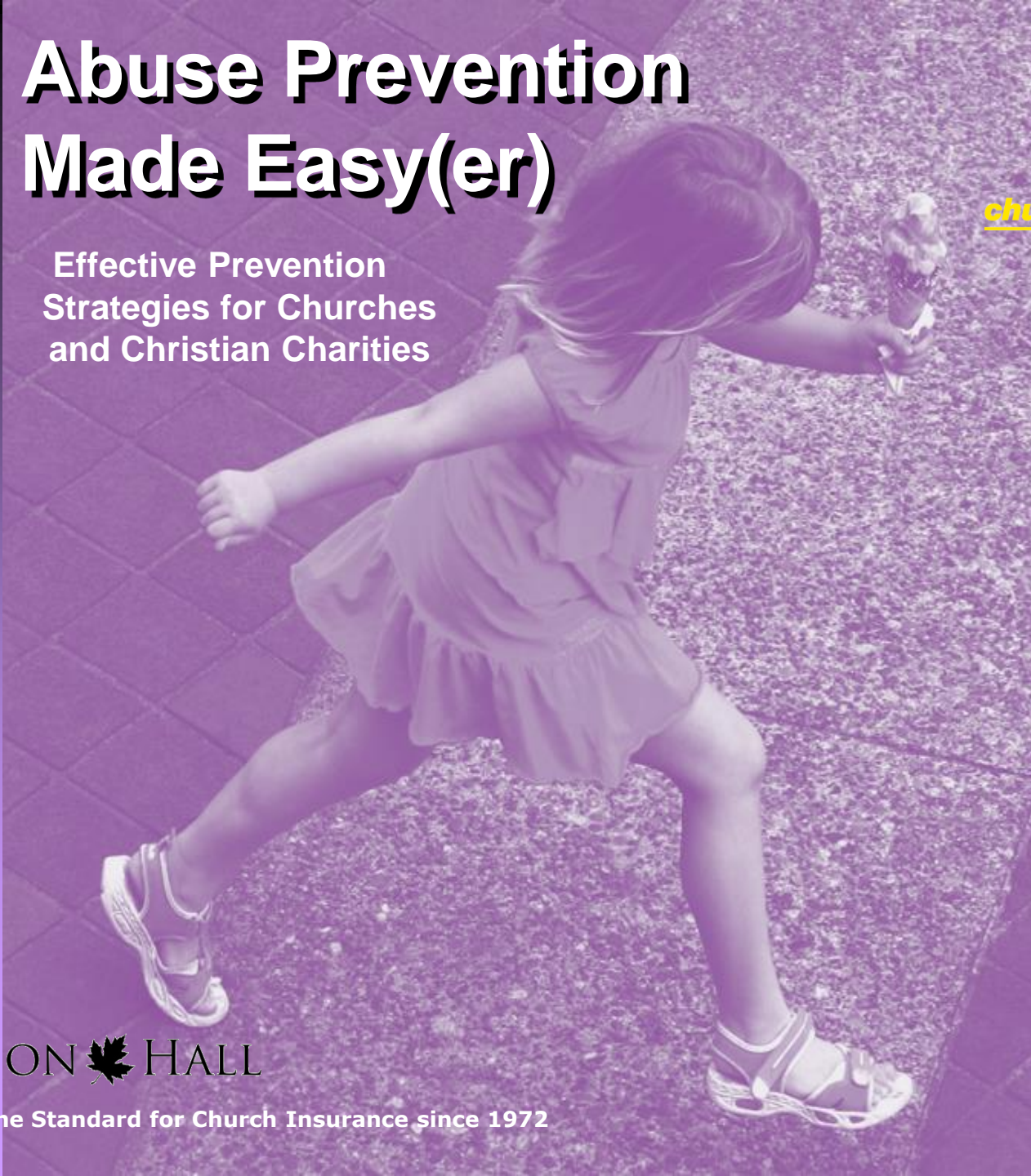


Abuse Prevention Made Easy(er)

Effective Prevention
Strategies for Churches
and Christian Charities

church protection  *plus*



ROBERTSON  HALL

Setting the Standard for Church Insurance since 1972

Background ...

church protection



Physical and sexual abuse remains the # 1 risk for organizations and institutions entrusted with the care and safety of vulnerable persons, including children, teenagers and vulnerable adults.

Sadly, we are no longer shocked by daily stories in the media uncovering instances of abuse committed against children while in the care of boys' and girls' organizations, sports associations, day cares, schools, campgrounds, churches, orphanages, shelters and group homes.

Background

church protection



Christian ministries who do not screen may unintentionally be making themselves easy targets by providing pedophiles or those with serious sexual or violent criminal records with unrestricted access to the children in their care.

A lack of proper procedures may also place pastors, staff and volunteer workers unnecessarily at risk for false allegations.

Physical and sexual abuse prevention is the highest legal duty owed by the leaders of any organization that runs programs, ministries and events for minors and vulnerable adults; with potential for personal legal liability against the directors.

Actual and alleged abuse ... what cost?



- Innocent victims
- Emotional, psychological and spiritual trauma for a lifetime
- Effects on families and community
- Reputations of churches, charities and ministries
- Substantial civil damages against organizations, leaders and individuals
- Destruction of personal reputations, careers and relationships due to false allegations

The Impact of Child Sexual Abuse

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plus



Spiritual Crisis

Financial Costs

Litigation

Victimization of
Children

Media Coverage

Congregational
Disunity

Damaged Families

Shattered Trust





Unfortunately, we are now aware of over 70 cases of documented abuse involving individual or multiple victims at churches within evangelical Christian circles in Canada...48 of these have occurred in smaller congregations or at churches in rural communities!”

- Abuse Prevention Newsletter, June 2017

But....



Abuse prevention is onerous!

We're just a volunteer organization!

We trust our volunteers!

It's so expensive!

It's unspiritual and legalistic!

We've never had an abuse claim!



We get it – Your organization reaches and serves
Vulnerable People – ***it's what you do!***

It's why you exist and we are thankful for what you do –
organizations and ministries like yours that fulfill Christ's
purpose to reach the world through your testimony,
dedication, compassion and faithful service.



We know that abuse prevention measures including procedures such as criminal record checks can be an ongoing challenge for charities whose purpose is to help the most vulnerable persons in society – children, youth and vulnerable adults.

In a perfect world, we could trust everyone! But as we are all painfully aware, it is not a perfect world and big part of the reason churches and Christian ministries exist is to help make it better.

Safe care of the vulnerable must be a primary focus of our witness and testimony as Christians to the communities we serve and seek to reach!



What does scripture have to say about protection and the vulnerable?

“Love ... always protects” – I Corinthians 13: 4-7

“It would be better if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea, than he should cause one of these little ones to stumble” – Luke 17: 1-2



What are our society's legal requirements and standards of justice?

“(Is) it unfair to fix liability without fault on non-profit organizations performing needed services on behalf of the community as a whole?”

It is difficult not to be sympathetic to this plea. Churches and aid societies undertake to care for society's most needy. They do work few others would, and they do it in a selfless, generous manner ... It is unjust, the defendant argues, that they be made to pay damages when, through no legal fault of their own, an unscrupulous employee or volunteer abuses his position with one of the wards. There is, however, another perspective to be considered; that of the innocent child who was the victim of the abuse. From this perspective, the defendant's institution, however meritorious, put the victim in the intimate care of (the abuser) and in a very real sense enhanced the risk of his being abused ... the institution should bear legal responsibility. It may also deter other incidents of sexual abuse by motivating charitable organizations entrusted with the care of children to take not only such precautions as the law of negligence requires, but all possible precautions to ensure that their children are not sexually abused.”

- Chief Justice Beverley McLachlan, Supreme Court of Canada – An excerpt from the majority opinion in *Bazley v Curry* 1999.



What do Christian leaders say about the care of children in ministry?

“Our ability to reach people is directly related to how well we care for their children.”

“I urge all Christian leader to take Paul’s advice to the Corinthians – *For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord, but also in the eyes of man.* Christian ministries must be a model for the world in how we handle the potential for abuse.”

“Trust in God ... screen all others!”

Good News About Christian Ministries and Abuse Prevention



- Churches and Christian charities have come a long way in implementing effective abuse prevention plans to protect the children, youth and vulnerable adults in their care; and protecting their workers from false allegations

Among our client organizations across Canada, the percentage of churches who have implemented formal prevention plans has increased from less than 10% in 1996, to over 80% in 2017.

Many leaders now use their prevention plans as another means of promoting their organization programs and premises as a “safe place” in their community.

- Christian Charities that have “safe place” plans provide a strong witness and a positive Christian testimony, attracting non-church families, children and youth into their ministries, programs and events.



So how do we make Abuse Prevention Easy(er)?



Remember!

The amount of work involved is proportional to the size of your operations, ministries and programs – small congregations and organizations usually have much less screening to do!

Unlike a generation ago, there are now lots of great abuse prevention resources available to Christian ministry leaders, including sample protection plans, application forms, waivers, pocket guides for workers and third party screening services that specialize in not-for-profits.

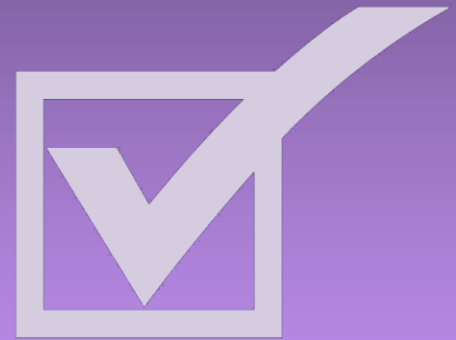
When the task of implementing and maintaining a prevention plan is shared among the leaders from all departments (i.e. Sunday school, nursery, boys and girls clubs, youth groups and vulnerable seniors ministries) the load is much lighter.

Both ministry personnel and board members need to buy in!

church protection



Abuse Prevention Plan Checklist





7-Point Checklist

- A Statement of Policy
- Defining Abuse
- Screening
- Operational Procedures
- Safe Premises
- Training Workers
- Responding To Abuse



Screening



Screening all children's and youth ministry workers who have care or supervision of minors and vulnerable adults.

Screening should also apply to personnel who have management authority and power over other staff with respect to career advancement and performance review

Insurers specializing in liability and employment practices coverage have already seen an increase in claims and potential claims since the rise of the #Me Too Movement. Christian workplaces are not immune to sexual harassment and assault.

Screening



The following staff and volunteers should be subject to mandatory screening:

- All staff including paid and unpaid ministers and lay pastors
- All volunteers working with children, youth and vulnerable adults/seniors
- All board members, elders, deacons, trustees, directors and officers
- Designated monitors and care staff
- Refer to the “**Who Should We Screen**” chart contained on Page 8 of our Abuse Prevention Newsletter handout



Screening

Effective screening for these individuals includes the following procedures:

- ☐ Targeted recruitment of personnel
- ☐ Employee and volunteer applications including ministry agreements and release for background references and criminal record checks
- ☐ Personal Interview
- ☐ Background reference checks (minimum 2) for new workers
- ☐ Criminal Record Checks for all new workers 16 and over, prior to eligibility. Initial checks must be original copies, viewed within 60 days of issuance.

Criminal Record Checks: Review



- ◆ A CPIC is a “name-based” check (i.e. based on full legal name and date of birth for applicant) of the National Repository of Criminal Records that is updated with input from municipal, provincial and federal police jurisdictions across Canada
- ◆ A VSV is an enhanced version of a Criminal Record Check that includes:
 - ✓ Search of Canadian Police Information Centre database (CPIC)
 - ✓ Scan of the “pardoned” sexual offender database (approx. 15,000 individuals)
 - ✓ Search of local police indicies including reports and incidents of domestic abuse

Criminal Record Checks: Review

church protection



Current RCMP protocol for accessing criminal record checks

- Complies with federal privacy act and legislation
- Vulnerable Sector Verification (i.e. VSV) requires individual requesting the check to provide police with letter from sponsoring organization confirming they are working in a position of trust with minors or vulnerable adults
- Restrictions on 3rd Party criminal record check providers (e.g. private companies can access a CPIC but not a VSV)
- Fingerprinting required in some cases to verify identity
- Three levels criminal history available to law enforcement officers including Criminal Name Index, Criminal Record Synopsis and Criminal Records II, along with the VSV
- Rules for keeping, sharing and purging of young offender records are more restrictive than adult records

Two Possible Responses to a Criminal Record Inquiry

church protection



1) “No criminal record identified. Only verifiable by fingerprinting”

This response means no criminal record, but police will not verify 100% without fingerprinting

2) “There may or may not be a criminal record in existence. Only verifiable by fingerprinting”

This response means that the applicant’s name is associated with a criminal conviction which can only be confirmed by fingerprinting to avoid cases of mistaken identity



church protection **plus**

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK OPTIONS

INITIAL SCREENING	RE-CHECKS
Under 18 Years Old CPIC (Police Services)	Under 18 Years Old CPIC (Police Services)
Adults born January 1, 1986 or later CPIC (Police Services) <i>or</i> EPIC (SterlingBackcheck)	Adults born January 1, 1986 or later CPIC (Police Services) <i>or</i> EPIC (SterlingBackcheck)
Adults born before January 1, 1986 VSV (Police Services) <i>See "Who Needs A VSV?"</i>	Adults born before January 1, 1986 (If initial VSV is on file) CPIC (Police Services) <i>or</i> EPIC (SterlingBackcheck)



THERE IS NO NEED TO DO ANOTHER VSV "IF"

The volunteer or employee has been continuously working for your organization since an original VSV was done. Just a CPIC or EPIC re-check is required.

If there has been a gap in the volunteer or employee serving with your organization, but a VSV was completed since January 1, 2012 (or within the past five (5) years). Just a CPIC or EPIC check is required when they begin working with your organization again.

✓ A new (or existing) worker can provide proof that either:

- A VSV has been completed within the past 5 years (or since January 1, 2012), or
- A VSV has been completed previously, with proof of continuous volunteer service,*

Then just a CPIC or EPIC is required when they commence working with your organization.

* Proof should be in the form of an original VSV clearance or a Vulnerable Sector Verification letter robertsonhall.com/pdf/VSV_Letter.pdf

Other resources available on our website...

- 📄 A sample *Church Commendation Letter* recommending volunteers to your parachurch or camp organization is also on our website robertsonhall.com/pdf/Home_Commendation_Letter.pdf
- 📄 A *Sample Request From Agency* letter to present to police services when a VSV is required robertsonhall.com/pdf/Sample_Request_Letter.pdf
- 📄 Criminal Record Checks: Who Should We Screen? robertsonhall.com/pdf/Who_Should_We_Screen.pdf



INITIAL Checks available through EPIC *for any adult applicant born January 1, 1986 or later*

RE-CHECKS available through EPIC for *any worker*, if re-checked every five (5) years, or less

There are two components to the EPIC check:

1. A search of the convictions in the National Repository of Criminal Records
2. A search of locally-held police information across Canada, including pending charges and "persons of interest"

With SterlingBackCheck EPIC screening, you can set up your own convenient account and invite staff and volunteers to go on-line and have their checks done individually. You'll be notified when they have finished the process.

Some of the benefits include:

- ✓ Convenient on-line process with no travel to police station
- ✓ Paperless, secure and forgery proof
- ✓ Comprehensive, consistent national process
- ✓ Permanent electronic storage of results
- ✓ Checks can be shared with multiple organizations
- ✓ No finger printing required



NOTE: Robertson Hall provides this convenient access and preferred pricing as a benefit for its client organizations. It is not privy to any results and receives no financial consideration from your ordering of criminal record checks.

Third Party Screening Services



Robertson Hall also has a variety of practical excerpts available on the subject of abuse prevention, including:

- 7-Point Abuse Prevention Checklist
- Top Ten FAQ About Abuse Prevention
- Abuse Case Studies Claims Examples, to help with your training
- What is a Position of Trust? Who is a Vulnerable Person?
- Sample Vulnerable Sector Screening Request Form
- Criminal Record Checks: Who Do We Screen?
- Sign-In/Sign-Out Procedures
- Good/Better/Best Guide to Off Premises Activities and Transportation
- The Ten Commandments of Youth Abuse Prevention
- Resource Directory, including sample prevention plans, trainers and third party screening providers

Go to www.robertsonhall.com and click on Church Protection Plus, Resources, Abuse Prevention Newsletter



Abuse Prevention Plan Checklist

The following seven (7) items are generally acknowledged by experts as essential elements in establishing an effective formal abuse prevention plan and are required by your insurance company in order to qualify for abuse coverage:

1 STATEMENT OF POLICY formally approved, implemented and periodically reviewed under the direction of your board members. It should confirm your organization's commitment to providing a safe environment for children and declare zero tolerance for abuse, harassment or neglect committed by any children's or youth ministry worker, including employees, members and volunteers. This policy should be expressed in terms of your organization's statement of faith, scriptural standards and the duty of care owed to children in our society. The declared purpose of the policy should be clearly expressed; that is, preventing harm to the children, youth and vulnerable adults in your programs and protecting your staff and volunteers from false or wrongful allegations.

2 DEFINITION of abuse and related issues so that all of your workers will clearly understand and be able to identify unacceptable behavior, including:

- ☐ PHYSICAL ABUSE
- ☐ SEXUAL ABUSE
- ☐ EMOTIONAL ABUSE
- ☐ CHILD NEGLECT
- ☐ HARASSMENT
- ☐ IMPROPER TOUCHING/DISCIPLINE

3 SCREENING all children's and youth ministry workers to a degree that is appropriate with their interaction with minors in your organization's care. Screening should also apply to personnel who have management authority and power over other staff with respect to career advancement and performance review in order to discourage harassment. The following staff and volunteers must be subject to mandatory screening:

- All staff including paid and unpaid ministers and lay pastors
- All volunteers working with children, youth and vulnerable adults/seniors
- All board members, elders, deacons, trustees, directors and officers
- Designated monitors and care staff (refer to the "Who Should We Screen?" chart on Page Nine)

Effective screening for these individuals must include the following procedures:

- ☐ Targeted recruitment of personnel
- ☐ Employee and volunteer applications including ministry agreements and release for background references and criminal record checks
- ☐ Personal Interview
- ☐ Background reference checks
- ☐ Criminal Record Checks for all new workers 16 and over, prior to eligibility, including:

CPIC - Name-based Criminal Record Check done through the Canadian Police Information Centre

VSV - Vulnerable Sector Verification (also referred to as Screening, Scan or Check) including a query of Local Police Indices and National Pardoned Sex Offenders Database

Note: Checks must be original copies viewed within 60 days of issuance by police services

- ☐ Criminal Record Re-Checks for existing workers
- Camping ministries and short-term missions organizations – Annually – See Options
- Schools, daycares and nurseries – Every three (3) years or less
- Churches and all other organizations – Every five (5) years or less

Note: Re-checks may be done by means of a CPIC and VSV or CPIC and FIP (refer to Page Eight and Nine)

- ☐ Minimum waiting period of 6 months or more for new volunteers regularly attending church services or volunteering with organization prior to eligibility to work with children or youth (refer to FAQ/Question #8)

4 OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES should be outlined in a written manual summarizing your organization's specific guidelines for preventing abuse and harassment, including:

- ☐ "Team" approach to children's/youth ministries
- ☐ Volunteers under age 18 may assist only under qualified adult supervision

- ☐ Off-premises contact during sponsored programs should be subject to signed parental permission and a "two-adult" rule at all times (refer to Good/Better/Best Guidelines on Page Nine)

- ☐ Prohibiting corporal punishment
- ☐ Appropriate Youth Communication and Social Networking (refer to Page Eleven)
- ☐ Addressing health, safety and sanitation issues for infants and toddlers in nursery programs, including protocol for illnesses, infections and emergencies, cleanliness of change tables, washrooms and floor surfaces and safety of toys, cribs, etc.

- ☐ Avoiding activities that could easily lead to allegations of abuse or harassment, such as individual photography of children, unsupervised internet access, vehicle transportation by workers alone with unrelated youth. Sleepovers, camping or other overnight events should only be allowed when all supervisors and volunteers are fully screened.

- ☐ Having all workers sign a ministry covenant confirming they have read, understood and are willing to comply with policies and procedures
- ☐ Keeping documentation on file indefinitely for all workers (refer to FAQ/Question #9)
- ☐ Obtaining signed parental consent and permission for off-premises or overnight events
- ☐ Sufficient qualified supervision of children outside and in public places (e.g. parks, playgrounds, libraries, amusement parks, etc.) at all times
- ☐ Incident reporting forms must be completed for all cases of injury or suspected abuse
- ☐ Internal or external audit to ensure Abuse Prevention Plan compliance (refer to Page Twelve)

5 PREMISES modifications or alterations to your facilities which can assist in preventing and discouraging abuse incidents, including:

- ☐ Windows in classroom doors and/or open door policy for Sunday School and boys' and girls' clubs
- ☐ Designated monitors circulating periodically from room to room for

surveillance and to protect against false allegations

- ☐ Controlled access/entry and signing infants and pre-Grade 1 age children in and out of sponsored activities
- ☐ Adequate lighting inside and outside of building where children's activities take place
- ☐ Appropriate design of washroom and shower facilities and/or appropriate supervision of washroom breaks (refer to FAQ/Question #3)
- ☐ Locking rooms and closets when not in use during children's programs

6 TRAINING for all staff members and volunteers who regularly work with children and youth to assist in the prevention of abuse through the following means:

- ☐ Initial formal training, including in-house video and DVD presentations (or online training) and distribution of handbooks or pocket guides containing a summary of prevention policies and procedures for all workers for their reference
- ☐ Educating workers about their legal obligation to report suspected abuse and to recognize and identify the signs and symptoms of abuse and molestation

- ☐ Follow up with refresher courses or sessions that emphasize the Operation Procedures, Premises and Reporting requirements (refer to Items 4, 5 and 7 in the 7-Point Checklist). Refresher training can be done at any time including during monthly staff, teacher or volunteer worker meetings. Many churches conduct an annual review of their prevention plan for workers at the beginning of their children's and youth program year in September or October.
- ☐ Reviewing the ongoing suitability of existing workers including updated criminal record checks (refer to Section 3 Screening for frequency of re-checks)

7 RESPONDING to all allegations or complaints of abuse in an appropriate manner, including the appointment of individual(s) designated to respond to allegations in the following manner:

- ☐ Completing incident reporting forms for suspected abuse or injury
- ☐ Satisfying statutory legal obligations by reporting all cases of suspected abuse to police authorities and/or child protective agencies
- ☐ Consulting a lawyer for advice

- ☐ Without admitting legal liability, express your organization's concern to the complainant and their families and assure them of your commitment in assisting the investigation
- ☐ Assuring confidentiality for the benefit of both the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator
- ☐ Immediately suspending the alleged perpetrator from children's or youth ministry duties without presuming guilt, pending outcome of police investigation
- ☐ Avoiding public statements to individuals, the media or from the pulpit, without obtaining legal counsel
- ☐ Contacting your insurance agent or broker to report the incident in order to satisfy the statutory conditions of your liability policy and to avoid jeopardizing your legal defense and coverage response

Don't try to triage suspected abuse incidents. Just as you don't wait to call the fire department when a building is on fire, you also don't wait to report abuse. The responsibility to report suspected abuse is the law in Canada!

ABUSE PREVENTION DECLARATION FORMS

If you're a client organization policyholder of Robertson Hall Insurance and haven't already done so, please complete an Abuse Prevention Declaration form in order to qualify for the most comprehensive Abuse Liability coverage for Christian Charities in Canada, including the following coverage features:

- \$5,000,000 General Liability for Abuse, Molestation and Harassment Claims
- Vicarious Liability Protection for Organization and Leaders
- Occurrence Form / No Deductible
- No Restriction on Stacking of Policy Limits
- Civil Defense Costs covered in excess of Policy Limits
- Covers all Civil Damages Insurable by Law, with no exclusions

- Criminal Defense Cost Reimbursement for Wrongful Accusation
- No Fault Therapy and Counselling Costs for Victims
- Legal Advice / Media Relations Expense for Suspected Abuse

If you don't have an Abuse Prevention Declaration form on file, please request one today from Robertson Hall. We have Declaration form versions available for:

- Churches and Charitable Organizations
- Education Organizations, including Day Cares, Schools, Colleges, etc.
- Camp and Retreat Organizations

CHURCH / CHARITY

CAMP

SCHOOL

Newsletter

church protection

plus

Abuse Prevention

FAQ THE TOP TEN LIST OF MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#10 HOW DO WE GET STARTED?

Unlike a decade ago, there are now many abuse prevention resources available to churches and para-church ministries. These include sample prevention plans that can be modified for your organization's particular programs and premises; training materials such as DVD's, reference guides and training manuals; sample screening applications and incident reporting forms; and even experienced qualified consultants who can assist in reviewing your organization's operations, implementing an effective prevention plan, and educating and training your children's ministry workers. Please check the Resource Directory on Page Three of this newsletter or with your denominational head office and other churches and organizations in your community, for practical and valuable tools to assist in establishing your own prevention plan.

#9 HOW LONG SHOULD OUR ORGANIZATION STORE SENSITIVE DOCUMENTS?

Federal and provincial privacy legislation (such as PIPEDA) aimed at regulating the collection, use and storage of financial, health and other sensitive personal information has created a great deal of confusion about the length of time that the contents of files for paid and unpaid personnel should be kept. One of the key purposes of screening personnel is to demonstrate that the organization and its leaders have demonstrated reasonable due diligence when placing individuals in positions of trust. Since sexual and physical abuse claims and lawsuits often only arise many years, or even decades, after alleged incidents take place, the only way organizations can defend themselves effectively in a future lawsuit is with documentation. Therefore these records should be kept indefinitely!

However, to satisfy the provisions of privacy legislation and the reasonable and prudent expectations of common law, we recommend the following:

1. Disclose the reasons for collecting and storing this information on each application.
2. Protect sensitive material in a locked and secure location to ensure confidentiality and to avoid misplacing or allowing the wrongful abstraction of documents.

#8 WHY DO WE HAVE TO WAIT? WE NEED WORKERS NOW

Child abuse is a crime of trust and opportunity. Pedophiles are looking for the softest target in their community in order to gain easy access to children, whether it be a public place, a school, a boys' or girls' club, a sports association or a church. Organizations that are chronically short of volunteers to run their programs, and who give the green light to new applicants without careful consideration only serve to place the children in their care at greater risk. In many cases the most effective practical screening procedure to weed out unacceptable volunteer candidates is to impose a minimum waiting period of 6 to 12 months before eligibility to serve in a position of

trust. Individuals who are relatively unknown to the organization, who do not have a track record and/or who may have only recently moved from another community, should never have immediate access to children. A minimum waiting period allows the organization and its leaders to observe these individuals in other volunteer roles, membership and regular attendance for an extended period of time. Exceptions should only ever be made in circumstances where the volunteer candidate has transferred from another church of the same denomination in which they have been long-time members and children's ministry workers in good standing (with background references from at least three individuals, including one from their previous minister or children's ministry director). New and returning counsellors, supervisors or volunteers in seasonal Christian ministries such as summer camping programs and short-term missions should only be approved if they are fully screened and can provide at least three background references, including at least one from their current home church minister, or the executive director at an organization where they previously served in children's ministry and to whom they have been well known for a period of at least one year.

#7 WE DON'T WORK WITH KIDS, WHY BOTHER WITH A PLAN?

The answer to this question really depends on another fundamental question: is your organization comfortable without any insurance protection for liability suits arising out of incidents of actual or alleged abuse, molestation and harassment committed by staff, volunteers, other participants or complete strangers, whether on your premises or during sponsored off-premises events? Even organizations that do not offer any programs or care for children and youth may still be vulnerable to abuse and harassment allegations related to counselling and other forms of spiritual and physical care for minors or vulnerable adults. In order to qualify for insurance protection for abuse, molestation and harassment, it will be necessary for your leaders to implement abuse prevention procedures that are appropriate to the level of your ministries, programs and activities.

#6 DO WE NEED A SIGN-IN/SIGN-OUT PROCEDURE?

If you have children in your programs who are pre-Grade 1 age (SK, JK or Daycare) it is important to have a signing in and out policy, just as with elementary schools and daycares. Parents bring their kids to these institutions directly, not just leaving them on the premises unattended. At the end of the day these children are not released into the general population of students and often have separate dismissal times. Younger children should only ever be released by a parent directly to the teacher or supervisor and your organization should keep a record of this in a sign-in log initiated by the parent or guardian. A sign-in/sign-out procedure for this age group provides you with formal confirmation that children are released to the right person, especially in this day and age of child custody issues, assuring safety for the children and protection for your organization and its volunteers.

Abuse Prevention

#5 WHAT ABOUT VULNERABLE ADULTS IN OUR CARE?

While children and youth (minors) are the main focus of abuse prevention, there are other persons who may be vulnerable to physical or sexual abuse, harassment and neglect. They include adults with diminished physical, mental or emotional capacities, seniors with assisted living or special needs, and other adults in your care receiving counselling and support services because they are going through marital, bereavement, depression or other life crisis situations. If your organization offers supervised programs or special care for vulnerable adults, it is important that staff, counsellors and volunteers in positions of trust be fully screened and adequately supervised.



School Age Children requiring assistance should be accompanied to the door of the washroom, which the worker should open to make sure no one is hanging around in the washroom and then wait outside the door in the hallway in case they are called for help or hear anything suspicious. Helpers under the age of 16 should not be authorized to take children to the washroom unaccompanied by a screened adult worker. Older children may go on washroom breaks using the buddy system unaccompanied by a supervisor if your hallways and washrooms are checked regularly (every 15 to 20 minutes) by a screened hall monitor who is trained regarding what to look for in terms of suspicious activity, including strangers (adults or teenagers) lingering in hallways or washrooms.

THE CANADA EVIDENCE ACT
Section 6.3 (1) The definitions in this subsection apply in this section.

"Children" means persons who are less than 18 years of age

"Vulnerable Persons" means persons who, because of their age, a disability or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent,

- (a) are in a position of dependence on others; or
- (b) are otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by persons in a position of authority or trust relative to them.

#4 YOUTH MENTORING SERVES A REAL NEED IN OUR COMMUNITY... IS IT POSSIBLE TO RUN THIS TYPE OF PROGRAM SAFELY, EFFECTIVELY AND WITHOUT UNNECESSARILY EXPOSING OUR VOLUNTEER MENTORS TO FALSE ALLEGATIONS?

Encouraging long-term, one-on-one relationships which provide positive adult role models can make all the difference in the world for a young person with a difficult family background. However, mentoring programs modeled after Big Brothers and Big Sisters are also one of the most challenging activities to manage and monitor from an abuse prevention standpoint. One-on-one youth mentoring should generally be avoided as this type of program is well beyond the capabilities of most organizations. This type of program should only be contemplated if you have the resources and professional staffing to ensure the comprehensive initial and ongoing screening of volunteers and the professional assessment of mentoring relationships through a system of parental consent, checks and balances, spot checks, review of detailed notes for each meeting and regular follow-up interviews with each child, parent and mentor.

#3 WHAT IS AN APPROPRIATE WASHROOM PROTOCOL FOR CHILDREN IN OUR CARE?

Although every organization, program and premises is unique and may require a procedure appropriate to the circumstance, we can recommend the following general protocol. Pre-Grade One Age Children should only be taken to the washroom or infants have their diapers changed by a parent or guardian. If not possible, then the screened worker should do so in the presence of at least one other unrelated screened worker.

GOOD	BETTER	BEST
Off-premises Activities and Events		
At least 2 screened adults, with the total number of screened supervisors to minors in a ratio appropriate to the type of activity, number and age of participants. Unscreened helpers or other unscreened adults can assist with activities, but only if they have no interaction with minors.	All adults and youth supervisors must be fully screened and a minimum two-adult rule maintained at all times. Signed parental permission and informed consent must be obtained for each participant prior to participation in any higher risk off-premises activity or event (i.e. short-term missions, travel, sports, recreation, concerts).	All adults and youth supervisors must be fully screened and a minimum two-adult rule maintained at all times. Signed parental permission and informed consent must be obtained for each participant prior to participation in any off-premises activity or event.
Vehicle Transportation		
A minimum of 2 screened adult supervisors gg 1 screened adult plus at least 2 other minors in the vehicle at all times. Note: Having only one screened adult transporting minors should be avoided as much as possible, as it opens the worker up to false allegations of abuse, molestation or harassment.	A minimum of 2 unrelated screened adult supervisors in the vehicle with minors at all times. Driving records checked (no at-fault accidents and not more than 2 minor traffic violations in the past three years) and minimum 21 years of age. Note: Minimum 25 years of age is recommended, however exceptions can be considered for safe, mature staff members or ministry leaders.	A minimum of 2 unrelated screened adult supervisors in the vehicle with minors at all times. Driving records checked (no at-fault accidents and not more than 2 minor traffic violations in the past three years) and minimum 25 years of age.

SEVEN



Join / Services

Services

Plan to Protect® is the highest STANDARD of abuse prevention and vulnerable sector protection. Our customized tools, training, policies and procedures help leaders and their organizations meet that standard.



Our products and services include:

- The best-selling Plan to Protect® Manual
- Customized policies and procedures;
- Risk assessments;
- Policy audits;
- Access to a vast network of member organizations;
- Certification training for trainers and administrators;
- On-site facilitators for Orientation and Refresher training;
- On-line training for abuse prevention;
- Speaker's Bureau providing excellent special guest speakers; and Consulting services;
- Criminal record checks;
- Additional resources to help your organization to meet your goals.



Members of Plan to Protect® enjoy wide access to our products and services.

The Plan to Protect® team is committed to providing the tools, training and momentum to help you achieve excellence in your programming. We can help make planning and implementation of abuse prevention a manageable task.

Whether you are looking for assistance writing abuse policies, a facilitator for on-site training, Criminal Record Checks, contract help implementing abuse prevention, or a spokesperson to challenge your Board of Directors, Plan to Protect® is your one-stop shop for abuse prevention.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." - Margaret Mead

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church protection

plus

Other Resources

Helpful Tips

church protection



Aside from Screening, here are some other tips to keep in mind with respect to your Premises, Operations and Training...

Use Jesus' example and go two by two, including your ministry to children, youth and vulnerable adults

Remember to screen a few extra people, to create an extra pool of safe volunteers, to fill in as necessary from time to time.

For example if a part-time volunteer is fully screened, they can go into the nursery if there's an unexpected abundance of children at the last minute, or for a summer day camp or special event during the year. Even if they're not regular weekly kid's church workers, you will find volunteers more willing to commit if they don't have to do it weekly!

Helpful Tips continued...

church protection



Use the same rule of thumb with your nursery as in a day care setting. This will help your volunteers to understand the reason for the measures you're putting in place, including screened supervision, proper intake and release of children, restricting contagious children and regular sanitation of change tables, cribs, other surfaces and toys. It is what people expect in society whether in a day care, school or youth organization and no parent should be left with the feeling that a church or Christian charity should maintain lower standards.

Keep a clipboard for your attendance sheet if you have a small nursery. Include the names of regulars on the sheet with a attendance schedule/history over many weeks. That way, parents can initial infants, toddlers and pre-Grade 1 children in and out easily on the same form. At the end of the event, if workers are left with one or two children who haven't been picked up, they can take the clipboard with the kids and find the parents to sign them out. Sample recommended attendance forms are available.



Helpful Tips continued...

With respect to special events/off site events, remember that your organization is held to the same standard as activities and field trips taking place in a school setting. Examples of good procedures include parental permission forms for off-site events and cautioning volunteers to avoid driving alone with kids to reduce the possibility of false allegations (i.e. school teachers and daycare workers never put themselves in that position in this day and age!)

Make good use of the Training Resources available for your workers, including the sample prevention plans, pocket guides, onsite training and convenient on-line training from organizations like *Plan to Protect*.



Helpful Tips continued...

With respect to Social Media and teenagers, ask this question:

If this young person was my son or daughter, how would I like the church and leaders of the youth group to communicate with him or her?

We have a Social Media article called “Keeping Online and Out of Court” to assist you in identifying practical steps to help keep your organization’s communications (emails, blogs and tweets!), website content, streaming media and wireless networks appropriate, safe and secure. It also contains important information about Privacy Breaches and Cyber Liability.



ABUSE PREVENTION DECLARATION FORMS

If you're a client organization policyholder of Robertson Hall Insurance and haven't already done so, please complete an Abuse Prevention Declaration form in order to qualify for the most comprehensive Abuse Liability coverage for Christian Charities in Canada, including the following coverage features:



- \$5,000,000 General Liability for Abuse, Molestation and Harassment Claims
- Vicarious Liability Protection for Organization and Leaders
- Occurrence Form / No Deductible
- No Restriction on Stacking of Policy Limits
- Civil Defense Costs covered in excess of Policy Limits
- Covers all Civil Damages Insurable by Law, with no exclusions
- Criminal Defense Cost Reimbursement for Wrongful Accusation
- No Fault Therapy and Counselling Costs for Victims
- Legal Advice / Media Relations Expense for Suspected Abuse



If you don't have an Abuse Prevention Declaration form on file, please request one today from Robertson Hall. We have Declaration form versions available for:

- Churches and Charitable Organizations
- Education Organizations, including Day Cares, Schools, Colleges, etc.
- Camp and Retreat Organizations

CHURCH / CHARITY

ROBERTSON HALL INSURANCE ABUSE PREVENTION DECLARATION CHURCHES/CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

NAME OF ORGANIZATION/CORPORATION: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

POLICY NUMBER: C/P/ _____

Please check the box for boxed that best describes your organization's operation and activities:

<input type="checkbox"/> Church Congregation	<input type="checkbox"/> Christian Camp/Retreat Centre	<input type="checkbox"/> Short-term Missions/Retreat
<input type="checkbox"/> Day Care/Nursery	<input type="checkbox"/> Counseling Centre	<input type="checkbox"/> Long-term Missions/Retreat
<input type="checkbox"/> Christian School	<input type="checkbox"/> Drop-in Centre	<input type="checkbox"/> Evangelistic Ministry
<input type="checkbox"/> Bible College/Seminary	<input type="checkbox"/> Crisis Pregnancy Centre	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

DECLARATION

A. Our organization has implemented a formal written abuse prevention plan to protect the children, youth and vulnerable adults in our care. Yes ☐ No ☐

B. Our formal prevention plan contains the following measures:

1. A written **Statement of Policy** confirming our organization's commitment to:

- a) A safe environment by preventing harm to those in our care, and
- b) Protecting our children's and youth ministry workers from false allegations, and
- c) Declaring zero tolerance for abuse or neglect.

Yes ☐ No ☐

2. Our Prevention plan assists workers by **Defining** physical, sexual and emotional abuse, child neglect, inappropriate touching and improper discipline. Yes ☐ No ☐

3. We have mandatory **Screening** measures for all workers (including all employees, board members and volunteers) serving in any position involving work with children, youth or vulnerable adults, including the following:

Yes ☐ No ☐

(PLEASE CHECK IF YES)	EMPLOYEES/STAFF	VOLUNTEERS
Signed Employee/Volunteer Application (including ministry agreement and release for references/criminal record checks)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Criminal Record Checks (i.e. C.P.I.C. and V.S.V.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ New Applicants - checked prior to eligibility		
➤ Existing Workers - re-checked annually		
➤ Camps and Short-Term Missions Organizations - Annually		
➤ Schools, Day Cares and Nurseries - Every Three (3) years, or less		
➤ Churches and All Other Organizations - Every Five (5) years, or less		
Note: For Existing Workers being re-checked or for New Applicants under 25 years of age, a C.P.I.C. and F.I.P. can be done in lieu of a C.P.I.C. and V.S.V.		
* C.P.I.C. means national-based Police Check through Canadian Police Information Centre		
* V.S.V. means Vulnerable Sector Verification (Screening)		
* F.I.P. means Firearms Interest Police query (available through Third Party Providers)		
Background Reference Checks (minimum 2) for new Employees/Volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal Interviews for new Employees/Volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minimum 6-month waiting period for Volunteers new to your organization prior to eligibility	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: Refer to Abuse Prevention Newsletter (October 2011) (Editorial for T-Point Checklist, FAQ and Criminal Record Checks section for full details regarding Screening requirements and options.

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CAMP

ROBERTSON HALL INSURANCE ABUSE PREVENTION DECLARATION CAMP AND RETREAT ORGANIZATIONS

NAME OF ORGANIZATION/CORPORATION: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

POLICY NUMBER: C/P/ _____

Please check the box for boxed that best describes your organization's operation and activities:

☐ Day Camp ☐ Overnight Camp ☐ Retreat Centre

DECLARATION

A. Our organization has implemented a formal written abuse prevention plan to protect the children, youth and vulnerable adults in our care. Yes ☐ No ☐

B. Our formal prevention plan contains the following measures:

1. A written **Statement of Policy** confirming our organization's commitment to:

- a) A safe environment by preventing harm to those in our care, and
- b) Protecting our staff and volunteer workers from false allegations, and
- c) Declaring zero tolerance for abuse or neglect.

Yes ☐ No ☐

2. Our Prevention plan assists workers by **Defining** physical, sexual and emotional abuse, child neglect, inappropriate touching and improper discipline. Yes ☐ No ☐

3. We have mandatory **Screening** measures for all workers (including all employees, board members, camp counsellors, seasonal workers and volunteers) serving in any position involving work with children, youth and vulnerable adults, including the following:

Yes ☐ No ☐

(PLEASE CHECK IF YES)	FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES	SEASONAL WORKERS
Signed Employee/Volunteer Application (including release for references/criminal record checks)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Criminal Record Checks (i.e. C.P.I.C. and V.S.V.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ New Applicants - checked prior to serving		
➤ Existing Workers - re-checked annually		
(Existing Returning Workers may be re-checked every five (5) years, or less, but only if they provide an annual Church Commendation Letter from the minister or church leader at the home church above they regularly attend or from the program director at an organization above they regularly volunteer)		
Note: For Existing Workers being re-checked or for New Applicants under 25 years of age, a C.P.I.C. and F.I.P. can be done in lieu of a C.P.I.C. and V.S.V.		
* C.P.I.C. means national-based Police Check through Canadian Police Information Centre		
* V.S.V. means Vulnerable Sector Verification (Screening)		
* F.I.P. means Firearms Interest Police query (available through Third Party Providers)		
Background Reference Checks (minimum 2) documented for new Employees/Volunteers including one Background Reference from the minister or church leader at the home church where they regularly attend, or from the program director at an organization where they regularly volunteer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal Interviews documented for new Employees/Volunteers (in person or via telephone)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

NOTE: Seasonal Workers include camp counsellors, leaders in training, lifeguards, kitchen staff, nurses, program leaders and any other paid staff or volunteers who have supervision of minors and vulnerable adults, who interact with minors and vulnerable adults or who are working on the camp premises during programs involving minors and vulnerable adults.

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SCHOOL

ROBERTSON HALL INSURANCE ABUSE PREVENTION DECLARATION EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

NAME OF ORGANIZATION/CORPORATION: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

POLICY NUMBER: C/P/ _____

Please check the box for boxed that best describes your organization's operation and activities:

☐ Licensed Daycare/Nursery ☐ Secondary School (60 to 612) ☐ Bible College/Seminary

☐ Elementary School (UK to 60) ☐ Adult Bible School ☐ Accredited College/University

DECLARATION

A. Our organization has implemented a formal written abuse prevention plan to protect the children, students and vulnerable adults in our care. Yes ☐ No ☐

B. Our formal prevention plan contains the following measures:

1. A written **Statement of Policy** confirming our organization's commitment to:

- a) A safe environment by preventing harm to those in our care, and
- b) Protecting our staff and volunteer workers from false allegations, and
- c) Declaring zero tolerance for abuse or neglect.

Yes ☐ No ☐

2. Our Prevention plan assists workers by **Defining** physical, sexual and emotional abuse, child neglect, inappropriate touching and improper discipline. Yes ☐ No ☐

3. We have mandatory **Screening** measures for all workers (including all employees, board members and volunteers) serving in any position involving work with children, students or vulnerable adults, including the following:

Yes ☐ No ☐

(PLEASE CHECK IF YES)	EMPLOYEES	VOLUNTEERS
Signed Employee/Volunteer Application (including release for references/criminal record checks)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Criminal Record Checks (i.e. C.P.I.C. and V.S.V.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ New Applicants - checked prior to eligibility		
➤ Existing Workers - re-checked every three (3) years, or less		
Note: For Existing Workers being re-checked or for New Applicants under 25 years of age, a C.P.I.C. and F.I.P. can be done in lieu of a C.P.I.C. and V.S.V.		
* C.P.I.C. means national-based Police Check through Canadian Police Information Centre		
* V.S.V. means Vulnerable Sector Verification (Screening)		
* F.I.P. means Firearms Interest Police query (available through Third Party Providers)		
Background Reference Checks (minimum 2) for new Employees/Volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal Interviews for new Employees/Volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minimum 6-month waiting period for Volunteers new to your organization, prior to eligibility	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>

NOTE: For "Student Teachers" only a Criminal Record Check from an accredited college is required. For "Parent Volunteers" who have completed all other screening for their child's admission, only a Criminal Record Check is required.

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In Summary

The story of all of those who play a role as leaders and workers in the prevention of abuse should always be... no story!

- No story filling the media or internet about abuse taking place at our church or charity
- No story about innocent children, teenagers or vulnerable adults being victimized
- No story of directors and organizations being defendants in a multi-million dollar lawsuit for lack of due diligence
- No story of our workers being falsely accused
- No story about our organization and leaders losing our reputation, good will and support in the communities we serve.

We hope this presentation assists you in making abuse prevention effective and easy(er)... so that your organization's testimony will be many more years of doing good work for the communities you serve... with no abuse stories!

Thank you!

church protection  **plus**

Disclaimer: The information contained in this seminar has been compiled by Robertson Hall Insurance Inc. to assist churches, charitable organizations and their leaders in better understanding insurance and legal issues and to help in reducing or eliminating foreseeable and preventable risks associated with their ministries, programs, operations and events. However, your organization may have insurance requirements and risks that are unique to your premises or operations which are not addressed by this seminar and should be specifically reviewed with the appropriate qualified professional. This publication may not be reproduced in any way without the written consent of Robertson Hall Insurances Inc.

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