

SUSTAINING THE TRUST OF OUR COMMUNITIES

Church of St. John the Evangelist
Port Hope

September 2009

Objectives

- Purpose
- Policy
- Vulnerable Populations
- Screening Steps
- Risk Assessment
- St. John's Positions & Risks
- Reduce the Risks
- Screening Standards
- Sexual Misconduct
- Sexual Offenders
- Screening Coordinator
- Case Studies

Purpose

- Responsible Ministry: Screening in Faith initiative launched by Diocese of Toronto in February 2003
- Helps parishes ensure their places of ministry are safe and healthy, especially for children and vulnerable adults who come to them in trust
- Ensures that those we place in positions of power and trust are selected, trained and supported so that their ministry may be life giving
- Ensures our Christian values are consistent with the legal concept of “duty of care”

Policy

- Applies to all lay and ordained people under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Toronto that by virtue of their ministry or work are in positions of trust
- Must be implemented in all parishes, ministries or other organizations which:
 - are funded, in whole or in part, by the Diocese of Toronto;
 - function on behalf of the church (whether on or off its premises); and/or
 - operate on church premises
- Establishes minimum standards for the screening of staff and volunteers
- Non-compliance could jeopardize insurance coverage and/or could also result in disciplinary proceedings

Vulnerable Persons

- Includes children, youth, some of the elderly, hospital patients, the mentally and physically disabled
- May include otherwise healthy adults who become vulnerable because of personal circumstances; e.g., grieving the death of a loved one, experiencing job loss or career difficulties, facing illness in themselves or others, etc.

Screening Steps

- Steps 1 & 2: List all ministry activities and positions and all duties and responsibilities for each activity or position
- Steps 3 & 4: Assess and reduce the risk for potential harm
- Steps 5 & 6: Assign appropriate screening standards for each position and finalize the ministry descriptions
- Steps 7 & 8: Establish appropriate training and supervision and apply screening standards
- Steps 9 & 10: Make a selection decision based on the screening information and evaluate and enforce the screening standards

Risk Assessment

- Low Risk Ministries: duties and responsibilities do not permit a person to be alone with a child or vulnerable adult, or do not permit access to financial resources or confidential information; e.g., bulletin folder, greeter, reader

Risk Assessment

- Medium Risk Ministries: duties and responsibilities permit few chances for a person to be alone with a child or vulnerable adult or permit some access to moderate amounts of financial resources or confidential information; e.g., adult Bible study leader, advisory board member, team collection counter, team nursing home visitor

Risk Assessment

- High Risk Ministries: duties and responsibilities permit opportunities for a person to be alone with a child or vulnerable adult, permit access to significant amounts of financial resources or sensitive and confidential information, and permit the establishment of long-term relationships of trust. All residential or off-site ministries with children or vulnerable adults are always ranked high; e.g., church musician, churchwarden, clergy, home visitor, most parish employees (i.e., organist), server instructor, Sunday school teacher, youth leader

St. John's Positions & Risks

■ Volunteers

- Advisory Board - Medium
- Auditor - Low
- Bible Study Leader - Medium
- Bulletin Folder - Low
- Camp (VBS) Leader - High
- Chalice Bearer - Low
- Chancel Guild: President, Treasurer - Medium; Members - Low
- Choir: Treasurer - Medium; Members - Low
- Christmas Story (Director) - High

St. John's Positions & Risks

- Volunteers - continued
 - Churchwarden - High
 - Coffee Fellowship - Low
 - Deanery Council Representative - Low
 - Flower Convener - Low
 - Greeter - Low
 - Home Visitor - High
 - Kids Club Coordinator and Teachers - High
 - Lay Communion Visitor - High
 - Lay Reader - Low

St. John's Positions & Risks

- Volunteers - continued
 - Librarian - Low
 - Men's Club (President/Treasurer) - High
 - Newsletter Editor - Low
 - Outreach Coordinator - Low
 - Parish Guild (Quilting) - Low
 - Property Committee (Chair) - Medium
 - Readers - Low
 - Screening/Parish Volunteer Coordinator - High

St. John's Positions & Risks

- Volunteers - continued
 - Service Club: President/Treasurer - Medium;
 - Members - Low
 - Service Teams - Low
 - Sidespersons - Medium
 - Synod Delegate - Medium
 - Treasure Trove - Medium
 - Tribunal - Low
 - Trinity Group (President, Treasurer) - Medium
 - Youth Leader - High

St. John's Positions & Risks

- Staff
 - Caretaker - High
 - Clergy - High
 - Organist and Choir Director - High
 - Associate Organist - Low
 - Parish Administrator and Treasurer - High
 - Sexton - High

Reduce the Risk

- Change the size of the group being ministered to, the number of leaders required, the location and visibility of the ministry, the level of supervision, and/or the degree of authority associated with the position
- Always treat personal information in a confidential, respectful, and sensitive manner regardless of how or why the information has been collected
- Always handle the church's finances, including collections, in an accountable, confidential, and secure manner

Screening Standards

- Low Risk Ministries: training and ongoing supervision recommended
- Medium Risk Ministries: requires interview, training, ongoing supervision, and attendance at a sexual misconduct policy training session at the beginning of the ministry and every three years thereafter
- High Risk Ministries: as per Medium Risk Ministries plus a police record check, renewable every three years, if applicable, obtained through Total Security Management Services Inc. must be submitted to the Diocesan Human Resources Department
- For more information, browse the Diocese's Screening web pages at:
<http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/index.asp?navid=135>

Sexual Misconduct

- Sexual Harassment: vexatious comments or conduct that is known, or ought reasonably to be known, as unwelcome
- Sexual Exploitation: taking advantage of the vulnerability of an adult where there is a fiduciary or pastoral relationship
- Sexual Assault: includes sexual offences as defined by the Criminal Code of Canada and sexual abuse of children as defined in the Child and Family Services Act of Ontario
- For more information, browse the Diocese's Sexual Misconduct web pages at:
<http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/index.asp?navid=464>

Sexual Offenders

- Persons who have been found in a criminal proceeding to have committed sexual abuse of a child shall under no circumstances be given duties where they may be in contact with children
- All reasonable suspicions of sexual offence against children and vulnerable adults are reported to the police, Children's Aid Society and the Canon Pastor (appointed by the Bishop to assist parishes with sexual abuse allegations)
- The Canon Pastor is the Venerable Judy Walton (Contact her via the Diocese of Toronto 416-363-6021)
- For more information, see web page link on previous slide

Screening Coordinator

- Acting on behalf of the Incumbent and churchwardens, ensures that Responsible Ministry: Screening in Faith policy is implemented including:
 - all ministry activities and positions are assessed, screening standards are assigned, and position descriptions are developed and maintained;
 - reduce the risk in each position, where possible, especially for all high risk positions
 - all assigned screening standards are applied
 - inform, prepare and support ministry leaders for their role, where applicable, including informing them of appropriate training opportunities
 - set up and maintain an appropriate information, storage and retrieval system for ministry positions
 - copies of Screening Checklists and police record checks for all high risk ministry positions are sent into the Diocesan Centre