



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

**BRITISH UNION CONFERENCE**

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**KEEPING OUR  
CHURCH FAMILY SAFE**  
(Child Protection Policy)

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# KEEPING OUR CHURCH FAMILY SAFE

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# **KEEPING OUR CHURCH FAMILY SAFE (Child Protection Policy)**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church places great importance upon family life.

It affirms the dignity and worth of each human being and decries all forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and family violence. The church recognises the global extent of this problem and the serious, long-term effects upon the lives of all involved. It therefore believes that Seventh-day Adventists must respond to abuse and family violence both within the church and in the community. It believes that to remain indifferent and unresponsive is to condone, perpetuate, and potentially extend such behaviour.

The church also recognises its duty and responsibilities to both its employees and volunteers who work with children and young people, to provide an environment which seeks to eliminate the risk of child abuse.

'Safe From Harm' a code of practice for safeguarding the welfare of children in Voluntary Organisations in England and Wales was published by the government in 1993. The Seventh-day Adventist Church welcomes the guidelines offered in this document. 'Safe From Harm' contains thirteen recommendations and those recommendations have been used as the basis for this document.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church recognises that the Law relating to children and young people in England and Wales is different from that of Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The guidelines set out in this document are not intended to contravene the law and regulations relating to children in any of these other jurisdictions.

'Keeping Our Church Family Safe' sets out the church's guidelines relating to child abuse and the procedures to be followed in order to reduce, to the minimum, the risk of abuse to any child and young person it has contact with through its paid and voluntary workers. The church wishes to reassure the wider community that it will take all reasonable steps to safeguard the welfare of children with whom it works.

## **A. POLICY STATEMENT**

### **1. POLICY STATEMENT**

The British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists concurs with the position statement approved and voted by the church's world headquarters in 1995 (see Appendix A).

- (a) The church wishes to affirm the dignity and worth of each human being and therefore will not condone neglect, bullying or any form of physical, sexual, emotional and spiritual abuse of any individual whether in the church or in the community.
- (b) The Seventh-day Adventist church has a responsibility to protect all children who are involved in any of its programmes.
- (c) The church will report to the appropriate agency all allegations of abuse disclosed by a child or young person and will co-operate fully with other professional agencies to identify the perpetrators and to protect the child(ren).
- (d) The church will help persons in need to identify and access the range of professional services. It will assist families in grief over relationships that cannot be restored. It will address the spiritual questions confronting abused persons, seeking to understand the origins of abuse and family violence.
- (e) When changed attitudes and behaviour open possibilities for forgiveness and new beginnings, the church will provide a ministry of reconciliation, but intervention by appropriate agencies must occur to hold the perpetrator accountable for his or her actions and safeguard children.

- (f) The church will undertake to follow principles found within the Abuse of Trust guidance issued by the Home Office. It will therefore be unacceptable for people in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop while a relationship of trust continues.
- (g) This policy covers children and young people under the age of 18.
- (h) This policy may be used as guiding principles for responding to concerns about vulnerable adults.

## **2. DEFINITIONS**

### **CHILD/YOUNG PERSON**

The term 'child' or 'young person' will be used interchangeably throughout this document. It relates to any person under the age of 18 with whom the church has contact through any of its activities.

### **RESPONSIBLE PERSON**

Throughout this document, reference will be made to a 'Responsible Person'. A Responsible Person is each head of a department, whether an employee or volunteer who has been appointed by the local church to be responsible for a specific sphere of activity involving children and young people. A Sabbath School Leader, Choir Leader, AYS Leader, Adventurer and/or Pathfinder Leader, Camp Director, Supplementary School Leader, Family Life Leader or Pastor are all Responsible Persons.

### **INDEPENDENT SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

The local church must let children and young people know of their right to talk with an Independent Person or Service and that independent support is available for them. To this end each local church must ensure that it displays a large poster with child friendly wording advertising the name and telephone number of a recognised independent national organisation that children and young people can contact. Eg. Childline, Kidscape, NSPCC. This information should also be included from time to time in church bulletins and newsletters where available.

### **COMMUNICATION SPOKESPERSON**

A communication spokesperson is that person appointed by each Conference/Mission to supply information as required to the public concerning incidents of child abuse, whether actual or alleged. It is essential that such a person has full and accurate knowledge of the situation but is sensitive to the confidentiality to which people are entitled. If there is only one spokesperson, confusion can be avoided and the information supplied will be kept within the legal limits when court proceedings are envisaged.

Specific people (eg. victims, survivors, parents, the accused) have a right to information. It may be that a local district, a school or church organisation must be informed, and such a task will be provided by an individual identified by the Conference/Mission. The individual providing information to those personally involved should be distinct from the Conference/Mission spokesperson who is the focal point for the media.

## **B. CHOOSING THE RIGHT STAFF**

To minimise the risk of abuse to a child/young person the church should adopt a careful selection process. The screening procedure for employees/volunteers working with children/young people should include the following elements:

- (a) Employees/volunteers shall be required to complete an information form (see Appendix C).
- (b) Be required to apply for a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure (See Appendix H) or complete a Declaration of Criminal Conviction form (see Appendix D).
- (c) First time appointees should be limited to a probationary period of twelve months.

- (d) Where the Conference/Mission runs accreditation courses for those working in specific areas with children and young people, applicants for these courses will be interviewed prior to certification. The appropriate course Director is responsible for these interviews and should be a member of the interviewing panel.
- (e) Employees and volunteers with a history of sexual abuse and or violence towards children/young people should never again be allowed to work with minors, even after participating in rehabilitation programmes.
- (f) Where employees/volunteers are subsequently found to have had a history of sexual abuse and or violence and have failed to disclose the same they shall be immediately removed from their appointment.

## **C. MANAGING THE STAFF**

### **1. ROLE DEFINITION**

Confusion over roles, responsibilities and accountability is the ideal framework within which child abuse can occur and be perpetuated. Therefore, the church must ensure:

- (a) That everyone who works with children/young people has a clear understanding of their role, responsibilities and to whom they are accountable. This can be provided through a simple job guideline (see Appendix E). The individual and their Responsible Person should each hold a copy. Job descriptions and outlines of work should be reviewed annually or when the job changes significantly.
- (b) That job descriptions include boundaries for physical contact with minors.

### **2. ACCOUNTABILITY**

There is need for good lines of accountability to keep children safe.

- (a) Each Responsible Person must meet with their team of workers/committee on a regular basis (at least once a quarter) to:
  - (i) Review and plan the work for their particular activity area.
  - (ii) Give opportunity for team members to raise any concern regarding any child or young person and highlight any observations. However the reporting of any concerns should not be delayed until this meeting.
  - (iii) Keep minutes of each meeting. Where situations of suspected abuse are being discussed the minute should be detailed with a clear decision regarding future action. Copies of the minutes must be shared with the local minister who is then responsible for passing relevant information to the appropriate Conference departmental director or Mission sponsor.
  - (iv) Inform team members whom they should speak to when they are absent.
- (b) See section E. 4. for the necessary actions to be implemented when a child/young person is considered to be at risk.

## **D. EFFECTIVE TRAINING**

A written policy and guidelines, however good they are, will not protect children from abuse. However, careful consideration should be given to the training of staff in the following areas:

- Planning the work of the Department to prevent abuse.
- Using supervision to prevent abuse.

- What to do when a child begins to talk of abuse or is found to have been abused.
- Teaching children to be appropriately aware of how to remain safe.

Training is important. No appointee should be expected to implement a policy or guidelines without being equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge.

All paid or voluntary personnel appointed to work with children and young people are expected to complete Level One Training or an equivalent package provided in the local area.

All 'Responsible Persons' are expected to complete Level Two Training (in addition to Level One) or an equivalent package provided in the local area.

## **E. PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE**

The church is not an investigative agency and therefore employees/volunteers must understand their role when working in a child/young person-centred programme of the church. Under no circumstances should any person attempt to carry out any investigation into the allegation or suspicions of sexual abuse. The latter is the responsibility of the Police and Social Services Department, whose task it is to investigate the matter under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

### **1. KINDS OF ABUSE**

There are 4 categories of abuse: Physical, Sexual, Emotional, and Neglect. The church is also concerned with bullying and spiritual abuse.

For more detailed descriptions please see Appendix B which also includes possible indicators of abuse.

### **2. WORKING PRACTICE**

Good working practice should:

- (a) Arrange, as far as possible, that no adult is left alone with a child or young person without the activity being observed by others. This may mean that doors will have to be left open or that small groups work simultaneously in the same room.
- (b) In a one-to-one situation with a child or young person, where privacy and confidentiality are important, try to make sure that another adult knows the interview is taking place and with whom. If possible, another adult should be in the building, and the young person should know they are there.
- (c) As far as possible, ensure that there are always at least two adults working with a group, especially when it is the only activity taking place on the premises. Consideration must be given to matching the gender of the workers with that of the group. The two-adult provision applies in changing areas and toilets, even if only one or two children are present.
- (d) Never do anything of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves. Be mindful of how and where one touches minors.
- (e) Arrange when transporting children or young people by car or minibus to have more than one passenger in the vehicle. Require leaders/workers to keep others informed if they have to drive a minor home on his/her own.
- (f) Provide an adequate number/ratio of adults to supervise children/young people events, especially where overnight activities are involved. For further guidance see the OFSTED Guidelines or its equivalent.
- (g) In the event of any injury to a child, accidental or otherwise, ensure that it is recorded on an Accident Form and that the record is witnessed by another adult.

### **3. ACTION TO BE TAKEN WHEN A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON SAYS THAT THEY HAVE BEEN ABUSED**

- (a) Accept what the child or young person tells you. Remain calm and if you are in a face-to-face situation with the child or young person show the child that he/she has your undivided attention and that you are interested in them.
- (b) Let them know that you will need to tell someone else. Do not promise them confidentiality.
- (c) Even when the child or young person has broken a rule do not blame them.
- (d) Remember that the child or young person might have been threatened.
- (e) Remember you are not conducting an investigation. Never push for more information. Allow the child or young person to proceed at their speed.
- (f) Reassure the child or young person that they were right to tell you and that you take what they have said seriously.
- (g) Tell the child or young person what you are going to do next and what is going to happen.
- (h) Write down as soon as possible exactly what was said, including the date and time of your meeting or conversation with the child/young person. In addition you will need to record the dates and times of the any events or incidents told to you by the child/young person and keep your records safe because you might want to refer to them at a later date. (See Appendix J).
- (i) Consideration should be given as to whether it is considered safe for a child to return to a potentially abusive situation. On occasions it might be necessary to take immediate action to contact Social Services and/or police to discuss putting into effect safety measures for the child so that they do not return home.

### **4. ACTION PLAN FOLLOWING A DECLARATION OF ABUSE**

Always remember that the welfare of the child must be your paramount concern and you should take the following steps:

- (a) Do not delay.
- (b) Contact the Responsible Person. If that person is not available contact the local minister who will help you in contacting the appropriate authority.
- (c) If the information concludes that the child is at risk the person receiving the allegation must contact the statutory services responsible for child protection in the area:
  - The statutory services are as follows: the Social Services, the Police or in England and Wales the NSPCC, in Scotland the RSPCC. In Northern Ireland the local Health Board or Police and in the Republic of Ireland the local Community Social Work Department or the Gardai. Local Church Boards in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland must publish the office and out of office numbers for the local Statutory Services.
  - If the Social Services cannot be contacted then the Police should be, but it has to be remembered that the police response will be largely governed by the nature and severity of the allegation. Local Church Boards must publish the telephone numbers of the local Social Services Department, their out of hours number and the local police.
- (d) Do not inform or have any conversation with the alleged perpetrator regarding the conversation with the child or young person, nor with the parents/guardians if this would put the child at risk.

- (e) Following referral to the statutory authorities the local minister should be informed of the action without breaching the confidentiality of the declaration made by the child or young person on a 'need to know' basis in keeping with the Data Protection Act 1984 and 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1999.
- (f) The local minister is responsible for informing the appropriate Conference/Mission personnel on a 'need to know' basis in keeping with the Data Protection Act 1984 and 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1999.
- (g) Everyone should be aware that in every Local Authority Area, there are procedures for investigating cases where a child or young person has been abused or is 'at risk'. The Social Services Department has, along with the police, the legal responsibility to investigate cases of child abuse.
- (h) Included in the process may be a Case Conference convened by the Social Services Department. The individual reporting the matter could be asked to attend, either to give information or to support the child, parent or family. Before attending the case conference it is important to clarify in what capacity one has been invited and how one wants to be seen by the family, ie. as an employee/volunteer worker of the church giving information which could very well be used later in any proceedings or as a support to the child, parent or family.

## **5. HOW TO RESPOND TO CONCERNS OF POSSIBLE ABUSE**

- (a) When an individual or individuals have concerns regarding a child as a result of things seen by themselves or heard from others they should discuss these concerns with the Responsible Person and or the Pastor.
- (b) A rapid preliminary evaluation and clarification of the situation must be undertaken with circumspection by the Responsible Person and or the Pastor. If this evaluation supports the concerns these must be passed on to the appropriate statutory agencies by the person conducting the evaluation.
- (c) In the interim a plan of action must be put in place to protect children and young people. This may involve removing the accused person from office, suspending them from duties, or placing employees on leave of absence pending the outcome of the investigation by the statutory agencies.
- (d) Even where criminal charges are not made, there remains an obligation on the church to review the pastoral consequences and action plan of such a situation. A person known to be a danger to children or young people should not continue to have access to them through holding a position in the church.
- (e) When the church is made aware of rumours, gossip or allegations concerning any person related to the church the accused person should not be approached at this stage by anyone with a view to discussing the allegation. This is to safeguard the child(ren)'s interests and the unimpeded course of any official processes.

## **F. CARING FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY ABUSE**

### **1. PASTORAL CARE FOR THE VICTIM/SURVIVOR AND HIS/HER FAMILY**

The abuse of a child/young person is traumatic for both the minor and the minor's immediate and extended family especially where the perpetrator is a parent or another family member. It is traumatic for the child because not only is the child the victim/survivor but the child could be legally removed from the family for reasons of continuing safety. For the family there is the trauma of coming to the realisation that a member has the capacity to inflict pain and suffering on a child. For the church family the trauma is coming to terms with the fact that a professed Christian church member has the capacity to abuse a child.

Children are also abused by adults or children who are not family members, but who are known by the child and often the child's family. The abuse inflicted by these perpetrators is very often sexual abuse and again is traumatic for both the victim and the family.



Causes of child abuse can be many and varied. Whatever has happened to a child within the family, the basic needs of the child and family remain and they should continue to receive support from the church family.

Pastoral care for victim/survivor and his/her family will include retaining contact, prayer support, helping the individual find legal advice, accompanying to court hearings.

The church should ensure that:

- It does not become involved with possible inter-family disputes but should always focus on the needs of the child or young person.
- It works hard to maintain those links that the child has with the church so that the child's life within the church remains as normal as possible.

Recognising the confidential nature of the information available to the members of the young person's child protection conference, the minister should seek an interview with the child's social worker to establish what risk the alleged perpetrator poses to the child and other children when they attend church based activities.

## **2. PASTORAL CARE FOR THE ALLEGED PERPETRATOR**

During the difficult period of investigation following an allegation of sexual or other forms of child abuse, the church should arrange appropriate support for the alleged perpetrator, who is a church member, without compromising the victim/survivor, their family or the church.

- (a) Pastoral care for alleged perpetrators will involve retaining contact, prayer support, helping the individual find legal advice, accompanying to court hearings.
- (b) It is unlikely that the same person would be able to provide support to meet the conflicting needs of the various parties, ie. victim/survivor, victim's family, alleged perpetrator. The church may find it helpful if one person is responsible for dealing with the authorities, while another offers support to the victim and his/her family, and yet another gives pastoral care to the alleged perpetrator.
- (c) Pastoral care for an alleged perpetrator must not be given at the expense of the victim, the victim's family, or justice. The victim/survivor should not sense that the church is in collusion or taking the alleged perpetrator's side.

## **3. PASTORAL CARE OF KNOWN ABUSERS**

An adult who is on parole for sexual or other child abuse offences will be receiving a high level of intensive supervision from a specialised Probation Officer. The offender could have restrictions placed upon them in terms of where they live and work. Schedule 1 offenders are required, on their release, to register their names and address with their local police who with the Probation Service will co-ordinate any public protection strategy.

Sexual offences are often addictive. The perpetrator may well be tempted to re-offend; to fantasise about abusing; to gain access to children and young people by befriending their parents. Therefore the church must continue to take protective action.

The individual who has a previous record of abusing minors and who enters the church presents a delicate situation for the minister and the congregation. The church has a responsibility to extend love and fellowship to the individual while at the same time protecting the children and youth in its midst.

The local minister and/or elder should:

- Talk to the offender's Probation Officer who should know the person and be able to advise on management.
- Meet with the offender and the church elders and lay out the boundaries that the offender will be expected to keep. Get the offender to sign an agreement form. While this sounds formal it helps in dealing with the manipulative ways of the sex offender. (See Appendix F).

- Inform key people, elders, Sabbath School leader, AYS leader, Adventurer and Pathfinder leaders, etc. that the offender is attending and that the individual should have no contact with children or young people. Offenders must never be on their own with children or young people.
- Inform the offender that a failure to keep to these conditions, may lead to him/her being barred from attending the church, and in such circumstances the church leadership may choose to inform the statutory agencies (probation and social services) and any other relevant organisation.
- Inform the appropriate Conference/Mission personnel of the details of the person along with a copy of the completed Appendix F.

#### **4. PASTORAL CARE FOR EMPLOYED WORKERS**

Working with children, young people and adults in the aftermath of an incident of child abuse will be extremely stressful. As the main burden of this work will inevitably fall upon the shoulders of the employee, they should be provided with a counsellor while they are working in this specialised area. The employee should not feel guilty in accepting the services of a counsellor, but should see it as a necessary support for them to remain objective while working in a highly emotional and stressful situation.

### **G. IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY**

#### **1. LOCAL CHURCHES**

Local churches are responsible through their church board for ensuring that the Keeping Our Church Family Safe policy is implemented with respect to all personnel appointed by them to undertake programmes involving children and young people.

Each church board will appoint a Child Safety Clerk. This individual will be responsible for reporting to the conference/mission office, in a manner prescribed by the latter, information relating to those individuals currently working in a paid or voluntary capacity with children or young people, their compliance in completing the necessary forms as outlined in the policy and the level of training completed.

#### **2. CONFERENCES/MISSIONS**

The local conference/mission will monitor the implementation of the Keeping Our Church Family Safe policy within its territory. It will be responsible for:

- (a) Holding the local churches accountable for implementing the policy at the local church level.
- (b) Organising an annual schedule of training seminars in consultation with the departmental directors/sponsors and the training team personnel of their Conference/Mission to provide Level One and Level Two training to local church "Responsible Persons" and volunteers or an equivalent package.
- (c) Assembling a training team in consultation with the appropriate departmental directors/sponsors of their Conference/Mission to facilitate the provision of training for local church officers and volunteers.
- (d) Appoint a Communication Spokesperson to supply information as required to the public concerning incidents of child abuse, whether actual or alleged.
- (e) Nominate an individual who will be responsible for co-ordinating the above duties.

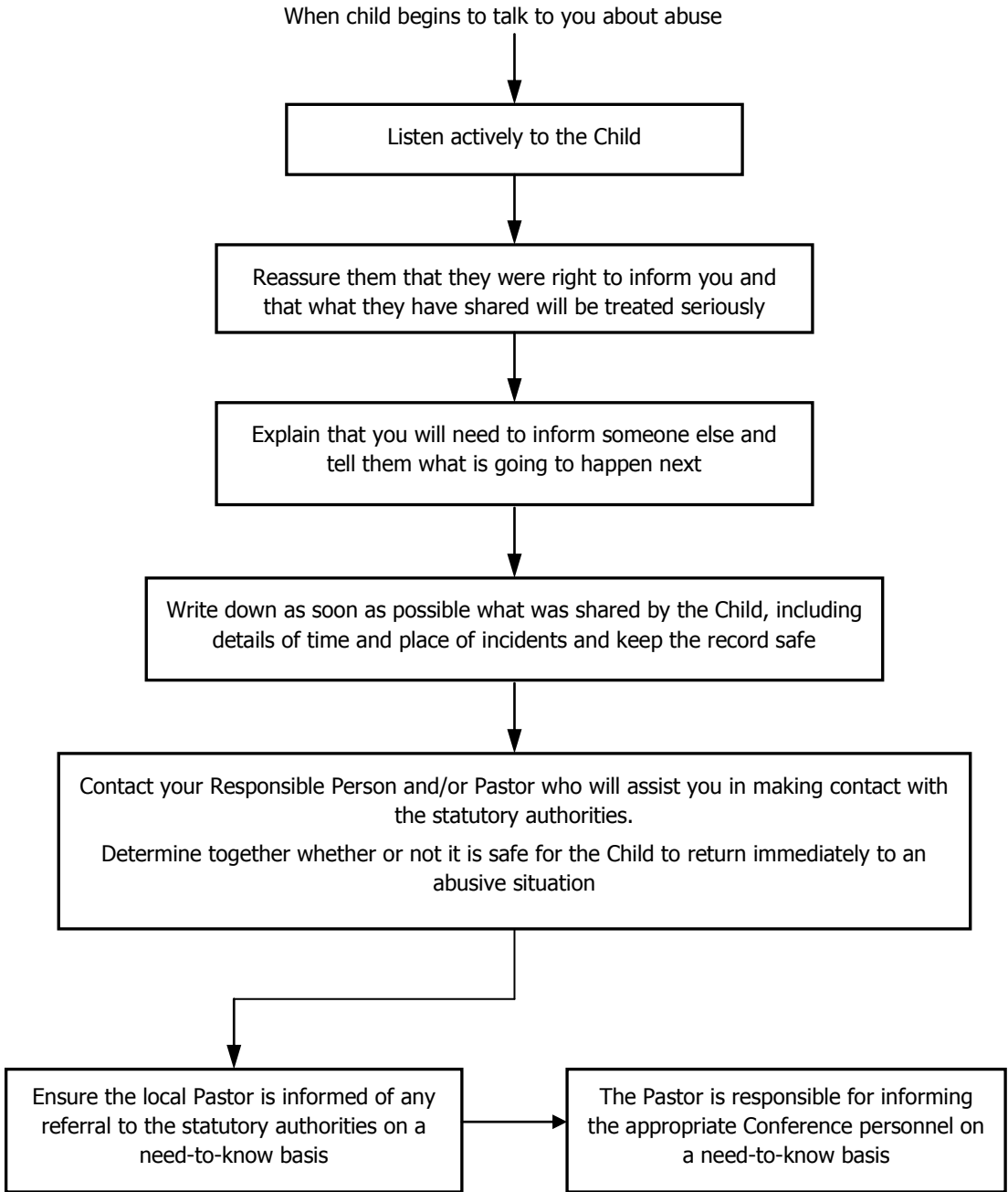
#### **3. UNION CONFERENCE LEVEL**

The executive committee of the British Union Conference will appoint someone along with a steering committee who will be charged with:

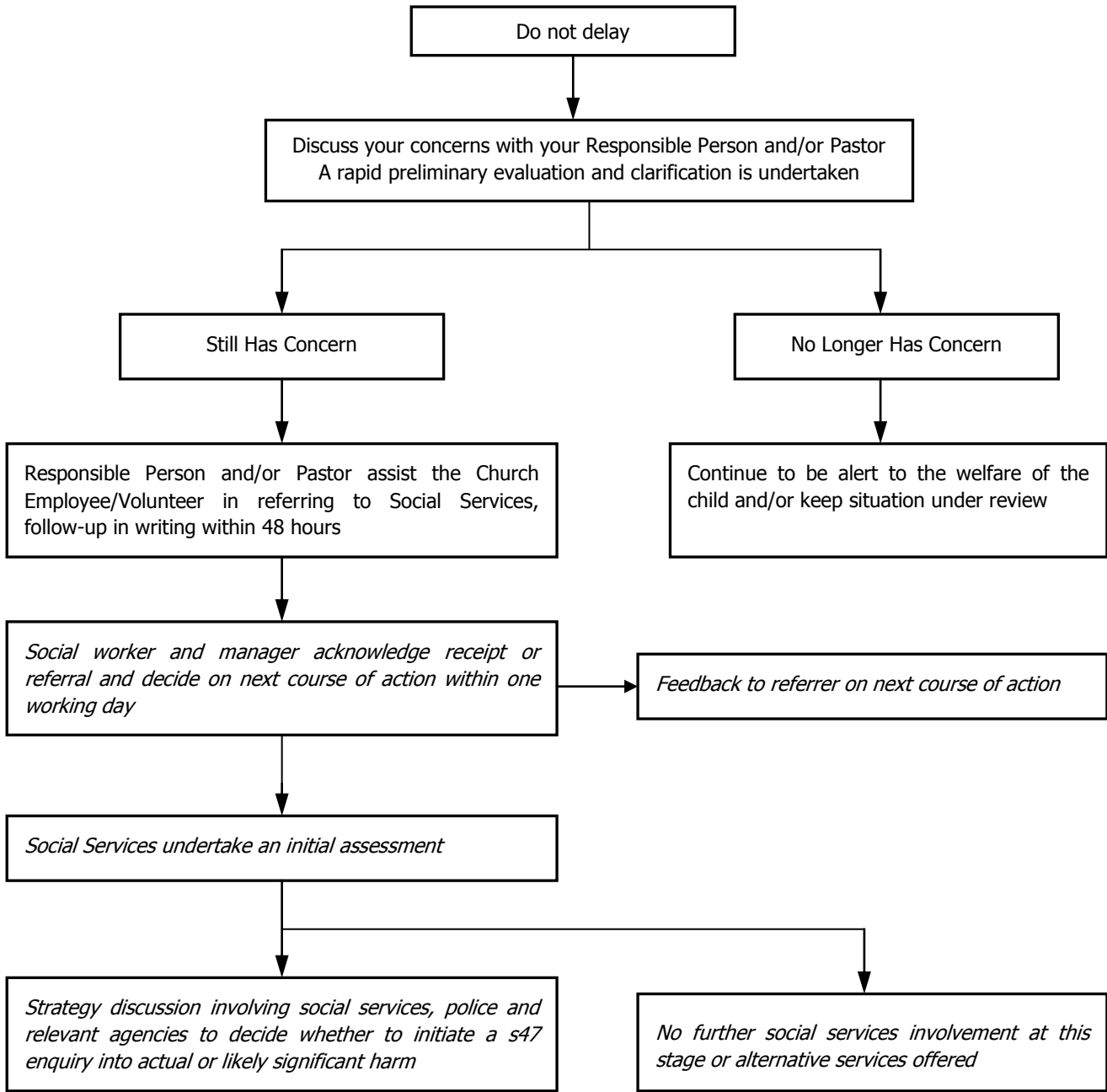
- (a) Overseeing the implementation of the Keeping Our Church Family Safe policy in the Conferences and Missions.

- (b) Reviewing and recommending amendments to the Keeping Our Church Family Safe policy to the British Union Conference Policy Committee. This will be undertaken annually.
- (c) Working with the Conference/Mission nominated personnel to produce standardised training materials for Level One and Level Two training programmes.

**Church Employee/Volunteer Receives Report of Abuse from Child\***



**Church Employee/Volunteer Has Concerns About Child's\* Welfare**



## BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RESOURCES

### A. NATIONAL AND LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

- NSPCC, Weston House, 42 Curtain Rd, London` EC2A 3NH. Tel. 0207 825 2500.
- NCH Action for Children, 85 Highbury Park, London, N5 1UD.
- Social Services or NHS Health Promotion Service (ask at your local health centre).
- PCAA Christian Child Care, P O Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ.

These organisations may also be approached for training or literature

### B. PRINTED MATERIALS

- *Children Act, 1989.* HMSO.
- *An Introduction to the Children Act 1989.* HMSO.
- *Working Together Under the Children Act 1989.* HMSO.
- *Caring for Young People and the Vulnerable? Guidance for Preventing Abuse of Trust.* Home Office 1999.
- *Safe From Harm.* Home Office, researched and written by David R Smith.
- *Child Abuse Guidelines.* Department of Health, Child Care Division, Republic of Ireland.
- *Even in the Name of God.* Birthe Kendel, Trans-European Division.
- *Abuse and Family Violence; Child Sexual Abuse and Family Violence.* Statements on the church website: [www.adventist.org](http://www.adventist.org).
- NSPCC publish a series of separate information leaflets for parents, children and teenagers. See address above.
- PCCA Christian Child Care supply books, tapes, video and material to use with children. Send for their resource list at the above address enclosing a stamped addressed envelope.
- Kidscape, 82 Brook Street, London W1Y 1YG, supply materials for parents to use with children, and kits for use, particularly in schools.

### C. Helplines

- Childline: 0800 1111 (also handles adult calls).
- NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 500.
- Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service 0845 120 4551.

### D. Web Sites:

- Home Office Documents: [http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/new\\_indexes/index\\_family.htm](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/new_indexes/index_family.htm)
- PCCA: <http://www.pcca.co.uk>
- OFSTED: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/about/childcare>

- Department of Health 2003 'What to do if your're worried a child is being abused':  
[www.doh.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren/index.htm](http://www.doh.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren/index.htm) and  
[www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance](http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance)
- Criminal Records Bureau [www.disclosure.gov.uk/docs/pdf/employingpeoplewithconviction.pdf](http://www.disclosure.gov.uk/docs/pdf/employingpeoplewithconviction.pdf) and  
[www.disclosure.gov.uk/docs/pdf/recruitingsafely.pdf](http://www.disclosure.gov.uk/docs/pdf/recruitingsafely.pdf)
- NSPCC Inform (online child protection resources)  
[www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/InformNews/SexualOffencesAct.asp](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/InformNews/SexualOffencesAct.asp) and  
[www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/Training/Stopcheck.asp](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/Training/Stopcheck.asp)

GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

**POSITION STATEMENT ON ABUSE AND FAMILY VIOLENCE (1995)**

Seventh-day Adventists affirm the dignity and worth of each human being and decry all forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and family violence.

We recognise the global extent of this problem and the serious, long-term effects upon the lives of all involved. We believe that Christians must respond to abuse and family violence both within the church and in the community. We take seriously reports of abuse and violence and have highlighted these issues for discussion at this international assembly. We believe that to remain indifferent and unresponsive is to condone, perpetuate, and potentially extend such behaviour.

We accept our responsibility to co-operate with other professional services, to listen and care for those suffering from abuse and family violence, to highlight the injustices, and to speak out in defence of victims. We will help persons in need to identify and access the range of available professional services.

When changed attitudes and behaviour open possibilities for forgiveness and new beginnings, we will provide a ministry of reconciliation. We will assist families in grief over relationships that cannot be restored. We will address the spiritual questions confronting abused persons, seeking to understand the origins of abuse and family violence and developing better ways of preventing the recurring cycle.



## **DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE**

*The definitions of child abuse recommended as criteria throughout England and Wales by the Department of Health, Department for Education and Employment and the Home Office in their joint document, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (1999)' are as follows:*

### **Abuse and Neglect**

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger.

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or develop mentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (eg. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in, the production of pornographic materials, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic or physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing; failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

### **Organised Abuse**

Organised or multiple abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abuser and a number of related or non-related abused children and young people. The abusers concerned may be acting in concert to abuse children, sometimes acting in isolation, or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for abuse. Organised and multiple abuse occurs both as part of a network, or abuse across a family or community, and within institutions such as residential homes or schools.

When working in a faith setting there is a need to aware of how spirituality can be used to justify abusive behaviour.

## **Spiritual Abuse**

Spiritual abuse is using God's word or His name to justify human behaviour that is sexual, emotional or physical abuse or neglect. Spiritual abuse is most destructive because it gives children a distorted image of God.

(A child may suffer more than one category of abuse).

### **POSSIBLE SIGNS OF ABUSE**

- Physical: unexplained injuries and bruising, or injuries which have not received medical attention. Hidden injuries, bruising which is only discovered when clothes come off. Signs of neglect.
- Sexual: allegations made by the child or young person. Pre-occupation with sexual matters. Being sexually explicit in words, play or drawing. Reported sleep disturbances with fears and phobias. Being sexually provocative with adults.
- Emotional abuse: nervousness, sudden under-achievement, regression in behaviour. Inappropriate relations with adults/peers, attention seeking, running away/stealing/lying, looking uncared-for.
- Neglect: looking ill-cared for and unhappy, being withdrawn or aggressive. Having lingering health problems or injuries.

It should be remembered that many symptoms of distress can point to abuse but there may be other explanations. It is important that the above signs are not taken as absolute indicators that abuse has taken place. They should cause employees/volunteers to stop and think rather than jumping to conclusions. Therefore, it is always important to discuss any concerns with the appropriate Responsible Person or committee.

<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	
Church Name:	
<b>INFORMATION FORM FOR EMPLOYEES/VOLUNTEERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE</b>	
Full Name:	
Maiden or former name:	
Home Address:	
Date of Birth:	
Telephone Number:	Evening:
Church:	Church Office Held:
Please give details of previous experience of looking after or working with children and/or young people.	
Why do you want to work with children?	
Continue on a separate sheet if required.	

Reference: Please give the name, address, telephone number, position or relationship of someone who knows you well.

Qualifications:

Have you already received certified child protection training?  Yes  No

If YES

Please give details of any relevant qualifications or training and present the original certificate to your Child Safety Representative:

If NO

Are you prepared to undertake appropriate training?  Yes  No

Please note that if you decline to undertake training if necessary the church may refuse your application or withdraw your authority to work with children and young people.

Are you willing to apply to the Criminal Records Bureau for a disclosure?  Yes  No

If YES please complete Appendix H and obtain the disclosure information details from your Child Safety Representative.

If NO please complete a Declaration of Criminal Conviction form Appendix D.

I confirm that there is nothing that should bar me from working with children and young people.

Yes  No

Signed:

Date:

When completed this form must be held in confidence and should be retained by the local Church Clerk, (with a copy to the appropriate Conference Departmental Director where applicable).

Retention period **up to** 3 months.

## PROTECTION OF CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

### DISCLOSURE OF CRIMINAL BACKGROUND

#### OF THOSE WITH ACCESS TO CHILDREN

#### NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES, POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

Your employment, potential employment, or voluntary work for which you are being considered involves substantial opportunity for unsupervised access to children and is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. You are therefore required to declare any convictions or cautions you may have, even if they would otherwise be regarded as "spent" under that Act. The information you give will be treated in confidence and will only be taken into account in relation to appointments where the exemption applies.

The Organisation is also entitled, under arrangements introduced for the protection of children, to check with the Police for the existence and content of any criminal record of any employee, potential employee or volunteer. Information received from the Police will be kept in strict confidence and will be destroyed immediately after the selection process is completed.

The disclosure of a criminal record will not debar you from employment or volunteer work unless the organisation considers that the conviction renders you unsuitable for this position. In making this decision, consideration will be given to the nature of the offence, how long ago it was committed, what age you were at that time and any other factors that may be relevant.

Any employment or voluntary work will be made subject to the condition that this check does not reveal any conviction that would render the applicant unsuitable to work with children.

Please complete the enclosed form listing all previous convictions, bind-overs, and cautions (if none write NONE). Spent convictions must also be listed pursuant to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975.

Failure to declare a conviction may disqualify you from employment or voluntary work, or result in summary dismissal if the discrepancy comes to light.

I confirm that I have received, read and understood the above notice.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### A DEFINITION OF SEXUAL/PHYSICAL MISCONDUCT TOWARD MINORS

Sexual abuse of children consists of activities which expose children to sexual stimulation inappropriate to their age, psychological development, and role in the family. Such abuse may begin with apparently innocent physical or verbal expressions of inappropriate familiarity and progress to inappropriate touching, caressing, indecent exposure, sexual fondling and intercourse.

**PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS**

<b>DECLARATION OF CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS</b> (Private and Confidential)	
Surname:	First Name:
Title (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Dr) etc.	Date of Birth:
Have you been known by any other name?	Previous Name:
Address:	
Post Code	
Telephone No: Day	Evening:
If resident at the above address for less than 2 years please give previous address	
Address	
Post Code	
Please state your Church Office or Job Title:.....	
Church: - .....	
Have you been convicted of any offence? You must include offences which are "Spent" under the provisions of The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974	
YES/NO	
If 'YES', please give details, continuing on a separate piece of paper if necessary	
Signed:	Date:

This document to be forwarded to the Conference/Mission Secretariat or KCFS Co-ordinator

**\*\*This Appendix Should Only Be Used when The Pre-Prepared Templates Are Not Suitable**

**APPENDIX E**

Church Name:	
<b>JOB GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEES/VOLUNTEERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE</b>	
Church:	
Name of Employee/Volunteer:	
Name of Group:	Age range:            to
Person to whom responsible:	
Work to be undertaken:	
Signed: (Responsible Person or Minister)	Date:
To be completed by the Employee/Volunteer:	
I understand the nature of the work I am to do with the children/young people who attend this church programme. I have read 'Keeping Our Church Family Safe' and I understand that it is my duty to protect the children/young people with whom I come into contact. I know what action to take if abuse is disclosed or discovered.	
Signed:	Date:
Note: These guidelines should be reviewed annually (at the time of church officer's election). If the job changes substantially a new form should be completed. Copies should be retained by the Individual and the Responsible Person.	

**AGREEMENT Between**

..... Church and

.....

1. I will never allow myself to be in a situation where I am alone with children or young people.
2. I will attend meetings and house-groups as directed by the church leadership.
3. I will sit where directed in the church and will not place myself in the vicinity of children and young people.
4. I will not enter certain parts of the building designated by the leadership, nor any areas where children's activities are taking place.
5. I will decline invitations of hospitality where there are children in the home.
6. I accept that ..... and ..... will sit with me during church activities, and accompany me when I need to use other facilities. They will know that I am a Schedule 1 Offender.
7. I accept that there are certain people who will need to be told of my circumstances in order for them to protect the children and young people they care for.
8. I accept that contact will need to be made with my probation officer, who will meet with the church leaders as and when necessary.
9. I accept that Pastor ..... will provide me with pastoral care.
10. I understand that if I do not keep to these conditions, then I may be barred from attending the church, and in such circumstances the leadership may choose to inform the statutory agencies (probation and social services) and any other relevant organisation.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Witnessed by: .....

Date: .....

Witnessed by: .....

Date: .....

Copies should be retained by the individual, the Church Clerk and be the Conference/Mission Secretariat or KCFS Co-ordinator

Retention period by the Church Clerk: Period of Church Attendance/Membership.



**LOCAL INFORMATION**

**(Local telephone details to be inserted by the local church, school, office etc.)**

**Police: (Child Protection Team)**

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Social Services (Duty Officer)**

.....

.....

.....

.....

## **PERMISSION TO APPLY FOR CRIMINAL RECORDS BUREAU DISCLOSURE**

### **NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES, POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS**

Your employment, potential employment, or voluntary work for which you are being considered involves substantial opportunity for unsupervised access to children and is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. You are therefore required to declare any convictions or cautions you may have, even if they would otherwise be regarded as "spent" under that Act. The information you give will be treated in confidence and will only be taken into account in relation to appointments where the exemption applies.

The Organisation is also entitled, under arrangements introduced for the protection of children, to check with the Police for the existence and content of any criminal record of any employee, potential employee or volunteer. Information received from the Police will be kept in strict confidence and will be destroyed immediately after the selection process is completed.

The disclosure of a criminal record will not debar you from employment or volunteer work unless the organisation considers that the conviction renders you unsuitable for this position. In making this decision, consideration will be given to the nature of the offence, how long ago it was committed, what age you were at that time and any other factors that may be relevant.

Any employment or voluntary work will be made subject to the condition that this check does not reveal any conviction that would render the applicant unsuitable to work with children.

**Please sign below to give your consent to a disclosure being sought from the Criminal Records Bureau and then obtain the application information from your Child Safety Representative.**

Failure to grant consent may disqualify you from employment or voluntary work.

I confirm that I have received, read and understood the above notice.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **A DEFINITION OF SEXUAL/PHYSICAL MISCONDUCT TOWARD MINORS**

Sexual abuse of children consists of activities which expose children to sexual stimulation inappropriate to their age, psychological development, and role in the family. Such abuse may begin with apparently innocent physical or verbal expressions of inappropriate familiarity and progress to inappropriate touching, caressing, indecent exposure, sexual fondling and intercourse.

## **REQUEST FOR REFERENCE**

**(Paid/Volunteer Worker with Children and Young People)**

Name of Worker: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear

The above-named person has applied to be a worker with the children and young people for (name of church/organisation) \_\_\_\_\_.

As I am sure you are aware, before we can accept anyone to work with children and young people, whether on a voluntary or paid basis, we must be sure that they are suitable. This applicant has given your name as a referee.

I would be grateful if you could give your opinion of the person's suitability for the post by completing the enclosed form and return it in the pre-paid envelope as soon as possible.

Please note that this position is exempt from Section 4(2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions Order 1975). It is not, therefore, in any way contrary to the Act to reveal any information you may have concerning convictions which would otherwise be considered "spent".

Any information you are able to give will be kept in strictest confidence and used only in consideration of the suitability of the applicant for this position.

Should you require any further information to not hesitate to contact (name) \_\_\_\_\_  
telephone number \_\_\_\_\_.

May I take this opportunity for thanking you for your help in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

## Reference Form

(Paid and Volunteer Helpers with Children and Young People)

### PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Reference for: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you known this person? \_\_\_\_\_

In what capacity? \_\_\_\_\_

### COMMENTS ON SUITABILITY OF WORKER. (Please attach)

(In considering whether the person is fit to work with children and young people please consider the following alongside the job application: Previous experience of looking after or working with young children or young people; Ability to provide warm and consistent care; Commitment to treat all children and young people as individuals and with equal concern. The position for which this person is being considered gives substantial access to children and young people. To your knowledge, is there any reason why this person should not be entrusted with care of children and young people? If so, please provide details).

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

**RESPONDING TO ABUSE – WORKERS ACTION SHEET**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Name of Church/Group \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Child/Young Person \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Name of Person Reporting Incident \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time Alleged Incident Occurred \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Sequence of Events/Actual Words Used/Observations

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken (including person(s) contacted)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time of Written Report \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_