
Child Abuse Prevention Policy

TERMS OF DEFINITIONS IN POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Abuse: There are many different forms of abuse and a child may be subjected to more than one form:

Verbal: Verbal abuse is often a large component of emotional abuse and includes, but is not limited to: blaming, ridiculing, insulting, swearing, yelling, humiliating and labelling, name-calling, making racist comments and constant teasing.

Physical: A non-accidental act which results in physical pain or injury – it includes physical coercion and physical restraint.

Sexual: May include one or a series of incidents involving unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Any person who persists in such behavior which they know or should know is unwelcome may be guilty to sexual harassment.

Mental: Psychological abuse is language or actions designed to intimidate another person and are usually characterized by a pattern of behaviour repeated over time intended to maintain a 'hold of fear' over the person.

Children/Youth: a person who is under 18 years of age.

Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA): provides information about requirements that must be met within early learning and care settings including a Program Statement and monitoring;

Committee: a group of persons responsible for ensuring that the policy or procedure is put into place.

Funders: an organization that provides money for a particular purpose. i.e.: through a grant application process

Leader position: a leadership role occupied by an employee or volunteer where there is expected to be direct interaction with children. Examples include: the positions of teacher, assistant teacher, volunteer, ect.

Risk Assessment: a process by which programs are rated according to the degree of risk exposure

Volunteer: a person or student who is involved peripherally in programs with children and/or youth for a one-time event or for a term. i.e.: student placement

REASONS FOR DEVELOPING AN ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

Kinder College Early Learning Centre advocates for children and has a responsibility in promoting every child's right to safety and well-being in all areas of their lives.

Prevention of abuse of children. Prevention includes having adequate processes in place in order to prevent opportunities for abuse, neglect, and harm from arising.

Protection of all the vulnerable in our midst. The protection of all children is everyone's responsibility.

Reporting of all incidents of abuse, neglect and harm. Such incidents, wherever, and whenever they are encountered, will be reported immediately to a designated internal authority, the police, and the appropriate agencies in accordance with civil law requirements.

Training and Support for staff and volunteers. A process of screening, recruiting, training, supervising and supporting staff and volunteers.

Protection of the organization from lawsuits involving allegations of abuse. Abuse can place the reputation of the organization in jeopardy, and the financial costs of defending lawsuits can be devastating.

HOW THIS POLICY IS STRUCTURED

There are three main components that make up this policy; Preparation, Working with Staff and Evaluating and Reporting.

PREPARATION

Abuse Prevention Committee

In order to effectively implement an abuse prevention policy, a committee will be formed with the unique responsibility of putting the policy into action. This committee should be responsible for making sure that all staff and volunteers in the organization know about the policy and follow the implementation steps with integrity and consistency.

Job descriptions

Position descriptions are vitally important. They communicate to everyone, whether paid or unpaid, what is expected of them, what skills or experience may be needed, how the organization will provide orientation and training for the task, and what support they can expect to receive.

Job descriptions for every position can be found **Appendix 1**.

Evaluate Risk Factors

The committee will determine how much risk there is in our programs, and whether or not this risk can be effectively reduced. Each position requires the completion of a risk assessment. This work is ongoing and must be revisited with each new program year, each change in leadership, or after any considerable change in the overall environment of the organization.

Risk assessment for each program should be done annually, as responsibilities associated with positions often change over time. The completed risk assessments should be kept in a locked metal file cabinet.

Risk assessments are performed in the following cases:

I. General Program:

The committee must determine the elements of risk in each program position. Such an assessment is performed by reviewing the position description and considering the most common circumstances under which a person in that position is likely to carry out his or her duties.

II. Specific or Special Events:

Should a teacher decide to introduce a new element into a program, he / she must determine the risk for that specific event and submit the risk assessment in writing to the Committee for review prior to the event.

III. Risk Assessment Guide:

If any of the categories below are checked "Yes," the event or program may require additional consideration. See suggestions for reducing risk below.

Risk Category	Risk Factor	Yes	No
Degree of Isolation	The teacher / volunteer helper may be alone with person being served.		
Degree of Supervision	The teacher / volunteer helper has limited or no supervision in role		

	The activities of teacher / volunteer helper are in a place where activities are not observed or monitored		
Access of Property	The teacher / volunteer helper has access to confidential information related to the person served		
Degree of Physical Contact	The position description includes touching persons served.		
Degree of Physical Demands	The activity involves potential danger to person served (e.g. using a stove).		
	Activity involves potential stress.		
Degree of Inherent Risk	The activity heightens potential for the teacher / volunteer helper to be in contact with bodily fluids or disease of the person served.		
	The activity exposes the person served to handling toxic substances or results in exposure to poor air quality, noise, etc.		

How to Reduce Risk

Sometimes it is simply not feasible to eliminate risks, but in other cases, risks can be lowered without jeopardizing the intended effect. Often, lowering the risk can even improve the quality of the program being offered. When the committee performs risk assessments for programs or events, there are several options to consider:

I. Forego the Activity / Event / Program in question:

Many dangers can be avoided by simply aborting the situation. However, while some programs are inherently high risk, you may opt to continue them because of their importance.

II. Transfer the Liability:

You may choose to have a service or program offered by someone with professional expertise who carries separate insurance coverage.

III. Modify the Program or Event:

You may make changes as to how the activity is carried out.

Some other Suggestions for Reducing Risk

- Follow a two-person policy whenever possible – during any program, have at least two adults present.
- Where possible, the two adults should be unrelated.
- When the two-person policy cannot be used, notify a parent before a proposed one-to-one contact with a child and ask permission to meet.
- Where the two-person policy cannot be used, require that one-to-one contacts between a volunteer / staff and child take place in a public area either inside or outside the organization's facilities, where both people can be seen by others.
- All volunteers working with children should wear name tags.
- Parent / caregiver contact information should be carefully maintained.
- No child should be dropped off without a teacher present.
- No parents or adults should enter a classroom / activity room without permission.

Covenant of Care Form

At orientation, teachers and volunteer will be required to sign a "Covenant of Care" form, stating that the signatory understands the safety standards as presented in the orientation, and agrees to adhere to them. A "Covenant of Care" makes behavioral expectations clear at the outset. A sample form is found in **Appendix 2** in this policy.

Examine Safety and Prevention Areas

The committee must oversee all Safety and prevention areas: facilities, fire procedures, requirements of staff / child ratios and health issues.

I. Facilities:

The areas in facility that require preventive measures have been identified and made into a usable checklist. This checklist will be conducted every three months (or if we experience rain or snow) by the supervisor and documented. For more information about the Facility Checklist, please refer to **Appendix 3**.

II. Fire Procedures:

An emergency evacuation plan is clearly defined is displayed in each classroom and ensure that fire extinguishers are properly placed.

Emergency evacuation drills are conducted on a monthly basis and results are documented and assessed. Evacuation procedures are adjusted if necessary. In the event of a fire, the evacuation plan is to be carried out. Attendance and emergency information for the children is taken to the designated gathering place.

III. Ratios of Children to Teachers

The Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA) provides the ratio guidelines for every program. If there are not enough teachers and adult volunteers for a particular activity or event, whether the event or activity should be held should be considered.

Program	Ratio	Max. Class Size
Infant (birth to 18 months)	3:1	10
Toddler (18-30 months)	5:1	15
Preschool (30 months - 5 years)	8:1	24

IV. Day Excursions

Kinder College will no longer be participating in off-site excursions.

V. Health

While we cannot always avoid having ill children in their programs, several measures can be taken to promote good health and reduce infection.

Allergies:

When children register to our child care centre we obtain all health information including allergies. Information about children's allergy are posted in all classrooms and kitchen so that this information will not be overlooked. The planned menu is also posted so that the parent's / caregiver can view it. The centre has does not utilize foods identified as serious allergens such as nuts (including peanuts), shrimp, chocolate, and nuts of any kind. For more information about how we handle allergies, refer to **Appendix 4** (Anaphylactic Allergy forms and policy).

Injury:

If a child is injured while participating in a program or activity, the teacher must immediately attend to the injured child and administer first aid and an incident report is completed by the staff. If necessary, call 9-1-1. If the child is bleeding, the volunteer / teacher should protect himself / herself and all others from the blood. For all injuries,

even if the person does not need medical attention, a leader must complete an Incident Report Form (see **Appendix 5**) and report the incident to the injured person's parent / guardian. Incident reports should be filed and stored in a locked metal cabinet, in the event that future reference is necessary.

Infectious Diseases:

Teachers must ask parents / guardians to not let their children attend programs if they have been diagnosed with, or exhibit symptoms of illnesses which are known to be infectious, such as: diarrhea, vomiting, fever, rash, open sores, skin or eye infection, scarlet fever, measles, mumps, chicken pox, whooping cough, head lice. Reportable diseases will be reported to Toronto Public Health Department under the Ontario Health Protection and Promotion Act. For more detailed information refer to **Appendix 6** - Exclusion of Sick Children Policy and Procedures.

WORKING WITH TEACHERS

Hiring Process

The recruitment process includes a personal interview, a reference check, and a Police Background Check of all prospective staff or volunteers (See **Appendix 7**, Employment / Volunteer Application form).

Volunteer Screening Check and Police Reference Checks

Screening comes prior to a Police Records Check (PRC). Screening is a process performed by an organization to ensure that the right match is made between the work to be done and the person who will do it. The screening process must also filter out unsuitable candidates, in order to ensure that a safe environment is maintained for all employees, volunteers, and external clients. The screening process includes steps such as job design, recruitment, and orientation. The steps that are most important in determining the suitability of a candidate are interviews, reference checks and a Police Records Check.

A PRC is a criminal records check, as well as a search of the records in a national database. The PRC can reveal if an individual has been investigated for an incident or incidents. This may or may not be revealed by the police. PRC's have become a standard and accepted part of institutional and organizational procedures for those working with children, youth, and vulnerable persons in schools, hospitals, communities, and religious groups. However, PRC's do have limitations, and that is why they are only one part of the larger screening process.

PRC's are mandatory for all staff and volunteers in the organization regardless of whether their position specifically deals with children. Any position within an organization that provides programming and support to children may be seen as an access-point by predators.

I. Handling the Information

The Committee must handle this information with great care and maintain confidentiality. The individual who obtains a PRC hands it to the designated person. This person reviews the document and gives it back to the individual to whom it belongs. The person who is seeking to be a teacher or volunteer "owns" his / her PRC and should keep the original. A copy is made for the organization's records for licensing purposes. It is extremely important for the Committee to handle this information with strict confidentiality.

II. How often must a check be done

A PRC must be done at any of these points:

- At the time of a new application
- At the time of a change of position
- At a time when the position changes
- Every three years

III. PRC Limitations

There are some limits, but the fact still remains: PRCs can be a positive deterrent in discouraging nefarious individuals from applying for employment or volunteer positions with children. Here are some of the limitations of PRCs:

- They are only good up to the day of checking and based on the information provided.
- A person may use a false name, driver's license, or birth date, so there are no matches found in their record.
- If a conviction occurred when the person was a youth, the information is protected under the Youth Criminal Justice Act; therefore, you will not have access to this information after a certain time period.
- Some sex offenders and abusers have never been charged or convicted of a crime, so there will be no record to review.

Provide Orientation and Training for All Teachers and Volunteers

Orientation for all members – whether new or experienced – is very important. Orientation sessions provide individuals with general information in order to prepare them for their positions. Everyone, whether experienced or new, must attend the orientation sessions. Orientation

should be timed to coincide with the start of the majority of the organization's programs. It should include important information about safety practices. It is important that both teachers and volunteers are given an orientation, and trained in accordance with the organization's Health and Safety policies. Orientation includes items like these:

- A review of position descriptions. Does everyone know what his or her job entails?
- What to do in case of a sudden illness of either themselves or someone in the program. If ill, teachers and leaders should be given instruction about who to inform and how to find a replacement for their program.
- In small organizations where there is only one leader / volunteer, a plan must be made if only one child comes to a program on a particular day.
- How to access supplies and equipment.
- How to access the building, activity rooms, supply cupboards etc.
- Overview of the training sessions that will be available in the year ahead.
- All leaders and volunteers must fill out the Employment / Volunteer Application form (See **Appendix 7** of this policy).
- Safety issues such as fire procedures, washroom practices, and other safety issues which are specific to the situation.
- All teachers / volunteers must be given a print form about physical contact, washroom procedures, and information on abuse (See **Appendix 8, 9, & 10**).
- Teachers must be given a record book to record attendance carefully in case parents need to be advised about a health or safety concern. Attendance should be recorded at the beginning of each program and the attendance book taken to a central place.
- All teachers / volunteers must read, agree and sign a "Covenant of Care" form (See **Appendix 2**).

Provide Supervision of and Support for Teachers and Volunteers

On-going Support:

After orientation and training, supervision / support and evaluation will be provided. Supervision / support and evaluation provide the following:

- A standard level of practice

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- An opportunity for new teachers / volunteers to reflect on what they have learned so they can improve their skills.
 - Protection for all participants from unsafe practices
 - Protection for teachers / volunteers against false allegations of wrongdoing.

The position description is used as a reference point. For instance, in the description, a supervisor may tell new employees that he / she should know to expect a visit from the supervisor. The level of risk of the program or event determines the amount and frequency of supervision / support and evaluation.

Our monthly classroom meetings between the teachers and supervisor will provide an opportunity for teachers to express and identify challenges they are facing and work together to come up with strategies to address the issue.

Comments and feedback from participants and their families / caregivers are also helpful for new teachers / volunteers. Supervisors need to ask new teachers / volunteers to maintain open, frequent communication with program participants and their families. Supervisors may assure new teachers / volunteers that, if negative feedback is received, the supervisors will honor confidentiality but will work with the teachers / volunteers to make any necessary changes.

EVALUATING AND REPORTING

Evaluate the Policy and Report to Supervising Body

At least twice a year the Committee should meet to evaluate how things are going in your organization. These key questions will guide the evaluation:

- What positive things have we noticed as a result of introducing the Policy?
- Are there special problems that have emerged that require attention?
- Are there things that we need to plan for in the future?

It is important to do an evaluation of position descriptions and risk assessments on an annual basis. As programs change and evolve, the position descriptions and risk assessments will also change. It is also very important that the committee report these evaluations to Management (Site Supervisor, Operations Manager & Director) at least twice a year.

Collect and Retain Necessary Information

The purpose of retaining screening and training records is to ensure that, in the unfortunate event that an allegation is brought against the organization, documentation exists to prove that preventative measures were in place, and were being followed. This pertains to employment / volunteer applications (and the attendant police checks and references) as well as records of induction training, performance appraisals, and refresher courses. This also includes a signed "Covenant of Care" document, indicating that employees and volunteers have made a clear commitment to observe industry-accepted 'best practices.' One of the few effective legal defenses available is to prove that adequate measures were taken prior to an incident. It is also important that the organization retain copies of all insurance policies, particularly where insurers may have changed over the years. This is necessary so that, in the event that a claim is brought forward, it can be determined which insurer was on risk at a particular time.

Organizations should also ensure that the details of any incidents or allegations of abuse are documented and retained. In some cases, legal demands for compensation may not be made until several years after the alleged abuse took place. If pertinent details are not permanently retained, an organization may face serious difficulty defending itself. Documentation plays an important role in substantiating a complaint, and can be extremely useful when alleged incidents are reported to the organization's insurer. The information that should be permanently retained includes but is not limited to:

- All employment / volunteer applications
- Employee / volunteer screening records (this includes any notes made during the reference checking process, and a copy of the Police Background Check performed on each employee / volunteer)
- Signed and dated "Covenant of Care" forms
- Records of Induction training and attendance at refresher-courses (the use of training review forms is recommended. These forms, which are signed by both the trainer and staff member or volunteer, can be used as documentary evidence of what training has been delivered, and that the person receiving the training has understood and agreed to all of the learning objectives)
- Details regarding any probationary restrictions placed on new employees / volunteers

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- Documentation regarding any allegations of abuse or misconduct (including: the name, age, sex, and address of both the victim and the alleged perpetrator, the nature of the abuse that is alleged to have occurred, the number of times the alleged abuse occurred, the date and location of the incident, the relationship between the victim and the alleged perpetrator, and any other evidence, such as medical exams, witnesses etc.)
 - Attendance Records
 - Copies of all policies of insurance secured by the organization

How to Manage Confidential Information

Records that are of a personal, confidential nature must be kept in accordance with the privacy policy of the organization. Information about the collected data is confidential and will be used only for the purpose for which it was collected, that is, implementing and monitoring this policy. Information will be safely stored and only accessed by those who need to access it for purpose of the policy.

Confidential information must be stored in a fire-proof, locked metal cabinet. The information should include a copy of the Covenant of Care form, the Employment / Volunteers Application form, documentation of individual Police Records Checks, performance evaluation records, and completed incident forms. The organization will designate one or two individuals to have a key to this cabinet.

How does PIPEDA Affect This Policy?

PIPEDA, the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, became effective in Canada in January 2004. While this Act provides useful and necessary protection for Canadians, many organizations are not subject to PIPEDA because they do not collect, use, or dispose of commercial goods. Individual organizations should make sure that their rights and obligations under Canada's privacy laws are known and understood.

Appendix 1a – Job Description

Job Description

Title of the Position: Co-Lead Teacher (preschool program)

Responsible to: Site Supervisor

Responsible for: 24 children in preschool program (30 months – 4 years)

Main Goal: Kinder College Early Learning Centre's mission is to provide a safe and stimulating program that enables our young learners to develop emotionally, socially, intellectually, creatively and physically.

General summary: The Co-Lead Teacher will oversee and facilitate learning in the classroom in-line with the centre's curriculum. This will include preparations of classroom activities and ensuring all necessary supplies are available for classroom time. The teacher will be responsible for record keeping, care of the children and encouraging children in their education.

Roles, Responsibilities and Tasks: (list the expectations of this position)

- Plan and implement weekly curriculum programs
- Maintain confidentiality unless the child is in danger
- Maintain accurate records of attendance
- Attend monthly classroom meetings
- Advise the Supervisor of his/her absence and find a suitable replacement
- Ensure that the safety issues presented in orientation are followed
- Foster and maintain positive, open communication with families

Skills, Experience, and Qualities: (list all that are necessary for this task)

- Gift of teaching, time management and organizational skills
- Compassion for children and experience working with them
- Patience and sensitivity to the needs of children
- Creativity in sharing stories and personal experiences
- Ability to work with a team

Screening Procedure: In accordance with the policy of the organization regarding the screening of all adults involved in programs with children, this procedure includes completing a teacher/volunteer application form, an interview, a reference check, and a Police Records Check.

Orientation and Training: (list all training courses)

- Mandatory orientation program
- Fire, safety and emergency procedures
- Monthly teacher's meetings
- Annual policy and procedure refresher

Support, Supervision and Evaluation: As a support to all adults engaged in children programs, Kinder College Early Learning Centre will provide monthly visits by the Supervisor, opportunities to training events, and regular on-going support.

Schedule and Commitment: (insert duration and terms of contract)

Appendix 1b – Job Description

Job Description

Title of the Position: Lead Teacher (toddler program)

Responsible to: Site Supervisor

Responsible for: 15 children in toddler program (18 - 30 months)

Main Goal: Kinder College Early Learning Centre's mission is to provide a safe and stimulating program that enables our young learners to develop emotionally, socially, intellectually, creatively and physically.

General summary: The Lead Teacher will oversee and facilitate learning in the classroom in-line with the centre's curriculum. This will include preparations of classroom activities and ensuring all necessary supplies are available for classroom time. The teacher will be responsible for record keeping, care of the children and encouraging children in their education.

Roles, Responsibilities and Tasks: (list the expectations of this position)

- Plan and implement weekly curriculum programs
- Maintain confidentiality unless the child is in danger
- Maintain accurate records of attendance
- Attend monthly classroom meetings
- Advise the Supervisor of his/her absence and find a suitable replacement
- Ensure that the safety issues presented in orientation are followed
- Foster and maintain positive, open communication with families

Skills, Experience, and Qualities: (list all that are necessary for this task)

- Gift of teaching, time management and organizational skills
- Compassion for children and experience working with them
- Patience and sensitivity to the needs of children
- Creativity in sharing stories and personal experiences
- Ability to work with a team

Screening Procedure: In accordance with the policy of the organization regarding the screening of all adults involved in programs with children, this procedure includes completing a teacher/volunteer application form, an interview, a reference check, and a Police Records Check.

Orientation and Training: (list all training courses)

- Mandatory orientation program
- Fire, safety and emergency procedures
- Monthly teacher's meetings
- Annual policy and procedure refresher

Support, Supervision and Evaluation: As a support to all adults engaged in children programs, Kinder College Early Learning Centre will provide monthly visits by the Supervisor, opportunities to training events, and regular on-going support.

Schedule and Commitment: (insert duration and terms of contract)

Appendix 1c – Job Description

Job Description

Title of the Position: Lead Teacher (infant program)

Responsible to: Site Supervisor

Responsible for: 10 children in infant program (0 - 18 months)

Main Goal: Kinder College Early Learning Centre's mission is to provide a safe and stimulating program that enables our young learners to develop emotionally, socially, intellectually, creatively and physically.

General summary: The Lead Teacher will oversee and facilitate learning in the classroom in-line with the centre's curriculum. This will include preparations of classroom activities and ensuring all necessary supplies are available for classroom time. The teacher will be responsible for record keeping, care of the children and encouraging children in their education.

Roles, Responsibilities and Tasks: (list the expectations of this position)

- Plan and implement weekly curriculum programs
- Maintain confidentiality unless the child is in danger
- Maintain accurate records of attendance
- Attend monthly classroom meetings
- Advise the Supervisor of his/her absence and find a suitable replacement
- Ensure that the safety issues presented in orientation are followed
- Foster and maintain positive, open communication with families

Skills, Experience, and Qualities: (list all that are necessary for this task)

- Gift of teaching, time management and organizational skills
- Compassion for children and experience working with them
- Patience and sensitivity to the needs of children
- Creativity in sharing stories and personal experiences
- Ability to work with a team

Screening Procedure: In accordance with the policy of the organization regarding the screening of all adults involved in programs with children, this procedure includes completing a teacher/volunteer application form, an interview, a reference check, and a Police Records Check.

Orientation and Training: (list all training courses)

- Mandatory orientation program
- Fire, safety and emergency procedures
- Monthly teacher's meetings
- Annual policy and procedure refresher

Support, Supervision and Evaluation: As a support to all adults engaged in children programs, Kinder College Early Learning Centre will provide monthly visits by the Supervisor, opportunities to training events, and regular on-going support.

Schedule and Commitment: (insert duration and terms of contract)

Appendix 1d – Job Description

Job Description

Title of the Position: Assistant Teacher

Responsible to: Site Supervisor

Responsible for: 10 children in infant program, 15 children in toddler program and 24 for preschool program.

Main Goal: Kinder College Early Learning Centre's mission is to provide a safe and stimulating program that enables our young learners to develop emotionally, socially, intellectually, creatively and physically.

General summary: The Assistant Teacher will help facilitate learning in the classroom in-line with the centre's curriculum. This will include supporting the preparations of classroom activities and ensuring all necessary supplies are available for classroom time. The assistant teacher will be responsible for record keeping, care of the children and encouraging children in their education.

Roles, Responsibilities and Tasks: (list the expectations of this position)

- Help implement weekly curriculum programs
- Maintain confidentiality unless the child is in danger
- Maintain accurate records of attendance
- Attend monthly classroom meetings
- Advise the Supervisor of his/her absence and find a suitable replacement
- Ensure that the safety issues presented in orientation are followed
- Foster and maintain positive, open communication with families

Skills, Experience, and Qualities: (list all that are necessary for this task)

- Time management and organizational skills
- Compassion for children and experience working with them
- Patience and sensitivity to the needs of children
- Creativity in sharing stories and personal experiences
- Ability to work with a team

Screening Procedure: In accordance with the policy of the organization regarding the screening of all adults involved in programs with children, this procedure includes completing a teacher/volunteer application form, an interview, a reference check, and a Police Records Check.

Orientation and Training: (list all training courses)

- Mandatory orientation program
- Fire, safety and emergency procedures
- Monthly teacher's meetings
- Annual policy and procedure refresher

Support, Supervision and Evaluation: As a support to all adults engaged in children programs, Kinder College Early Learning Centre will provide monthly visits by the Supervisor, opportunities to training events, and regular on-going support.

Schedule and Commitment: (insert duration and terms of contract)

Appendix 1e – Job Description

Job Description

Title of the Position: Site Supervisor

Responsible to: Operations Manager/Director

Responsible for: Overseeing the entire child care operations

Main Goal: Kinder College Early Learning Centre's mission is to provide a safe and stimulating program that enables our young learners to develop emotionally, socially, intellectually, creatively and physically.

General summary: The Supervisor is responsible for all aspects of day-to-day operations which includes staffing, regulatory compliance and supporting educators by training, evaluating and offering ongoing support. This will include supporting the preparations of classroom activities and ensuring all necessary supplies are available for classroom time. The assistant teacher will be responsible for record keeping, care of the children and encouraging children in their education.

Roles, Responsibilities and Tasks: (list the expectations of this position)

- Ensuring regulatory compliance with licensing standards
- Maintain accurate records of attendance
- Hold monthly classroom meetings
- Observing classroom/staff
- Recruitment and training of new staff/volunteers
- Foster and maintain positive, open communication with families and staff
- Payroll related duties
- New enrollment

Skills, Experience, and Qualities: (list all that are necessary for this task)

- Time management and organizational skills
- Computer skills
- Patience and sensitivity to the needs of teachers
- Strong communication skills
- Strong knowledge of Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)

Screening Procedure: In accordance with the policy of the organization regarding the screening of all adults involved in programs with children, this procedure includes completing a teacher/volunteer application form, an interview, a reference check, and a Police Records Check.

Orientation and Training: (list all training courses)

- Mandatory orientation program
- Annual policy and procedure refresher

Support, Supervision and Evaluation: Kinder College Early Learning Centre will provide opportunities to training events, regular on-going support and annual performance evaluations.

Schedule and Commitment: (insert duration and terms of contract)

Appendix 2 – Covenant of Care Form

Covenant of Care Form

The Covenant of Care for Kinder College Early Learning Centre

I promise, in all my relationships with children, to follow appropriate action as defined by my training orientation.

I promise to use only the physical contact that is deemed appropriate by the document (Abuse Prevention Policy), which I have read and understand;

I promise to use appropriate language;

I promise to show no bias based on gender, ethnic background, skin color, intelligence, age, religion, sexual orientation or socio-economic status;

I promise that I will not harass others;

I promise to respect confidentiality and privacy, unless a child is in danger, then I will report to a child protection agency or the police.

I have read and agree with the covenant of care.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witnessed by: _____ Date: _____
(Authorized Person)

Appendix 3 – Facilities Checklist

Facilities Checklist

Date: _____

	Adequate?	Plan for Improvement
Rain/Snow		
Are floors, especially around entrances resistant to slipping?		
Snow cleared in front and back entrances?		
Classrooms		
Are signs posted reminding people to wash hands?		
Are there fire/emergency escape maps in each classroom?		
Are child locks in working order?		
Are toilets in good working order?		
Is there adequate lighting?		
Is the First Aid Kits locked and in working order?		
Other Areas of Building		
Fire extinguishers in proper locations?		
Are child railings in safe, working order?		
Are stairs/steps safe?		
Is there adequate lighting in hallways and stairways?		
Office		
Is the locked cabinet in good working order?		

Additional Notes: _____

Conducted by: _____ Signature: _____

Appendix 4a (cont..) – Anaphylactic Forms

Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____
Address: _____ Home Telephone: _____

Emergency Action Plan: (To be filled in by parent)

Child Care Staff Roles and Responsibilities:

- Adhere to the Anaphylaxis Policy
 - Staff will conduct a check to confirm child (ren) have their required medication with them before each transition, (ie. moving from the classroom to the playground or leaving for school, etc.)
 - Administer medications and/or instructions as set out in child's Individual Plan and Emergency Procedures
 - Staff is to remain calm
 - Staff will be debriefed
 - Written report to be filled out by staff dealing with emergency
 - Serious Occurrence to be filed

Parent Agreement

I _____ acknowledge my participation in the development of the preceding Emergency Action Plan and agree to execute the parent commitments listed within them.

I give my consent for the staff of _____ to execute the child care commitment as outlined within the plan.

In the event of an emergency, I authorize the child care staff to administer the designated medication and obtain medical assistance. I agree to assume responsibility for all costs associated with medical treatment and absolve Kinder College Early Learning Centre and its employees/volunteers of responsibility for any adverse reaction resulting from administration of the medication.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

TO BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY

Appendix 4b – Anaphylactic Policy

Anaphylactic Allergy Policies & Procedures

Upon a child's admission to the centre, the parent must provide an up-to-date auto-injector (EpiPen). In conjunction with the parent and the supervisor, will develop an individual plan and emergency procedure, which will include a description of the child's allergy, monitoring and avoidance strategies, signs and symptoms of an anaphylactic allergy, and action to be taken by the staff in the event that a child has an anaphylactic reaction. This information, along with the child's photograph, will be posted for staff.

To ensure the well being of children who have anaphylactic reactions it is imperative that an EpiPen is available at the child care centre at all times. If a parent does not provide an EpiPen, or fails to replace an expired EpiPen, admission to the program is denied. If a parent believes the child no longer requires an EpiPen, a written confirmation from the parent is required.

The individual plan for the child with anaphylaxis and the emergency procedures in respect of the child shall be reviewed as follows:

1. By all employees before they begin their employment and at least annually afterwards.
2. By volunteers and students who will be providing care or guidance at the day nursery before they begin providing that care or guidance and at least annually afterwards.

In addition to the emergency plan, there are 3 other components to our anaphylactic allergy policy:

Prevention

Our "no peanut zone" policy in the centre is a strategy to reduce the risk of exposure to this particular anaphylactic causative agent.

Dissemination of Information

The centre provides information boards and information pamphlets to inform parents on life-threatening allergies, including anaphylactic allergies. There are also signage in all rooms where children are present on how to administer the epi-pen medication.

Training

All staff are required to be trained in how to handle an anaphylactic episode. Training can be from a physician or a parent on procedures to be followed in the event of a child having an anaphylactic reaction.

Appendix 4b (cont..) – Anaphylactic Policy

Procedure

1. All staff, providers, back-up providers, students and volunteers involved with a child who has a life threatening allergy, must be trained by a physician or a parent on the procedures to be followed in the event of a reaction including how to recognize the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis. This will be reviewed upon hire and at least annually.
2. The parents are required to supply an epinephrine auto-inject pen labelled with the child's name and the expiry date. Epinephrine auto-inject pens are **not** to be locked in cabinets, drawers or cupboards. The epinephrine auto-inject pen will be located in a position out of reach of children but readily available to staff. The epinephrine auto-inject pen must always be in close proximity to the child especially on outings, during outdoor play, excursions, etc.
3. "Allergy Alert Forms" will be posted in the playrooms and food preparation areas. They will include the child's name and picture, description of the allergy, monitoring and avoidance strategies, signs and symptoms of the allergy, location of the epinephrine auto-inject pen, action to be taken by staff or provider, and parent consent.
4. The information on the "Allergy Alert Form" should be reviewed every 12 months and before any outings, excursions, etc.
5. In the case of an older school age child, the child may self-administer the medication, but this must always be done with the support of a staff member. Adult supervision is mandatory.
6. Parents of children with life threatening allergies will complete an "Anaphylactic Emergency Plan" form before the child attends care.
7. Any child who is administered an epinephrine auto-inject pen must be immediately transported to hospital by ambulance and the parents will be contacted immediately. A staff member will accompany the child in the event the parent is not present.
8. A serious occurrence report will be completed and processed.
9. The Anaphylactic Reaction policy will be reviewed upon hire and annually thereafter with parents.

Appendix 5 – Incident Report Form

Incident Report Form

CONFIDENTIAL

Report date: _____ Time of report: _____

Full Name of child: _____ Room: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Gender: M F

Full Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Notified: Yes No

If yes, date/time of notification: _____

Date/time and location of incident: _____

Description of incident: _____

Names/contact information of witnesses: _____

Description of injuries sustained: _____

Appendix 5 (cont.) – Incident Report Form

Description of action taken: _____

Additional information you think is relevant: _____

Direct quotes from child/youth/adult: (Note: If this is an abuse allegation, do not interview the child/youth but report only the comments they share with you.)

I hereby confirm that the information provided in this report is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Name and position of person making report (please print):

Phone/Address: _____

Signature of Person making report: _____ Date: _____

Note: If this is an allegation of abuse, it must be reported to a protection agency or police. (See section on reporting procedure.)

Appendix 6 – Exclusion of Sick Children Policy

Exclusion of Sick Children Policy and Procedures

Policy Statement

Kinder College Early Learning Centre is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, families and employees. Kinder College will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases within our facility.

Purpose

To ensure that all employees are aware of and adhere to the directive established by Toronto Public Health (TPH), and Kinder College ELC regarding the exclusion of sick children in early learning and child care centres.

Applies to

This policy applies to all employees, students, children and any others persons engaged in business with Kinder College ELC.

Procedures

As required by the Child Care and Early Years Act, Kinder College must separate children of ill health and contact parents/guardians to take the child home.

When children are ill, child care employees will ensure the following:

- Ill children are cared for and comforted by employees, while monitoring symptoms
- Ill children will be separated from other children when possible
- Symptoms of illness will be recorded in the child's daily record and in a daily log as per the CCEYA
- The parent/guardian of the ill child will be notified to take them home; or
- If it appears that the child requires immediate medical attention, the child will be taken to the hospital by ambulance and examined by a legally qualified medical practitioner or a nurse registered under the Health Disciplines Act. R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 262, s. 34 (3).

If you suspect a child has symptoms of a reportable communicable disease (refer to Kinder College's Guidelines for Common Communicable Diseases), please report these immediately to TPH's Communicable Disease Surveillance Unit (416-392-2489).

When to exclude

Child care employees should exclude a sick child when the child has two signs and/or symptoms that are greater than normal, or if the child is unable to participate in regular programming because of illness.

Exclusion Examples:

- If a child has diarrhea and a fever that is above normal for that child, then exclusion should occur
- Child has runny nose, fever, generally not feeling well and parents request the child does not participate in outside activities. Exclusion should occur

How to exclude

When excluding a child, they must be separated by at least 2 metres/6 feet from others. The supervisor's office or staff room will suffice; however, if this is not an accessible space then please separate the ill child from others as best as possible.

Surveillance

Ensuring that all environmental conditions are constantly monitored is essential in prevention and reducing illness. Employees must monitor for an increase in above normal amount of illnesses among other employees and children by looking at the normal occurrence of illness at that location and during the specific time period.

Ensure surveillance includes the following:

- Observe children for illness upon arrival
- Record symptoms of illness for each child
- Record attendances and absences
- Record any outings, special events, etc.

Child returning from exclusion due to illness

Please refer to the Management of Common Communicable Diseases policy and procedures

Policy and Procedure Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed and signed off by all employees and students prior to commencing employment/unpaid placement at Kinder College Early Learning Centre and annually thereafter and at any time where a change is made.

The review will be documented on the Infection Prevention and Control Policies and Procedures Review & Sign Off form, a hard copy will be retained in the individual's file for a minimum of 3 years and a scanned copy posted on the employee's file on the Children's Services' Staffing System.

Appendix 7 – Employment/Volunteer Application Form

Teacher / Volunteer Application Form

Personal Information

Full name: _____
Last First Initial

Address: _____ Postal code: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Hobbies/Interest/Skills: _____

Position (please check): RECE Teaching Assistant Cook Volunteer

Do you have an up-to-date First Aid/CPR certification? No Yes

Do you have ECE diploma? No Yes

Are you registered with the College of ECE? No Yes

What is your program of interest within this organization?

- Infant (0-18 months)
- Toddler (18-30 months)
- Preschool (30 months – 5 years)

Do you have any barriers that would affect your ability to carry out the duties involved with this position?

No Yes, Please explain: _____

References

Please provide the names of two people, excluding relatives, who will provide a reference for you. Provide one professional reference. Please note: all references will be called.

1. Name: _____ Occupation: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Relationship to Applicant: _____

2. Name: _____ Occupation: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Relationship to Applicant: _____

Appendix 8 – Information Sheets for Volunteers / Teachers

Information Sheets for Volunteers / Teachers

Physical Contact

It is essential to be careful regarding behavior, language and physical contact when working with children:

- Do not show favoritism when dealing with children / youth / vulnerable adults. Show a similar level of affection and kindness to all.
- Do not engage in or allow the telling of sexual jokes or behave in a way that promotes the sexual exploitation of others.
- Provide clearly stated consequences for inappropriate behavior. Stop inappropriate behavior early. Be fair, consistent and reasonable, matching consequences to the age and ability to the child / youth.
- Do not use corporal punishment such as hitting, spanking or strapping.

Appropriate and inappropriate touching

A touch can convey a multitude of positive messages and communicate care, comfort and love; however, it is important to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touching. It is also important to be aware of, and sensitive to, differences in interpretation to touching based on sex, culture or personal experience.

Some examples of **appropriate touch**:

Love and care can usually be expressed in the following common-sense ways:

- Holding or rocking an infant who is crying
- Affirming a participant with a pat on the hand, shoulder, or back
- Bending down to the child's eye level and placing a hand gently on the child's hand or forearm
- Putting your arm around the shoulder of a person who needs comfort
- Taking a child's hand and leading him / her to an activity
- Holding hands for safety when changing locations
- Shaking a person's hand in greeting
- Holding a child gently by the hand or shoulder to keep his / her attention as you redirect behavior
- Providing comfort with a wet, warm cloth.

Some examples of **inappropriate touch**:

- Kissing a child or coaxing them into kissing you
- Extended cuddling
- Tickling
- Piggy-back rides
- Having others sit on your lap (except for babies / young toddlers)
- Touching anyone in any area normally covered by a bathing suit (except changing an infant's diapers)
- Hand holding, except for the examples listed above
- Stroking a child's hair
- Hugging, where an adult knows or ought to have known that hugging is inappropriate.

Dealing with a participant's inappropriate behavior

The best approach to dealing with inappropriate behavior is thoughtful prevention. If a leader has been adequately prepared for teaching/leading, makes clear statements about expectations, and provides an engaging program, inappropriate behavior will be avoided or reduced. If, however, a child's behavior is unacceptable, these practices must be followed:

- Tell or remind the child what is expected.
- If it is necessary to speak to a child in private, move to a quiet place in view of
- others. Seek supervisory help if needed and if available.
- Keep children from harming themselves or others.
- If necessary, engage another adult to help you remove the child the
- situation, in order to calm down.
- Discipline with children must be limited to talking and time out.
- Provide a 'time-out' space for younger children on one side of the room until they are ready to rejoin the group. The 'time-out' should be no longer than one minute for each year of the child's age.
- Inform the parent / guardian of the problem and work co-operatively with them. They may have good ideas of how to deal with particular situations.

Do not use corporal punishment (such as hitting, spanking or strapping) under any circumstances.

Appendix 9 – Washroom Procedures Info Sheet

Washroom procedures

Every group providing a program for children / youth / vulnerable adults must determine the washroom procedure that will be followed in that program at the time of determining the risk. This is particularly critical with pre-school children and some vulnerable adults who must have help to use the washroom. Here are guidelines:

- Ask parents of pre-school children to take their child to the washroom before class.
- For nursery aged children, diaper changing is to be done only by designated adult personnel and must be conducted within the view of another leader / volunteer. If at all possible, diaper changing should be done by the child's parent or guardian.
- Children under the age of 6 who need to go to the washroom should be accompanied by a leader who escorts the child to the washroom and checks the bathroom for safety. No adult or teen helper is ever to be in a closed washroom or cubicle with a child. If another adult is not available, the adult who accompanies the child should position him / her in plain view at the open door of the washroom. A volunteer or teen helper may stay behind with the remaining children.
- Children aged 6 and over may go to the washroom with a "buddy."
- Male personnel are not to accompany female children to the washroom.
- If there is an emergency bathroom situation, the parent or supervisor should be notified immediately.
- Vulnerable adults may need special bathroom aids: assists bars, and so on. It may be necessary to ensure that cleanliness follows use.

Appendix 10 – Understanding Child Abuse Info Sheet

Understanding Child Abuse

This policy advocates zero tolerance for any form of abuse. This includes abuse that happens to a child by a staff member or volunteer. There is also a need for adults within the organization to be sensitive to incidents of abuse that may be happening in the home or social life of a child.

Any person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is (or may be) in need of protection must report that suspicion to a protective agency or police authority. A volunteer / teacher who hears an allegation of abuse should confide this to the Supervisor within the organization. A Supervisor or Director in the organization should be identified as the contact for reporting all cases.

In order to understand and recognize child abuse, the following definitions and indications of emotional, physical and sexual abuse or neglect are listed.

What is Child Abuse?

The term “child abuse” refers to the violence, mistreatment or neglect that a child or adolescent may experience while in the care of someone they either trust or depend on, such as a parent, sibling, other relative, caregiver or guardian. Abuse may take place anywhere and may occur, for example, within the child’s home or that of someone known to the child. There are many different forms of abuse and a child may be subjected to more than one form:

Physical abuse may consist of just one incident or it may happen repeatedly. It involves a deliberately using force against a child in such a way that the child is either injured or is at risk of being injured. Physical abuse includes beating, hitting, shaking, pushing, choking, biting, burning, kicking or assaulting a child with a weapon. It also includes holding a child under water, or any other dangerous or harmful use of force or restraint.

Sexual abuse and exploitation involves using a child for sexual purposes. Examples of child sexual abuse include fondling, inviting a child to touch or be touched sexually, intercourse, rape, incest, sodomy, exhibitionism, or involving a child in prostitution or pornography.

Neglect is often chronic, and it usually involves repeated incidents. It involves failing to provide what a child needs for his or her physical,

psychological or emotional development and well being. For example, neglect includes failing to provide a dependent child with food, clothing, shelter, cleanliness, medical care or protection from harm.

Emotional abuse involves harming a child's sense of self-worth. It includes acts (or omissions) that result in, or place a child at risk of, serious behavioral, cognitive, emotional, or mental health problems. For example, emotional abuse may include aggressive verbal threats, social isolation, intimidation, exploitation, or routinely making unreasonable demands. It also includes terrorizing a child, or exposing them to family violence.

An abuser may use a number of different tactics to gain access to a child, exert power and control over them, and prevent them from telling anyone about the abuse or seeking support. A child who is being abused is usually in a position of dependence on the person who is abusing them. Abuse is a misuse of power and a violation of trust. The abuse may happen once or it may occur in a repeated and escalating pattern over a period of months or years. The abuse may change form over time.

Appendix 11 - Guide for Interviewing

Interviewing a New Recruit

The interview may be either formal or informal, using questions like these:

- Tell us about yourself. What attracted you to our organization?
- Tell us about your experience working with [children, youth or vulnerable adults].
- Why do you want to assume this position?
- This position requires [List requirements]. Will you be able to meet these requirements?

During the interview, discuss the policy, the orientation session, and the training you offer to all employees.

Explain that, as part of your organization's commitment to ensuring a safe and nurturing environment, you would like to speak to two references who they have known for at least a year.

Thank the and promise another visit or a phone call in the near future. After the interview, call the references provided and ask questions such as the ones suggested below.

If your committee believes that the new recruit is a suitable candidate for a teaching / volunteer position, call him/her with the good news and arrange orientation and training times.

Group Interview with Experienced Leaders

Leaders who have been involved in program leadership for many years can be invited to participate in a group interview. This can take the form of coffee and a snack and should be framed as a way for the organization to support the leader in his/her program. Each person should be asked to respond to questions like these:

- What originally motivated you to become a program leader?
- What motivates you to continue in your role as program leader?
- In the years that you have been a leader, what has given you most satisfaction?
- What do you consider to be the most challenging or difficult thing about being a leader?
- What are your hopes and dreams for the people you lead?

Following Up on References

It is important to speak to at least two references provided by the applicant. References are extremely helpful and must be requested with all new recruits, both paid and volunteer. Even if members of the committee know a person well, they may not have seen him / her interact

with others at work, with children at play, in a teaching / leading capacity. Even if written references are provided, follow up with a phone call. Inform the reference of the nature of the position. Ask his / her opinion about the person's suitability in this situation. Listen to tone, attitude, and any hesitancy as well as to the words the reference uses. Contact at least two references.

Sample Reference Check Form

Person's name for which references are checked: _____

Person contacted: _____ Phone: _____

Contacted by: _____

Date: _____ Person who contacted reference: _____

Introduce yourself and state the purpose of your call. Ask if they have a few minutes to answer some questions.

1. How long have you known [person's name]?
2. In what capacity do you know him/her?
3. How well do you feel you know [person's name]?
4. Could you briefly describe the character and personality of [person's name]?
5. Have you ever been in a position to work with him/her? If so, what was your impression?
6. What gifts, talents and abilities would this person offer to [Insert your organization name here]?
7. Are you aware of any factors or circumstances involving this person that would bring into question his/her
8. ability to perform [position applied for]?
9. Would you, without reservation, recommend this person for [position applied for]?

"Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions for us. We are working hard to provide a safe environment for all who participate and all who offer leadership in our organization."

Appendix 12 - Dealing with Reports of Abuse:

There should be a separate policy in place to deal with reports or allegations regarding the abuse of children.

When a child, youth, or vulnerable adult is upset or distressed about a situation, he / she may turn to a trusted adult for support and advice. Often, though, they may be hesitant and shy about discussing what has happened. Feelings of guilt or shame are common. The volunteer / leader should help the child / youth / vulnerable adult feel safe and understand that they can talk about what happened. A vulnerable adult, disabled or confined, may not be able to tell anyone, so volunteers / leaders or visitors need to be sensitive and aware of any change in appearance / emotion.

A listening adult should be supportive and pay attention to what is said. Be cautious about asking questions. Asking questions can invalidate future statements to police or child welfare authorities and can cause a case to be dismissed in court. Accept the child / youth / vulnerable adult's story; do not dispute it. Investigating the incident is the responsibility of the protection agency or police. Although it may be difficult, be calm, supportive and helpful.

It is important not to make promises that you cannot keep, such as promising to stop the abuse, punish or remove the offender. Do not promise not to report the incident to the authorities. If you have inadvertently promised to keep what the child / youth / vulnerable adult says confidential, tell him / her that you must tell someone who can help you both.

Note: Any person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is, or may be in need of protection must report the suspicion to a protective agency or police authority. A teacher/volunteer who hears an allegation of abuse should confide this to the leader of the organization or designated member of the executive board of the organization.

Reporting to a Protection Agency:

If the person has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need for protection, the person must promptly report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to a children's aid society or other appropriate protection agency.

Professionals or officials must report any suspicion that a child is or has been in need of protection, where such a suspicion arises from information revealed in the course of his or her professional or official duties. By the way of example, in Ontario, professionals who fail to report a

suspicion of abuse may be fined up to \$1,000, according to provincial standards.

Information Needed by a Protection Agency:

When one calls a protection agency, that person should prepare notes on why he / she is calling.

- Ask for an intake screener.
- Give your name and location, or you may remain anonymous.
- State that you are making a report regarding a person you believe to be in need of protection.
- Give your relationship to the person and / or family
- Indicate what you heard from the child, or what you observed.
- Offer facts such as dates, descriptions of the child and identifying facts about people who were involved.
- Share knowledge of other agency or community involvement if known.
- Provide any relevant background information.

Procedure if Contacted by a Protection Agency:

1. Any request from a child protection worker (see photo ID or badge to verify identity) should normally be made in person. The worker will want to speak with the person filing the alleged abuse report and usually to the person to whom the child / youth spoke. If the matter is urgent and those investigating cannot do a personal interview, the investigator may telephone you from his / her office.
2. The child protection agent should identify themselves and provide their business contact phone number. Record the workers first and last name.
 - Do not give any information at this time. The investigator will explain the process to follow and what information he / she is seeking
 - It is your responsibility to verify that this is indeed a child protection agent. Simply say, "I need to move to another phone. May I phone you back in 30 seconds?" Move to a phone where you can ensure confidentiality.
 - When you return the call, provide the necessary information.
 - Ask what is to happen next. This is critical as a court order may be warranted and restraining order put in place. The organization should be aware of this. Details do not need to be given. Ask when

the organization can expect a final report on the case if further information will be required.

- Make clear written notes about what you reported, date, time, phone number and name of investigator. Place in a confidential, locked, metal file cabinet.

Reporting to the Insurance Carrier

Any allegation of abuse, no matter how minor, should be reported immediately to your organization's insurance company. The prompt reporting of incidents is extremely important, because it allows your insurer to intervene and help manage the situation.

Organizational Response to a Report of Abuse:

Disclosure of an incident of alleged abuse is an emotionally charged experience. When an individual discloses that he / she is a victim of alleged abuse, it is important to:

- Assure him / her that he / she will be listened to and be provided with support throughout the process
- Take the allegations seriously
- Keep emotions in check; when disbelief or horror is shown, it may result in the individual becoming withdrawn or unwilling to share the experience with you
- "Listen more, talk less"
- Remind him / her that he / she is in no way at fault for the abuse
- Affirm that it is always appropriate to tell someone the he / she has been abused
- Remind him / her that your first priority is his / her protection
- Reassure him / her that ongoing care will be provided for him / her and his / her family
- Provide support to him / her; give reassurance that he / she has done the right thing in reporting this incident
- Report the incident to a designated senior authority within the organization

Do Not:

- Promise him / her that you will not tell anyone; some secrets should not be kept secret; assure the individual that this information is to be restricted to those who need to be advised.
- Prejudge the situation
- Take an adversarial approach, or defend the alleged perpetrator by making comments like, "I can't believe they did that."

Response to the Media:

If it is deemed essential to respond to media, a designated individual will be the spokesperson for the organization. A sample response could be as follows.

"All allegations of abuse or harassment are taken seriously. The protection of children is a priority of Kinder College Early Learning Centre. In accordance with civil law, an allegation of abuse has been reported to Toronto Children's Aid Society".

Appendix 13 - Legal and Insurance Considerations

Most forms of abuse are punishable under sections of the Criminal Code of Canada. If abuse is proven in a court of law, criminal punishment will usually be imposed on the perpetrator. When this happens, an organization may find itself drawn into a civil suit for damages if it failed to exercise due diligence. An organization can be held liable for institutional abuse in the following ways:

- **Vicarious Liability:** This is a form of no-fault liability that can attach to an organization even if the organization did not know about the incident of abuse, and even if adequate prevention policies were followed. In the past, Canadian courts have held that, even when organizations have little or no control over the harmful acts of an employee or volunteer, they must bear some of the responsibility for having afforded perpetrators a “job-created opportunity” to commit them.
- **Direct Negligence:** If abuse occurs because an organization has failed to meet an expected level of competence, it may find itself liable for direct negligence. This might occur if an organization has failed to adequately screen its employees, if it has retained an employee after becoming aware that they pose a threat to children or vulnerable adults, or if it has neglected to ensure that employees in sensitive positions are properly trained and supervised.
- **Breach of Fiduciary Duty:** This is liability that can attach to an organization if it is known that an implied or direct understanding of trust was broken. For example, it is generally understood that an organization will protect and care for children, so if the organization’s policy leads to a child not being cared for, that understanding of trust is broken and this kind of liability may follow.

Where abuse is proven, a court may award three types of damages. These damages are often assessed against organizations that have been deemed vicariously liable, rather than against the perpetrators themselves, because organizations typically represent a more adequate source of funds. Generally, an organization’s insurance coverage will protect only the interests of the insured organization – it will not protect the perpetrator of the abuse.

- **Pecuniary or “Special” Damages** – These are amounts awarded to the victim for quantifiable monetary losses suffered as a result of abuse. (Example: lost wages)

-
- Non-Pecuniary or “General” Damages – These are amounts awarded to the victim for losses that are not readily quantifiable. (Example: pain and suffering)
 - Punitive Damages – Punitive damages are intended to penalize a perpetrator for blatantly reckless conduct. Punitive damages are not assessed against defendants in criminal cases (where judgments are already considered “punishment”), but they may be awarded in civil litigation. For example, if it is shown that an organization outright refused to implement screening procedures, and abuse occurs as a result, a court may apply a punitive amount to the total award. Most insurance policies **do not** provide coverage for punitive damages, as this would be against the public interest.

Document Retention and Reporting Considerations:

Any allegation of abuse, no matter how minor, should be reported **immediately** to your organization’s insurance company. The prompt reporting of incidents is extremely important, because it allows your insurer to intervene and help manage the situation. Retained screening and training records can be vital toward this end. Because there is virtually no statute of limitations of many forms of abuse, legal proceedings for misconduct are often brought many years after an incident was alleged to have taken place. If adequate documentation (regarding both screening and training procedures, and any allegations / incident details) is not provided, an insurer may face serious difficulty defending the interests of the organization. Documentation plays an important role in substantiating a complaint, and one of the few effective legal defenses available is to prove that adequate preventative guidelines were in place at the time that the alleged incident took place.

If abuse is alleged in an environment within an organization's purview, the organization may be found legally liable. Insurance coverage does not negate the liability, but may provide important financial coverage for legal defense and / or settlement costs, should the organization be confronted with legal action. Implementing the following guidelines will increase the likelihood that your insurer will provide liability coverage for various forms of physical and sexual abuse:

- Clear definitions for all forms of abuse so that everyone, including volunteers, understands the requirements and boundaries.
- Recruitment procedures to screen unacceptable candidates.
- A clearly defined “Covenant of Care: for employees and volunteers

-
- Training and coaching procedures to ensure understanding of what is considered to be abuse and how to prevent occurrences and allegations
 - Monitoring and evaluation procedures
 - Communication and feedback procedures
 - Procedures to screen employees and adult volunteers, such as:
 - Completion of application forms
 - Written statements of commitment to safety and procedures
 - Interview conducted by at least two interviewers
 - Completed reference checks
 - Police Records Checks/Volunteer Screening Checks
 - Approval followed by orientation and probation.