



To All Volunteers who work with Infants, Children and Youth

The leadership and workers at The Gathering are committed to creating a safe environment that will have a positive impact on: those we minister to, those who do the ministering, the testimony of the church, and the reputation of God's kingdom. Since we serve the King of kings, our conduct needs to be of the highest possible standard.

The Conduct Policy of The Gathering is designed to provide the structures and procedures that will meet the needs of both those served and those who serve, as well as satisfy the requirements of the law and our insurance carrier.

Please read the material in this package. Complete the police check, make a copy of your signed acceptance letter and submit the original to your ministry leader or an elder.

We are grateful to God for the gifted and generous servants he has led to our fellowship. Thanks so much for your willingness to partner and contribute here at The Gathering

Mark Norman
On behalf of the Leadership Team

THE GATHERING

Sexual conduct policy

It is a privilege to have the opportunity to be involved in Christian ministry at *The Gathering*. However, with this privilege comes responsibility. There is a responsibility of all involved to embody the principles they teach (James 3:1). Therefore, it is imperative that the highest level of moral behavior be observed by all involved in this ministry (Eph. 3-7). It is with this in mind that the following guidelines are given. Our desire is to prevent any abusive behavior from occurring, and to do all that is possible to avoid false allegations. This policy covers all those in a position of authority, which involves leadership, counseling or instructing of other persons.

POLICY

1. *The Gathering (TG)* will not tolerate sexual, emotional or physical abuse of or by staff. The church pastor or elders must be informed immediately of suspected offences. In support of the Ontario Human Rights Code, all staff, parishioners and guests can expect at TG to be free of suggestive language and comments made to them directly or indirectly. There will be no sexual solicitation or advances made by any and all members of staff including church leaders and pastoral staff (i.e., unwanted sexual references and innuendo made directly or indirectly.) They can be reassured that their privacy will be protected and respected by all staff at all times. They can also be reassured that any person filing a complaint against any person who violates the policy will be supported. Any allegations will be treated very seriously.
2. A screening process is in place. All staff & volunteers must complete the appropriate application & provide references independent of family relatives. This is to ensure there is nothing known that would hinder them from performing their assigned duties. All applicants must have no known past record of abusive behavior, which would disqualify them from service.
3. In situations where children 4 years and younger are in a class or nursery setting, there will always be at least two workers/volunteers present. One of these should be an adult over 18 years of age. Teams from the same family (husband/wife, brother/sister) should not work together without another adult present. Only parents, guardians or individuals designated by the parents or guardians are allowed to retrieve a child from the nursery.
4. There will be at least two adults be present for all overnight activities or any activities at off site locations. There should always be a sufficient number of adults in attendance so that not only are the youth supervised, but the adults are held accountable as well.
5. When driving youth from off-site activities, drivers must drop off children of the opposite sex first and same sex last, or drop off “singles” first, then siblings (more than one).

Sexual conduct guidelines

These guidelines will be enforced by the Leadership Team of *The Gathering*

- An application form to work with youth must be completed.
- Abuse/Harassment policy form must be signed by all volunteers.
- Require volunteers to be associated with the church for at least six months before working with youth or children.
- Classroom doors without windows will remain open at all times.
- Police and background checks on all youth & children's ministry volunteers or staff.
- Church leaders will randomly visit classrooms and check all areas of the church.
- All staff and volunteers will be trained in recognizing signs of abuse, and reviewing policies and procedures.

REPORTING

1. If a staff member or volunteer becomes aware of any alleged incident, it must be reported immediately to the pastor or elders. All reported incidents will be immediately dealt with and appropriate action taken.
2. The pastoral staff is required by law to report all allegations to the police.
3. Should a staff member or volunteer become aware that any member of the congregation may be suffering or may have suffered abuse in other circumstances (i.e. a home, etc.) they will immediately report it to the pastor or elders.
4. All staff members and volunteers must sign a form indicating that they have read and understand the above and will adhere to the policies as outlined. A copy will be given to each worker and the church office will retain a copy.

EXPECTED STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

A member of the church is expected at all times to conform to the following standards and engage in conduct that is ethical and moral and in conformity with biblical principles as generally understood in the church;

1. Conform to the statement of faith and philosophy of the church;
2. Demonstrate Christian love in his or her dealings with others.
3. Refrain from all forms of abuse, including sexual abuse.

In our policy, "**sexual abuse**" means,

- Physical sexual relations between a person in a position of authority and a person under his or her influence except his or her spouse with consent;
- Touching of a sexual nature by a person in a position of authority of a person under his or her influence except his or her spouse with consent.
- Behavior or remarks of a sexual nature by a person in a position of authority to a person under his or her influence except his or her spouse with consent.
- In this policy, touching, behavior, or remarks of a sexual nature do not include touching, behavior or remarks that are appropriate in the circumstances.

- In this policy position of authority means an office or position held in the church which involves leadership, ministry, counseling or instruction of other persons.

Examples are:

- (1) Members of the Leadership Team or Ministry Team
- (2) A youth leader and volunteers
- (3) A Sunday School teacher and volunteers
- (4) A nursery worker
- (5) Etc.

THE GATHERING

Application Form to work with Children and Youth

Name: _____
Phone: Home _____ Bus: _____
Address: _____

Name and city of previous church if applicable:

Attending regularly for at least six months: Yes ____ No ____

Previous experience in working with youth: _____

If you have been participating at The Gathering for less than 3 years:
I authorize *The Gathering* to contact the following individual for a character reference; I
authorize that individual to answer any questions asked by TG about my character.

References

1. _____
Phone _____

2. _____
Phone _____

**(Note: One reference must be a Pastor, or someone otherwise acceptable to The Gathering,
who has known and worked with you for at least 3 years)**

I realize that my actions can have an impact on the ministries of *The Gathering*. I hereby certify
that I have never been convicted of a criminal act, other than those listed below, and that I have
no tendencies (including sexual tendencies) or addictions which could compromise the integrity
of this ministry.

Criminal Convictions: Yes ____ No ____

If Yes give details:

I, _____ give *The Gathering* permission to conduct a police search
of my records or I will provide a copy for TG.

Signed _____ Date _____

Reviewed by:
_____ Date _____

And
_____ Date _____