



YMCA Protecting Children and Vulnerable Persons Policy

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YMCA PROTECTING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PERSONS POLICY

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YMCA PROTECTING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PERSONS POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION

The Sault Ste. Marie YMCA is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children in its care and vulnerable persons accessing YMCA programs and services. We all share a responsibility to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm. The YMCA recognizes its responsibility to promote safe environments and practices and to protect children and vulnerable persons from abuse and exploitation.

Throughout this policy and procedures, reference is made to “child” or “children” and “vulnerable person(s) or adults”. Refer to Terminology below for definitions for these terms.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

The Sault Ste. Marie YMCA recognizes its responsibility to promote safe practices and to protect children and vulnerable persons from abuse and exploitation.

The YMCA will immediately refer any concerns that a child might be abused or at risk of harm to the Children’s Aid Society of Sault Ste. Marie.

The YMCA will refer any concerns of suspected abuse involving a vulnerable person to the Police Services of Sault Ste. Marie.

To fulfill the above policy statement, the YMCA is committed to ensuring that all staff and volunteers:

- provide safe environments for children and vulnerable persons;
- identify any child who is suffering, or likely to suffer harm, and report concerns to the proper authorities as noted above, and
- adhere to human resource practices described within this policy, including recruiting, screening and training, and provision of an acceptable police records check prior to beginning work.

The **YMCA Protection of Children and Vulnerable Persons Policy** applies to all YMCA staff and volunteers.

3. TERMINOLOGY

The following terms are used in this policy:

Child under provincial child protection legislation is someone who is under 16 years of age.

Child Abuse can be of a physical, emotional or sexual nature, or neglect. It may consist of just one incident or it may happen repeatedly. Vulnerable persons also may be at risk of abuse or neglect. See *Vulnerable Persons - Types of Abuse* below for more information.

A **child** can be subjected to more than one form of abuse:

- **Physical abuse** could result from a parent or person in charge causing physical injury to a child, or failing to adequately supervise a child or from a pattern of neglect of the child.

Examples of physical abuse include beating, slapping, hitting, pushing, throwing, shaking, burning. **A child who is physically abused** may have burns, bite marks, cuts, bruises, or welts in the shape of an object; not want to go home; be afraid of adults; wear inappropriate clothing (e.g. long sleeves on a very hot day).

- **Sexual abuse** happens when a parent or other person in charge sexually molests or uses a child for sexual purposes or knowingly fails to protect a child from sexual abuse.

Examples of sexual abuse include any sexual act between an adult and a child, including intercourse; fondling; exposing a child to adult sexual activity; sexual exploitation through child prostitution or child pornography. **A child who is sexually abused** may have an inappropriate knowledge of sexual acts; be very compliant or extremely aggressive; be afraid of a certain person or a family member; have difficulty walking or sitting.

- **Emotional abuse** occurs when a parent or other person in charge harms a child's sense of self. It includes acts or omissions that result in, or place a child at risk of serious behavioural, cognitive, emotional or mental health problems.

Examples of emotional abuse include yelling at, screaming at, threatening, frightening, or bullying a child; humiliating the child, name-calling, making negative comparisons to others; showing little to no physical affection (such as hugs) or words of affection or praise; saying that everything is the child's fault; withdrawing attention, giving the child the 'cold shoulder'; confinement of a child; or exposing a child to domestic violence, allowing the child to be present during violent behaviour of others, including the physical abuse of others. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse. **A child who is emotionally abused** may show signs of serious anxiety, depression or withdrawal; show self-destructive or aggressive behavior; show delays in physical, emotional or mental development.

- **Neglect** happens when a child's parent or other person in charge fails to provide for basic needs.

Examples of neglect include failing to provide proper food, clothing suitable for the weather, supervision, a home that is clean and safe, medical care as needed; failing to provide emotional support, love and affection. **A child who is neglected** may not wear clothing that's suitable for the weather; be dirty or unbathed; be very hungry; or not be properly supervised.

*Any of the above signs of child abuse noticed by a staff or volunteer must be reported immediately to a child protection authority. See **Appendix A** for child protection authority contact information.*

Duty of Care is a legal principle that identifies the obligations of individuals and organizations to take reasonable measures to care for and protect their participants.

Duty to Report is defined under Section 72 of the Child and Family Services Act, 1990(CFSA) that sets out what must be reported to a child protection authority or agency. A report must be made immediately if a child is or appears to be suffering from abuse or is at *risk of harm*. **Duty to report**

applies to the public, and includes special reporting responsibilities for professionals whose work involves children.

- **Child in need of protection** is defined under Section 72 of the Child and Family Services Act, 1990(CFSA) *as a child who is or who appears to be suffering from abuse, neglect or risk of harm.* Anyone who has *reasonable grounds* to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection must promptly report the suspicion to a child protection authority (e.g. Children's Aid Society - CAS). Refer to Section 6 for Duty to Report procedures.
- **Risk of harm** is the risk that a child is likely to be physically, sexually or emotionally abused or neglected.
- **Reasonable grounds** refer to the information that an average person, using normal and honest judgment, would need in order to decide to report. It is not the person's responsibility to prove or have proof of abuse; investigation is the role of child protection authorities.

Refer to section 6 for more information on 'duty to report' suspected child abuse.

Police records check (PRC) is a search of the records held in the information database of a police agency. It may include a check of national or local and regional police records. Basic types include a Police Criminal Record Check or Police Information Check or Police Vulnerable Sector Check. At the end of the process, a report is issued.

Position of Trust or authority is created when an individual's relationship with someone else has any of the following characteristics: decision-making power; unsupervised access; closeness inherent in the relationship; personal nature of the activity itself.

Staff means salaried, regular, hourly, seasonal, contract and supply staff.

Volunteers include all program volunteers ages 16 years and older. The following volunteers are excluded from this policy: program volunteers under the age of 16, philanthropy and special event volunteers.

Vulnerable person for the purposes of this policy and reporting means a young person 16 or 17 years of age, or an adult at risk. An **adult at risk** is a person aged 18 or over who is, or may be unable to protect themselves from abuse. The vulnerability of an adult is related to how able the adult is to make and exercise their own informed choices free from duress, pressure or undue influence of any sort, and to protect themselves from abuse. Refer to section 7 for examples

Vulnerable persons may be at risk of one or more **types of abuse** including physical abuse or neglect (defined above), or emotional abuse, sexual abuse and financial abuse or exploitation.

- *Emotional abuse* of a vulnerable person is any act which may lessen the sense of identity, dignity or self-worth of a person, such as: confinement; physical and social isolation; verbal assault, harassment, humiliation, or intimidation; denial of information, privacy, visitors; coercion.
- *Sexual abuse* of a vulnerable person is any act involving unwanted touching/activity of a sexual nature, or a situation in which an adult consents or submits to sexual activity because a person in a position of trust or with authority has used that trust/authority to gain that consent. Such acts

include: sexual assault, sexual harassment, any act designed to use the vulnerable person for the perpetrator's sexual gratification.

- *Financial abuse or exploitation* is any act involving the misuse or abuse of funds or assets belonging to a vulnerable person. Examples include obtaining property and funds without the person's knowledge or consent, or by using undue influence; or where a person is not mentally competent, or not acting in the person's best interest.

Alleged, suspected or witnessed abuse of a vulnerable person may constitute a criminal offence and the police should be informed. See section 7 for more information.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Sault Ste. Marie YMCA is committed to promoting safe practices to protect children and vulnerable persons from harm or abuse. While primary responsibility for the protection of children and vulnerable persons from abuse rests with the Children's Aid Society of Sault Ste. Marie, all YMCA staff and volunteers who come into contact with children and vulnerable persons have a duty to help protect them from abuse or risk of abuse.

The responsibility for managing this policy lies with YMCA management. The YMCA has appointed the Manager of Child Care and Children's Services as the designated person responsible for the implementation of the child protection policy and procedures in the association. The CEO will ensure the designated person has necessary resources and support within their official responsibilities to carry out their responsibility for child protection.

4.1 YMCA Board of Directors and Management team is responsible for protecting children and vulnerable persons by:

- Providing oversight of a protection framework that includes establishing policies and procedures, and monitoring;
- Establishing a reporting protocol that complies with provincial child protection legislation;
- Establishing recruitment and screening including police records check procedures;
- Ensuring systems are in place for regular review, reporting and evaluation of effectiveness of child and vulnerable persons protection initiatives;
- Appointing a member of YMCA management team having special responsibility for advancing the objectives of this Policy and child protection legislation.

4.2 YMCA Managers and Supervisors have additional responsibilities for maintaining safe environments in all facilities and program areas by:

- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers have read, understand and signed *the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Persons Policy Acknowledgement (Appendix E)* or master policy sign off form.
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers receive training and ensure re-fresher training in protecting children and vulnerable persons is provided annually;
- Arranging advanced training for staff and volunteers working directly with children;
- Ensuring recruitment, screening including police check/recheck procedures are implemented;

- Ensuring programs are developmentally appropriate and well planned in advance;
- Maintaining physical security and other safeguards to protect children accessing YMCA programs;
- Responding promptly to any complaints, reports or allegations against staff or volunteers.

4.3 YMCA Staff and Volunteers are expected to abide by this Policy that includes:

- Following the Code of Conduct (section 5) for the protection of children and vulnerable persons;
- Participating in mandatory and re-fresher training in protecting children and duty to report;
- Producing acceptable police records/re-check clearance letters;
- Reporting immediately any suspicion of abuse to the appropriate protection agency;
- Notifying their supervisor or staff contact that a report has been made to a child protection authority;
- Contacting police services if a staff or volunteer suspects that a vulnerable person's safety is at risk;
- Helping to maintain a safe environment for the protection of children and vulnerable persons.

5. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PERSONS

In the course of staff or volunteer work at the YMCA, even if not working directly with children, there are times when staff or volunteers will encounter and interact with children and vulnerable persons or adults. The YMCA is committed to treating everyone with respect and dignity, and to helping children grow and develop to their full potential in a safe and caring environment.

Staff and volunteers are required to follow the Code of Conduct that describes good practices and includes practices to be avoided or never sanctioned. The practices outlined below clarify what is and is not acceptable behaviour when working with children and vulnerable persons. By defining what is and is not acceptable behaviour, good practice can be promoted, and the potential for abuse or allegations of abuse minimized.

5.1 Good Practice when interacting with children:

- Treat all children with respect, dignity and fairness.
- Make requests in clear terms geared to the child's level. Offer choices if you can.
- Give encouragement, in words or as a smile.
- Ensure the number of adult staff is appropriate to safely conduct and supervise program activity.
- Involve parents whenever possible and reasonable.
- Ensure that a child is not left alone. Contact the parent or guardian if a child is or appears to be under 10 years old and is without adult supervision.

5.2 Good Practice when interacting with vulnerable persons:

- Treat all people with respect, dignity and fairness.
- Give full consideration to the needs, interests and wishes of vulnerable persons.
- Presume mental capacity and participation in decision-making.
- Respect the privacy of persons.

5.3 Practice to be Avoided or Never Sanctioned/Prohibited:

- When working with a child, avoid being alone or in private or unobserved situations
- Avoid having 'favourites' when working with children. This could lead to resentment and jealousy by other children and could be misinterpreted by others.
- Do not use your size or authority to intimidate.
- Do not make comments of an improper nature.
- Never verbally or emotionally abuse a child or vulnerable person.
- Never physically harm or engage in suggestive touching of a child or vulnerable person.
- Never exploit financially or in any other way a child or vulnerable person.
- Do not interact or relate to children or vulnerable persons outside of YMCA program activity (e.g. avoid weekend visits or babysitting or calling or online chatting, etc.)
- Never invite or allow a child or vulnerable person to visit or stay with you at your home.

Any reports involving breach of the above Code of Conduct is taken seriously and will be dealt with by management. Individuals who violate the Code of Conduct and this Policy are subject to disciplinary or corrective action up to and including termination of employment or volunteer assignment.

6. DUTY TO REPORT PROCEDURE FOR SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

In the event that a child discloses or there are grounds to suspect child abuse, the YMCA will take prompt and immediate action. The YMCA is mandated by provincial law to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities for investigation.

General Procedure:

- a) Staff and volunteers of the YMCA will take allegations of abuse seriously.
- b) The YMCA will ensure that staff and volunteers working with children and vulnerable persons are familiar with their duty to report and the procedure for reporting suspected abuse or neglect of a child.
- c) YMCA staff and volunteers shall follow duty to report suspected abuse procedures. Refer to **Appendix B** for an example of duty to report procedures from the YMCA.
- d) The first priority will be to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk by taking measures as advised by The Children's Aid Society of Sault Ste. Marie. Refer to **Appendix A** for child protection agency contact information.
- e) In the event the reported incident involves an allegation against a staff or volunteer, the procedure for responding to an allegation against the YMCA will be followed. See section 9 below for more information. Refer also to **Appendix D** for an example of response to an allegation procedure from the YMCA.
- f) A report will be completed in accordance with relevant provincial child protection reporting requirements, and the Association will cooperate with any legal authority involved. Refer to **Appendix C** for a sample form to report suspected abuse.
- g) All information related to a disclosure or allegation of abuse will be treated confidentially. Documentation regarding a report to a child protection authority must not be circulated internally nor given to anyone, unless a warrant or subpoena is provided. **Appendix B** includes documentation guidelines from the YMCA.

7. REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE OF A VULNERABLE PERSON

Ontario does not have legislation to protect adults like it does for children, which means there are no adult protection agencies as such. Therefore, it is up to all of us to act.

Anyone who has a reduced capacity to look after their own interests, needs and well-being can be at risk of abuse. For example, an adult with a physical disability or mental health or developmental or intellectual disability, as well as some seniors may be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. Refer to section 3 (terminology) for more information about vulnerable persons and types of abuse. Staff wishing to learn more about persons living with a disability can speak with their supervisor or manager, or refer to any 'Accessibility' resources that may be available from the Association or through YMCA Canada.

As all adults are presumed to have mental capacity to make informed choices about their own safety and how they live their lives, all interventions in respect of vulnerable persons need to take into account their ability to make informed choices about the way they want to live and the risks they want to take.

Alleged, suspected or witnessed abuse of a vulnerable person may constitute a criminal offence and the police should be informed. If a staff or volunteer suspects that a vulnerable person's safety is at risk or in immediate danger, contact the local police services (see contact information in Appendix A), or dial 911 immediately. The police have the ability to check on the person's well-being.

Staff shall use the YMCA Incident Report form to record brief information, indicating the vulnerable person's name, the date the call was made to police services, and program location. In the description, record 'call made to the police regarding suspected abuse of a vulnerable person', then sign and date the incident report form. Forward a copy of the incident report to the CEO.

8. RECRUITING, SCREENING AND TRAINING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

The YMCA offers a range of programs to a variety of age groups including children and vulnerable persons.

Proper screening of potential employees and volunteers is essential for matching people and YMCA roles or positions, for ensuring the quality of YMCA programs, for maintaining safe YMCA environments, and for reducing or eliminating the risk of harm to children and vulnerable persons.

The YMCA maintains comprehensive, clearly communicated recruitment and screening processes that are consistently applied across the Association. A documented recruitment and selection process is in keeping with regulatory requirements relevant to screening including Employment Standards and Eligibility to Work in Canada, Child Protection, Human Rights, Information and Privacy, Youth Criminal Justice, and other legislated requirements.

The following general procedures shall apply when recruiting and screening potential YMCA staff and volunteers. Refer also to the Sault Ste. Marie YMCA Employment Policies and Practices, and to Volunteer Management procedures for more information.

- a) All forms of advertising used to recruit and select staff and volunteers will include a statement that YMCA offers of employment (or volunteer assignment) are contingent upon the successful completion of a police records check.
- b) All applicants will be required to complete an application form (see Appendix F) to obtain relevant details for the position including prior work experience with children or vulnerable persons.
- c) Formal interviews in person or by telephone are conducted, with questions designed to determine suitability for working with children or vulnerable persons for all positions of trust.
- d) A minimum of three professional reference checks will be completed before a staff or volunteer position is offered. Reference checks are conducted to reveal more about the candidate's patterns of job performance, to predict success on the job or volunteer assignment, and to verify the accuracy of the information provided by the candidate through their application and interview responses. If a young candidate with little or no prior work experience, professional/personal references may include coaches, teachers, leadership facilitators, etc. References contacted should be asked to confirm the nature of their relationship to the candidate to indicate they meet the YMCA reference check requirement.
- e) Potential employees and volunteers will be offered positions conditional upon the production of a satisfactory police records check, **vulnerable sector check**, and acceptance of YMCA employment obligations including adhering to YMCA policies that include child protection and duty to report requirements. Potential employees and volunteers under the age of 18 years are not required to complete a police record check.
- f) At the discretion of the department manager AND the CEO, a volunteer or staff may not require a police records check (for example, if a staff is leaving one program area to work in another within the YMCA). Exemptions will be documented with the reason for the exemption and kept in the employee or volunteer's file.
- g) An acceptable police records check (PRC) is obtained for all staff and volunteers before starting training or first day of work. Supervisors shall refer to any additional screening procedures established by the Association.
- h) Supervisors and managers follow a documented process when addressing situations where a positive record has been identified.
- i) During orientation, new staff and volunteers will be made aware of policies regarding the protection of children and vulnerable persons and duty to report suspected abuse, and YMCA code of conduct/behavior expectations. All staff and volunteers shall complete a Policy sign-off form (see Appendix E).
- j) Supervisors shall ensure that mandatory training on child protection is completed within the first 3 to 6 months of employment or volunteer assignment. Re-fresher training will also be completed annually.
- k) All employee and volunteer records (including training records) will be maintained in keeping with information and records management processes, which will include appropriate safeguards to protect highly sensitive, personal information such as police records checks and references.
- l) An ongoing police records re-check process for existing staff is implemented and followed consistently across the Association. Supervisors and managers shall follow police records check screening and re-checking procedures established by the YMCA for all staff and volunteers.

For more information about recruitment, screening and training, please refer to Employment Practices, and Volunteer Management policies and procedures established by the YMCA.

9. MANAGING AN ALLEGATION, COMPLAINT OR CLAIM OF ABUSE AGAINST THE YMCA

In the event of an allegation, complaint or claim of abuse against a staff or volunteer of the YMCA, the following procedures shall apply.

9.1 Reporting an Allegation of Abuse to a Protection Authority

- a) If a staff or volunteer suspects or receives an allegation or complaint of abuse about another YMCA staff, volunteer or student placement, he/she will follow the procedure for reporting an allegation or suspicion of abuse to the appropriate child protection authority. Refer to **Appendix D** for an example from a YMCA of procedures for responding to allegations of abuse against the YMCA.
- b) As soon as a call has been made to a child protection authority, the staff or volunteer will promptly notify their manager that a call has been made involving a suspicion of abuse against a YMCA staff or volunteer. The manager shall immediately notify the senior lead responsible for child protection who will inform appropriate management team members in keeping with the YMCA's escalation protocol. Management will ensure any additional child safety concerns, human resources, insurance (see 9.3 below), and other mandatory reporting requirements are addressed, and that the appropriate follow up steps are implemented once child protection authorities have completed their investigation, in keeping with established YMCA procedures.
- c) In the event of an allegation of abuse of a vulnerable person against a staff, volunteer or student placement, a manager shall be notified immediately by the staff or volunteer suspecting or receiving an allegation of abuse, and the senior manager shall immediately inform management for appropriate handling and response. If the vulnerable person's safety is at risk or in immediate danger, staff shall call the police as outlined in section 7 above.

9.2 Information Management

- a) Staff and volunteers will follow the documentation and information handling procedures required under relevant child protection legislation.
- b) A report will be completed in accordance with relevant provincial child protection reporting requirements, and the YMCA will cooperate to the extent of the law with any legal authority involved. Refer to **Appendix C** for a sample report form.
- c) All information related to disclosure or an allegation of abuse will be treated confidentially. Documentation regarding a report to a child protection authority must not be circulated internally nor given to anyone, unless a warrant or subpoena is provided. See section 5 of **Appendix B** that captures documentation guidelines from a YMCA.
- d) All records related to the allegation or complaint will be retained indefinitely by the YMCA, or until such time as determined by the authorities.

9.3 Insurance

- a) Any allegation or complaint of abuse involving a YMCA staff or volunteer must be reported promptly to the insurer upon becoming aware of the allegation or complaint, in keeping with notice requirements under insurance policies. Providing the insurer with prompt notice protects the YMCA's ability to trigger abuse coverage under their insurance policies, in the event a legal demand or claim arises in the future.
- b) Liability insurance policies should be kept indefinitely by the YMCA, and stored in an accessible and secure location. Retention of insurance policies is important given the historical, long term nature that characterizes abuse claims.

9.4 Crisis Communications

The YMCA shall follow its escalation protocols as part of its proactive emergency response and crisis communication procedures that ensure the following:

- a) Senior managers responsible for responding to escalated or critical incidents understand their role in managing major or crisis events.
- b) Supervisors and staff have easy access to escalation and crisis management policies or protocols.
- c) Orientation includes review of protocols so that new staff and volunteers understand their role in an emergency or crisis situation.
- d) Associations promptly notify YMCA Canada of incidents involving serious injury or death or escalated situations with (potential) media attention.
- e) Organizational learning is incorporated following recovery from an escalated or crisis situation, facilitated by a designated senior lead who also reviews at least annually the effectiveness of the YMCA's escalation and crisis management protocols, for any needed enhancements.

10. STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE YMCA COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PERSONS

The YMCA is committed to an ongoing strategy for the protection of children and vulnerable persons and maintaining safe environments, which includes:

- providing training and education that ensures staff and volunteers know their responsibilities and duty to report;
- monitoring YMCA's effectiveness in its commitment to protecting children and vulnerable persons;
- providing mechanisms for feedback and appropriate response to complaints or disclosures.

10.1 Training and education increases knowledge and awareness of individual and organizational roles in protecting children and vulnerable persons, and ensures the effectiveness of this Policy. Through education and training that includes new staff orientation, mandatory and annual re-fresher training with sign-off requirements, the YMCA fosters awareness among staff and volunteers of their responsibility 'to act' if abuse is suspected.

10.2 Monitoring: The YMCA has implemented a formal monitoring system that includes self-assessments, peer and third party assessments of compliance with policies and procedures for the protection of children and vulnerable persons. Assessments are completed at least annually to identify where further enhancements may be needed to maintain the safety of YMCA program environments.

In addition, managers shall monitor programs regularly to identify any potential barriers and strategies for maintaining safe YMCA environments. Strategies include:

- fostering a culture of safety through safeguards including policies, training, education;
- providing children and vulnerable persons with support and guidance on what to do, and who to contact if feeling uncomfortable or afraid at any time;
- adhering to established employment practices, human resources and volunteer management procedures for recruitment, screening, supervising and training staff and volunteers;

- conducting program area checks including regular building sweeps/tours to monitor bathrooms, locker rooms and any isolated areas;
- maintaining building security through use of central point(s) of entry, sign in/out procedures, restricted access to child care or child minding areas, doors are locked that should be locked, etc.

10.3 Ongoing relevancy: The YMCA through its appointed child protection lead or designate shall review this policy annually to ensure effectiveness and ongoing relevancy given also changing laws and public expectations.

Maintaining safe environments is a team approach. Supervisors and staff can speak with their program or facility manager, their senior manager, or contact the Association lead for child protection for more information.

The Sault Ste. Marie YMCA shall continue to instill a culture of shared accountability and responsibility across the Association for the protection of children and vulnerable persons.

11. CONTACTS AND OTHER RESOURCES

For more information about this policy, staff may speak with their manager or the Association senior lead for child protection. The following sources also provide additional information about child protection:

- **YMCA Canada** - National Child Protection Standard Requirements, child protection training and audit tools;
- Resources available online through **Canadian Centre for Child Protection** at www.protectchildren.ca;
and **Boost Child Abuse Prevention** at www.boostforkids.org.



**APPENDIX A:
CHILD PROTECTION AGENCIES CONTACT INFORMATION**

Child Protection Agency	Phone Number	Website
Children's Aid Society of Sault Ste. Marie	705-949-0162	www.algomacas.org
Out of town Callers-24 hours per day	1-888-414-3571	
Sault Area Hospital Crisis Intervention	705-759-3434 Ext. 3398	www.sah.on.ca
Ministry of Education Child Care Quality Assurance Licensing Branch	705-541-2123	http://www.edu.gov.on.ca

Police Services	Non-Emergency Phone Number
Police Services of Sault Ste. Marie	705-949-6300
Ontario Provincial Police of Sault Ste. Marie	705-945-6833

APPENDIX B DUTY TO REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE PROCEDURE

In the event that a child or someone discloses, or a staff, volunteer or student placement suspects child abuse, the procedures outlined below must be followed. Supervisors shall ensure that staff, program volunteers and student placements are aware of their duty to report suspected child abuse to a Child Protection Agency.

1. If you (supervisor, staff, volunteer, student placement) suspect child abuse:

- You are required to make the call immediately to a child protection agency (e.g. Children's Aid Society - CAS).
- You are not to ask anyone for help in making the decision; you must call.
- You may inform your supervisor or manager of the intention to call CAS, if you need their support to ensure that you have the privacy and staff coverage required to immediately make the call. You may name the child, but no details of the suspicion or disclosure should be discussed with your supervisor or manager.
- If your supervisor or manager is not available, you must proceed with the report to CAS.
- Once you have made the call, notify your onsite or senior manager who will notify (senior YMCA lead for child protection) that a call has been made to a child protection agency.

*** No staff, student, volunteer or member of the Board of Directors shall advise someone not to report suspicions of child abuse, nor try to stop the person from reporting or consulting with the CAS.*

2. Seeking Medical Attention:

If the child has sustained injuries, seek immediate medical attention.

If injury is suspected to have been caused by child abuse or family violence, **do not** inform the parent of the intention to seek medical care for the child until you have spoken with a child protection worker and have been given clear direction to do so.

If you think the child is in immediate danger, **call the Police**. Immediately after calling the police, contact a child protection agency (CAS).

3. Avoid Discussing with a Parent or Guardian

A staff, volunteer or student placement who suspects abuse or family violence is **not** to disclose their suspicion or intention to call a CAS with the parent and/or guardian. Disclosing with the parent or guardian could jeopardize the child or contaminate the investigation. Therefore, **do not** talk with the parent or guardian unless you have been directed to do so by a child protection worker.

After consulting with a CAS and if given permission by CAS official to notify the parent and/or guardian, a supervisor or his/her designate will emphasize to the parent both the concern for the child and legal obligation to Report Suspicion of Abuse.

Remember: A CAS official will guide staff through this process if considered appropriate by CAS to speak with the parent or guardian. *Do not inform the parent or guardian on your own, without first consulting with CAS.*

4. Making the Call:

The call should be made to the CAS for the municipality in which the program is located. See contact information for child protection authorities in *Appendix A*.

If reporting to CAS *after* regular business hours, you will likely be required to leave a message, your name and phone number with an answering service. Indicate if your call is urgent. You will then need to wait to hear back from an after-hours protection worker.

***Leaving a message is not considered a report. You must speak directly to a child protection agency worker.*

If you think the child is in immediate danger, do not wait to be called back – Phone the police.

When placing a call to a child protection agency:

Provide your Full name, your position, our Association name and a number where they can reach you, along with the full details to the best of your knowledge of your suspicion(s). Ask for the name and phone number of the caseworker or manager you spoke with at the child protection agency.

If any further suspicion of abuse or new information with respect to a child occurs, then you must make another report to the child protection agency, regardless of any previous reports.

- **Remember:** The child protection agency provides support. You can call to “consult” for guidance and agency staff will support you through the process. The goal of the YMCA and a child protection agency is to protect all children whose safety must be considered first.

Additional reporting for staff delivering programs to children or vulnerable persons:

If a child care program is located in a school, child care staff shall inform the principal that a call has been made to CAS. In addition, suspected or witnessed abuse at a child care centre is a **Serious Occurrence** reportable within 24 hours to the Ministry. YMCA Child Care staff shall refer to *YMCA Child Care Policy and Procedures Binder located in the Child Care office* for more information about Serious Occurrence reporting.

5. Documentation Guidelines

- a) Documentation must be legible and written by hand by the person who reported the suspected abuse - do not type on a computer. Write with a ballpoint pen, not a marker or felt tip that might smudge or leak.
- b) Be factual, based on your observations. Do not include or document your personal thoughts about how it might have happened. Include direct observations and indicators to support your statements. You may include what someone else has told you, as long as it is relevant and you have recorded who told you the information.
- c) **Description Details** – Use the *Suspected Child Abuse Reporting Form* (Appendix C). The child abuse reporting form outlines what you need to include when documenting suspected child abuse and your call to a child protection authority.
***If a reporting form is unavailable or you are unable to access a child abuse reporting form at any time, it is very important that you still make a report by calling CAS immediately. Then document the report by hand, using a blank sheet of paper and place the report in a sealed envelope per e) and f) below.*
- d) Do not make a rough copy and then re-write ‘in good’. Your original document is required. If you make a mistake, don’t use whiteout. Simply cross it out with a single line.

- e) Make sure documentation is complete. Sign and date the report. Place the report in a sealed envelope marked CONFIDENTIAL. Write the child's name on the front, and sign and date the envelope.
- f) Give the sealed envelope to your manager who will ensure the envelope is promptly delivered to the CEO for safeguarding (secure storage) and retention indefinitely.
- g) In addition to the original documentation, staff shall use the YMCA Incident Report form to record **very brief** information, indicating the child's name, the program location, and date the call was made to CAS. In the description, record 'call made to a child protection agency'. If applicable, also record 'abuse allegation against a staff/volunteer' in the event of an allegation of abuse against a staff or volunteer. Then sign and date the incident report form. Forward a copy of the incident report to your program manager and to Risk Management in keeping with YMCA incident reporting procedures.

***Documentation with respect to suspected child abuse is not to be released to anyone unless there is a warrant, subpoena or court order to submit records or attend court. Any request to release of records is to be forwarded to the senior lead for child protection who will determine appropriate action in consultation with legal counsel as needed.*

6. If a staff, student placement or volunteer is suspected of abuse

If a staff/student placement/volunteer suspects another staff/student/volunteer of abusing a child or children who participate in the program, he/she will inform their onsite manager or general manager of the intention to immediately call a child protection agency.

If it is a parent who is making the allegation against a staff/student/volunteer, staff shall inform the parent of his/her Duty to Report suspected child abuse to a child protection agency. The supervisor also has a responsibility to call the children protection agency. If the person suspected of abuse is the supervisor, the parent should make the call to a child protection agency.

A staff/student/volunteer making the allegation will complete required documentation as outlined in 5 above.

The person who is suspected of abusing a child will not be told by anyone about the suspicion, or the intention to report. Only under the direction and consultation with a child protection worker is the information to be disclosed by a manager with the alleged person.

The manager will notify their senior manager that a call has been placed to a child protection agency. The manager will notify the senior lead for child protection who will notify designated members of management of the allegation. Management will determine further action steps for appropriate handling and response.

7. Confidentiality

All information related to disclosure or an allegation of abuse will be treated confidentially to the extent possible.



APPENDIX C
YMCA SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE REPORTING FORM

Date and Time Documentation Completed: _____

Child's Name: _____ Male Female

Child's Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Child's Address: _____

Child's Phone Number: _____

Name of Parent(s)/Guardian: _____

Describe fully the incident, situation, statement or behavioural and/or physical indications of abuse including the dates and times. Describe fully, using the child's words, the interaction between the child and the person to whom the child disclosed.

Multiple horizontal lines for text entry.

Describe fully the physical condition of the child, including injuries, burns, welts, and/or signs of illness. Where appropriate, circle bruises or other injuries on the attached body chart.

Multiple horizontal lines for text entry.

Describe fully the emotional condition of the child, including any behavioural problems, and the child's response upon disclosure. Are there any noticeable changes in the child's behaviour patterns?

Multiple horizontal lines for text entry.

If known, describe fully the risks of further harm to the child, including the access of the alleged abuser to the child.

Multiple horizontal lines for text entry.

Describe fully the action taken on behalf of the child, including any advice/instructions from a child protection agency or police service.

Date and time of report made to a child protection agency or police service: _____

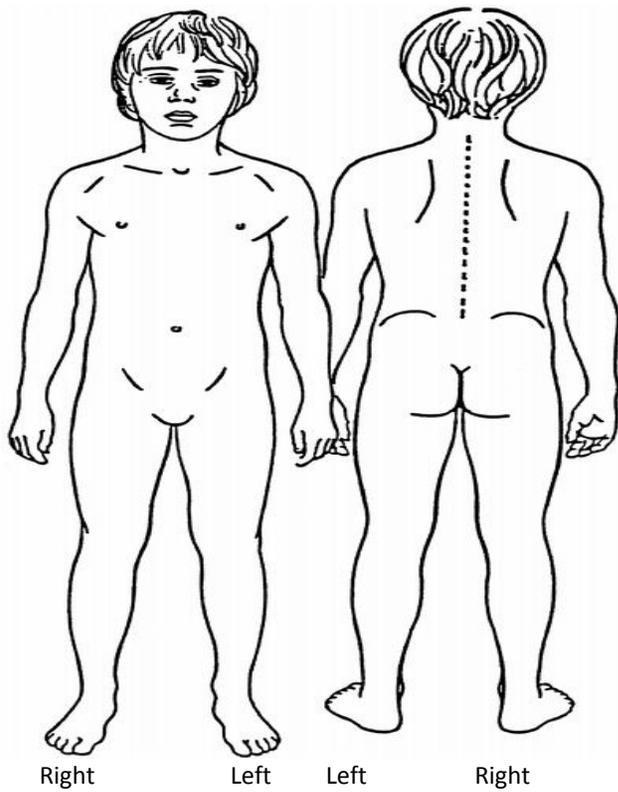
Outcome of Call:

Name of child protection worker or police officer: _____

Phone number: _____

Your name and signature: _____

BODY CHART



Once the report is made, place it in the envelope provided and seal it. Give the sealed envelope to your Supervisor or Manager who will ensure the envelope is promptly and securely delivered to the CEO for safeguarding.

APPENDIX D
RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION OR COMPLAINT OF ABUSE AGAINST THE YMCA

In the event of an allegation, complaint or disclosure of abuse against a staff or volunteer of the YMCA, the following procedures shall apply.

Reporting an Allegation or Complaint of Abuse against a staff or volunteer

If a staff or volunteer or student suspects, or receives an allegation or complaint of abuse against another YMCA staff, volunteer or student, he/she must follow the procedures for reporting an allegation or suspicion of child abuse to a child protection agency (see Appendix B).

Once the call has been made, the staff or volunteer or student shall immediately notify their manager that a call has been made to a child protection authority involving an allegation or suspicion of child abuse against a YMCA staff or volunteer.

The manager will immediately notify the CEO. Senior management will ensure any additional child safety concerns, HR, insurance and other mandatory reporting requirements are addressed, and that the appropriate follow up steps are implemented once child protection authorities have completed their investigation, in keeping with established YMCA procedures.

In the event of an allegation of abuse of a vulnerable person against a staff, volunteer or student placement, report the allegation immediately to your manager who will notify the CEO. If the vulnerable person's safety is at risk or in immediate danger, call the police or dial 911 immediately. The police have the ability to check on the person's wellbeing.

Any complaint or allegation of abuse made against the YMCA is taken seriously and shall be dealt with by management.

Information Management

All information related to an allegation or disclosure of abuse will be treated confidentially to the extent possible. Supervisors shall ensure that all records including investigation related to an allegation or complaint of abuse against a YMCA staff, student or volunteer shall be promptly delivered to the CEO for safeguarding (secure storage) and retention indefinitely.



APPENDIX E
YMCA POLICY AND PROCEDURES ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As a staff or volunteer member of the YMCA of Sault Ste. Marie, I acknowledge that:

- I have read the YMCA Protecting Children and Vulnerable Persons Policy;
- I understand my legal duty to report and my responsibility and actions required by me;
- I understand that the policy and procedures may be revised from time to time, and that I am responsible for reading any updates;
- As a condition of employment or volunteer service, I agree to abide by YMCA policies and procedures. I understand that failure to follow a YMCA policy or procedure may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or volunteer assignment.
- Training/Orientation attended: _____
Date Training/Orientation completed: _____

Staff or Volunteer Name: _____
(Please print)

Staff/Volunteer Signature: _____

Position: _____

YMCA Program: _____

Date: _____
(Day/Month/Year)

Supervisor Name: _____

(signed copy to be maintained in employee or volunteer file)



APPENDIX F

YMCA Employment/Volunteer Application Form

Please note that a criminal reference check will be required to be submitted for review prior to starting employment or volunteering.

Position being applied for _____

Date available to begin work _____

PERSONAL DATA

Last Name _____ Given Name _____ Initial _____

Address: Street _____ Apt. # _____

City _____ Province _____ Postal Code _____

Home Telephone # _____ Bus. Telephone # _____

Are you legally eligible to work in Canada? Yes No

Are you over 18 years of age? Yes No

To determine your qualifications for employment, please provide below and on the reverse, information related to your academic and other achievements including volunteer work, as well as entire employment history. Additional information may be attached on a separate sheet.

EDUCATION

Secondary School Business or Trade School

Highest grade or level completed _____ Name of Program _____

Length of Program _____

License, certificate or diploma awarded? Yes No

Type: Community College University

Name of Program _____ Length of Program _____

Diploma/Degree Awarded _____

Major subject _____

Other courses, workshops or seminars _____

Licenses, certificates or degrees _____

WORK RELATED SKILLS

Describe any of your work related skills, experience or training that relate to the position being applied for.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY/REFERENCES

Function/Responsibilities _____
Name of present/last employer/job _____
Job title _____
Period of employment From: _____ To: _____

Function/Responsibilities _____
Name of present/last employer/job _____
Job title _____
Period of employment From: _____ To: _____

Function/Responsibilities _____
Name of present/last employer/job _____
Job title _____
Period of employment From: _____ To: _____

List references if different than above on a separate sheet. Two of the three references must be unrelated to the Sault Ste. Marie YMCA.

I hereby declare that the foregoing information is true and complete to my knowledge; I understand that a false statement may disqualify me from employment or volunteerism, or cause my dismissal. I do not have any accusations of misconduct against me.

Have you attached an additional sheet? Yes No

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

References checked _____