

Introduction from the Diocesan Bishop

April 2, 2017

I commend to you the Missionary Diocese of CANA West Policy for the Protection of Children.

This thoughtful and comprehensive policy sets forth “best practices” and other requirements and standards for the protection of children in the congregations and ministries of our diocese. It is the cumulative result of the wisdom of experts in this field, as well as legal counsel.

The Church must intentionally provide boundaries that will protect and nurture our children.

It is clear from the Bible that Almighty God sees children as precious in his sight. *Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward.* Psalm 127:3

Jesus tells us that we are not to despise little children. He says, *that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.* Matthew 18:10

Please read this policy carefully. It is vitally important that congregations, missions and church plants follow these requirements and recommendations.

Variances to specific provisions of the policy may be granted by the Bishop or the Standing Committee. Any such variance must be in writing and signed by the Bishop or the Chairman of the Standing Committee.

If you have questions, or to apply for a variance, please contact the Diocesan Chancellor, Christopher Lee Milner (clmilner@sbcglobal.net). In Canada, please contact the Canadian Vice-Chancellor, David Avren (david.avren@coastcapitalsavings.com).

Yours faithfully in Christ,

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The Missionary Diocese of CANA West

Policy for the Protection of Children

April 2, 2017

Purpose of the Policy

1. Jesus teaches clearly that children are of great value to His Kingdom (Matthew 18:1-6). Caring for our children and youth is a sacred trust.
2. It is our responsibility as Christian adults to provide a safe place for children and youth to grow in the nurture and stature of the Lord. They must not fear being hit or touched in an inappropriate manner. Unfortunately, sexual abuse is a real threat, especially to the most vulnerable and marginalized children and teenagers. Statistics regarding sexual abuse and misconduct toward minors in church settings are distressing, and we must do what is prudent to keep our children safe.
3. Abuse of any kind significantly damages an individual, and can cause devastating effects that last a lifetime. Men and women who were abused as minors tend to have difficulty forming and maintaining healthy relationships, and often struggle to see themselves worthy of God's love and saving power through Jesus' death and resurrection.
4. Every state has laws regarding the safety of children, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and sexual misconduct toward minors. We are to submit to the government in authority over us, and should give no reason for our integrity to be questioned. There are also civil penalties for willfully failing to follow the law.

Responsibility for this Policy

The Bishop, in cooperation with the Standing Committee, is responsible for maintaining the diocesan Policy for the Protection of Children in accordance with the Canons of the Diocese.

Responsibility for Implementing this Policy

The Rector has overall responsibility for administration of this policy within the church he leads, and for providing all reports requested by the Diocese. In the absence of a Rector, the Priest-in-Charge and/or the Senior Warden will be responsible. Duties may be delegated, except where noted.

Clarification of Relation between this Policy and Insurance

A congregation's adoption of written standards of conduct may be required by insurers as a condition of coverage. This Policy and its related procedures are not a substitute for understanding and complying with the conditions of a congregation's insurance coverage, and the Diocese assumes no responsibility for a congregation's non-compliance with its own insurance carrier's policy.

Clarification of Relation between this Policy and a Church's Policy on the Protection for Children

The vestry of each congregation within CANA West is required to adopt a policy regarding the protection of children that reflects both the statutes of the state or territory in which it is located and the principles set forth in this Diocesan Policy.

Diocesan Policy for the Protection of Children

The term "child abuse" is defined for this policy as acts committed by a parent, caregiver, person in a position of trust interacting with a minor, or any other individual that are intentional and which harm or threaten to harm a child's physical or mental health or welfare, and may include any or all of the following:

- physical and/or mental abuse;
- physical and/or mental neglect; and
- sexual abuse and/or exploitation.

NOTE: Each state and territory has statutes that define "abuse," or "child abuse," or "abuse toward minors." Each congregation must fully understand and comply with the statutes and laws of the jurisdiction in which it is located.

CANA West will not tolerate any form of child abuse involving clergy canonically resident in the Diocese; any seminarian or person at any stage of seeking holy orders in the Diocese; any lay employee or volunteer of the Diocese or its congregations; or any other person who might interact with children or youth in a congregational or diocesan setting.

No one in the employment or volunteer service of the Diocese or its congregations:

- who has a civil or criminal record of physical abuse, sexual abuse, or sexual misconduct of any kind toward a minor or adult;
- who has admitted committing prior such acts toward a minor or adult; or
- who (except where inquiry is prohibited or limited by applicable laws and regulations) has been diagnosed with a paraphilic psychological condition, as defined by the American Psychiatric Association, including but not limited to pedophilia, voyeurism, or exhibitionism;

will be permitted to serve with children or youth. To help ensure this, all individuals seeking employment or to volunteer in a ministry working with children or youth must be screened according to the procedures outlined below.

All who serve the church through educational, pastoral, recreational, administrative (including vestry), or other activities are expected to maintain the highest Biblical standards in relationships with those to whom they minister, avoiding any form of misconduct, including child abuse. Those who work with children and youth are also expected to be alert to signs of child abuse by parents, peers, or other people in a child or youth's life, and to follow proper reporting procedures for their respective states or territories. To help provide adequate common understanding of proper boundaries and signs of abuse, all such employees and volunteers shall be trained according to the procedures outlined below.

As previously stated, each individual congregation within CANA West is required to have a policy regarding the protection of children (and the prevention of child abuse). The policy must be customized according to the statutes of the state or territory in which the congregation is located. In addition, the leader responsible for each educational, pastoral, recreational or other program involving children or youth must write a Supervisory Plan detailing those measures in place to keep children and youth safe and to satisfy diocesan standards for supervision. A copy of this Supervisory Plan must be shared with all clergy, staff, or volunteers participating in the ministry, program, or activity. Please see Appendix A for a ready-to-use Supervisory Plan template.

Known sexual offenders, those who self-disclose a history of sexual misconduct, and those who self-disclose a struggle with sexual attraction toward minors will not be excluded from congregations in CANA West without first consulting the Chancellor and the Bishop. Should such an individual wish to participate in the life of a church, the clergy shall prohibit him or her from any contact with minors and shall require (except as otherwise directed by the church's legal counsel) said individual to sign a contract that details expectations, defines boundaries and off-limits locations, and establishes appropriate supervision for the offender while on church premises or at church activities. Where appropriate, the Rector shall consult with said individual's probation or parole officer to assure that supervision and reporting requirements have been and are being met. The church shall have a plan in place to deal with any violations of the contract.

A "home group" or "small group" meeting in a home for Bible study, prayer, and fellowship is not under the oversight of the Diocese or its congregations. The care and protection of children in such settings is *always* the responsibility of the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of each child present, as well as of the leader of the group in question. Nevertheless, the Diocese strongly recommends that home group leaders become familiar with and be trained in accordance with this Policy, develop Supervisory Plans that ensure child supervision by two or more screened and trained adults, child-proofed environments, and suitable procedures for changing diapers and for children's use of restrooms as though this Policy was in full force and effect in the homes in question.

Congregations will help keep children safe by:

- posting photos of minors on the church's website, social media accounts, or downloadable print publications only if written parental consent is obtained beforehand;

- posting personal identification information for minors on-line only if written parental consent is obtained beforehand; and
- ensuring that the church's website is COPPA-compliant.

Should an incident of child abuse occur, the Diocese and the congregation shall respond in a manner that promotes healing for the victim, the offender, the loved ones of both parties, and the congregation. Such measures will include timely communication with lay leadership and the congregation. The Diocese and its parishes shall, at a minimum, comply with all applicable statutes and laws regarding the reporting of known and/or suspected cases of child abuse.

Screening and Training Procedures

Table 1: Screening and Training Requirements specifies what is required for clergy of the Diocese, lay employees, interns, fellows, day camp staff, wardens, vestry members, and lay volunteers who work with children and youth. These requirements are explained below.

Background Checks

National and state sex offender registry and criminal background checks must be completed on a regular basis. The Diocese currently uses the Oxford Document Management Company (www.oxforddoc.com).

Each state has prescribed which background checks are required in order to work with minors in a religious setting. Some states, for example, require a fingerprint-based FBI check. Procedures for completing these state-required background checks can be found on official state-government webpages.

You may also use Ministry Safe (www.ministrysafe.com) for this purpose.

Personal Screening Statement

A ready-to-use, suitable example of a Personal Screening Statement can be found in Appendix A. If the form provided there is not used, the alternate statement used must include the definition of child abuse provided in this Policy and ask whether the applicant and/or any member of the applicant's household:

- has ever been arrested for, or convicted of, any crime involving child abuse or any crime of sexual misconduct, or been found to have abused or neglected a child by a family court or other civil domestic court for the protection of children;
- has ever had such a conviction expunged;
- has ever been charged with child abuse or neglect in a civil proceeding;
- has ever committed an act of child abuse or neglect;

- has ever been diagnosed with any paraphilic psychological condition, as defined by the American Psychiatric Association, including, but not limited to, pedophilia, voyeurism, or exhibitionism; or
- is now, or has ever been, a registered sex offender in any state or province.

Signed Policy Acknowledgement

Every category of person included in Table 1 (see following page) must have a signed statement on file acknowledging that he or she has read and understood the CANA West Policy for the Protection of Children and his or her respective church's policy concerning the same (if different from the diocesan policy). A ready-to-use example of such statement is provided in Appendix A.

Ministry Safe Training

Ministry Safe is an extensive safety system designed to reduce the risk of child sexual abuse in a congregation. This program has been endorsed by the Anglican Church in North America and is considered the *minimum* standard for such training programs. All clergy, lay employees, and lay ministry volunteers are required to complete Ministry Safe training every two (2) years. Since Ministry Safe is an on-line service, individuals can watch the course video and take the included test when convenient. Be sure to note that some features within Ministry Safe may need to be customized to state requirements before using. Find more information at www.ministrysafe.com.

Church-Specific Training

Individual congregations should have regular training on how child abuse prevention standards will be applied to specific groups in specific settings (to include the preparation of written Supervisory Plans). It is recommended that annual training (prior to children and youth program launches) be conducted to refresh awareness of existing standards as well as to explain what changes, if any, have been made to the Policy for the Protection of Children during the preceding year.

Church-Specific Prevention Program

Each congregation will make information available to parishioners regarding how to prevent child abuse, and should have a regularly-scheduled presentation regarding child abuse prevention that is appropriate for parents and children to attend.

Table 1: Screening and Training Requirements

	Diocesan Clergy	Lay Employees	Interns, Fellows, Day Camp Staff	Lay Ministers and Volunteers Serving with Children or Youth
National Sexual Offender Registry and Criminal Background Check	Every 5 years; filed by diocesan office	Every 5 years	Every 5 years	Every 5 years
Any state-required background checks for those in religious institutions working with children or youth	Every 5 years; filed by diocesan office	Every 5 years	Every 5 years	Every 5 years
Reviewing signed job or volunteer applications	When applicable	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reference checks	Personal and professional	Personal and professional	Personal and professional	Personal, if applicable
Face-to-face interviews	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Personal Screening Statement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Six-month minimum attendance	Not required	Not required	Not required	Yes, except where the Bishop has granted a

				variance
Signed Acknowledgement of Diocesan and Church Policies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ministry Safe Sexual Abuse Prevention Course online or another diocesan-approved training workshop	Every 2 years; certificate of completion on file with Diocese	Every 2 years; certificate of completion on file with church	Every 2 years; certificate of completion on file with church	Every 2 years; certificate of completion on file with church
Church-specific training	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Copy of valid driver's license, vehicle registration, DMV record, and proof of auto insurance	Anyone who drives minors for a church-sponsored activity	Anyone who drives minors for a church-sponsored activity	Anyone who drives minors for a church-sponsored activity	Anyone who drives minors for a church-sponsored activity

Procedures for Adults Interacting with Children and Youth

Every effort shall be made to have at least two adults working together with children. Private (*i.e.*, out of the sight and hearing of other adults) face-to-face interaction between an adult and a child not his or her own shall be avoided if at all possible. Adults initiating telephone calls with children or youth shall do so in the presence and hearing of another adult. Except in emergency situations, adults who receive telephone calls from children or youth (who are not in the presence and hearing of another adult) shall terminate those calls as quickly as possible, making appropriate arrangements for such additional communication as may be necessary.

Adults who send e-mails, text messages, or other social media messaging to children or youth shall always copy the appropriate ministry leader and/or a designated member of the clergy.

Communication (verbal, text, e-mail, and social media messaging)

- Be positive, uplifting, encouraging, and constructive, aiding in the spiritual growth and development of children and youth;
- Avoid harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating speech;
- Refrain from swearing or other coarse language;
- Refrain from commenting on children's and youth's bodies;
- Direct concerns about children to parents, legal guardians, the appropriate ministry leader, or clergy;
- Avoid discussion of sexually-oriented topics except where age-appropriate and Rector-approved (or designee-approved) materials are being used in order to address human sexuality, sexual abuse prevention, and/or sexual purity (such materials should be made available for review to parents beforehand, and an opt-out should be allowed for those whose parents have concerns);
- Refrain from discussing inappropriate or explicit information about personal relationships, dating experiences, or sexual activity;
- Report to the appropriate ministry leader or clergy any sexually-oriented communication initiated by a minor, or by another person toward a minor (follow through with any state-required reporting if necessary!);
- Refrain from connecting with minor students on social media; and
- Model appropriate personal interactions when connected to youth on social media.

Physical Interaction

Physical contact

- Physical contact must be for the benefit of the child – never for the emotional needs of the adult
- Physical contact should not be forced on a reluctant child
- Physical contact should always occur in observable (*i.e.*, public) places
- Avoid even the appearance of wrongdoing

Discipline

- Physical discipline of any kind is prohibited (including, but not limited to, spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, and other forms of physical force used for retaliation or correction)
- Acceptable methods of discipline include time-outs and other non-physical strategies
- If child or youth behavior requires physical restraint to prevent self-injury or harm to others or to property, the incident must be reported immediately to parents, Children's Ministry Director, Youth Pastor, and/or clergy

Physical affection

- Appropriate physical affection includes: high-fives, handshakes, fist bumps, thumbs up, pats on head or back, side hugs, and smiling
- Inappropriate physical affection includes: wrestling, tickling, sitting in laps (except for nursery-aged children), kissing on lips, and full-frontal hugs
- Inappropriate touching and displays of affection are forbidden, and should be reported immediately in accordance with the church's policy for protecting children

Calls of Nature

Diapers

- Only a child's parents, legal guardian, or screened, trained individuals identified in writing by the child's parents or legal guardian will change diapers for either gender
- Children and Youth Ministry leaders will work with parents of special needs individuals wearing diapers in order to devise the best plan for them

Toilet training

- Only a child's parents, legal guardian, or screened, trained individuals identified in writing by the child's parents or legal guardian will participate with parents in toilet training efforts
- No child should be forced to toilet train

Bathroom use

- Preschool children should not be left unattended in bathrooms (*i.e.*, bathroom door should be open)
 - If program staff assists child in stall, stall door must be partially open
 - If needed, children should be assisted in straightening clothing before returning to areas with other children
 - Bathroom “accidents” should be handled in a reassuring manner
- Elementary children should receive only the minimum amount of help needed
 - Child uses toilet in stall alone, with staff standing in hallway with foot in bathroom door to monitor and verbally assist as needed
 - Two children can proceed to the bathroom together

General Behavior

- Refrain from use, possession, or being under the influence of tobacco products, alcohol, prescription medications not prescribed by a doctor, or any illegal drugs while in church facilities, while traveling with or in the presence of children or their parents, during church-sponsored activities, or while working with or supervising children
- Refrain from possession of obscene or pornographic materials (including on electronic devices) while in church facilities, while traveling with or in the presence of children or their parents, during church-sponsored activities, or while working with or supervising children
- Refrain from engaging in any type of bullying while working with or supervising children, including verbal, physical, and cyber-bullying
- Refrain from using or openly carrying firearms while working with children
- Wear appropriate attire while working with children
- Never be nude in the presence of children or youth; in situations where changing clothes or showering are necessary (such as on retreats or mission trips), the Supervisory Plan should make provision for adults to bathe and dress privately
- Treat seriously all suspicions and/or reports of child abuse and/or neglect
- If anyone is in immediate danger of serious bodily injury or death, and for other emergencies, call 911

Supervisory Plans

Remember that the minimum number of adults required with any group of children or youth is two. State or territory statutes may specify required ratios of adults to children. If a church's jurisdiction does not specify ratios, the following ratios are recommended:

	Adults to Children	Maximum group size for 2 adults
Infants	1:4	8
Young toddlers	1:5	10
2 and 3 years	1:8	16
4 years	1:10	20
School Age	1:16	36

All Supervisory Plans shall include the following written details:

- A description of the nature of the activity, including what age groups are involved
- The details of the registration process (and a registration form should be attached)
- The identities of the leaders responsible for running the activity
- The number of adults needed
- A description of physical environment (*e.g.*, classroom, gym, rotating rooms)
- The bathrooms that will be used and which procedures will apply
- First aid and medication procedures
- Reporting methods for disciplinary matters
- The procedure for the release of children

Supervisory Plans for off-site activities shall also include:

- A transportation plan
- Dining arrangements, including provisions for those with special diets (if applicable)
- Overnight sleeping arrangements (if applicable)
- Showering arrangements (if applicable) for adults and minors

Reporting and Investigation Procedures

To the Authorities

These procedures vary by state. It is a church's responsibility to be familiar with and train its staff and volunteers to follow all state-mandated procedures.

Within the Congregation

The supervisor over the children's and/or youth programs should notify the Rector and Senior Warden as soon as possible regarding disclosures by a minor, or regarding suspicions of abuse expressed by a staff member or volunteer.

Staff members and volunteers may report knowledge or suspicion of abuse to supervisors of children's and youth programs or directly to the Rector.

Please see Appendix A for a ready-to-use internal reporting form.

To the Diocese

The Rector must immediately notify the Executive Archdeacon and Canon to the Ordinary, the Chancellor, and the Bishop upon receipt of any such report of abuse or suspected abuse.

Duty to Cooperate with Both External and Internal Investigations

Staff members and volunteers will cooperate fully with any investigation required by appropriate civil or law enforcement authorities as well as with any internal investigation by the church or Diocese. All internal investigations, to the extent allowed by law, will be conducted in as confidential a manner as possible, taking into account the circumstances of the report and the allegation of abuse.

Appendix A (Ready-to-Use Forms)

- **Personal Screening Statement**
- **Acknowledgment of Diocesan Policy for the Protection of Children**
- **Internal Reporting Form**
- **Supervisory Plan**

Personal Screening Statement

The term “child abuse” is defined in the CANA West Policy for Protection of Children as follows:

... an act committed by a parent, caregiver, person in a position of trust interacting with a minor, or by any other individual that is both intentional and which harms or threatens to harm a child’s physical or mental health or welfare, and may include any or all of the following:

- physical and/or mental abuse;
- physical and/or mental neglect; or
- sexual abuse and/or exploitation.

Answer the questions below based on the definition above. Circle each answer.

Have you ever:

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| • been arrested for or convicted of any crime involving child abuse or sexual misconduct, or been found to have abused or neglected a child by a family or other court? | Yes | No |
| • had such a conviction or other disposition for any such offense expunged? | Yes | No |
| • been charged with child abuse or neglect in a civil or family court proceeding? | Yes | No |
| • committed an act of child abuse or child neglect? | Yes | No |
| • been diagnosed with any paraphilic psychological condition, as defined by the American Psychiatric Association, including, but not limited to, pedophilia, voyeurism, or exhibitionism? | Yes | No |
| • been registered as a sex offender in any state or province? | Yes | No |

Has any member of your household ever:

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| • been arrested for, or convicted of, any crime involving child abuse or sexual misconduct? | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|

- had such an arrest or conviction expunged? Yes No
- been charged with child abuse in a civil proceeding? Yes No
- committed an act of child abuse? Yes No
- been diagnosed with any paraphilic psychological condition (as defined by the American Psychiatric Association) including, but not limited to, pedophilia, voyeurism, or exhibitionism? Yes No
- been registered as a sex offender in any state or province? Yes No

Signature

Printed Name

Date

Acknowledgement of Policy for the Protection of Children

I, _____ (print name), have received a copy of the Policy for the Protection of Children, I have read it in full, and understood its content and its applications to my employ or volunteer service in the Diocese and/or local congregation.

I further certify that I will abide by the provisions of these policies as long as I am an employee or volunteer of the congregation.

Signature

Printed Name

Date

Policy for the Protection of Children

Internal Reporting Form

Date and time of
initial report/outcry: _____

Person making
initial report/outcry: _____

Contact information for person
making initial report/outcry: _____

Person to whom initial
report/outcry was made: _____

Position and contact information
of person receiving
initial report/outcry: _____

Substance of initial report/outcry: _____

**Action(s) taken by person receiving
initial outcry/report (with dates and times
said actions were taken):**

Signature of person receiving initial outcry/report

Printed Name

Date and time Reporting Form was prepared

Supervisory Plan

Description of activity, including age groups involved

Details of registration process (attach sample of registration form)

Names of leaders responsible for the activity

Number of adults required for the activity _____

Description of physical environment (*e.g.*, classroom, gym, rotating rooms)

Bathrooms that will be used and description of bathroom for the activity

First aid and medication procedures

Reporting procedure for disciplinary issues

Procedure for the release of children

If all or part of the scheduled activity is “off site,” please provide the following:

Details of transportation to and from off-site location(s)

Dining arrangements, including provisions for special diets (if applicable)

Overnight sleeping arrangements (if applicable)

Showering arrangements (if applicable) for adults and minors

Name of person(s) who prepared this Supervisory Plan

Name of person who submitted this Supervisory Plan (if different from above)

Date Supervisory Plan Submitted _____

FINAL APPROVAL:

Person approving Supervisory Plan _____

Date Supervisory Plan Approved _____