



ELIM BIBLE CHAPEL SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICIES

2013

Safe Environment

Elim Bible Chapel has this Safe Environment Program set out, we realize that sometimes people are unclear about who does what, and what is my responsibility in all of this. Following is a structure for you to go over, so that you understand your role in this process.

1. **Deacons:** are the men who have had the policy created, approved it and are responsible for any changes, questions and making sure the processes within are followed.
 - a. **S.E.P. Committee:** makes sure any research is done for the Deacons, that the paperwork is taken care of, Police Checks are done, that Policies are updated and printed as per the Deacons request, and that the classes are taught. They will make sure that there is a list posted with all volunteers who have completed the process so people know who they can ask to help.
 - i. **Ministry Leaders:** Sunday School Superintendent, Youth Leader, Kids Club United Leader, Teen Choir Leader are responsible to make sure that anyone they get to volunteer have their Police Check done and turned in; classes that year done; and all paper work filled out and turned in before they can allow that person to volunteer in any way. There is a list that they can check, or they can call the office and find out.
 1. **Volunteers:** make sure that you have turned in your Police Check, taken the class and turned in all of the paperwork that was requested before you actually teach, or volunteer in any way.

As we continue with our Safe Environment Policy, please keep your position in mind. If you have any questions about what your roll is, please ask during the Q & A time at the end of the class or call the office.

Elim Bible Chapel Safe Environment Policies

Elim Bible Chapel is committed to providing a Safe Environment for everyone who comes here. We want our children, youth and anyone who is vulnerable, to be safe and secure here at Elim, we want to provide a place where they can grow healthy both spiritually and physically.

We also want all of our leaders, teachers, and volunteers to be protected from any type of false allegations that could potentially occur by making them aware and providing them with the tools and the help they need while working with the children and youth here, so that the leaders are not put at risk.

We at Elim Bible Chapel declare zero tolerance for any type of abuse, bullying, harassment, or neglect of those who are vulnerable in our midst.

We also want to be aware of the signs that abuse may be happening somewhere else, and that we would react appropriately to protect any child that comes here to Elim Bible Chapel for any activities.

Defining Abuse in its many forms

Child Abuse: Child abuse is an act committed by a parent, caregiver or person in a position of trust (even if they do not deal with the child everyday) which is not accidental and which harms or threatens to harm a child's physical or mental health or welfare. Child abuse occurs every minute of every day; it happens in every community, amongst every economical, racial, economic and religious group. We need to provide a safe and secure environment for our children at Elim Bible Chapel.

Physical Abuse: Physical abuse is any deliberate physical force or action that results, or could result, in injury to the child.

Sexual Abuse and Inappropriate Touching: Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used for the sexual gratification of an adult or older child. This includes allowing a child to see pornographic pictures or hear indecent phone calls.

Emotional Abuse: Emotional abuse is a pattern of behaviour that attacks a child's emotional development and sense of self-worth or neglects to provide a child with love, emotional support and guidance.

Child Neglect: Neglect is the failure to meet a child's basic need for food, clothing, shelter, sleep, medical attention, education and protection from harm.

Bullying: This is when a stronger, more powerful person hurts, frightens or threatens a smaller or weaker person deliberately.

Harassment & Discrimination: This is behaviour that is meant to disturb or upset someone, treating people without dignity and respect. Sexual harassment is persistent and unwanted sexual advances.

Assault: a person directly or indirectly applies force intentionally, or threatens to do so, to another person without their consent

Coercion: use of force or intimidation to obtain compliance.

Recruitment and Screening for any Board Members or Volunteers that will be involved with children or youth.

1. All ministry personnel are to be approved by church leadership at Elim Bible Chapel after the following process is completed.
2. A 6-month waiting period prior to serving is required for unpaid individuals wanting to work in children's or youth ministry. They also must be attending Elim Bible Chapel regularly and support the vision, doctrines, and constitution of Elim Bible Chapel.
3. The volunteer needs to fill out the appropriate ministry application forms, these application forms are confidential except for the Church Leadership, the ministry lead and the Abuse Prevention Committee.
4. At least 2 reference checks will be called and documented
5. A Personal Interview will be done and documented
6. Criminal record checks will be done every 5 years
7. Individuals, that have been accused, convicted, or are under suspicion of crimes against children/youth; who have been convicted of violent crimes or other relevant crimes will not have any involvement in ministries or programs that involve children or youth in any way.
8. All volunteers need to take an initial training class so that they understand the issues of abuse, to learn what our church policies for prevention are, and know what to do if there is an actual or alleged incident. They must also take an annual refresher course if they continue to work with children or youth.

Supervision

Procedures Elim Bible Chapel uses to provide a safe environment for both leaders and children.

1. There is adequate lighting inside and outside the building(s) where children/youth activities take place
2. An Adult is anyone 18years and older.
3. There is a 2 Adult rule (unrelated) at all times – a Hall monitor counts as an adult. There will be '0' one on one between and adult and a child. This is to include the hall monitor.
4. During Sunday school, we have windows on all Sunday school doors and Hall monitors periodically walk through the church keeping a watchful eye on what is going on.
5. During youth activities, such as kids clubs, youth programs there will always be two unrelated leaders at all times since related individuals are to be considered as one person when working together.
6. It is important that when children are arriving and leaving, that at least two leaders are there until the last child leaves, at the end of the activity.
7. The Child/Teacher ratios are as follows – remembering that during kids programs & youth activities where there are no hall monitors, there must always be at least two unrelated leaders.
 - a. One personnel for every 3 infants (birth to 17 months) (at least 2 unrelated personnel to start)
 - b. One personnel for every 4-5 toddlers or preschoolers (at least 2 unrelated personnel to start)
 - c. One personnel for every 20 elementary age children (at least 2 unrelated personnel to start)
 - d. One personnel for every 20 Junior high youth (at least 2 unrelated personnel to start)

- e. One personnel for every 20 Senior high youth (at least 2 unrelated personnel to start)
- f. One personnel for every 10 youth on an overnight trip, remembering there needs to be at least two unrelated personnel. Leaders are to be assigned a specific group of children or youth. Female personnel will be assigned to female children or youth
- g. An occasional observer is not to be put into a position of helping with the children, unless Elim Bible Chapel has approved them, because this puts them into a position of trust in the eyes of the children.

Attendance and Registrations

1. Attendance will be taken each time there is an activity
2. Attendance will include all leaders, all children, parents, and any occasional observer that might be there.
3. Attendance sheets are to be given to the office to be kept on file.
4. All groups must have a registration done, although one registration for each child or youth will be enough for Sunday school, kids club, Youth group, and any single events that are happening here, as long as the parent has specified that it does cover all groups.
5. The original registration forms are to be given to the church office, and each group is to have a copy as well so that the leaders have the information on hand that they will need.
6. As a requirement from the insurance companies, there is a release and permission statement include on all registration forms releasing the church from unforeseen and accidental damages along with contact information in case of an accident. There is also a liability shield on permission forms when there is any level of risk. There is also a statement, which stipulates the purpose and extent for collecting personal information for children and youth. All three of these statements are a requirement of our insurance company.
7. The original registration forms will be kept on file permanently; a photocopy of the registration forms are to be given to all groups that need them.
8. It is the responsibility of the leaders to make sure that each participants parent in the group fills out and submits these forms.
9. Send a registration form home with visiting children

Receiving and Releasing Children

Babies to Kindergarten (This includes grade one when they are included in the kindergarten class)

1. There is a mandatory Sign-in and Sign-out sheet in each classroom, which must be signed when children are dropped off and when the child is picked up.
2. If anyone but the parent who drops the child off, wants to pick the child up, there must be a signed sheet designating the people allowed to pick up the child
3. Babies and younger children will only be released into the care of the child's parent or designate that the parent who drops off the child designates. That designate must sign the child out

Elementary Children

1. Make sure new and visiting children know where they need to go to find their parent

2. If all other children are gone and there is one child left, the teacher is to take them up to the parent, not being left alone with them
3. If you are in a kids program, two leaders need to stay until all the children are gone so that a teacher is not left with one student.

Washroom Guidelines

It would be best if all parents would take their child to the washroom, and they would change diapers before their child is left in the classroom. The doors in the washrooms are to always be propped open.

Nursery

1. Diaper changing is to be done only by Nursery leaders and must be done with the change room door open.
2. Don't use creams etc., unless asked to by the parent

Preschool

1. Do not send Preschool children to the washroom alone.
2. One option is to take the whole group to the washroom at the same time.
3. Only Women are allowed to take any child, boy or girl, to the washroom.
4. If a preschool child needs help, please leave the door open, yet still considering the privacy of the child. Never go into a cubicle with the door closed with a child

Elementary Children

1. Teachers & Leaders are not to be alone with a child in an unsupervised washroom and never to enter into a cubicle with a child
2. Hall Monitors are keeping an eye on the halls, to make sure no one is wandering around
3. You can just send an elementary child down to the washroom, if needed.
4. You can send two children together if you'd like.

Special Events & Overnight Policies

Field Trips & Special Events

1. All off-site activities will be pre-approved by the Leader
2. The parents are to be notified at least one week in advance
3. Proper written consent and medical release forms are required for each child participating in special events. These forms are to be kept in the leader's possession during the event; with a photocopy of the completed forms filed in the church office. Originals will be kept permanently
4. All trips and events will be supervised by a minimum of two approved and unrelated adult leaders
5. Mentoring Relationships are to be conducted in teams and in public places, and it is best if the parent does the dropping off and picking up.

Retreats and Overnight Events:

1. All overnight activities will be pre-approved by church leadership.
2. Written communication regarding retreats and overnight events should be available to families no less than one week prior to the event – with all details regarding location, phone numbers and a list of all adult personnel who are attending the event, all activities and travel information.
3. Proper Written consent and medical release forms are required for each child or youth participating in overnight events. Forms must be kept in the ministry lead's possession during trips and events and a photocopy filed in the church office. The originals are to be kept on file.
4. One personnel for every 10 youth on an overnight trip, remembering there needs to be at least two approved unrelated leaders. Leaders are to be assigned a specific group of children or youth. Female personnel will be assigned to female children or youth
5. Youth attending retreats and overnight events will not be allowed to leave the event. Any exceptions must be added to the permission form signed by the parent.
6. Female and male youth are not allowed in each other's rooms or tents for any reason during retreats and overnight events and they are not permitted to sleep in mixed company.

Billeting and Hosting

1. For the protection of our youth it is required that adults residing in the home where billets are staying complete the following screening process prior to hosting.
 - a. Recommendation from a pastor
 - b. Police record checks
2. Any allergies or medications our youth are taking need to be communicated to the host home prior to arrival, and clear instructions on how to manage allergies and meds.
3. Youth must be billeted with youth of the same sex
4. Youth must have separate sleeping arrangements from the family they are staying with
5. Youth are informed of proper etiquette and curfew guidelines

Transportation

1. We are concerned for the safety of our children and youth in the matter of transportation. All drivers must obey all the rules of the road including speed limits. Reckless or unsafe driving will not be tolerated.
2. For church related activities, it is preferred that parents drop the children and youth off and pick them up at the event location.
3. All ministry personnel drivers transporting children or youth during Elim Bible Chapel activities must complete the following before the event:
 - a. Must be Pre-Approved by the ministry lead
 - b. Provide a copy of a valid driver's license
 - c. Provide a copy of their current automobile Insurance policy
 - d. Must have a minimum 5 years driving experience
 - e. Elim Bible Chapel must have a drivers abstract for them
4. The number of occupants must not exceed the number of seat belts. Seat belts must be worn by everyone and remain fastened at all times the vehicle is in motion

5. A trips and off-site travel form will accompany the group with the original left in the church office and filed permanently with:
 - a. Names and numbers of all people in the vehicle
 - b. Location of events and contact numbers
 - c. Drivers and vehicles information involved
6. Children and youth are never to be transported one-on-one.
7. Children will not be left unattended in a vehicle.
8. Mentoring relationships are to be conducted in teams and in public places, and it would be best if the parent dropped them off and picked them up.

Proper Display of Affection

Appropriate Touch with Children:

1. Recognizing that children need appropriate displays of affection that reflect pure, genuine and positive displays of God's love, appropriate touch with children will be age and developmentally appropriate.
 - a. Hold a preschool child who is crying
 - b. Speak to a child at eye level and listen with your eyes and ears
 - c. Hold a child's hands when speaking, listening or walking them to an activity
 - d. Gently hold the child's shoulder or hand to keep his or her attention while you redirect the child's behaviour
 - e. Put your arm around the shoulder of a child when comforting or quieting is needed
 - f. Pat a child on the head, hand, shoulder or back to affirm him or her.
2. All touch must be done in view of others

Appropriate Touch with Youth:

- a. One-arm or shoulder to shoulder hugs
- b. Touch on the back or shoulder

Inappropriate Touch with Children

1. Recognizing that the innocence of children must be protected, ministry leaders will be made aware that the following actions are deemed inappropriate and will not be permitted:
 - a. DO NOT kiss a child or coax a child to kiss you
 - b. DO NOT engage in extend hugging or tickling
 - c. DO NOT hold a child's face when talking to or disciplining the child
 - d. DO NOT touch a child in any area that would be covered by a bathing suit (except in cases of diapering and assisting preschoolers as outlined in washroom policies)
 - e. DO NOT carry older children and DO NOT allow them to sit on your lap
 - f. AVOID prolonged physical contact with any child or youth.

2. Ministry personnel are not to be left alone with a child or youth – if all children but one are gone or picked up – take the last child up to their parents/guardians. Two leaders must stay till everyone is picked up by their parents/guardians.

Inappropriate Touch with Youth

1. No Chest to Chest hugging or extended hugging
2. No over exuberant affection
3. No lap-sitting
4. No kissing
5. No touching of thighs, knees or inappropriate spots of the body
6. No horseplay, tickling or extended backrubs

No Dating between Youth Leaders and students

Discipline & Classroom Management

1. All discipline and classroom management will be conducted in a loving and caring environment.
2. Elim Bible Chapel Prohibits any type of corporate punishment
3. Classroom rules are to be established, so there are clearly communicated expectations on what is required of the children and Youth.
4. If there is a problem you cannot solve, see the Ministry lead in your department to come up with a solution to the problem, if you are the Ministry Lead then see the Elders and/or Pastor for solutions and/or suggestions.

Bullying Among Peers

1. Our children and youth have a right to a caring, respectful and safe church environment where they will encounter the love of God in action
2. An anti-bullying policy is in effect at all times and this should be made known quite clearly to the children and youth, it is your responsibility to make sure that bullying isn't tolerated.
3. If you are aware of a bullying issue, do not hesitate to see the leadership at Elim Bible Chapel for advice and support in this matter

Harassment and Discrimination

1. We are committed to fostering an environment that is free of discrimination and harassment and one in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity without discrimination or harassment based on race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, age, marital status, family status or disability.
2. Every member of Elim Bible Chapel's community, especially screened personnel, is responsible for creating an environment, which is free of discrimination and harassment.

Health and Safety Guidelines

1. First Aid Kits can be located in the Nursery upstairs, in the Kitchen and in the Hallway in the Sunday School wing near the door. There are CPR masks with the Kitchen and Nursery first aid kits.
2. It is the responsibility of the parent to make sure the church is aware of any known allergies that their children may have, and they are responsible to put that information onto the registration forms.
3. Information regarding allergies are collected on the registration forms, all teachers and leaders who have children in their care should have a copy of this information with them.

Medications

1. Ministry Personnel are not to give or apply any medications.
2. Medications are not to be left in a classroom.
3. In an extreme case where Epi-pens and puffers are needed for allergies or asthma, written instructions are to be provided by the parent/guardian to the Ministry lead. Requests are to be written, signed and kept on file.

Cuts or Injuries

1. When a person is injured, separate them from the others.
2. If there is blood on the floor or toys, that is to be isolated from others.
3. Make sure other children are not exposed to any of the blood from the cut or injury.
4. There are Latex gloves to be used when bandaging the injury
5. Extreme care is to be taken in the cleaning up and disposing of all blood & bloody bandages & gloves.
6. Hands are to be washed with sterilizing soap

Emergencies

1. Emergency Fire Drill evacuation is to be reviewed annually by church leadership and the procedures posted in a visible place in each classroom stating the planned route of escape to the nearest exit.
2. There will be an annual fire & evacuation drill
3. A parent will be contacted when an injury, accident or medical emergency happens.
4. There are incident reports to be complete any time an injury happens. Contact the ministry lead when an injury occurs. Give the incident report to the office to keep on file permanently

Internet and Computer use

1. Elim Bible Chapel does not allow children or youth computer access to use the computers
2. There are filters installed on all our computers to limit access to inappropriate content.
3. Relationships between children, youth and ministry personnel are to be conducted within the parameters set by the church. Communication outside of scheduled programs should only be done with the parent's knowledge.
4. No photographs of children or youth will be used without prior written consent. No photos of children or youth are to be posted on facebook or other online social networks from our leadership.

Ministry Personnel Standards

Lifestyle

1. For the protection of our children and youth, and as an example to them as well, our ministry personnel are to be committed to maintaining a consistent spiritual life including prayer, Bible Reading, Attendance at Activities that involve their group, planning meetings and Worship Services at Elim Bible Chapel.
2. Ministry personnel are to be role models of integrity at all times. They are to refrain from activities that are illegal or considered morally and biblically questionable.

Contacting Opportunities

1. Meet with Youth in small group settings and in teams and meetings are always done in public settings and only under the following conditions
 - a. The elder board is informed of the time and place of the meeting prior to the meeting
 - b. Parental permission is granted
 - c. Separate transportation is arranged
2. The Pastor or Elder Board must document and file any information

Reporting and Response - You are Liable anytime to report abuse

Suspected or Alleged Abuse

Following are the procedures and sequence for reporting suspected abuse cases

1. For the protection of our children and youth, all allegations and/or suspicions of abuse against children and youth will be taken seriously.
Upon hearing of potential abuse or there are allegations of abuse to a child or youth, the ministry personnel will complete a Suspected Abuse Report Form documenting all pertinent information.
 - a. Do not ask leading questions
 - b. Do not contact the accused
 - c. Keep the forms permanently unless otherwise directed by legal counsel
2. Allegations of abuse to a child or Youth must now be reported to the proper authorities in conjunction with the Senior Pastor.

Media Relations

1. It is the responsibility of the Senior Pastor, or another elder, to be the designated spokesperson to speak on behalf of the church to the media or public in relation to a suspected child abuse case. All inquiries are to be directed to this person. No one else should comment unless given permission by the chapel.
2. Public statements will be made under the guidance of legal counsel.

These Policies were updated in July of 2012 vs 1.02.

We have decided that we need to add a cover to the policies so that People are careful to get the most updated version of the policy, and the cover and colour will be an easy reminder.