

YMCA OF  
HAMILTON/BURLINGTON/BRANTFORD  
YMCA Child Protection Policy and Procedures  
July 2014

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## YMCA CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### 1 GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

The YMCA is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults in its care. It recognizes its responsibility to promote safe practices and to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Throughout these policies and procedures, reference is made to children and vulnerable adults. These terms are used to mean “those under the age of 16 or up to 18 if under the care of the Children’s Aid Society”. The YMCA also recognizes that some adults are also vulnerable to abuse, and therefore the procedures may be applied accordingly (with appropriate adaptations) to allegations of abuse and the protection of vulnerable adults.

The YMCA is committed to ensuring that it:

- Provides a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults
- Identifies children, young people and vulnerable adults who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm; and
- Takes appropriate action to see that such children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe at the YMCA.

In pursuit of these aims, the YMCA will annually review and approve policies and procedures with the aim of:

- Promoting and implementing appropriate procedures to safeguard the well being of children, young people and vulnerable adults and protecting them from abuse while participating in Y activities and programs;
- Recruiting, training, supporting and supervising staff and volunteers to adopt best practices to safeguard and protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse and to reduce risk to themselves;
- Requiring staff and volunteers to adopt and abide by this Child Protection Policy and these procedures;
- Establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers; and
- Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this policy and these procedures and adapting them whenever there is a significant change in the Association or if there are any legal changes.

The YMCA will refer concerns that a child or young person might be at risk of significant harm to the Children’s Aid Society.

There will be a senior member of the YMCA management team with special responsibility for child protection issues: Ursula Motyka, Vice President of Human Resources.

#### 1.1. Terminology

The YMCA recognizes the following definitions:

A **child or young person**, according to Ontario law, is someone under 16 years of age or someone up to 18 years of age if under the care of the Children’s Aid Society.

A **vulnerable adult** is a person aged 18 years or older who may be unable to take care of him/herself or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or exploitation.

A **child in need of protection as defined by the Child, Family & Community Services** is: any child or young person who has been placed at risk through something a person has done to them or something a person is failing to do for them. This includes any form of physical harm, emotional deprivation, sexual mistreatment or neglect which can result in injury or psychological damage to a child.

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

**Physical abuse** may consist of just one incident or it may happen repeatedly. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or young person including deliberately causing ill health to a child or young person.

**Emotional abuse** involves harming 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. For example: emotional abuse may include verbal threats, social isolation, intimidation, exploitation, or routinely making unreasonable demands. It also includes terrorizing a child, or exposing them to family violence. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse.

**Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child or young person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. This may also include involving children and vulnerable adults in prostitution or pornography.

**Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's or young person's basic needs for his or her physical or emotional development and well being such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or not being responsive to a child's or young person's basic emotional needs.

## 2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CHILD PROTECTION

While the primary responsibility for the protection of children from abuse rests with the Children's Aid Society, all YMCA staff and volunteers who come into contact with children and vulnerable adults have a duty to help protect them from abuse or risk of abuse.

The responsibility for managing this policy lies with the YMCA's senior management. Every Association will appoint designated person(s) who will have responsibility for the implementation of the child protection guidelines and procedures in their Association and office(s).

### 2.1 Management's Responsibility

YMCA Management is responsible for ensuring that a safe environment is maintained in all facilities and programs by:

- implementing all procedures relating to child protection
- establishing a reporting protocol that complies with provincial child protection legislation
- ensuring that all staff and volunteers who have significant contact with children and vulnerable adults are oriented to child protection policies and procedures
- establishing guidelines that ensure programs are developmentally appropriate and well planned in advance; and
- ensuring that all staff and volunteers have read, understand, and signed the Child Protection Policy and Procedures sign off form or master policy sign off form (See Appendix A)

### 2.2 Staff and Volunteer Responsibility:

YMCA staff and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults in their care by:

- reporting that a child is in need of protection as provided in the Child, Family & Community Services Act;
- notifying their supervisor that a report is being made;
- following guidelines that ensure programs are developmentally appropriate and well planned in advance; and
- creating a safe and caring environment for children and vulnerable adults that will challenge their development in spirit, mind and body

The YMCA supports and requires all staff and volunteers to observe the following code of conduct including verbal and non-verbal actions when involved in activities with children and vulnerable adults. This code of conduct is a clear and concise guide of what is and is not acceptable behavior or practice when working with children and vulnerable adults.

Through defining what is and is not acceptable behavior, good practice can be promoted and opportunities for abuse minimized. This can also help prevent false allegations being made against staff and volunteers.

All concerns about breach of this Code of Conduct will be taken seriously and responded to in line with the Association's performance management, disciplinary procedure and/or procedure for responding to concerns about child abuse.

### 3.1 Good Practices

- 3.1.1 Treat all children and vulnerable adults equally, with respect, dignity and fairness
- 3.1.2 Give constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- 3.1.3 Involve parents wherever possible and reasonable
- 3.1.4 Be vigilant and aware of how actions can be misinterpreted and always work in an open environment. Avoid private or unobserved situations with a child or young person unless personal assistance such as toileting or changing is required.
- 3.1.5 Ensure the number of adults is appropriate to safely supervise an activity.
- 3.1.6 Have two staff members present when in situations with children and vulnerable adults where it is necessary for staff to change or undress (i.e. swimming) so this activity is not misconstrued.
- 3.1.7 Avoid taking a child or young person alone on journeys. Where this is unavoidable the child should sit in the back seat. Where possible parents should be advised before departure.

### 3.2 Practices to be Avoided

In the context of your role within the YMCA, the following practices should be avoided:

- 3.2.1 Spending excessive (i.e. unwarranted) amounts of time alone with children and vulnerable adults away from others.
- 3.2.2 Relating to children and vulnerable adults from programs in non-program activities, such as babysitting or weekend visits.
- 3.2.3 Having "favourites" this could lead to resentment and jealousy by other children and vulnerable adults and could be misinterpreted by others.
- 3.2.4 Where possible, doing things of a personal nature for children and vulnerable adults that they can do for themselves.

### 3.3 Practices Never to be Sanctioned

In the context of your role within the YMCA, the following practices will never be sanctioned and may also be prohibited by law:

- 3.3.1 Engaging in rough or physical contact except as permitted within the rules of the game or competition.
- 3.3.2 Forming intimate emotional, physical or sexual relationships with children and vulnerable adults.

- 3.3.3 Allowing or engaging in touching a child or young person in any sexually suggestive manner.
- 3.3.4 Allowing children and vulnerable adults to swear or use sexualized language unchallenged.
- 3.3.5 Making sexually suggestive comments to a child or young person, even in fun.
- 3.3.6 Reducing a child or young person to tears as a form of control.
- 3.3.7 Allowing allegations made by a child or young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- 3.3.8 Inviting or allowing children and vulnerable adults to stay with you at your home.
- 3.3.9 Asking children and vulnerable adults to keep any type of secret from other children and vulnerable adults, staff or from their parents.

## 4 PROCEDURE FOR THE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

The YMCA will take all reasonable steps to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working or volunteering with children and vulnerable adults.

This recruitment and selection procedure has two functions:

- Provides the YMCA with an opportunity to assess the suitability of an individual to work/volunteer with children and vulnerable adults; and
- Provides the prospective employee or volunteer with an opportunity to assess the organization and the opportunities available.

Compliance with these policies and procedures will be audited periodically to ensure:

- Recruitment guidelines are adhered to;
- Staff/volunteer operating guidelines when caring for children and vulnerable adults/vulnerable adults are adhered to; and
- Training of new staff/volunteers on Child Protection Policy operating guidelines takes place.

### 4.1 Procedures for all Staff and Volunteers (excluding policy volunteers, fundraising volunteers and board members):

For purposes that require regular contact with children and vulnerable adults the following procedures will apply (refer to the YMCA Employee Handbook for detailed employment procedures):

- 4.1.1 All job postings used to recruit and select staff/volunteers to positions involving regular contact with children and vulnerable adults will include a statement that a police information check/vulnerable sector screening is a requirement for the position.
- 4.1.2 All applicants will be requested to complete an application (See Appendix B). The purpose of this is to obtain from the applicant relevant details for the position including any previous youth work involvement.
- 4.1.3 Prior to appointment a Police Information Check/Vulnerable Sector Search will be requested for all volunteers/staff who have regular contact with children and vulnerable adults.
- 4.1.4 For every position involving regular contact with children and vulnerable adults, will require a minimum of three references (where practical and reasonable) will be completed before an offer of employment is made (See Appendix C). At least two of these references will be at arm's length. Where possible, at least one of the references will be from an employer or volunteer organization where the position required the incumbent to work with children and/or young people. References from relatives will not be accepted.
- 4.1.5 Formal interviews, either in person or by telephone, will be required for all positions of trust with questions designed to determine the suitability for working with children and vulnerable adults.
- 4.1.6 Potential employees and volunteers will be offered positions conditional upon the production of a satisfactory police records check/vulnerable sector search and acceptance of the employment obligations e.g. agreement to the child protection policy and procedures of the YMCA.
- 4.1.7 During orientation, new staff and volunteers will be made aware of policies on protecting children and vulnerable adults, on staff conduct, and legal requirements in reporting

suspected abuse. This orientation will be completed within the first month of starting their position.

- 4.1.8 Until the orientation is complete and a satisfactory Police Information Check/Vulnerable Sector Search is received, the new staff/volunteer will not have unsupervised access to children, young people or vulnerable adults.

## 5 EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR KEEPING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS SAFE

Management and all staff working with children and vulnerable adults will receive training adequate to familiarize themselves with child protection issues and responsibilities and the YMCA procedures and policies, with annual refresher training at least every three years. The initial training will be documented in the employee's personnel file or volunteer file, as appropriate, on commencement of employment or volunteering.

In the event of any change to the Child Protection Policy, all staff will receive an orientation to the new policy and be required to complete a YMCA Child Protection Policy and Procedures sign off form (See Appendix A.)

### 5.1 Education and Training

The learning opportunities for staff and volunteers to develop and maintain the necessary skills and understanding to keep children and vulnerable adults safe will include the following:

- 5.1.1 All staff and volunteers and other associates have training on child protection when they join the Association which includes an introduction to the YMCA's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- 5.1.2 All staff and volunteers are provided with opportunities to learn about how to recognize and respond to concerns about child abuse.
- 5.1.3 Children and vulnerable adults are provided with advice and support on keeping themselves safe.
- 5.1.4 Staff and volunteers with special responsibilities for keeping children and vulnerable adults safe have relevant training and regular opportunities to update their skills and knowledge.
- 5.1.5 Training is provided to those responsible for dealing with complaints and disciplinary procedures in relation to child abuse and inappropriate behavior towards children and vulnerable adults.
- 5.1.6 Training and written guidance on safer recruitment practices is provided for those responsible for recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers.
- 5.1.7 Opportunities exist for learning from practical case experience to be fed back into organizational training and development programs.

## 6 RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE

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.

### 6.1 General Procedures

- 6.1.1 Staff and volunteers of the YMCA will take allegations of abuse seriously.
- 6.1.2 The YMCA will ensure staff working with children and vulnerable adults are familiar with the procedure for handling a disclosure of abuse or neglect by a child. (Refer to Appendix E for the procedure).
- 6.1.3 Staff will follow the prescribed procedure for handling a disclosure.
- 6.1.4 The first priority will be to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk by taking any precautionary measures as advised by the Children's Aid Society. (Refer to Appendix F for child protection telephone numbers.)
- 6.1.5 In the event the reported incident(s) involve staff or a volunteer, the procedure for handling an allegation against a YMCA staff or volunteer will be followed. (Refer to Appendix G for the procedure.)
- 6.1.6 A report will be filed in accordance with relevant provincial child protection reporting requirements and the Association will cooperate to the extent required by the law with any legal authority involved. (Refer to Appendix H for report form.)
- 6.1.7 All information related to disclosures or an allegation of abuse will be handled confidentially.

## 7.0 MANAGING AN ALLEGATION COMPLAINT AND CLAIM OF ABUSE AGAINST THE YMCA

In the event of an allegation, complaint or claim of abuse against a staff or volunteer, the YMCA will follow the following procedures:

### 7.1 Incident Reporting

- 7.1.1 If a staff or volunteer suspects or receives an allegation or complaint of abuse about another staff, volunteer or student, he/she will follow the procedure for reporting an allegation or suspicion of abuse to the appropriate child protection authority. Refer to 6.1.5. and Appendix F for the procedure.
- 7.1.2 The staff or volunteer will notify their manager and branch Vice President as soon as a call to the child protection authority has been made. The manager or senior manager will also notify the YMCA's Child Protection Lead to ensure that the insurer is notified promptly of the allegation or complaint of abuse against the YMCA.

### 7.2 Information Management

- 7.2.1 Staff and volunteers will follow the documentation and information handling procedures required under relevant child protection legislation. Refer to Appendix I.
- 7.2.2 All records related to the allegation or complaint will be retained until such time as determined by the authorities, or by YMCA records retention requirements, or by the insurer, whichever is longer.

**APPENDIX A**  
**YMCA CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES SIGN OFF**

As a staff/volunteer member of the YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford:

- I have read the YMCA Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- I understand my legal duty to report under the Child, Family & Community Services Act of Ontario; and
- I understand my responsibility and actions as required by me.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Please Print

Branch: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



YMCA of

Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford

APPENDIX B

**YMCA EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION FORM**

Position being applied for

Date available to begin work

**PERSONAL DATA**

Last Name

First Name

Initial

Street Address

City

Province

Postal Code

Home Telephone

Business Telephone

Cell Telephone

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_@\_\_\_\_\_

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 your full employment history. Additional information may be attached on a separate sheet.

RESUME ATTACHED? Yes  No

**EDUCATION**

Secondary School

Business or Trade School

College or University

Highest Grade/Level Completed

Name of Program

Length of Program

License, Certificate, Diploma or Degree awarded? Yes  No  Honors

Please list any other courses, workshops and/or seminars which may relate to the position you are applying for:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list any volunteer work or personal hobbies which may relate to the position you are applying for:

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**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

**DATES:** \_\_\_\_\_

**COMPANY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**JOB TITLE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**FUNCTION/RESPONSIBILITIES:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**DATES:** \_\_\_\_\_

**COMPANY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**JOB TITLE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**FUNCTION/RESPONSIBILITIES:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**DATES:** \_\_\_\_\_

**COMPANY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**JOB TITLE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**FUNCTION/RESPONSIBILITIES:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**REFERENCE CHECK REQUIREMENTS:** The YMCA's hiring policy requires the completion of three references before an official offer is confirmed. Please list references on a separate sheet. **Two** of the three references must be professional references i.e. previous employer, supervisor, etc. The purpose of reference checks is to confirm the candidate's qualifications, skills and suitability for employment/volunteer placement with the YMCA in a pre-determined position. Employment/volunteer placements within a YMCA child care program area will include questions specific to the suitability of candidates to work with children and/or vulnerable adults.

**PRIVACY STATEMENT:** The Hamilton Burlington YMCA and any groups that are officially associated with the Hamilton Burlington YMCA (HB YMCA) respect your personal privacy. We appreciate your concern about your personal information, and believe ensuring the security of your personal information is an important part of our job. We strive to protect any personal information you give to the YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington. If we ask you to provide us with any personal information, we will tell you the purposes for which we intend to use that information. **WE WILL NOT COLLECT, USE, OR DISCLOSE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION WITHOUT YOUR**

**CONSENT.** We collect no personal information about you unless you choose to provide that information to us. We do not use techniques that collect personal information about you without your knowledge. Your personal information is not lent or sold to anyone for any purpose. It is our intention to fully comply with the “Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act” passed by the Government of Canada in April 2000 – for your benefit and ours.

**POLICE RECORDS CHECK/VULNERABLE SECTOR SEARCH:** It is the policy and practice of the YMCA to receive a current police records check as a condition of employment/volunteer service. As per YMCA policy, the Association also reserves the right to randomly request future police records check reports as a condition of continued employment and/or volunteer service. In addition to the police records check, an enhanced volunteer sector screening report is required for all positions working directly with children and/or vulnerable adults. While the initial cost of the police records check and/or vulnerable sector screening is the responsibility of the employee/volunteer, the cost of subsequent reports will be assumed by the YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford.

**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 cause my dismissal. I have not had any accusations of misconduct against me and there is nothing known to me that could prevent me from doing the applied for work.**

**Signature of Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



**VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM**

Thank you for considering a YMCA volunteer opportunity. The YMCA believes that people enrich their own lives when they enrich the lives of others. All YMCA endeavors involve a partnership of volunteer and staff teams dedicated to creating healthy communities where individuals and families have opportunities to reach their potential.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

<b>Full Name</b>						
<b>Address</b>					<b>Apt / Unit #</b>	
<b>City</b>		<b>Province</b>		<b>Postal Code</b>		
<b>Telephone #</b>				<b>Mobile #</b>		
<b>Email Address</b>					<b>DOB</b>	
<b>Emergency Contact</b>		<b>Relationship</b>		<b>Contact #</b>		

**VOLUNTEER AVAILABILITY**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
___ - ___ am						
___ - ___ pm						

**Current or Past Volunteer Experience**


Name	Number	Relationship

--	--	--

**REFERENCES**

Position Title	Position Description	Check One
<b>40 Hour Community Student Volunteer</b>	<p>This volunteer position is designed to support secondary school students achieve their community service requirements as required for all secondary school students.</p> <p>Placements are available within the five health, fitness and recreation YMCA branches with locations throughout the Hamilton (Downtown and Mountain sites), Burlington, Waterdown, and Brantford areas.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Skills Development Volunteer</b>	<p>This volunteer position is designed to support volunteers to gain hands-on experience and involvement in a selection of tasks and functions within various YMCA settings designed to support the volunteer in achieving individual specific outcomes which may include a sense of giving back to the community, networking and establishing social relationships and/or developing skills and gaining relevant and meaningful experiences which may support future employment opportunities.</p> <p>Placements are available within the five health, fitness and recreation YMCA branches with locations throughout the Hamilton (Downtown and Mountain sites), Burlington, Waterdown, and Brantford areas.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Special Event Volunteer</b>	<p>The volunteer position of <b>Special Event Volunteer</b> serves as a resource to YMCA special events, supporting the YMCA's on a one time placement.</p> <p>Special Event Volunteer opportunities are available in YMCA branch sites throughout the Hamilton, Burlington, Waterdown, Brantford, and Haliburton areas.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>YMCA Immigrant Settlement Services</b>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Clerical Volunteer Job Description</b> - To provide assistance with clerical and administrative needs</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>English Conversation Circle Facilitator</b> - To provide facilitation of English Conversation Circles, which offers a forum where newcomer adults to Canada can gather in a safe and supportive environment in order to practice their English language speaking skills.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Newcomer Youth Centre</b> - To introduce newcomer youth to Canadian culture through activities and programming, while facilitating their settlement into the Hamilton community.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Youth Cooking Club</b> - To introduce newcomer youth to Canadian culture, while helping youth build their cooking and baking skills</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Youth Homework Club</b> - To provide guided assistance to newcomer youth with Canadian academic homework, while promoting learning and English language development.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Soccer Program</b> - To provide assistance to newcomer youth through soccer games, practices, drills and scrimmages, while promoting team work, cooperation and good sportsmanship.</p>	

**HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER AT THE YMCA?**

**COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT (STUDENTS ONLY)**

<b>Name of School</b>			
<b>School Contact Name</b>			
<b>School Contact Number</b>			
<b>Hours needed to meet requirement</b>		<b>Deadline to meet requirement</b>	
<b>Completion Verification Letter Required?</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>
<b>Addition Information</b>			

<b>Signature of Student</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Signature of Parent/Guardian</b>		<b>Date</b>	

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**CONSENT TO COLLECTION AND DISCLOSURE**

I understand that the YMCA will be collecting, creating, using and disclosing my personal information for the purpose of establishing and managing a volunteer relationship.

I consent to the YMCA doing so, and I also consent to the collection and use of my personal information in order to ensure the safety of YMCA participants, for statistical purposes, and to inform me about YMCA programs or services.

I consent to the release of my name and address to the YMCA's Financial Development Department to further the YMCA's philanthropic activities. I also consent to the use of any photographs which may be taken to be used by the YMCA in any local or national print or promotional production material.

A current police records check issued within 6 months of the start of a volunteer placement is a condition of volunteering with the YMCA. As per YMCA policy, the YMCA also reserves the right to request future subsequent reports. Subsequent report requests will be paid for by the YMCA. Volunteer positions working in the direct care of children and/or vulnerable adults will require an enhanced vulnerable sector screening report as a condition of volunteer service.

<b>Signature of Applicant</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Signature of Parent/Guardian</b>		<b>Date</b>	



**APPENDIX D**  
**REFERENCE CHECKING FORM**

**Suggested Reference Check Questions**

Category:        If the person providing the reference is/was the candidate's supervisor:

1. How long have you supervised this candidate?
2. In general terms, what kind of employee is this candidate?
3. How much direction does the candidate need?
4. How does the candidate respond to criticism?
5. What do you feel are the candidate's principal strengths for this position?
6. What have been the candidate's greatest contributions to the organization?
7. What are the candidate's areas of development?
8. How opinionated is the candidate?
9. How well will this candidate function in a position where a high degree of integrity, diplomacy and common sense is required?
10. Would you re-hire this candidate? Why?
11. What is your overall rating of this individual? Why?
12. Is there anything I haven't ask that you would like to share with me?

Category:        If the person providing the reference is/was the candidate's peer:

1. Did this candidate get along well with management and peers?
2. How would you rate this candidate's interpersonal skills?
3. Does the candidate respect institutional boundaries or politics?
4. Did you enjoy working with this individual? Why?

Category:        If the person providing the reference is/was a Board/Community Representative:

1. Does this candidate get along well with Board members? Is this candidate respected by board members?
2. How did this individual's performance compare with other employees with similar job duties?
3. Is the candidate the type of individual that you would consider hiring for your own company/organization?
4. How would you describe this candidate's communication skills (both verbal and written)?

Instructions:

1. Ensure that the candidate signs a release allowing you to contact and speak with the individuals he/she has provided as references. (See attached)
2. Identify yourself and the YMCA. State the purpose of your call as being a reference check and provide the name of the person you are calling about. Confirm the relationship to the candidate. i.e. I understand that you were \_\_\_\_\_'s supervisor at Company ABC.
3. Prepare your questions in advance and ensure that you leave adequate space for the response.
4. If responses are vague, attempt to probe and listen for clues that may alert you to potential issues and/or concerns.

5. Always close the discussion with the following question: Is there anything else that you would like to share with me that you feel would be beneficial in making my decision?
6. Always ensure that you completely and thoroughly document your discussion. This information may be needed at a later date as well as be submitted to human resources for inclusion in the incumbent's personnel file.

#### Reference Check Requirements

All new hires and/or volunteers will have three references checked before an official offer is made. The reference checks will include the following:

- A statement indicating to the reference that the individual will be either working with children and/or vulnerable adults or will have access as part of their work.
- All references will be asked if there is any reason why the prospect should not be placed in such a position of trust with children and/or vulnerable adults.

**APPENDIX E**  
**PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING DISCLOSURE BY A CHILD**

1. The staff must investigate suspected marks and discuss with management who reported the marks and if support is needed to make a call to the Children's Aid Society. At this time a decision must be made as to whether the call to the Agency is:
  - a. For consultation purposes
  - b. Non-abuse request or
  - c. Abuse request

If a report is not made to the Children's Aid Society, the marks should be recorded on a chart stating the colour, approximate size and location. If a call is made to the child's parents, the conversation should be recorded on the chart. (See Appendix G).

2. When a decision to report is made, the following information should be documented before calling:
  - a. Type of abuse suspected.
  - b. If physical, documented on chart the location, approximate size (relate size to coin) and colour of marks.
  - c. Name, address, birth date, telephone number and religion of child. Make sure to document any comments the child might have concerning the marks and also the child's condition at the time of the report.
  - d. The name and telephone number of the individual suspected of abuse and where they can be located. If individual suspected of abuse is not the parent, then the name, telephone number and parent's location is to be given. It is important to let the agency know how to approach these parents.
  - e. If the decision to report was made after talking to the parents, then document where the incident occurred and any other information you might have.
  - f. If this is not first incident of concern, have other reports available for reference.
  - g. If any other person or agency has been involved with the child, have the name and telephone number available.
3. When you call the Children's Aid Society make sure:
  - a. You give your full name, professional title, and the name of the YMCA branch/department you work for.
  - b. Report all information you have documented.

**Incidents of a Minor Nature That Occur Repeatedly**

There are three basic steps in the procedure for dealing with "minor" but reoccurring incidents:

1. Record, in writing, all details related to the incidents, including date, time, observation, people involved, and the name of the staff member reporting the incident.

2. Monitor the situation and update record as appropriate. This documentation continues until the situation is judged severe enough to warrant further action or until suspicions are allayed.
3. Report if the evidence persists or escalates to a severe case.

**APPENDIX F**

**TELEPHONE NUMBERS FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED CASES OF  
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

Children’s Aid Society of Hamilton .....	905-522-1121
Halton Children’s Aid Society.....	905-333-4441
Brantford Children’s Aid Society .....	519-753-8681
Catholic Children’s Aid Society .....	905-525-2012

## **APPENDIX G**

### **PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING AN ALLEGATION AGAINST AN EMPLOYEE OR VOLUNTEER**

It can be very distressing when a staff member is accused of abusing a child. A YMCA staff member who receives a disclosure of abuse against another staff member or suspects a colleague of abuse has a legal obligation to report to the local Children's Aid. Staff must follow the procedures outlined below if a report is made against a colleague.

In many cases, handling of a situation in an inappropriate manner can cause an allegation of abuse. Staff should be familiar with and adhere to the YMCA Child Guidance Policies.

In general, an allegation against a staff member is usually made by a parent, a child or a colleague. In all cases, there is a legal obligation to report.

In the event that a parent makes an allegation against a staff member, the obligation to report also lies with the parent. The parent needs to be advised/reminded of their duty to report and be encouraged to make the report to the local Children's Aid. The staff member who has been informed of the situation or observed the situation, has the legal duty to report as well even if the parent(s) report. The staff member must follow the standard Children's Aid reporting procedures to report the allegation against another staff member.

If an allegation is made against a staff member, the staff member will be placed on a leave of absence during the course of the investigation. The YMCA Employee Handbook, section 2.07 – Harassment, shall be applied.

#### **Reporting Procedures for Staff**

Staff must follow these procedures when an allegation or disclosure is made against another staff member or when the abuse by the staff member is witnessed:

- Treat the allegations seriously and confidentially.
- Report immediately to management (includes Coach, Senior Staff or Manager) any allegations of abuse against a staff member.
  - Staff will notify their General Manager, Senior Regional Manager, and Vice President of the allegation. The Vice President will notify the President & CEO and the Vice President of Human Resources (Association Lead responsible for Child Protection)
  - If you are unable to reach a member of your leadership team, call your General Manager/Vice President. If he/she is not available, contact the President & CEO.
  - The staff member must complete the YMCA Child Abuse Reporting form and follow the reporting procedures. The form will be reviewed by management to ensure that all required information is recorded.
  - Staff are required to keep information confidential and not to discuss the allegation with other staff, volunteers, parents or participants. Any questions regarding the incident should be referred to the CEO or his/her designate.

- The Association Lead responsible for child protection (Vice President of Human Resources) is also to be made aware of the situation at the same time as the President & CEO.

### **Procedures for Management**

Management will follow these procedures:

- Staff will notify their General Manager/Vice President of the allegation.
- The General Manager/Vice President will notify the President & CEO and the Association Lead (Vice President of Human Resources).
- Management will ensure that the appropriate procedures have been followed.
- Management must take immediate steps to ensure that children are safe. This includes taking the necessary steps to ensure that the suspected staff member is not left alone with children and is placed on a leave of absence pending the investigation.
- Any questions and enquiries are to be referred to the CEO or to his/her designate.

### **Investigation Outcome**

The YMCA will respond to the outcome of the child abuse investigation in the manner outlined in the current Human Resource Policy.

**APPENDIX H**  
**YMCA SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE REPORTING FORM**  
CONFIDENTIAL WHEN COMPLETED

Reminder:

- The person suspects abuse/received the disclosure must make the call him/herself
- Use pen only when completing the form
- Document the facts only and do not include your personal feelings about the incident or opinions about what may have happened
- Fill out this form every time you have reason to suspect abuse has occurred (even if you only made a consultation call to CAS)
- Do not make a rough copy and then a good copy; keep original facts/notes
- If a mistake is made, do not use white out but rather, cross it out, initial it and continue writing
- If a child is in immediate danger, contact your supervisor immediately to discuss if calling the police is required

Date Form Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of YMCA Branch: \_\_\_\_\_

YMCA Program Name/Course: \_\_\_\_\_

**CHILD'S INFORMATION**

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Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Male  Female

Child's Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Month/Day /Year

Child's Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City/Province Postal Code

Child's Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for this Report:

- Suspicion of abuse
- Child disclosure
- Allegation of abuse against a YMCA staff

**Please use facts only and bullet point form when completing the following questions:**

Describe fully the incident, statement of behaviour and/or physical indications of abuse. Describe fully using the child's words, the interaction between the child and the person to whom the child disclosed:

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If child's explanation was sought or offered, give details, including what was said and when:

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If other staff were consulted about this incident, give details, including the name of the staff, what was said and when:

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

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

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Report made to:

- Children's Aid Society
- Ministry of Education (if applicable)

Serious Occurrence/Incident Report completed and submitted to Manager (if applicable)

Police (if applicable)

Date of Call: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Call: \_\_\_\_\_ a.m./p.m.

CAS Branch/Region contacted (please circle): Hamilton Burlington Brantford Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Children's Aid Social Worker \_\_\_\_\_ ext: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Consultant \_\_\_\_\_ ext: \_\_\_\_\_

Police Officer \_\_\_\_\_ ext: \_\_\_\_\_

Actions CAS said will occur (if known):

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Follow up required by YMCA Staff  Yes  No. If yes, please provide details below:

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Other Comments or observations:

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YMCA Internal Reporting:

<b>Contacted</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
Supervisor	_____	_____	_____
Manager	_____	_____	_____
General Manager	_____	_____	_____
Vice President	_____	_____	_____
Association Lead	_____	_____	_____
President & CEO	_____	_____	_____

Name of Staff Making Report: \_\_\_\_\_

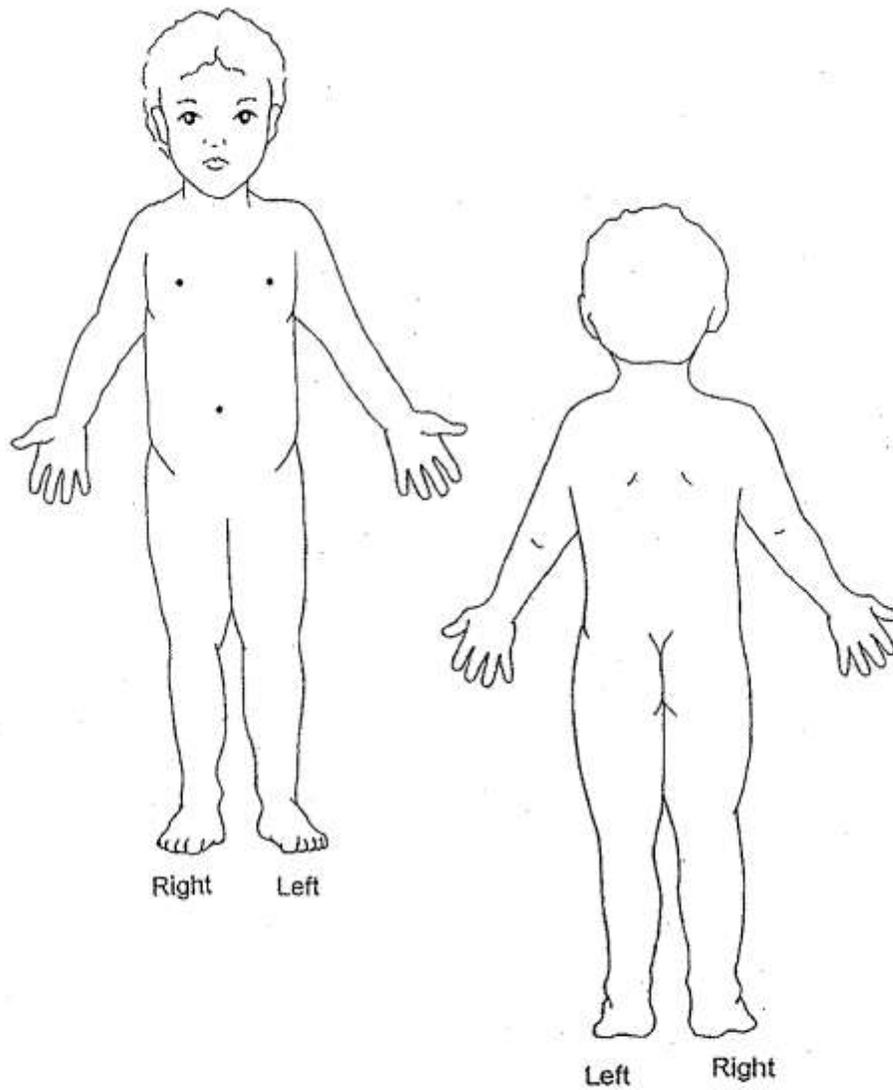
Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Body Chart

APPENDIX I  
YMCA CHILD ABUSE DOCUMENTATION PROCEDURE



## Guidelines for Writing Documentation

All documentation must be:

- Legible and hand written by the person who suspected and reported the suspected abuse (never to be typed on a computer)
- Written with a ball point pen, not a marker or felt tip, which might smudge/leak
- Factual, based on your observations. Do not document your personal thoughts about how it might have happened or include second or third party information.
- Submitted as the original document. Do not re-write your documentation.
- Free of white-out, if you make a mistake, simply cross it out and initial any errors/changes
- Complete with the name(s) and phone number(s) of the individual(s) you spoke with at the Children's Aid Society (CAS) and/or Police Division;
- Complete with any directions you were given by a CAS and/or Police Division
- Signed, dated, and placed in a sealed envelope

Written documentation should include the following information:

- Child's name and address
- Observation date and time
- Description of the full incident(s), and/or situation(s) of suspected abuse (FACTS ONLY). Ensure to include dates, times, behaviours, specific words and interactions between the individuals involved
- Description of the physical condition of the child, including any injuries or signs of illness. Where appropriate, circle the attached Body Chart to indicate location of injury(s).
- Description of the emotional condition of the child, including any behavioural concerns, as well as the child's response upon disclosure (if applicable). Are there any noticeable changes in the child's behaviour?
- If known, a description of any further risks of abuse to the child, including the access of the alleged abuser to the child
- Describe fully the "action taken" on behalf of the child. Include all instructions and/or advice from the Children's Aid Society or Police Official.

**Documentation regarding a CAS record is never to be given to anyone including Police or CAS unless a warrant or subpoena is provided.**

## APPENDIX J

### CHILD GUIDANCE AND ABUSE PROTOCOLS REVIEW POLICY

#### Introduction

Effective programs are planned to:

- Recognize and accept each child's individuality, and developmental level.
- Establish feelings of trust and security.
- Enhance feelings of mutual respect, acceptance and caring between children and adults.
- Encourage positive social interaction.
- Allow children to select, plan, and organize their own learning activities for a significant portion of the program day.
- Minimize problematic environmental influences.

It is the responsibility of every site Director or General Manager to ensure that each person involved with the children has read the Child Guidance Policy prior to commencing her/his work.

This will include program staff, supply staff, volunteers and students. After reading the policy, program and supply staff will initial/sign their sign off sheets. These are to be kept in their individual files. Volunteers and students will sign the sign off sheet and insert in the actual policy manual with a copy to the Human Resources department for tracking/record purposes.

The policy will be reviewed annually with all staff in direct child supervisor program delivery positions including supply staff, students and volunteers.

#### Child Guidance Principles

The Child Guidance Principles stated in this policy are intended to foster desired behaviours rather than focus on less desirable behaviours. All YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford staff and volunteers should:

##### 1. Plan for Positive Outcomes

Plan for the needs, the developmental level and the personality of the children in your program. Arrange the environment to meet these needs. Be aware of the emotional environment and intervene before play deteriorates.

##### 2. Recognize Positive Behaviour

Show your genuine approval when children are engaged in positive activity.

##### 3. Project a Cheerful Attitude

Be enthusiastic and call upon your sense of humour. Let children appreciate the funny side of things.

**4. Offer Choices**

Choices must be real choices which are clearly understood by the child and acceptable to you.

**5. Encourage Children**

Encouragement indicates that we appreciate the child's effort and provides them with the impetus to explore and initiate. Acknowledge successes and all children's efforts to succeed.

**6. Relate Clear Messages**

Make requests in clear, precise terms in keeping with the child's developmental level. Say what you want to have happen.

**7. Do Not Reinforce Inappropriate Behaviour**

If using this method, all staff must be working together so that one person does not reinforce the poor behaviour others are ignoring. The child may need to be removed from the audience or the audience from the children.

**8. Be Flexible**

Sometimes you can change your mind. Rules can change if it's sensitive and appropriate to change them.

**9. Point Out Natural or Logical Consequences**

Clarifying logical consequences can help develop understanding and self-discipline.

**10. Provide Time Alone**

As soon after misbehaviour as possible allow the child time to be alone, regenerate and a cooling off period. **Renewal time is not punishment or time out**, it is time to adjust mixed feelings or regain composure.

**11. Remember to Show You Care**

Children often feel the only way they can get attention is to cause problems; reinforce the positive. A hug is important to a child.

**12. Promote Discussion**

Let the children own the problem, assist them to talk and listen to each other.

**13. Recognize Our Anger**

Learn to recognize the first feelings of your own anger, try to figure out why you feel annoyed and express your anger rationally and appropriately.

**Serious Behaviour Policy**

This policy is considered for behaviour that has changed from a couple of times a week, to frequent and expected occurrences. Staff will do the following:

1. Staff will meet with the Supervisor daily for advice, support and to maintain a healthy perspective devoid of blame.

2. Distribute relevant material for all families to read.
3. Every occurrence of behaviour will be charted, including time, participants, staff present and circumstances.
4. Evaluate your response to each situation. Create a plan. Follow through with plan – this will include changing the environment, providing alternatives of serious behaviour and shadowing. This step will involve the family of the child exhibiting behaviour in ensuring consistency at home.
5. Consider early transition if possible for children exhibiting serious behaviour.
6. Consult outside resources. This process will occur over months.
7. Confidentiality will be respected.
8. These steps will be taken before considering any other permanent plans of asking for removal of a child from the centre. This would only occur after months of effort when all other steps have been taken and other children are in serious harm.
9. The permanent removal of a child from a YMCA program must be authorized by the CEO or delegate.

### **Examples of Serious Behaviour**

- Biting
- Hitting
- Scratching
- Kicking
- Spitting
- Throwing toys/equipment
- Swearing
- Running away (out front doors off site)

### **Abuse Protocols Review Policy**

Upon initial hiring, a new employee in the YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford will become oriented to the Child Protection Policy via the following procedures:

1. Child Protection Policy will be introduced during the first day. The policy is reviewed at the employee's annual appraisal.
2. The Child Protection Policy sheet is dated and signed annually. This should be sent to Human Resources for filing in the employee's file.

## APPENDIX K

### ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR BETWEEN CHILDREN

Abusive behaviour between children, including sexual behaviour, generally involves an imbalance of power. For example, one child may be significantly older than the other, or one of the children may be more vulnerable for other reasons.

This kind of behaviour has many different causes and occurs along a continuum of severity. Responses to the child's behaviour will therefore vary. A sensitive, collaborative approach and careful analysis by service providers, parents and the community are key components of any effective response.

Upon discovery of the allegations, the staff are to immediately intervene in the interests of protection and safety and then the parents of the children involved will be contacted and be involved in the response decision.

The decision as to whether to report to Children's Aid is made on a case-by-case basis. There is no need to report:

- Normal sexual play or exploration between children of similar ages;
- Minor altercations or aggression between children; and
- Any other activity that is in the bounds of normal childhood behaviour

Factors to be considered when deciding to report include:

- The seriousness of the behaviour;
- The existence of a power imbalance between children;
- Is the behaviour considered harassment;
- Whether the behaviour resulted in harm to the child(ren); and
- The willingness and ability of the involved children's parents to respond appropriately.

In deciding whether to report to Children's Aid, ask yourself:

- Are the children behaving inappropriately for their age?
- Are they being coercive or exploitive?
- Is their behaviour impulsive or premeditated?
- Is there a pattern of domination, force, aggression (actual or threatened) or intimidation, which endangers the physical or psychological well being of another child?

YMCA staff should document any behaviours that raise concern on an ongoing basis.

## APPENDIX L

### VULNERABLE ADULT ABUSE POLICY

#### Definition

A vulnerable adult is someone defined as: an adult who, because of disability, medical condition, communication problem, or advanced age, has difficulty expressing or acting upon his or her wishes.

#### Types of Vulnerable Adult Neglect and Abuse

##### 1. Neglect

Failure or refusal to meet the needs of a person unable to meet those needs him/herself. The two forms of neglect are:

###### a) Active Neglect

Intentional or deliberate withholding of basic necessities and/or care for physical or mental health. Basic necessities include clothing, food, water, heat, medical treatment, medications, and needed aids or equipment.

###### b) Passive Neglect

Not providing basic necessities and care, with no conscious attempt to inflict distress.

Examples of passive neglect include

- Denial of service because of a lack of experience, information or ability
- A lack of daily personal hygiene
- Abandonment

##### 2. Abuse

Any inappropriate action that causes, or is likely to cause, the person physical or psychological harm, financial or material loss. Abuse can be manifested in several forms, including physical, sexual, psychological, financial, material. Different types of abuse can occur in isolation or together. There are several specific types of abuse:

###### a) Physical Abuse

Any act of violence or rough treatment, whether or not physical injury results. Examples of physical abuse include: rough handling, slapping, pinching, pushing, shoving, beating, twisting, shaking, burning, forced feeding, restriction of movement.

###### b) Sexual Abuse

Any sexual behaviour directed toward a vulnerable adult without his or her full knowledge and informed consent. It includes sexual harassment, sexual assault, or any act designed to sue the adult for the

abuser's sexual gratification. Sexual abuse also includes taking advantage of the vulnerability of a resident to engage in sexual behaviour, with or without the person's consent.

c) Psychological, Verbal or Emotional Abuse

Behaviour leading to debilitating emotional stress or mental anguish. It includes excessive, aggressive or unreasonable demands on a person. It can also include degrading, isolating, rejecting, constant criticism, belittling, name-calling, silent treatment, social isolation, denial of privacy, denying participation in discussions regarding his/her own life, and instilling fear through intimidation and threats.

d) Financial Abuse

Improperly or illegally taking/keeping the person's money or other valuable possessions. Some examples include: misrepresenting what the person is signing, forcing a person to sell property, stealing a person's money, pension cheques or possessions, obtaining goods or power by fraud, forgery and extortion, wrongful use of power of attorney, not paying the person's bills, not making "comfort money" available.

e) Medical Abuse

Any medical procedure or treatment that is done without the permission of the older person, or the person's legally recognized proxy. It also refers to actions that are not within accepted medical practice. Medical abuse includes: using medication, prescriptions or treatments without the person's consent, withholding medication or overmedication (use of chemical restraints), forcing treatment, refusing to let the person see her or his own physician, using treatments beyond or without a physician's orders, using unnecessary medical treatments.

### 3. Violation of Rights

Denial of an adult's basic rights (according to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons (1975) and United Nations Principles for Older Persons). Examples include: withholding information, denying privacy, visitors, worship, restricting liberty, confining a person in a hospital or institution, censoring mail, not informing the person of his/her rights.

## APPENDIX M

### CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY PROTECTION

#### Confidentiality

It must be emphasized that strict confidentiality is extremely important in these situations/circumstances. Inappropriate disclosure of information about the case, whether it has been “proven” or not can result in a lot of extra pain and suffering for the family involved as well as the child. Open discussion about the case among the staff members or volunteers is not appropriate.

Staff must report that a child is or may be in need of protection even when the information is supposed to be confidential or privileged. (The only exception for “privileged” information is in the relationship between solicitor and a client.)

#### Privacy Statement

The YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford and any groups that are officially associated with the YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/ Brantford (HBB YMCA) respect your personal privacy. We appreciate your concern about your personal information, and believe ensuring the security of your personal information is an important part of our job. We strive to protect any personal information you give to HBB YMCA (address, name, email address, phone number, etc). If we ask you to provide us with any personal information, we will tell you the purposes for which we intend to use that information. **We will not collect, use, or disclose your personal information without your consent. We collect no personal information about you unless you choose to provide that information to us. We do not use techniques that collect personal information about you without your knowledge. Your personal information is not lent or sold to anyone for any purpose.** It is our intention to fully comply with the “Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act” passed by the Government of Canada in April 2000 – for your benefit and ours.

## **APPENDIX N**

### **LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY**

1. **Penalty for Failure to Report**

Failure to report is an offence under the Child and Family Services Act. Any professional or official who fails to report his/her suspicion of a child's abuse is liable on conviction to a fine of up to \$1,000.

2. **Protection from Liability**

Should civil action be brought against a person who made a report he/she will be protected unless he/she acted maliciously or without reasonable grounds for his/her belief or suspicion.

## APPENDIX O

### CHILD ABUSE REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR SERIOUS OCCURENCES FOR CHILD CARE CENTRES

#### Phase 1: Initial Notification (Within 1 Hour)

1. Child Care Supervisor informs Preschool Manager.
2. Child Care Supervisor phones Children's Aid Society
3. Child Care Supervisor also notifies:
  - a. Ministry of Education Program Advisor
  - b. Regional Social Services

#### Phase 2: Complete/Review Documentation

1. Staff completes a written report and forwards to the Child Care Supervisor in a confidential envelope.

#### Phase 3: Forward Documentation

1. Child Care Supervisor forwards written documentation in a sealed confidential envelope within 24 hours to:
  - Ministry of Education
  - Regional Social Services
  - Children's Aid Society
  - Branch Vice President
  - Vice President of Human Resources
2. The Vice President of Human Resources will review and notify the President & CEO as required.

## APPENDIX P

### ABUSE PREVENTION STRATEGY

#### Issue

The YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford views the prevention of abuse and the safety of children and vulnerable adults participating in YMCA programs and services as of the utmost importance and priority in YMCA program delivery.

While the YMCA views prevention of abuse as a primary priority, it also recognizes the importance to protect the Association from the catastrophic losses associated with abuse. The two main risks to the association as related to abuse are adverse impacts to financial position (via law suits) and reputation (affecting ongoing revenue, grant funding, and philanthropy). **Both of these risks hold the potential to permanently and irreparably damage the YMCA's ability to operate.**

While the Child Protection Policy protocols regarding the hiring, and training of staff and volunteers reduce the likelihood of an abuse situation, accusations of abuse hold the same damage potential to the YMCA as do actual abuse.

The best way to limit the likelihood of an accusation, or dismiss an erroneous accusation, is through witnesses (participants, staff or volunteers). There is however instances where the YMCA staff and volunteers are left alone with children or vulnerable adults in our programs. In such situations, should an accusation of abuse follow, it can only be disputed through a) the reliability of the accuser in contrast with the reliability of the accused, and b) the likelihood of the accusation being accurate given concurrent facts of the situation. However, even if the accusation is ultimately proven to be false, the accusation can have lasting and significant negative impact.

Due to the nature of the services of the YMCA, accusations of abuse can be controlled, but not limited.

#### Identification

This policy is intended to cover all full and part time employees and volunteers. All senior staff for each branch are responsible for implementing and reviewing the policy.

The following locations and scenarios represent situations that hold the greatest potential for a YMCA staff person or volunteer to be alone with a child or a vulnerable adult, and therefore, placed at risk for an accusation of abuse:

1. Change rooms in all Health and Fitness facilities
2. Bathrooms in all facilities
3. General use areas at low volume times (i.e. the last child picked up at a child care centre or school age site)
4. Miscellaneous locations separate from YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford property where program/care is being provided and circumstances dictate that a staff/volunteer is left alone with a child i.e. field trips, camping trips
5. Children or vulnerable adults in transit with a YMCA employee i.e. Wanakita or Day Camp employee driving a camper to the hospital for medical treatment
6. YMCA Wanakita

## Protocols

1. All program delivery/care/regular maintenance/regular housekeeping in all areas must be planned out as part of a written schedule and overt deviations from the plan must be documented. This will help account for the location of staff in the event of an accusation of abuse. If through the course of events any time a staff or volunteer enters a situation where they are alone with a child or vulnerable adult participant, they will remove themselves from the situation immediately (or bring another staff/volunteer/participant into the situation) unless by leaving the child or vulnerable adult, is placed at risk.
2. All activities that are typical but not part of routine duties, such as escorted trips to the bathroom or change room, unplanned transit with a YMCA staff or volunteer, discipline and private discussion, must always be in plain view of at least one other staff/volunteer/ participant.
3. Some routine program delivery/care requires time spent alone with a participant, such as one on one support with a person with special needs, or care of younger children. In such cases, every effort will be made to ensure that their interactions are in plain view of least one other staff/volunteer/participant whenever reasonable and possible.
4. Application forms completed for all staff and volunteers that are to be hired/placed (see minimum requirements attached).
5. Reference checks for all staff and volunteers will be completed with a specific question being asked about suitability to work with children and/or vulnerable adults.
6. Training to include but not limited to YMCA Child Protection Policy.
7. Documentation of training and employee/volunteer sign off annually as part of the annual performance appraisal.
8. Audit review of programs and documentation of training and employee sign off.
9. Legal council review of Child Protection Policy.
10. Incident reporting system implemented.
11. Staff records including: application form, annual sign off of Child Protection Policy, annual performance appraisals, all to be kept indefinitely by the Human Resource Department.
12. General Managers/Vice Presidents from all branches will ensure that the Child Protection Policy including all documentation is being met.