

Towards Healthy

Relationships

Protecting Teen Welfare

Reporting Teen Abuse

Durham Christian High School

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Protecting Teen Welfare

Article A: BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

“For they will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain....” Isaiah 11:9

The kingdom of God is described in a variety of ways throughout the Bible, perhaps none so picturesquely and with so much vivid imagery as in the book of Isaiah, chapter 11. It’s a beautiful and harmonious scene, culminating in the quotation above. This passage describes not only relationships within the whole of God’s creation, but also human relationships.

The fall of the human race into sin and the depravity that resulted have destroyed God’s original design and intent for this world and especially for our relationships. While it is true that sin in general affects the whole of human life, few sins tear at the fabric of relationships with as much human misery and pain as the sin of abuse. Abuse distorts the image of God, devalues human beings created in his image, and devastates its victims.

Yet the Bible’s message is not one of despair, but of hope! In Christ, God’s world is restored and God’s kingdom comes. In his life on earth Christ was the embodiment of righteousness, justice, peace, reconciliation, and love. Through his death, he redeemed his church; and by his Word and Spirit, he calls and equips us to model his kingdom until it comes in all its completion and glory.

The Christian school is responsible for becoming a safe community that confronts sin, particularly the sin of abuse. The school seeks to bring healing to its victims and help to its perpetrators; and it consciously works for the prevention of all abuse.

DCHS should strive to help our community to publicly acknowledge that the sin of abuse exists among us; to support efforts that such abuse be addressed promptly so that abused and abusers may experience the healing power of God’s grace; and to take positive steps to make our school safe for all persons.

Article B: UNDERLYING GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. The primary responsibility for ensuring the safety and well being of the teen lies with the parents or guardians. The school has a custodial role in caring for the

- teen. This is delegated to it by the parents or guardians and is a prime duty of the school.
2. The protection of the teen is paramount. If there is any doubt in the reporting or management of teen abuse, the person should err on the side of protecting the teen.
 3. The state has the authority from God to use the means at its disposal to protect the teen from abuse where necessary.
 4. DCHS has a legal duty to cooperate with the state authorities. Furthermore, collaboration, cooperation, and good communication among all the involved professionals are essential for the protection of teens.
 5. DCHS must be sensitive to the particular needs of the teen in the reporting and management of teen abuse.

Article C: SUMMARY OF LEGAL PRINCIPLES

1. Every person who performs professional or official duties with respect to a teen and who has reasonable grounds to suspect physical, sexual, emotional abuse, or neglect to a teen is required by the Child and Family Services Act to report this belief and the information on which it is based as quickly as possible to the Family and Children Service Agencies. Failure to report is contrary to the Act and may result in legal and professional consequences. Reporting should be done within 24 hours of knowledge of the abuse or neglect.
2. The *professional* duty to report applies to a teacher and a school principal [Reference: Section 72(5) of the *Child and Family Services Act*].
3. The professional making a report only needs to have reasonable grounds to suspect abuse or neglect, and is not expected to engage in any investigative activity nor to be able to prove that teen abuse has taken place or is taking place. This investigation duty is the responsibility of the CAS.
4. The professional making a report is not subject to legal action for making the report unless the report was made maliciously or without reasonable grounds for the belief or suspicion.
5. The Child and Family Services Act takes precedence over all other Acts and thus in instances of suspected teen abuse, professionals must report all relevant information, even though the information may be confidential or privileged. The only exception to this rule is the lawyer-client relationship.

6. The principal of a school has the primary duty of care for the welfare of the students and of the overall management of the school. The principal also has many areas of legal responsibilities and powers originating in other legislation that may have to be considered in carrying out the responsibility for the teen's welfare.

Article D: PROTOCOL FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED TEEN ABUSE

1. **When Abuse is Suspected.** When a teacher or staff member suspects that a teen is a victim of abuse, that staff member shall inform the principal or another teacher regarding the suspicion and the circumstances, even if the information on which the suspicion is based is considered privileged or confidential. It is the responsibility of that person to report the abuse to CAS or another authority. Any adult is legally obligated to report abuse *where there are reasonable grounds to suspect it*. The duty to report child abuse cannot be delegated to another adult. When the suspected abuser is the principal, the staff member may consult with a senior trusted colleague or trusted board member. In this case, take a copy of this protocol along since the person consulted may not be familiar with it.
2. **No Investigation.** The teacher and the principal shall not attempt to conduct an investigation or to prove that the teen has been abused.
3. **Where Reasonable Grounds Exist.** If after consultation, either the teacher or principal believes that the suspicion is based on reasonable grounds, or if there is a difference of opinion about whether reasonable grounds exist, the Children's Aid Society shall be contacted.
4. **When Reasonable Grounds are Not Clear.** When a teacher or principal is unclear about "reasonable grounds," that person shall discuss the circumstances of the suspected abuse with a CAS intake worker without using the name of the teen. If after consultation, the intake worker advises that the situation must be reported, the staff member shall share all relevant information with the intake worker in accordance with the requirements of the Child and Family Services Act.
Comment: Once a report is made, the matter is out of the hands of the school; the procedures of the CAS take over and the school has no control over the course of events.
5. **When Students Report an Offense.** The school should provide an atmosphere where students feel comfortable in confiding to staff. Students should be aware that any information that indicate that harm could come to any individual must be disclosed to the authorities; it cannot be totally confidential.

6. **If the incident is not a reportable offence.** If there is behaviour that is inappropriate but not reportable to Childrens' Aid or other authorities (behaviour that is inappropriate but not abusive or harassing), the incident should be reported to the principal and board chairperson. A written summary of the incident should be sent to the principal or board chairperson. If the incident involves either the principal or the board chairperson, the report should be given to the vice-principal in lieu of the person involved. The board chairperson, principal, vice-principal, guidance counselor can serve as a consultant regarding whether it is an inappropriate offense.
7. **When Student is Sixteen Years of Age or Older.** If abuse is suspected to a teen 16 years of age or older, the suspected abuse shall be reported by the teen. The teen will, at the time that allegations are made, be made aware of the options and will be supported through the process. The CAS is responsible to determine if there is any other child under the age of 16 who may be in need of protection. The student should be encouraged to report, and should be given support in the form of counseling and confidentiality where possible.
8. **Report as Soon as Possible.** The report to the CAS shall be made as soon as possible in order to give the CAS time to interview the teen before he or she is scheduled to go home at lunch or after school. If the CAS requests it, the principal shall detain and supervise the teen at school for purposes of an interview.

Comment: If requested, the CAS will withhold the name of the professional reporting suspected child abuse. However, in subsequent court hearings it may become necessary to report the name; the person reporting may be required to appear in court.
9. **Do Not Contact Parents.** The person reporting shall not notify the parents or obtain their consent. The decision as to when and how to report to the parents will be made by the CAS workers.
10. **Confidentiality.** Any suspicion of a teen at risk - through either neglect or abuse - must be kept confidential by restricting the number of people who are made aware and by all parties maintaining strict silence.
11. **Make a Record of the Report of Suspected Child Abuse.** The teacher and the principal shall review the outcome of the reporting to the CAS and fill in the form "Report of Suspected Child Abuse" (Appendix A: Forms) immediately. The principal shall be available for support to the staff member and to assist in any decision-making that may have to occur.
12. **Provide Access to the Teen by the CAS worker.** The place of interview should be discussed with the Childrens' Aid Society worker at the time of the reporting.

The personnel from either the CAS or the police will usually interview the teen, and possibly other children in the family, at school. The principal shall permit a CAS worker to have access to the teen at school, and to the teen's siblings if requested. The principal shall ensure that the proper identification has been produced by the child protection worker or police officer prior to an interview.

13. **Presence of School Staff at Interview.** The CAS will usually ask to interview the teen alone. If the teen is adamant in asking that a teacher or parent be present, authorities will generally consent, but the CAS worker, having in mind the best interest of the teen, will make the decision.

Comment: The presence of school personnel in the interview should be determined on the basis of the unique relationship the school personnel may have with the student.

14. **Removal of Teen from School.** After the interview with the teen, the CAS worker may believe that the teen is at immediate risk and, therefore, is in need of protection. The CAS worker may, with or without a warrant, bring the teen to a place of safety. Where this is the case, the principal or principal designate shall require a statement from the worker that he or she "believes the teen is in need of protection and is removing the teen to a place of safety." If this is the case, the CAS worker or police officer will then take full responsibility for the student.
15. **Notification of Parents or Guardians.** It is the responsibility of the CAS to notify the parents where child abuse is suspected. The CAS will decide how and when to report to the parents. The reporting school person should ask the CAS worker when the parents will be notified so that the school may be prepared for the response and provide appropriate support.
16. **Ongoing Status of Investigation.** The principal may ask the designated authorities to inform them of the outcome of their investigation once they have completed their interviews. It is the discretion of the authorities how much information they choose to provide.
17. **Follow-up Treatment.** After the whole process of reporting the abuse, interviews, and possible charges have taken place, an assessment will be conducted and completed by the CAS. The CAS may recommend specific treatment for families, children, or teachers.

Article E: PROTOCOL WHEN COMPLAINTS INVOLVE TEACHERS

1. When students have complaints or charges against teachers, the principal should take these seriously.

- a. For allegations involving normal disciplinary actions by a teacher, the principal shall first consult with the teacher about whether existing discipline policies have been followed.
 - b. For allegations involving possible sexual or physical abuse by a teacher, the principal shall use discretion in consulting others.
2. When there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a school employee is the alleged abuser, the principal or person suspecting the abuse shall **follow the protocol in Article D above** and report the suspected abuse.
3. Neither the principal nor the school board is judge or investigator in serious allegations of physical or sexual abuse and must - the administrator being satisfied about the strength of the grounds - leave it to professionals through appropriate reporting (CAS or police).
4. Definitive action is not only important to protect the teen, but also the parents, the school, and the teacher. It is not wise to let events unfold via the grapevine.
5. If a principal or school board member is approached by an adult person claiming that a teacher or support staff member is *sexually* abusing a teen then:
 - a. The principal shall determine whether or not reasonable grounds exist.
 - b. If reasonable grounds exist, the principal shall contact the police and/or child welfare officer. These persons will interview the teen as soon as possible and determine whether the accusation is credible and if further action is warranted.
 - c. The employee may be made aware of the complaint immediately after it has been laid with the agencies. The employee should be advised to contact the Ontario Christian School Teacher's Association if he or she is a member, and to seek personal legal counsel. The Ontario Christian School Teacher's Association will provide a lawyer cover up to \$2,500 of the cost of the case. They will also provide mediation that is approved by both parties. It will provide arbitration made up of a group of three: one approved by each party and a third neutral person. OCSTA has a subcommittee that will provide professional advice.
 - d. The employee should be requested to maintain confidentiality throughout the whole process. The principal should inform the board chair in confidence of the allegations and keep him or her informed of the situation.
 - e. If charges are laid, the Board should suspend the employee from classroom duties. The Board will need to decide if this suspension is with or without pay, depending on other Board policies and the employment contract.
 - f. It is generally expected that the principal and the chair of the school board are the only two people required to know about these matters. If charges are laid, the police will notify the appropriate family members.

- g. If a teacher is a member of the Ontario College of Teachers, the *Student Protection Act* stipulates that the school must report to the College at the time a member is charged with a sexual offence (See OCT Professional Advisory, September 27, 2002).
6. If reasonable grounds do not exist, the grievance should be submitted in writing to the Chair of the Board, who will keep it on file for one year if the student or parent indicates a desire for it to be submitted.
 - a. The Chair of the Board must confirm that the complainant has attempted to resolve the matter with the defendant.
 - b. The Chair of the Board must confirm that the complainant has attempted to resolve the matter with the defendant's immediate supervisor, for example, the principal.
 - c. The Chair of the Board then has two working days to pass a grievance letter to the Chair of the Grievance Committee. This committee can be formed as an ad hoc committee. The committee should be formed at the beginning of the year before allegations have been made.
 - d. The Chair of the Grievance Committee or designate will meet with the complainant within five working days of receiving the letter. The issues of dispute must be isolated and concisely summarized in writing. The complainant is given a copy of Article E #6 protocol and asked to sign the copy indicating that they understand the process and timelines involved.
 - e. The defendant must also be informed of the grievance against him/her and is to be given a copy of Article E #6 and is to sign the copy.
 - f. The committee may require written information and may meet with the complainant and/or defendant. Written summaries of these meetings must be provided to all parties involved.
 - g. The Grievance Committee is to complete a report proposing a settlement and may make some recommendations within 15 days of the complainant and defendant receiving a copy of Article E #6.
 - h. Upon completion of the process, the Chair of the Grievance committee will send a letter, within 10 working days, to the complainant indicating that the Board has received the report and the recommendations and that the matter is now considered closed. A copy of the report is to be filed in the Board filing cabinet. If no action is taken, the report will be on file for one year.

Article F: PROTOCOL WHEN COMPLAINTS INVOLVE THE PRINCIPAL

1. When students have complaints or charges of abuse against the principal, these should be taken seriously by the teacher or other person to whom the complaint

is made.

2. When there are reasonable grounds to suspect that abuse by the principal has taken place, the teacher or person suspecting the abuse shall **follow the protocol in Article E above** and report the suspected abuse.
3. The staff member may consult with the vice-principal or a senior trusted colleague or the board chair. In this case, take a copy of this protocol along since the person consulted may not be familiar with it. For allegations involving possible sexual or physical abuse, the teacher shall use discretion in consulting others.
4. In allegations of physical or sexual abuse all investigation should be left to the professionals through appropriate reporting (CAS or police).
5. Definitive action is not only important to protect the teen but also the parents, the school, and the principal.
6. If a teacher or school board member is approached by an adult person claiming that the principal is *sexually* abusing a teen then:
 - a. The person approached shall determine whether or not reasonable grounds exist. Consultation may be made with the vice-principal or chairperson.
 - b. If reasonable grounds exist, the person shall contact the police and/or CAS. The police or CAS will interview the teen as soon as possible and determine whether the accusation is credible and if further action is warranted.
 - c. The person making the complaint should be advised to keep all these matters confidential.
 - d. The principal may be made aware of the complaint immediately after it has been laid with the agencies. The principal should be advised to contact the Ontario Christian School Teacher's Association and or the Ontario Christian School Administrator's Association, and to seek personal legal counsel.
 - e. The principal should be requested to maintain confidentiality throughout the whole process.
 - f. The person should inform the board chair in confidence of the allegations and keep him or her informed of the situation.
 - g. If charges are laid, the principal should be suspended from his or her duties by the Board. The Board will need to decide if this suspension is with or without pay, depending on other Board policies and the employment contract.
 - h. It is generally expected that the person reporting and the chair of the

school board are the only two people required to know about these matters. If charges are laid, the police will notify the appropriate family members.

7. If reasonable grounds do not exist, follow Article E #6.

Article G: PROTOCOL WHEN COMPLAINTS INVOLVE OTHER STUDENTS

1. School authorities will neither tolerate nor condone behavior that is likely to undermine the self-esteem of an individual or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.
2. In cases of non-reportable offenses, students are encouraged to speak with the principal, vice principal, or any staff member about behavior, whether physical or verbal, which is threatening, humiliating, insulting, sexually harassing, intimidating, or degrading. The policy includes e-mail and other threats made outside of school hours.
3. In reportable offenses, when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that abuse by another student has taken place, the teacher or person suspecting the abuse shall **follow the protocol in Article D above** and report the suspected abuse.

Article H: Sexual Harassment

1. Sexual harassment is conduct of a sexual nature directed at an individual or individuals by a person who knows or ought reasonably to know that such attention is unwanted, constitutes sexual harassment when:
 - Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, academic status or academic accreditation, or
 - Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment, or for academic performance, status or accreditation decisions affecting such individual, or
 - Such conduct interferes with an individual's work or academic performance, or
 - Such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or academic environment.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual invitations or requests
 - Demands for sexual favors
 - Unnecessary touching or patting
 - Leering at a person's body
 - Unwelcome and repeated innuendos or taunting about a person's body, appearance or sexual orientation
 - Suggestive remarks or other verbal abuse of a sexual nature
 - Visual displays of degrading or offensive sexual images
 - Threats of a sexual nature, sexual assault, and any other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
2. Sexual harassment may occur during one incident, or a series of single incidents, which in isolation would not necessarily constitute sexual harassment. Sexual harassment may occur between individuals of the same sex or between the sexes. Sexual harassment may occur between students and students, staff and students, and staff and staff.
Lifestyle and Conduct Policy for the teaching staff are found on contracts.
- 3.

Article I: RECORDS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

1. When a teacher identifies or recognizes a situation of concern with respect to a student (a matter for special attention, such as performance or dress), the teacher should make a note in his or her own records and may consult with other staff members; after discussing the matter, the teacher may follow up as warranted. Whenever there is danger to an individual, the teacher must pass the information to CAS or other authorities.
2. Normally, passing any information about the teen to a third person requires the consent of the parent. However, in the case of the health and safety of the teen, this parental right is overridden by legal and statutory demands.
3. The "Report of Suspected Child Abuse" form or any other record of the abuse allegations or reports must not be kept in the students' *Ontario School Record*

(OSR) but in a separate and confidential file, since it is not a record that is “conducive to the improvement of the instruction of the student” (*OSR Guideline 2000*, 3.4, p.12) and since normal privacy and access provisions apply to the OSR and would make the record accessible to the student and his or her parents and others.

4. **Confidentiality is essential.** The process of reporting suspected cases of child abuse is intended to help children. However, the process must also protect them and any others, including any adults involved, from unfair or undue social stigmas and public judgments while the process is in progress. Therefore, confidentiality is absolutely essential.
 - A. The intent to help teens requires that information about them be kept with the utmost confidence in order to protect their esteem (and self-esteem).
 - B. All parties involved, student, teacher, principal, parent, should be strongly advised to keep all information confidential. Leaked information will hurt the teen and damage the adult’s reputation.
 - C. The school principal may want to consult in confidence with the appropriate professionals (such as pastor, public health nurse, social worker) prior to making the report. The consultation process may be used for a variety of purposes and occur at different times.
 - i. Prior to reporting, a consultation can assist the principal in determining that reasonable grounds do exist to suspect that the teen is in need of protection.
 - ii. During the process, even though it is determined that the teen is not in need of protection, the consultation may lead to a cooperative venture in helping to improve a negative or hurtful family situation.
 - iii. After reporting, consultation can enable the school to be part of the helping process to bring about healing and reconciliation in the family, in the community, and in social relationships.
 - D. All such exchange of information must be guarded with the promise of confidentiality. The information is to be used for the benefit of those involved; the release of information may not be used to hurt or damage those involved.

Article J: WHAT ARE REASONABLE GROUNDS?

1. You do not need to be sure that a teen is in need of protection to make a report to a CAS. ‘Reasonable grounds’ are what an average person, given his or her training, background and experience, exercising normal and honest judgment, would suspect” (*Brochure Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect*, Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services).

2. Reasonable grounds vary from case to case and depend on the type of abuse. In order to be able to make a “reasonable grounds” decision, school staff should be familiar with the physical and behavioral indicators of the four types of abuse. (See Appendix B: What is Child Abuse?)
3. Discussion with the principal can not only clarify indicators of abuse, but also assist and support staff in these difficult circumstances. Consultation with the CAS regarding specific indicators and circumstances can also be helpful. “Reasonable grounds” should be based on factual observations and discussions. It is advisable to keep a record of such observations, with dates and times included, and significant direct quotes from a teen. This is particularly important in situations of neglect and emotional maltreatment, both of which are difficult to identify. (See the Documentation Form in Appendix A.)
4. Children’s Aid Society states that it is the duty to report in the following circumstances:
 - a. The child has suffered physical harm, inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by or resulting from that person’s
 - i. failure to adequately care for, provide for, supervise or protect the child, or
 - ii. pattern of neglect in caring for, providing for, supervising or protecting the child.
 - b. There is a risk that the child is likely to suffer physical harm inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by or resulting from that person’s
 - i. failure to adequately care for, provide for, supervise or protect the child, or
 - ii. pattern of neglect in caring for, providing for, supervising or protecting the child.
 - c. The child has been sexually molested or sexually exploited, by the person having charge of the child or by another person where the person having charge of the child knows or should know of the possibility of sexual molestation or sexual exploitation and fails to protect the child.
 - d. There is a risk that the child is likely to be sexually molested or sexually exploited.
 - e. The child requires medical treatment to cure, prevent or alleviate physical harm or suffering and the child’s parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, refuses, is unavailable or is unable to consent to the treatment.
 - f. The child has suffered emotional harm, demonstrated by serious
 - i. anxiety,
 - ii. depression,
 - iii. withdrawal,
 - iv. self-destructive or aggressive behaviour, or

- v. delayed development, and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the emotional harm suffered by the child results from the actions, failure to act or pattern of neglect on the part of the child's parent or the person having charge of the child.
- g. The child has suffered emotional harm of the kind described in paragraph 4f and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, refuses, is unavailable, or is unable to consent to services or treatment to remedy or alleviate the harm.
- h. There is a risk that the child is likely to suffer emotional harm of the kind described in paragraph 4f resulting from the actions, failure to act or pattern of neglect on the part of the child's parent or the person having charge of the child.
- i. There is a risk that the child is likely to suffer emotional harm of the kind described in paragraph 4f and that the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, services or treatment to prevent the harm.
- j. The child suffers from a mental, emotional or developmental condition that, if not remedied, could seriously impair the child's development and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, refuses, is unavailable, or is unable to consent to treatment to remedy or alleviate the condition.
- k. The child has been abandoned, the child's parent has died or is unavailable to exercise his or her custodial rights over the child and has not made adequate provision for the child's care and custody, or the child is in a residential placement and the parent refuses, is unable, or is unwilling to resume the child's care and custody.

For more information, see the Child and Family Services Act.

Article K: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISCRETIONARY AREAS

1. The principal is responsible for the welfare of the teen enrolled in the school during school hours and during school events. This is a custodial power enabling the principal to take actions to protect the teen's safety and ensure that the school environment remains friendly and supportive for that teen.
2. At the time of the reporting, possible police involvement should be discussed, and whether or not further information will be required. In cases of sexual abuse or serious physical abuse, the police may also become involved in the situation. The involvement of police is usually prescribed by local understandings between child protection agencies and the police department, so that any suggestions to CAS workers would be pre-empted by such understandings.
3. The persons affected in a situation of abuse may specify what treatment they

believe to be most appropriate for their needs. Therefore, the school should have available the names and addresses of preferred institutions, agencies, or services which can be forwarded to the CAS. The school should include the names of competent and certified Christian counselors and agencies in this list.

4. It is definitely recommended that the school contact local agencies in order to:
 - A. determine what their preferred procedures are;
 - B. determine what kind of support services they have available;
 - C. make the CAS workers familiar with the school and the type of community which supports the school;
 - D. discuss whether the school protocol fits local office preferences.

Article L: FOLLOW-UP FOR THE TEEN

1. After the assessment of the abuse allegations has been completed by the authorities, the parents may wish to work with a Christian counseling organization.
2. The principal and staff should be aware that the teen may need special understanding and support in school. The principal and staff are advised to get training for this. Resources are available from Christian counseling agencies, through referral by DCHS, or from the local CAS.

Article M: CREATING A SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

DCHS is responsible for being a safe school environment for all teens and adults within its walls. The school can become more safe in several ways: it can lessen the likelihood of abuse happening at school; it can help teens to be more aware of what abuse is and the importance of reporting it; and it can be more sensitive to teens who may be the victims of abuse.

1. Expectations of Staff and Volunteers
 - a. DCHS has a policy that all teachers of the school must undergo a security check prior to hiring.
 - b. All bus drivers, school staff, and volunteers that work directly with students are required to have a security check prior to beginning their employment or volunteer service.
 - c. All staff members must adhere to the Lifestyle and Conduct Policy (See Staff Handbook p.3).
2. Displays of affection between staff and students can be a natural way of conveying support and encouragement but should be limited to brief and appropriate contact. Any person's sensitivity to such contact or right to refuse such contact must be respected. One-on-one contacts between staff and

students should be held in public view and limited to pats on the back and arms. Staff should not initiate hugging.

3. To discourage inappropriate behavior, each classroom must be equipped with a window, either in the door or in the wall. No teacher should be alone with a student (male or female), unless in a counseling capacity (with a window in the room). This includes outside of school time (ex. taking a student in a car).
4. Training
All teachers and others who work with students will review this document. Teachers are required to annually sign a form acknowledging their access to, understanding of and commitment to the policy. Students will be made aware of the document through a note in the Student Handbook and at an assembly in the first few weeks of the school year. The assembly presentation to include:
 - * the context for the policy
 - * an overview of the policy
 - * a review of student protocols in dealing with abuse.
 - * the places where students can access the policy including the school web site, main office, vice principal office and library.
5. Curriculum
All Grade 9 students are part of our sexual harassment prevention program that focuses on defining abuse and harassment and provides direction to students if they are victims or witnesses in the school or elsewhere. They are made aware of our school's harassment policy.

ARTICLE N: THE GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

The Grievance Committee is a committee of the Board to provide a vehicle for the confidential, quick, peaceful, and ethical resolution to the normal range of non-policy disputes.

1. Membership: The Grievance Committee shall consist of 4 members.
 - * One member from the Board (not the Board Chair).
 - * One member from the Human Resources Committee (preferably the Chair).
 - * The principal.
 - * One member from neither the Board nor the Program Committee.In cases where there is a conflict of interest, that committee member should be excused from the grievance and may be replaced. An alternate can be named by the Chair of the Board.
2. Term

The Board and Resource Committee member will change as terms or positions are terminated or replaced. The term for the parent is 3 years and may be re-appointed for a second term.

3. Reporting

- * The committee Chairperson will submit minutes of regular meetings to the Board after every committee member has received a copy for review.
- * Minutes regarding grievances and/or disputes will not be distributed but kept in confidentiality with the Chair. After the grievance file is closed, one complete set of documents will be kept in the Board filing cabinets for a year if no action is taken.
- * The Committee Chair will submit a report to the Chair of the Board proposing a settlement and may make recommendations following a grievance process. The Chair of the Board evaluates and executes the recommendations.
- * The Chair of the Board informs the Board of Directors that there has been a grievance, the status, and the outcome.

4. Meetings

- The committee shall meet a minimum of once per year to review Mandate and Procedure.
- The principal shall not be elected Chair.
- The Chair may call additional meetings if he/she deems it to be worthwhile.

APPENDIX A

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Forms

DOCUMENTATION RECORD

1. It can be difficult for a teacher to decide whether reasonable grounds exist for a suspicion that a child is or may be in need of protection. A documentation record can be helpful to record observations that may eventually lead to a judgement that this is the case.
2. You do not need to be sure that a child is or may be in need of protection to make a report to a children's aid society. "Reasonable grounds" are what an average person, given his or her training, background and experience, exercising normal and honest judgment, would suspect" (brochure *Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect*, Ministry of Community and Social Services, 2000).
3. In order to be able to make a "reasonable grounds" decision, school staff should be familiar with the physical and behavioral indicators of the four types of abuse. (See Appendix B: Indicators of Child Abuse.) In the case of physical abuse, a single indicator may establish reasonable grounds. Generally, though, several indicators over a period of time may be needed to establish reasonable grounds. Discussion with the principal can not only clarify indicators of abuse, but also assist and support staff in these difficult circumstances. Consultation with the CAS regarding specific indicators and circumstances can also be helpful.
4. "Reasonable grounds" should be based on factual observations and discussions. It is advisable to keep a record of such observations, with dates and times included, and significant direct quotes from a child. This is particularly important in situations of neglect and emotional maltreatment, both of which are difficult to identify.
5. The teacher's documentation record should be kept by the teacher and not stored in the child's OSR. (See Article H#3 above.)
6. The teacher's documentation record should:
 - a. be brief and to the point and written immediately after an observation is made;
 - b. include dates and times;
 - c. record factual observations and no judgments
 - d. include relevant quotes from the child.
7. A simple form may look as follows:

Date	Time	Observation

APPENDIX B



Indicators of Child Abuse

INDICATORS OF ABUSE

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse is any non-accidental injury to a child, such as throwing, kicking, burning, or cutting a child, striking with a closed fist, shaking a small child, interfering with breathing, threatening with a deadly weapon, or doing any act which is likely to cause them harm greater than transient pain or minor, temporary marks. Such actions may cause bruises, welts, cuts, fractures, burns, internal injuries, and even death. Improper diet and withholding food, potentially resulting in severe malnutrition, are also examples of physical abuse. In some cases, injury can be caused by excessive discipline.

Physical Indicators of Physical Abuse

Unexplained bruises and welts, especially those:

- On face, back, buttocks and thighs
- In stages of simultaneous healing

- The shape of an instrument, such as a belt or hairbrush
- Appearing after child's absence, weekend or vacation.

Unexplained burns:

- Cigarette burns (hands, feet, back, buttocks)
- Immersion burns (sock-like or glove-like in shape)
- Burns patterned like an electric burner, iron, etc.
- Rope burns (arms, legs, torso).

Unexplained fractures:

- To skull or facial structure
- In stages of simultaneous healing
- Multiple or spiral fractures
- Inappropriate dress
- Long-sleeved dress in hot weather.

Behavioral Indicators of Physical Abuse

- Reports by child of having been injured by parents
- Extreme wariness of parents
- Extreme wariness of adults in general
- Resistance to being touched
- Fear of going home
- Extreme watchfulness ("frozen watchfulness")
- Apprehensiveness when other children cry
- Unexplained, prolonged absences
- Unlikely or inconsistent explanation for bruises, etc.
- Denial that bruises exist
- Reluctance to undress in change room
- Extremes of behavior
- Aggressiveness or withdrawal
- Fearfulness, fearlessness, attention-seeking, or avoidance.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse of a child is any interaction between a child and an older person where the child is being used for sexual gratification. The abuse may be in the form of inappropriate bodily touching over clothing, exposure to pornography, fondling, inviting the child to engage in masturbation, oral sex, or intercourse. Sexual abuse almost always involves engaging the child in sexual activity through the issue of bribes, threats, force, or coercion. It is estimated that up to eighty percent of sexual abuse cases involve someone the child know and trusts - a family member, neighbour, or friend. It is

important to note that when a child discloses, the abuse may have been going on for some time. Even if the victim is over 16 years of age, and even if the abuse has stopped, it is important to report the abuse so that the CAS and police can investigate and ensure that other siblings are not at risk.

Physical Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Torn, stained, or bloody underwear; pain or itching in the vaginal area
- Bruises or bleeding in genital, vaginal, or anal areas
- Venereal diseases, especially in pre-teens
- Pregnancy

Behavioral Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Fear of male parent or guardian; fear of all males
- Wariness of physical contact, especially when initiated by an adult
- Fear of the night, dark
- Sophisticated or bizarre behavior or knowledge
- Seductive behavior for approval
- Unwillingness to change for physical education, or to participate in active sports or games
- Poor peer relationships or inability to make friends
- Non-participation in school activities
- Inability to concentrate at school
- Sudden drop in school performance
- Sleep disturbances
- Withdrawal
- Running away from home, stealing, or other troublesome behaviour

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse occurs when the parent continually treats the child in such a negative way that the child's self-concept is seriously impaired. It can include chronic ridicule, rejecting, belittling, shouting, terrorizing, scape-goating, punishing a child for normal behavior such as smiling or running, intimidating a child by threatening to hurt them, ignoring or isolating the child so that the capacity of the child to reach his or her potential is seriously undermined. Long-term damage to the child can be devastating to the child's development and self-esteem.

Behavioral Indicators of Emotional Abuse

- Development lags: physical, mental, or emotional

- Habit disorders: sucking, biting, rocking, etc.
- Conduct disorders: antisocial and destructive behavior
- Speech disorders, sleep disorders, inability to play
- Extreme passivity or aggressiveness
- Extreme infantile behavior
- Extreme adult behaviour appearing to take over and parent parents
- Hysteria, obsession, phobias, hypochondria

NEGLECT

Neglect is chronic inattention to the child's basic needs, both physical and emotional. It is any maltreatment or negligence that harms the child's health, welfare, or safety, such as inadequate medical care, food, or housing. It is harder to pinpoint and more often ignored than physical abuse. The indicators are less dramatic and the effects on children seem to be less damaging. However, neglected children are very seriously at risk. Their situation may be chronic and long-term.

Physical Indicators of Neglect

Consistent hunger, malnutrition, underweight, dehydration
Poor hygiene, dirtiness, skin disorders associated with improper hygiene
Inappropriate dress; exposure symptoms, such as sunburn, frostbite
Consistent fatigue, listlessness
Unattended health problems
Inadequate supervision

Behavioral Indicators of Neglect

Begging, stealing food
Theft in general
Verbal evidence that there is no care-giver at home; arriving early/staying late
Falling asleep in class
Delinquency
Drug or alcohol abuse.

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