

my
**Plan to
Protect™**
Pocket Guide

of Best Practices for Children's Ministry

This protection plan belongs to

Name: _____

Church / Organization: _____

Dated: _____





Child Protection Procedures

'Reducing the Risk' lists four principles for supervision:

- As risk increases, supervision should also increase.
- Risk increases as isolation increases.
- Risk increases as accountability decreases.
- Risk increases when there is an imbalance of power, authority, influence, and control between a potential abuser and a potential victim.¹



¹ Cobble, Hammer and Klipowicz 2003



MY PLAN TO PROTECT

What you can do to ensure the plan is in place at all times:



In Canada there is no statute of limitations when it comes to child abuse. In court we will need to demonstrate we did everything within our power to prevent the abuse from occurring.

Plan to Protect identifies those best practices that we can put into place to help limit the children from being hurt or abused.

Teacher / Student Ratios

Classroom settings must comply with established ratios for adults and children at all times. This includes off-site activities and trips. Plan to Protect recommends the following ratios:

- *One personnel for every 3 infants (birth – 17 months)*
- *One personnel for every 4 – 5 toddlers or preschoolers*
- *One personnel for every 7 – 10 elementary-age children*

Our ratios:

- *One personnel for every _____ infants (birth – 17 months)*
- *One personnel for every _____ toddlers or preschoolers*
- *One personnel for every _____ elementary-age children*

Teacher/student ratios promote positive learning and offer protection to the personnel who serve our children.



Please be aware that these ratios do not preclude the need to have two leaders present in a classroom.

Provincial standards for ratios differ across Canada; be sure to check with your province's standards to ensure your organization complies with local laws and regulations regarding teacher/student ratios.

Classroom Supervision

To comply with insurance requirements and to provide adequate supervision for children, one of the following must be in place:

- A minimum of two unrelated screened personnel are present for supervision, except in the event of an emergency, or,
- One screened member of personnel is present with windows having 100% clear lines of visibility in place, or
- The door open, with designated hall monitors circulating periodically from room to room.





MY PLAN TO PROTECT

What I need to remember when taking attendance:

A record will be kept of ministry personnel on duty in each classroom or program. This record will be maintained with the record of attendance and kept on file permanently.

We will maintain permanent documentation in the following location:

The taking of attendance is important for safety and security reasons – not only for children, but for the ministry personnel who serve them.



MY PLAN TO PROTECT

The washroom designated for elementary children is:

Our elementary procedures for accompanying children to the washroom are:

Health and Safety Guidelines

Illnesses:

A child who is ill and could therefore expose others to illness should not be received into the nursery or classroom.

Factors and symptoms to consider are:

- Fever, unusual fatigue, irritability, coughing, sneezing, runny nose and eyes, vomiting, diarrhea, inflamed mouth and throat.
- Children with a known communicable disease

MY PLAN TO PROTECT

When I have completed the incident report I should

Examples of when to complete an incident report:

- A sprained ankle
- Put a bandage on a child's cut or bruise
- Playground fight
- Allergic reaction
- A child bites another child
- A broken tooth
- A child urinates in his pants
- A pre-schooler removes his underwear during class
- A melt-down during class





***Proper classrosom management
and discipline***

All discipline and classroom management can be conducted in a loving and caring environment.

All attempts will be made to prevent discipline problems from arising and to avoid the need for remedial discipline.

Preventative Discipline (Check off your preventative discipline measures):

- Create a loving, caring atmosphere,
- To gain respect, you must grant respect,
- Model self-discipline and structure in your own life,
- Prepare exciting and interesting classes with short transitions between activities,
- Arrange your environment for children and for learning,
- Establish and communicate realistic expectations for the children,
- Be sure the activities that you provide are meaningful and age-appropriate,



MY PLAN TO PROTECT

- Every effort will be made to offer choices that are acceptable to both you and the child



Classroom rules will be established to clearly communicate the expectations required of children. Check off your classroom rules here

- One voice talking at a time
- Quiet hands get answered
- Use inside voices
- Obey directions the first time
- Use good manners
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself
- Respect each other
- Be friendly
- Visit the washroom before class begins
- Remember – life isn't fair, but God is good



Depending on their age and stage of development, a child may not be able to communicate what has happened to them, or they may fear they will not be believed. They may be convinced that the abuse is their fault and, if they tell anyone about it, they will be punished. They may fear that they or the abuser will be removed from the home, or suffer other consequences. They may feel ashamed and want to keep the abuse (and related family problems) secret to avoid being stigmatized or have their sexual identity questioned.²

What is my legal responsibility:

If you suspect, on reasonable grounds, that a child or youth is or may be in need of protection, the law requires you to report this to your local Child Protection Services, even if you have made a similar report on a similar occasion. For the young person's sake, you should do this right away.

Reporting must be done orally by telephone or in person.

He has showed
you, O man,
what is good.
And what does
the LORD
require of you?
To act justly
and to love
mercy and to
walk humbly
with your God.
Micah 6:8

² Department of Justice - Canada: <http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/fv-vf/facts-info/child-enf.html#preventing>