social life of a child/youth/vulnerable adult.

26.2 Any person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child/youth is or may be in need of protection must report the suspicion to a protective agency or police. Clergy and other professionals have special responsibility to report allegations of abuse. A teacher/leader who hears an allegation of abuse should confide this to a member of the clergy because a minister is the executive of the presbytery in the congregation and, as such, needs to know what is going on in his/her congregation.

In the first instance, teachers should report suspicion to the group leader or group representative on the Leading With Care Group, or the minister. (Allegations or suspicions should not, of course, be reported to individuals who might be implicated in the situations.)

- 26.3 In order to understand and recognize child abuse, the following definitions and indications of emotional, physical and sexual abuse or neglect are listed. Some of the following also apply to vulnerable adults. A more complete description of abuse of vulnerable adults is found below. All congregations/ministries are asked to supplement this information from a provincial/territorial child protection agency.
- 26.4 *What is child/youth abuse?* (Source: Department of Justice Canada; <http://canada.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/fm/childafs.html>) The term “child abuse” refers to the violence, mistreatment or neglect that a child or adolescent may experience while in the care of someone they either trust or depend on, such as a parent, sibling, other relative, caregiver or guardian. Abuse may take place anywhere and may occur, for example, within the child’s home or that of someone known to the child.
- 26.5 There are many different forms of abuse and a child may be subjected to more than one form.
- 26.6 Physical abuse may consist of just one incident or it may happen repeatedly. It involves deliberately using force against a child in such a way that the child is either injured or is at risk of being injured. Physical abuse includes beating, hitting, shaking, pushing, choking, biting, burning, kicking or assaulting a child with a weapon. It also includes holding a child under water, or any other dangerous or harmful use of force or restraint. Female genital mutilation is another form of physical abuse.
- 26.7 Sexual abuse and exploitation involves using a child for sexual purposes. Examples of child sexual abuse include fondling, inviting a child to touch or be touched sexually, intercourse, rape, incest, sodomy, exhibitionism, or involving a child in prostitution or pornography.
- 26.8 Neglect is often chronic, and it usually involves repeated incidents. It involves failing to provide what a child needs for his or her physical, psychological or emotional development and well being. For example, neglect includes failing to provide a child with food, clothing, shelter, cleanliness, medical care or protection from harm. Emotional neglect includes failing to provide a child with love, safety, and a sense of worth.
- 26.9 Emotional abuse involves harming a child’s sense of self. It includes acts (or omissions) that result in, or place a child at risk of, serious behavioural, cognitive, emotional or mental health problems. For example, emotional abuse may include

aggressive verbal threats, social isolation, intimidation, exploitation, or routinely making unreasonable demands. It also includes terrorizing a child, or exposing them to family violence.

- 26.10 An abuser may use a number of different tactics to gain access to a child, exert power and control over them, and prevent them from telling anyone about the abuse or seeking support. A child who is being abused is usually in a position of dependence on the person who is abusing them. Abuse is a misuse of power and a violation of trust. The abuse may happen once or it may occur in a repeated and escalating pattern over a period of months or years. The abuse may change form over time.

27 Abuse of vulnerable adults

- 27.1 The most extensive body of literature on abuse of vulnerable adults can be found under “abuse of the elderly.” While some factors may not apply to all vulnerable adults (e.g. the developmentally challenged), most characteristics are equally applicable to all vulnerable adults. A thorough explanation of older adult abuse is found at www.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/fm/adultsfs.html. Although individuals may be abused at virtually any life stage — childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, middle age or old age — the nature and consequences of abuse may differ depending on an individual’s situation. Older adults’ experiences of abuse, for example, may be related to their living arrangement (they may be living alone, with family members or others, or in an institution). Their experiences may also be linked to their level of reliance on others, including family members or other care providers, for assistance and support in daily living. Abuse of older adults is sometimes described as a misuse of power and a violation of trust. Abusers may use a number of different tactics to exert power and control over their victims. Abuse may happen once or it may occur in a repeated and escalating pattern over months or years. The abuse may take many different forms, which may change over time.
- 27.2 **Types of abuse.** Psychological abuse includes attempts to dehumanize or intimidate older adults. Any verbal or non-verbal act that reduces their sense of self-worth or dignity and threatens their psychological and emotional integrity is abuse. This type of abuse may include, for example: threatening to use violence, threatening to abandon them, intentionally frightening them, making them fear that they will not receive the food or care they need, lying to them, failing to check allegations of abuse against them.
- 27.3 *Financial abuse* encompasses financial manipulation or exploitation including theft, fraud, forgery, or extortion. It includes using older adults’ money or property in a dishonest manner, or failing to use older adults’ assets for their welfare. Anytime someone acts without consent in a way that financially or personally benefits one person at the expense of another it is abuse. This type of abuse against an older adult may include, for example:

- stealing their money, pension cheques or other possessions
- selling their homes or other property without their permission
- wrongfully using a Power of Attorney
- not allowing them to move into long-term care facilities in order to preserve access to their pension income
- failing to pay back borrowed money when asked.

27.4 *Physical abuse* includes any act of violence, whether or not it results in physical injury. Intentionally inflicting pain or injury that results in either bodily harm or mental distress is abuse. Physical abuse may include, for example: beating, burning or scalding, pushing or shoving, hitting or slapping, rough handling or spitting.

27.5 There may also be sexual and spiritual abuse.

27.6 How widespread is abuse of older adults in Canada? Approximately 7% of the sample of more than 4,000 adults 65 years of age and older who responded to the 1999 General Social Survey on Victimization (GSS) reported that they had experienced some form of emotional or financial abuse by an adult child, spouse or caregiver in the five years prior to the survey, with the vast majority committed by spouses. Emotional abuse was more frequently reported (7%) than financial abuse (1%). The two most common forms of emotional abuse reported were being put down or called names, or having contact with family and friends limited. Only a small proportion of older adults (1%) reported experiencing physical or sexual abuse. Almost 2% of older Canadians indicated that they had experienced more than one type of abuse.

27.7 *What are some potential warning signs of abuse?* Some of the signs that may indicate an older adult is being abused include:

- depression, fear, anxiety, passivity
- unexplained physical injuries
- dehydration, malnutrition or lack of food
- poor hygiene, rashes, pressure sores
- over-sedation.

28 **Dealing with reports of abuse.**

28.1 When a child, youth or vulnerable adult is upset or distressed about a situation, he/she may turn to a trusted adult for support and advice. Often, though, they may be hesitant and shy about discussing what has happened. Feelings of guilt or shame are common. The teacher/leader should help the child/youth/vulnerable adult feel safe and understand that they can talk about what happened. A vulnerable adult, disabled or confined, may not be able to tell anyone, so teachers/leaders or visitors need to be sensitive and aware of any change in appearance/emotion. A listening adult should be supportive and pay attention to what is said. Be cautious about asking questions. Asking questions can invalidate future statements to police or

child welfare authorities and can cause a case to be dismissed in court. Accept the child/youth/vulnerable adult's story; do not dispute it.

28.2 Investigating the incident is the responsibility of the protection agency or police. Although it is difficult, be calm and supportive.

28.3 It is important not to make promises that you cannot keep, such as promising to stop the abuse, punish or remove the offender. Do not promise not to report the incident to the authorities. If you have inadvertently promised to keep what the child/youth/vulnerable adult says confidential, tell him/her that you must tell someone who can help you both.

29 **If You Suspect Abuse:** *Any person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child/youth/vulnerable adult is or may be in need of protection must report the suspicion to a protective agency or police. At Parkwood, the suspicion should be reported first to the Minister, or to Group leader/ Leading with Care Group member, who will inform the minister and initiate the report to the police or protective agency. Clergy and other professionals have special responsibility to report allegations of abuse. A teacher/leader who hears an allegation of abuse should confide this to a member of the clergy because a minister is the executive of the presbytery in the congregation and, as such, needs to know immediately what is going on in his/her congregation. If the complaint is against the minister, however, the person who heard the complaint or the Convenor of the Leading with Care Group should consult with the clerk of presbytery about the allegation.*

30 **Allegations of Sexual Abuse and/or Harassment.** If the allegation is of sexual abuse and/or harassment, the process of investigation and action will be in accordance with the Policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada For Dealing With Sexual Abuse And/Or Harassment, 1998. Ministers should consult a clerk of presbytery, synod or General Assembly regarding the two different processes to follow for reporting of non-criminal or criminal activity.

31 Reporting to a protection agency

- 31.1 *Moral obligation*. God has given us the responsibility to protect and care for children/youth and vulnerable adults. It is the responsibility of adults to develop and maintain a safe church environment for all. Reporting an incident of abuse involving a child, youth or vulnerable adult demonstrates this care and concern. A sample general incident report can be found in 4.6. of the LWC church policy document and is reproduced at Annex B of this section.
- 31.2 Some people, especially clergy, may hesitate to report a suspicion or allegation of abuse because of the confidential relationship they have with parishioners. However, it is important to distinguish between “confidentiality” and “secrets”. Confidentiality refers to being entrusted with important private information. However, if an activity is harmful to others and is kept secret, the situation will continue to be harmful and will likely worsen. In the case of abuse, secrets should not be kept. Confidentiality can still be honoured by reassuring a victim that only a person or restricted persons who need to know, will know. Reassure the victim that the purpose of “telling” is to obtain help. Reassure the victim of your support through the process.
- 31.3 *Legal obligation*. If a person has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child/youth/vulnerable adult is or may be in need of protection, the person must promptly report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to a children’s aid society or other appropriate protection agency. Professional persons, such as clergy, and officials have the same duty as any member of the public to report a suspicion that children/youth/vulnerable adults are in need of protection. Professionals or officials must report a suspicion that a child is or has been in need of protection, where the information on which that suspicion is based is obtained in the course of his or her professional or official duties. By way of example, in Ontario, professionals who fail to report a suspicion of abuse may be fined up to \$1,000, according to provincial standards.
- 31.4 *Information needed by a protection agency*. When one calls a protection agency that person should prepare notes on why he/she is calling.
Ask for an intake screener.
- Give your name and location, or you may remain anonymous.
 - State that you are making a report of a person you believe to be in need of protection.
 - Give your relationship to the person and/or family.
 - Indicate what you heard from the child/youth/vulnerable adult or what you observed.
 - Offer facts such as dates, descriptions of the child/youth/vulnerable adult and identifying facts about people who were involved.
 - Share knowledge of other agency or community involvement if known.
 - Provide any relevant background information.

32 **Procedure if contacted by a protection agency.** Any request from a child protection worker (see photo ID or badge to verify identity) should normally be made in person. The worker will want to speak with the person filing the suspected abuse report and, if a different person, to the person to whom the child/youth spoke. If the matter is urgent and those investigating cannot do a personal interview, the investigator may telephone you from his/her office. The child protection agent should identify him/herself and give his/her work contact phone number.

- Do not give any information at this time. The investigator will explain the process to follow and what information he/she is seeking.
- It is your responsibility to verify that this is indeed a child protection agent. Simply say, "I need to move to another phone. May I phone you back in 30 seconds?"
- Move to a phone where you can ensure confidentiality.
- When you return the call, provide the necessary information.
- Ask what is to happen next. This is critical as a court order may be warranted and a restraining order put in place. The church/ministry should be aware of this. Details do not need to be given
- Ask when the church/ministry can expect a final report on the case and if further information will be required
- Make clear written notes about what you reported, date, time, phone number and name of investigator. Place in a confidential, locked, metal file cabinet

33 **Pastoral response to a report of abuse.** Disclosure of an incident of alleged abuse is an emotionally charged experience. When an individual discloses that he/she is a victim of alleged abuse, it is important to:

- assure him/her that he/she will be listened to and be provided with support throughout the process
- take the allegations seriously
- keep emotions in check; when disbelief or horror is shown, this may result in the individual becoming withdrawn or unwilling to share the experience with you
- "listen more, talk less"
- remind him/her that he/she is in no way at fault for the abuse
- affirm that it is always appropriate to tell someone that he/she has been abused
- remind him/her that your first priority is his or her protection
- ask him/her if it is okay to pray with them
- reassure him/her that ongoing care will be provided for him/her and his/her family
- provide pastoral support to him/her; give reassurance that he/she has done the right thing in reporting this incident.

Do not:

- promise him/her that you will not tell anyone; some secrets should not be kept secret; assure the individual that this information is to be restricted to those who need to be advised.
- prejudge the situation
- defend the alleged perpetrator or make comments like, "I can't believe they did that."

34 **Response to the media**

If it is deemed essential to respond to media, a designated church leader; the minister, clerk of session, or head of the Leading with Care committee, will be the spokesperson for the church. No facts should be disclosed and the spokesperson may say something like this:

All allegations of abuse or harassment are taken seriously. The protection of children/youth/vulnerable adults is a priority of (your church/ministry name) and The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In accordance with civil law an allegation of abuse has been reported to (insert the name of the appropriate governmental protection agency).

PARKWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Activity Program Waiver and Medical Release

Description and Location of Activity: _____

Departure date: _____ Returning date: _____

Full Name of participant: _____
(First) (Last)

Birth date (N/A for adult): _____

Full Address: _____

Parent/guardian/caregiver name(s): _____

Circle the number where parent/guardian may be reached when trip is taking place.

Home/residence phone: _____ Cell phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Does participant have any severe allergies or other medical condition that leaders should be aware of?

Yes No

If yes, please list and explain _____

All reasonable precautions for the safety and health of the participant will be taken. He/she will be properly supervised in activities. In the event of accident or sickness, Parkwood Presbyterian Church, its staff and volunteers are released from any liability.

In the event of injury requiring medical attention, I authorize treatment for the participant and understand that reasonable attempts will be made to contact me, (or a residential staff) should such a situation occur.

In the event that travel or activities take place outside this province, I understand that any medical costs incurred involving the participant are my responsibility.

The participant must be covered by provincial health insurance or equivalent medical coverage. If the trip is out of province, please give insurance provider and policy number:

Participant's Health card number: _____

Participant's Family Physician: _____ Phone: _____

Contact person (not parent) in case of emergency and parents/guardians/caregivers cannot be reached:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (PRINT): _____

CONFIDENTIAL

PARKWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

GENERAL INCIDENT REPORT

Report date: _____ Time of report: _____

Full Name of child/youth/adult: _____ Age/Grade: _____
(not necessary for adult)

Date of Birth: _____ Gender: M F

Full Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian (for child/youth) or caregiver (for adult):

Notified: Y N If yes, date/time of notification: _____

Address: _____
(If different from above)

Phone number: _____
(If different from above)

Date/time and location of incident:

Description of incident (attach page if necessary):

Names/contact information of witnesses:

Description of injuries sustained:

Description of action taken: _____

Additional information you think is relevant: (attach page if necessary)

Direct quotes from child/youth/adult: (Note: If this is an abuse allegation, do not interview the child/youth but report only the comments they share with you.)

Signature: _____
(Name and position of person making report)

I hereby confirm that the information provided in this report is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Name of Person making report (please print): _____

Phone/Address: _____

Signature of Person making report: _____ Date: _____

The person filing this report must give a copy to the *Leading with Care* committee and/or the session of the congregation.

Note: If this is an allegation of abuse, it must be reported to a protection agency or police by the Leading with Care Committee.

Parkwood Presbyterian Church
10 Chesterton Drive, Ottawa, ON K2E 5S9
The Covenant of Care

The church is Christ, together with his people, called both to worship and to serve him in all of life (Living Faith: A Statement of Christian Faith, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1984, section 7.1.1). The Lord continues His ministry in and through the church. All Christians are called to participate in the ministry of Christ. As His body on earth, we all have gifts to use in the church and in the world to the glory of Christ, our King and Head. Through the church, God orders this ministry by calling some to special tasks in the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of God. (Living Faith, A Statement of Christian Faith, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1984, sections 7.2,1-2).

As an expression of this high and holy duty that Christ has offered to me as a leader/teacher/guide to children/youth/vulnerable adults,

I promise, in all my relationships with children/youth/vulnerable adults:

- *to follow appropriate action as defined by my training orientation;*
- *to use only the physical contact that is deemed appropriate by the document Leading With Care: A Policy for Ensuring a Climate of Safety for Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, which I have read and understand;*
- *to use appropriate language;*
- *to show no bias based on gender, ethnic background, skin colour, intelligence, age, sexual orientation or socio-economic status;*
- *that I will not harass others; and*
- *to respect confidentiality and privacy, unless a child, youth or vulnerable adult is in danger, then I will report to a child protection agency or the police.*

I have read and agree with the covenant of care.

Name: (please print): _____ Signature: _____

Position title: _____ Date: _____

Witnessed by:

Name: (please print): _____ Signature: _____

Position title: _____ Date: _____