



SAFE CHURCH AND CHURCH PROGRAM POLICY: A Plan to Protect Children, Youth and Adults

Approved at ADS March 15, 2014

Section I - STATEMENT OF POLICY

Vision: Healing and Hope

God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

Basis of this policy

As followers of Jesus Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, we recognize the guidance and authority of God through prayer, worship, and the Scriptures. Employees and volunteers involved in Mennonite Church Saskatchewan thus have the calling and responsibility to mentor children and youth at MCSask events to also know God's guidance and authority. We do this by conscientiously modelling healthy relationships with Jesus Christ and with all human beings. Healthy relationships include appropriate physical, sexual and emotional boundaries whereby the safety and well-being of all people is ensured¹. In order to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, MCSask events must provide an environment in which children and youth can grow physically, emotionally and spiritually and all people are safe. The faith and practices of Mennonite Church Saskatchewan are also shaped by the following document:

- · Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective²
- · Mennonite Vision Statement, "Vision: Healing and Hope"³

In addition to a spiritual commitment, the church has moral, legal and societal obligations to ensure a safe environment for children, youth and vulnerable adults participating in church programs. Recognising the human capacity for unacceptable behaviour, we accept our responsibility to implement clear policies and procedures to minimise the risk of abuse to those who participate in church programs and events.

Purpose

We recognize the need to provide an environment in which the risk of physical, sexual or emotional abuse is absolutely minimized through policies that outline expectations of positive relational boundaries between MCSask staff and/or volunteers and the children or youth and MCSask events. The purpose of this document is to ensure that MCSask events are a safe place for all people. The intent of the policies and procedures outlined herein is to protect children⁴, youth and vulnerable adults from harm and abuse, the adults who work with them from false allegations, and the church from unnecessary litigation.

There will be no tolerance for abuse, harassment or neglect by staff and/or volunteers at MCSask events.

Scope

This policy is intended to provide guidance and to spell out expectations for all staff, volunteers and persons of responsibility at all MCSask events. Each member church within the MCSask area church are responsible to their own policies and procedures. Consequently, MCSask does not assume responsibility for activities and events taking place in individual congregations or camps.

Section II - DEFINITIONS

1. See Appendix A for Guidelines for Healthy Relationships with Children and Youth
2. Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, Herald Press, 1995; or, see Appendix B
3. Vision: Healing & Hope. "God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world."
4. The terms "children" or "child" refer to any person under the age of eighteen. Vulnerable adults include those with physical, mental or emotional challenges.

In order that it is clearly understood what constitutes unacceptable behaviour, definitions of abuse and related issues are essential. Further, all workers should be aware that Saskatchewan law requires, through the Child and Family Services Act (CFSA)⁵, that all cases where there are reasonable grounds to suspect abuse and neglect of children must be reported to civil authorities.

- a. Abuse:** to use wrongly, to maltreat, to injure. It is the misuse of power by a person in a position of trust. Abuse may take various forms⁶:
- I. **PHYSICAL ABUSE:** deliberate physical force or action that could result injury to another person. It can include punching, slapping, beating, shaking, burning, biting or throwing. It is not a form of reasonable discipline at church events.
 - II. **EMOTIONAL ABUSE:** any pattern of hurting one's emotional development and sense of self-worth. It includes excessive, aggressive or unreasonable demands that place expectations on someone beyond his or her capacity. It includes, but is not limited to, verbal attacks, insults, humiliation or rejection.
 - III. **SEXUAL ABUSE:** occurs when someone is used for sexual stimulation or gratification without consent. It includes any sexual exploitation of a child, whether consensual or not, by an adult or older child. It also includes sexual exploitation of a non-consenting adult, or exploitation of someone without the mental capacity to provide informed consent.
Types of sexual abuse:
 - a) fondling
 - b) oral, genital and anal penetration
 - c) intercourse
 - d) forcible rape
 - e) improper touching (see below)
 - f) verbal comments
 - g) pornographic videos
 - h) obscene phone calls
 - i) exhibitionism
 - j) allowing children and/or youth to witness sexual activity
 - IV. **iv SPIRITUAL ABUSE:** happens when a spiritual leader or system such as a church or school tries to control, manipulate, or dominate a person through physical, intellectual, or emotional means. When words, or actions, tear down or attack another person in the name of God, or when fear, or other emotional affect is created in order to control and dominate a person, thus compromising the ability of the individual to think and act for him or herself apart from the wishes of the spiritual leader or group—this is spiritual abuse.
The church is to be a place that resonates with the fruit of the spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. (Galatians 3:22, 23) Where these traits are practiced by the spiritual leadership or group there will be little room for the coercion of spiritual abuse.
- b. Child neglect:** the failure to meet a child's basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, sleep, medical attention, education, and protection from harm. Young children should never be left unattended.
- c. Harassment:** repeated subtle or overt action, particularly by a person in a position of authority, which causes the recipient to feel attacked, demeaned, intimidated or manipulated.

5. Child and Family Services Act, Chapter C-7.2 of the Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1989-90, as amended.

6. These expansions on the legal definitions are typical of those found in "child safety" literature throughout Canada. This particular set is based on those published by The Children's Aid Society of London and Middlesex on their website, http://www.caslondon.on.ca/protect_what.htm

- d. **Improper touching:** touching which can create feelings of violation, confusion or isolation. It may include kissing, coaxing a someone to give a kiss, extended hugging or tickling, touching in any area that would be covered by a swim suit, carrying those capable of movement on their own or having them sit on an adult's lap.
- e. **Improper discipline:** Corporal or emotional forms of punishment are unacceptable. Improper discipline includes yelling or screaming at children, threatening them or physically hurting them. By contrast, proper discipline involves establishing clear boundaries of acceptable behaviour and maintaining such behavioural expectations with firm and kind expressions of authority.
- f. **Assault:** to cause bodily harm by inappropriately applying force to another person; to attempt or threaten to apply force.
- g. **Prejudice:** a judgement made and attitude formed towards a certain group without prior knowledge of the facts, usually based on a stereotype, sometimes including an irrational attitude of hostility.
- h. **Discrimination:** treating people differently through prejudice; unfair treatment of one person or group, usually because of prejudice about race, ethnic group, age group, religion, gender, sexual orientation or gender identification.

Section III - SCREENING

MCSask assesses the responsibility of all leaders and volunteers under their direct supervision who are involved with events involving children and/or youth. Depending on this responsibility assessment, various screening procedures are necessary. Any staff person or volunteer under MCSask with power or authority over children and/or youth will be subject to the screening assessment and procedures laid out below. MCSask is not responsible for screening volunteers and staff who attend MCSask events as a delegate or representative of a member church; it is each church's own responsibility to appropriately screen their staff or volunteers.

A. Responsibility Assessment

Low Responsibility

- a) MCSask has administrative responsibilities only;
- b) events where children and/or youth do not attend;
- c) events where there are no planned activities for children and/or youth.

Medium Responsibility

- a) Includes events where children and/or youth are in groups with more than one adult at all times

High Responsibility

- a) Includes any event with an overnight component;
- b) any event where personnel would have an opportunity to be alone with children and/or youth;
- c) includes any staff persons or volunteers who are in a position of power and/or trust.

Responsibility Categorization

Type of Event	Example	Personnel	Responsibility level	Screening responsibility
Youth (jr. and sr.) Overnight	Jr. /Sr. High Retreats; MC Sask Delegate Sessions; Service Projects; National Youth Assembly; Peace-It-Together	- Youth Minister	High	MC Sask
		- Youth pastors/sponsors	High	congregation
		- volunteers/parents	Medium	congregation
		- resource persons/guest speaker	Medium	MC Sask
Youth Day Event	SMYO Committee Worship Services; Service projects; SMYO Committee Orientation	- Youth Minister	High	MC Sask
		- Youth pastors	High	congregation
		- workshop leaders	Medium	MC Sask
		- sponsors/volunteers	Medium	Congregation
Children/ Jr. Youth Consecutive Day Event	VBS Troupe	- Youth Minister	High	MC Sask
		- troupe members	High	MC Sask
		- group leaders	High	Congregation
Youth Overnight	Bus Trips	- Youth Minister		
		- Youth pastors/sponsors	High	Congregation
Nursery Care Day Event	MC Sask Delegate Sessions	- care givers	High	MC Sask
Intergenerational Day Event	Mission Festival Green Trek	- MC Sask staff	High	MC Sask
		- Planners	Medium	MC Sask
		- activity leaders	Medium	MC Sask

B. Screening Procedures

Depending on the responsibility assessment, the following screening procedures will be employed to qualify staff and/or volunteers for medium and high responsibility. The pastoral candidates will provide the search committee of the congregation with a current police check.

Medium Responsibility

- a) targeted recruitment
- b) volunteer registration

High Responsibility

- a) targeted recruitment
- b) volunteer registration
- c) background reference checks
- d) minimum waiting period
- e) police record checks

Targeted Recruitment:

An MC Sask representative or MC Sask staff person shall approve the appointment or hiring of all personnel who fall under medium and high responsibility categories, whether volunteer or paid.

Volunteer Registration:

Volunteer applications will be kept on file by the MCSask staff person(s) in charge of the event. A suggested copy is appended to this document⁷. Volunteer applications are necessary for medium and high responsibility screening procedures.

Background Reference Checks:

Volunteers and paid staff who are directly responsible to MCSask (and not attending the event as a representative of a member church) and who fall under the high responsibility category must give the names of at least two references. MCSask staff will keep record of contact with these references using the reference check form appended to this document⁸.

Minimum waiting period:

MCSask volunteers who fall under the high responsibility category need to have at least 6 months attendance in an MCSask congregation before volunteering.

Police Record checks:

All staff and volunteers who fall under the high responsibility category and who are directly under the supervision of MCSask will need to supply police checks⁹. Costs will be covered by MCSask. A record involving any abuse of children or youth will disqualify the individual from working with children and/or youth.

If questions arise regarding the suitability of an adult to work with vulnerable populations, this policy allows the adult in question to engage in open dialogue with MCSask representatives regarding concerns. The faith and practices of the Mennonite church are sensitive to both the dignity of each person as well as the safety of all members. We also believe the church is to be a place that fosters forgiveness and growth. As such, a period of discernment may commence, with the content of the meetings documented, until MCSask and the adult in question reach a satisfactory agreement regarding their capacity to serve.

Any staff or volunteer who has been involved in leadership in at least two (2) conference sponsored events, and are deemed by MCSask staff as having no incidents against them, will be able to be involved in events of the same risk level without further screening. Volunteers who are serving in a high-risk capacity for the first time will need to provide a police check.

Adults at events other than those recruited specifically by MCSask:

Youth pastors, sponsors and other responsible adults from congregations normally attend events along with their youth. Each congregation will be responsible for their screening; a letter will be sent to churches outlining their responsibilities.

Section IV - OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES FOR PREVENTING ABUSE AND INVESTIGATING ALLEGATIONS

To minimise the risk of harm coming to children in the care MCSask, programs and personnel will abide by the guidelines outlined below.

7. See Appendix C for Volunteer registration forms
 8. See Appendix D for Record of Reference Check forms
 9. See Appendix E for Consent for Criminal Record Check

A. General Guidelines

- a. Consent forms¹⁰ wherein parents give written permission for their children or youth to participate in off-site activities will be gathered and kept on file.
- b. Corporal punishment is prohibited.
- c. When a person suspects abuse or harassment, s/he will follow procedures set out in Section IV F.
- d. A team approach is to be used. Normally there are to be at least two adults present for events.
- e. We have an open door policy. In rooms without windows in the doors, the door of the room being used will be left open unless two or more adults are present in the room.
- f. Activities that could easily lead to allegations of abuse or harassment, such as unsupervised internet access, vehicle transportation by workers alone with unrelated youth, or improperly supervised sleepovers, are to be avoided. If circumstances arise making it necessary to transport a child alone, proceed directly to the destination and inform the office of departure and arrival specifics prior to the trip.
- g. Out-of-program or off-premises contact between children and workers is discouraged without the prior consent of a parent.

B. Training

Our goal is to ensure that all volunteers and staff are informed as to what our Safe Policy includes. To that end, MCSask will:

- a. distribute copies of this policy to new staff and volunteers;
- b. train key members such so they have a thorough understanding of their responsibility to maintain this policy;
- c. have the MCSask staff conduct meetings at the beginning of each new MCSask event to review this policy and to educate workers about the symptoms of abuse;
- d. keep a copy of this policy in the main office.

C. First Aid Supplies/Training

A First Aid kit must be available at any MCSask event. It is the facilitator's role to ensure that it there is one available. A sign shall be posted identifying the location of the First Aid box. A review of those ministry leaders holding first aid certificates should be made before programs commence.

D. Ministry Covenant

All MCSask staff and volunteers will be obligated to sign a ministry covenant indicating that they have read and understood the policies and procedures¹¹.

E. Documentation for Staff, Volunteers, and Events

Documentation pertaining to staff, volunteers, and events will be archived according to MCSask practice. Documentation includes the following:

- a) Police checks:
- b) Volunteer registration
- c) Accurate lists of participants and contact information, made up for each event and kept in a safe place during the event.

F. Responding

The purpose of implementing procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse is to protect the innocent and the vulnerable, stop the abuse, and promote justice, restoration and healing. These procedures offer opportunities for the truth to be spoken, for any violation to be acknowledged or acquitted, for accountability to be exercised, and for compassion to be demonstrated in ways that serve justice and restorative healing.

10. See Appendix F for Consent Forms

11. See Appendix G for Ministry Covenant

Suspicion of abuse must be taken seriously. If suspicion arises from conversation with a child, be sure to avoid intrusive or leading questions since such questioning could interfere with an investigation and/or cause undue stress.

Saskatchewan Law requires that anyone who suspects on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection must report the suspicion to the local child protection agency. A list of Child Protection reporting lines in the province is appended to this document¹².

MCSask further requires that if such suspicion involves personnel or programs under the sponsorship of MCSask, it shall also be reported to the area church minister and/or another MCSask staff or executive member. A minimum of two executive/staff should be informed of the suspicion. This reporting to the MCSask staff or executive must not delay the reporting to the local child protection agency.

"Situations where spiritual abuse is suspected must be reported to area church minister and/or MCSask staff or executive member as this does not fall within the mandate of the Child and Family Services Act. A minimum of two executive /staff should be informed of the suspicion."

In the case of any suspected child abuse, the following procedures shall be observed in the order below.

1. While it may be appropriate to ask a child how an observed symptom appeared (e.g., a bruise on the body), it is never appropriate to ask any leading questions which might suggest to a child that s/he has been abused or suggest names, places or methods of abuse. Further, no person shall conduct any investigation unless authorized by the appropriate authorities. Such investigations can be undertaken only by the Social Services (SS) child protection officers or the police.
2. Any volunteer or employee having suspicion of the child abuse at the event must report the suspicion to the local SS child protection services or the police immediately. Leaders of the event should be informed of the reports. If the police or the SS representative indicates that an investigation must be undertaken, then all pertinent information must be provided. Any delay in reporting or providing the appropriate information may place the child at further risk. You have the right to complete confidentiality while reporting. Your name will not be used in the investigation without your prior consent. You will, however, be required to provide your name to the Child Protection Agency when reporting.
3. The person reporting may wish to extensively consult with other leaders, but only if doing so does not delay the reporting of the concerns to the authorities.
4. It is expected that any witnesses to symptoms or events will document their observations¹³, including:
 - a) specific signs or symptoms observed;
 - b) any report of abuse made by the child or others, and/or any witnessed event that raised the suspicion; as well as
 - c) the date and time relating to any of the above; and
 - d) any response the child made to any of the above.

This report should be written and signed as soon as possible after the appropriate reporting to the authorities. This report should then be provided to the MCSask executive. A log of all follow up involvements regarding this concern should be maintained by those involved. Be aware that these documents may be subpoenaed by the courts for use in the investigation. It is suggested that the writer be as thorough as possible, without including unnecessary information.

5. Any report and subsequent documentation of suspected child abuse is to be considered and treated as confidential. Access to this information should be limited to the specified persons responsible for providing leadership in this area, to SS and police, and when required, an MCSask attorney and/or insurance carrier.

12. See Appendix I for a list of child protection reporting lines

13. See Appendix H for a copy of an Incident Reporting Form

6. The notification of the child's parents of the suspicion of abuse must be carried out only in consultation with the SS child protection officers or the police.
7. If, after a report is made to SS or the police, the authorities choose not to investigate, a written log of any further signs, symptoms or events that may indicate abusive behaviour should be kept. Also, continue to report any suspicious activity to the authorities. It is not possible to report too much or too often.
8. It is recognized that the witness(s) to any suspicions of child abuse will require support, especially once a report is made to the authorities. Appropriate support is key to their well-being; they should be instructed on how to respond if the child, parents, or other interested parties contact him/her. Such instructions should include:
 - refraining from sharing any statement made by the child with anyone other than the authorities until the authorities have determined whether or not the child needs to be protected from contact with that person;
 - refraining from sharing with the accused, or any other person, information that has not been reported to the authorities. All information must be promptly reported to the SS;
 - refraining from attempting to convince the accused that the alleged abuse happened or did not happen;
 - listening to any information a parent or other party may offer about the suspected abuse, recording it immediately after the conversation and ensuring this additional information is reported in a manner consistent with the original report of suspected abuse;
 - assuring parents of the confidential nature of the report and the need to maintain confidentiality.
9. Appropriate precautions must be undertaken to ensure that the victim and other children at MCSask events are kept safe during the ongoing investigation by the authorities. Such precautions should include the following:
 - a) If the accused is an employee or volunteer of MCSask, s/he will immediately be suspended from his/her office or duty, pending the outcome of the investigation. This suspension is carried out with full pay (for paid personnel) and without prejudice. Suspension shall be given in such a way that no investigation will be put in jeopardy. The suspension from duties is not viewed as the "guilt" of the person, but only as the priority of the need to protect children.
 - b) Ensure that there is limited and no unsupervised contact between the alleged offender and children
10. Plans for pastoral and possibly clinical support of all parties involved need to be developed as soon as the investigation is under way. Resources for children, parents and the accused are available in the community via the police or SS, through a number of church related ministries, and via the MCSask offices in Saskatoon. Referrals for counselling or relevant resources may be suggested.
11. The decision whether or not the employee/volunteer is to be restored to his or her previous position or duty is dependant on the outcome of the investigation. This should be done only if and when, in consultation with the police, SS staff, legal counsel and child abuse experts; it is deemed safe and proper to do so. If the accused is reinstated, efforts will be made to restore strained relationships and facilitate a healing process.
12. In the event of prosecution resulting in conviction, the abuser will not be restored to his/her previous position or duty.

Section V – PREVENTING DISCRIMINATION

There can be many cultural differences within one religion, just as there are many parts within one body. We recognize that cultural differences have the potential to propagate misunderstanding, stereotypes and prejudice, which in turn can lead to discrimination or harassment. To minimize the risk of harassment happening to any attendee, volunteer or staff member, MCSask will abide by the guidelines outlined below.

- a) No person will be granted a position or prohibited from a position on the basis of age, gender, cultural background, physical appearance or sexual orientation
- b) All children and youth will have equal opportunity to participate in MCSask programming.
- c) In no program, curriculum, or event will one culture be presented as superior to or inferior to another.
- d) All members/attendees are free to express their own cultural affiliations through action, dress, language, communication, or any other way they see fit, as long as it does not stand in violation of this policy.

Appendix A

Guidelines for Healthy Relationships with Children and Youth¹⁴

Human warmth expressed through appropriate touch can foster a sense of acceptance, belonging and significance. Inappropriate touch can create feelings of violation, confusion and isolation which leave lasting scars. It is the responsibility of adults to maintain appropriate boundaries; this is not the responsibility of children or youth.

The following are examples of ways in which adults can show warmth to children while protecting their own integrity.

- a. Make a point of showing affection in open places where others can see and share in the warmth. In determining whether the touching is of a sexual or inappropriate nature, ask yourself the question, "How would a reasonable observer interpret this touch?"
- b. Classrooms and meeting places should be managed to create a feeling of public space, yet be conducive to good teaching. Leave the windows in the room uncovered and the door standing open whenever possible.
- c. If you and a child need to talk to each other in confidence, avoid isolating yourselves. Have another adult present or stay within view of the group. If you and a child must be in a room by yourselves, leave the door open.
- d. If a child is hurting physically or feeling ill and needs to be examined, ensure that another person of the same gender as the child is present in the room with you. Do not force the child to remove clothing for an examination.
- e. If a child is sad and needs to be comforted, you may, with the child's permission, show support by placing your arm around a shoulder and giving a gentle hug.
- f. Be cautious about any conversations that involve sex. Children may ask honest questions about sexuality and teenagers might seek advice. Listening, with respect for the child, is appropriate. When responding, be sensitive to the values and standards that are taught in the child's home and to a discussion that may cause conflict or confusion with those standards.
- g. Within the context of our mentoring program, there are often situations where it is appropriate for an adult to be alone with a child. By allowing the child to participate in the mentoring program, the parent has already given written consent. Even so, in such cases, be absolutely sure that the child's parents are well aware of your plans for your time together.
- h. When supervising overnight group activities, observe extra safeguards. Ensure that awareness and parental consent of the activity is clear. Under no circumstances shall an overnight event be supervised by fewer than two adults. Never allow only one adult to do bed checks. If sleeping space is to be shared, adults and children must have separate beds.
- i. Avoid situations in which you or a child may have to change clothing, such as swimsuits or sports clothes, in the other's presence.
- j. Always respect the integrity of the child. Allow the child to back away from your well-intentioned affection if s/he so wishes. Some children may feel fearful or distrustful of any physical contact. Use your common sense and good judgement to guide you in protecting the personal space and wellbeing of the children in your care.

¹⁴ From Listowel Mennonite Church, Safe Church Policy, 2003, p.5.

Appendix B

Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective

Summary Statement

1. We believe that **God** exists and is pleased with all who draw near by faith. We worship the one holy and loving God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit eternally. God has created all things visible and invisible, has brought salvation and new life to humanity through Jesus Christ, and continues to sustain the church and all things until the end of the age.
2. We believe in Jesus Christ, the Word of God become flesh. He is the Savior of the world, who has delivered us from the dominion of sin and reconciled us to God by his death on a cross. He was declared to be Son of God by his resurrection from the dead. He is the head of the church, the exalted Lord, the Lamb who was slain, coming again to reign with God in glory.
3. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the eternal Spirit of God, who dwelled in Jesus Christ, who empowers the church, who is the source of our life in Christ, and who is poured out on those who believe as the guarantee of redemption.
4. We believe that all Scripture is inspired by God through the Holy Spirit for instruction in salvation and training in righteousness. We accept the Scriptures as the Word of God and as the fully reliable and trustworthy standard for Christian faith and life. Led by the Holy Spirit in the church, we interpret Scripture in harmony with Jesus Christ.
5. We believe that God has created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, and that God preserves and renews what has been made. All creation has its source outside itself and belongs to the Creator. The world has been created good because God is good and provides all that is needed for life.
6. We believe that God has created human beings in the divine image. God formed them from the dust of the earth and gave them a special dignity among all the works of creation. Human beings have been made for relationship with God, to live in peace with each other, and to take care of the rest of creation.
7. We confess that, beginning with Adam and Eve, humanity has disobeyed God, given way to the tempter, and chosen to sin. All have fallen short of the Creator's intent, marred the image of God in which they were created, disrupted order in the world, and limited their love for others. Because of sin, humanity has been given over to the enslaving powers of evil and death.
8. We believe that, through Jesus Christ, God offers salvation from sin and a new way of life. We receive God's salvation when we repent and accept Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. In Christ, we are reconciled with God and brought into the reconciling community. We place our faith in God that, by the same power that raised Christ from the dead, we may be saved from sin to follow Christ and to know the fullness of salvation.
9. We believe that the church is the assembly of those who have accepted God's offer of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. It is the new community of disciples sent into the world to proclaim the reign of God and to provide a foretaste of the church's glorious hope. It is the new society established and sustained by the Holy Spirit.
10. We believe that the mission of the church is to proclaim and to be a sign of the kingdom of God. Christ has commissioned the church to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, and teaching them to observe all things he has commanded.
11. We believe that the baptism of believers with water is a sign of their cleansing from sin. Baptism is also a pledge before the church of their covenant with God to walk in the way of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Believers are baptized into Christ and his body by the Spirit, water, and blood.

12. We believe that the Lord's Supper is a sign by which the church thankfully remembers the new covenant which Jesus established by his death. In this communion meal, the church renews its covenant with God and with each other and participates in the life and death of Jesus Christ, until he comes.
13. We believe that in washing the feet of his disciples, Jesus calls us to serve one another in love as he did. Thus we acknowledge our frequent need of cleansing, renew our willingness to let go of pride and worldly power, and offer our lives in humble service and sacrificial love.
14. We practice discipline in the church as a sign of God's offer of transforming grace. Discipline is intended to liberate erring brothers and sisters from sin, and to restore them to a right relationship with God and to fellowship in the church. The practice of discipline gives integrity to the church's witness in the world.
15. We believe that ministry is a continuation of the work of Christ, who gives gifts through the Holy Spirit to all believers and empowers them for service in the church and in the world. We also believe that God calls particular persons in the church to specific leadership ministries and offices. All who minister are accountable to God and to the community of faith.
16. We believe that the church of Jesus Christ is one body with many members, ordered in such a way that, through the one Spirit, believers may be built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.
17. We believe that Jesus Christ calls us to discipleship, to take up our cross and follow him. Through the gift of God's saving grace, we are empowered to be disciples of Jesus, filled with his Spirit, following his teachings and his path through suffering to new life. As we are faithful to his way, we become conformed to Christ and separated from the evil in the world.
18. We believe that to be a disciple of Jesus is to know life in the Spirit. As the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ takes shape in us, we grow in the image of Christ and in our relationship with God. The Holy Spirit is active in individual and in communal worship, leading us deeper into the experience of God.
19. We believe that God intends human life to begin in families and to be blessed through families. Even more, God desires all people to become part of the church, God's family. As single and married members of the church family give and receive nurture and healing, families can grow toward the wholeness that God intends. We are called to chastity and to loving faithfulness in marriage.
20. We commit ourselves to tell the truth, to give a simple yes or no, and to avoid the swearing of oaths.
21. We believe that everything belongs to God, who calls the church to live in faithful stewardship of all that God has entrusted to us, and to participate now in the rest and justice which God has promised.
22. We believe that peace is the will of God. God created the world in peace, and God's peace is most fully revealed in Jesus Christ, who is our peace and the peace of the whole world. Led by the Holy Spirit, we follow Christ in the way of peace, doing justice, bringing reconciliation, and practicing nonresistance, even in the face of violence and warfare.
23. We believe that the church is God's holy nation, called to give full allegiance to Christ its head and to witness to every nation, government, and society about God's saving love.
24. We place our hope in the reign of God and its fulfillment in the day when Christ will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead. He will gather his church, which is already living under the reign of God. We await God's final victory, the end of this present age of struggle, the resurrection of the dead, and a new heaven and a new earth. There the people of God will reign with Christ in justice, righteousness, and peace for ever and ever.

Appendix C

VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM FOR MINISTRIES WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

(All information received will be kept confidential)

In our desire to reduce the risk of abuse within MCSask ministries with children and youth we believe this information is necessary to protect our participants, volunteers and staff. Thank you in advance for your understanding.

1. Personal Information

Full name: _____ Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Business phone: _____

E-mail: _____

2. Name of congregation you are currently attending: _____

3. Are you currently ordained, licensed or commissioned pastoral staff within MCSask? Yes ___ No ___
Have you been screened (see Section 3 of *Plan to Protect* and Appendix D for definitions of "screening")

for ministry with children and youth by your congregation? Yes ___ No ___

If your answer is **yes** to either of these questions go to number 6 on this form.

If you answer is **no** to both of these questions please answer all of the remaining questions.

4. How long have you attended the congregation named in question 2 of this form? _____

5. May we contact your pastor for a reference? Yes ___ No ___

If you have attended this congregation for less than two (2) years please provide the name, address and telephone number of your previous church(es) over the last two (2) years, as well as the years attended:

6. Please provide two (2) other references who are **not** family members. If you answered "no" to 4b, please provide three (3) references who are **not** family members. (Use the back of this page as needed.)

Full name: _____ Relationship to you: _____

Home phone: _____ Business phone: _____

E-mail: _____

7. Do you hold a current first-aid or CPR certificate? Yes ___ No ___

8. Have you ever been charged with a criminal offence? Yes ___ No ___

9. Volunteer Statement:

I authorize the churches listed in this application to give any information they may have regarding my fitness for ministry with children and youth. I will provide a police check if called upon to do so.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that the above information is correct to the best of my knowledge and acknowledge that I have read and understood MCSask's *Plan to Protect* and agree to comply.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D.
REFERENCE CHECK FORM
(Confidential)

Record of contact with a reference identified by applicant for ministry with children or youth.

Name of applicant: _____

Date of contact	Name of reference	Person contacting reference	Method of contact. Eg: E-mail, letter	Summary of contact

QUESTIONS TO ASK REFERENCES

Volunteer's Name: _____ Date: _____

Event: _____

Personal Reference Name: _____

- Explain that you are calling in regards to an applicant who has put their name down as a reference
- Explain what the applicant is applying for.
- Explain MCSask's *Safe Space* policy - i.e. why we are doing the checks.

Questions

- 1) What is the context of your relationship with this person and how long have you known him/her?
- 2) Would you have any concerns about this person being around children under 18?
- 3) Do you have any other comments you would like to make?

Data entered into database

Date _____ By _____

Staff/Volunteer Summary Form

Name of Event: _____

Name of MCSask staff person in charge: _____

Date of event: _____

Location: _____

Job title	Responsibility assessment	Name of volunteer	Registration on file?	Type of screening completed

Appendix E

CONSENT FOR CRIMINAL RECORD SEARCH¹⁵

Police Agency _____ File No. _____ / _____

Full Name of Applicant _____
Surname Given Names

Birthdate _____ Birthplace _____

Address _____ City _____

Postal Code _____ Phone _____

Reason for Request: Screening for Volunteer Work or Screening for Employment

Consent

I hereby consent to the full disclosure of the following records upon the request of Mennonite Church Saskatchewan. I authorise the above named police agency, on my behalf, to inquire into a full and complete disclosure of any criminal record they may find at any time during the application process or during the term where I am on staff or a volunteer, should I receive any criminal convictions after the initial check.

To this end, I affix my signature.

Year/Month/Day _____ / _____ / _____ Signature _____

¹⁵ Parallel samples are available from a variety of print and web sources, including Mennonite Brethren Church of Manitoba, Safe Place Policy for Children's Ministry, April 1999. Please note that some organizations do not ask for a blanket consent form. These attach a "Statement" to their application. This requests signed permission to contact "the churches listed on this application" and an assertion such as the following: "I will provide a police check if called upon to do so." This leaves with the applicant the responsibility for getting the police check if requested.

Appendix F

BLANKET CONSENT FORM

As parent or guardian of _____

I give consent for him/her to participate in off-site youth group activities which are sponsored by _____ Mennonite Church.

Signature of parent or guardian _____

Date _____

ONE-TIME CONSENT FORM

As parent or guardian of _____ I give consent for him/her to participate in the off-site activity sponsored by _____ Mennonite Church to _____ on _____.

Signature of parent or guardian _____

Date _____

Appendix G
MINISTRY COVENANT

For all MCSask staff and volunteers.

Name of staff member: _____

Position: _____

Date responsibility commences: _____

I, _____ (print name), the undersigned, have read and understand the Mennonite Church Saskatchewan's *Safe Church and Church Program* policy, and agree to adhere to the guidelines and principles stated therein.

(Signature of staff member)

(Date)

(Signature of Witness)

(Date)

Appendix H

ABUSE INCIDENT REPORT

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Details:

Other Persons Present: _____

Name of Person Making This Report: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix I

SOCIAL SERVICES CHILD PROTECTION OFFICES

Buffalo Narrows	1-800-667-7685 or 306-235-1700	Waite St, S0M 0J0
Creighton	1-800-532-9580 or 306-688-8808	1st Street E, S0P 0A0
Estevan	306-637-4550	1219-5th St, S4A 0Z1
Fort Qu'Appelle	1-800-667-3260 or 306-332-3260	177 Segwun Ave, S0G 1S0
Kindersley.....	306-463-5470	113 2nd Ave E, S0L 1S0
La Loche	1-877-371-1131 or 306-822-1711	La Loche Ave, S0M 1G0
La Ronge.....	1-800-567-4066 or 306-425-4544	1320 La Ronge Ave, S0J 1L0
Lloydminster	1-877-367-7707 or 306-820-4250	4910 – 50th St., S9V 1Z5
Meadow Lake	1-877-368-8898 or 306-236-7500	Unit 5, 101 Railway Pl, S9X 1X6
Melfort	1-800-487-8640 or 306-752-6100	107 Crawford St. E, S0E 1A0
Moose Jaw.....	306-694-3647	36 Athabasca St E, S6H 6V2
Nipawin.....	1-800-487-8594 or 306-862-1700	210 – 1st St E, S0E 1E0
North Battleford	1-877-993-9911 or 306-446-7535	#405 1146 – 102 St, S9A 1G1
Prince Albert.....	1-866-719-6164 or 306-953-2422	800 Central Ave, S6V 6G1
Regina.....	306-787-3760	2045 Broad St, S4P 3V6
Rosetown.....	306-882-5400	122-2nd Ave N, S0L 2V0
Saskatoon	306-933-6077	122-3rd Ave N, S7K 2H6
Swift Current	306-778-8219	350 Cheadle St W, S9H 4G3
Weyburn.....	306-848-2404	110 Souris Ave NE, S4H 2Z9
Wynyard.....	1-866-287-7747 or 306-554-5450	400A Ave D W, S0A 4T0
Yorkton.....	306-786-1300	72 Smith St. E, S3N 2Y4

After Hours Crisis Service

Prince Albert.....	306-764-1101
Saskatoon.....	306-933-6200
Regina.....	306-569-2724
Other Communities.....	Local Police