

# Safe People

Creating safe places and situations

We are a community within which love, justice, truth, peace, and self-discipline are nurtured and valued. The overall aim for the Screening in Faith policy is to ensure that there is a safe environment in every parish, ministry, and activity.

## Safe Environments

When we talk about screening we talk about safe people. We must not forget that it is also very important to create safe environments, that is, safe places and safe situations.

## Points to consider

- two adults are required to be present during any activity for young children or youth
- activity rooms should have windows that allow an outside person to see in
- in the case of children, there should be two leaders or an open door
- a leader should not meet alone with a child but should be joined by another leader if the meeting is to be private
- arrange for a bathroom monitor to keep the door slightly open when children are using the bathroom
- during diaper changing, the changing table should be in view of another nursery worker

## Safe situations

Safety doesn't apply just to children; it applies to everybody. Priests, leaders, counsellors and other adults in the church are also vulnerable, and need to be protected. Transparency in all our dealings with others is necessary.

Some rules, that protect everyone involved:

- never be closed up in a room where people cannot see in
- never be in a car alone with a minor
- when a priest or pastoral care worker gets called to visit a single distressed person, they should take another person along if at all possible. In an emergency, and failing all else, the priest or visitor should tell someone else, such as a spouse or secretary, where they are going and how they will be.
- if a pastoral care worker encounters a compromising situation or crisis, they should report the incident as soon as possible to the rector or their pastoral supervisor
- transparency in our dealings with others is always the Diocesan standard

## Safe people

In making our churches safe places we must:

- safeguard preschoolers, children, youth, and vulnerable others in our church
- take steps that will protect the church staff and volunteer workers from potential allegations of abuse
- limit the extent of legal risk and liability due to abuse

### Vulnerable people

We take it for granted that our children and youth are vulnerable. We know that the elderly or the disabled can also be vulnerable. What is less understood is that there are other vulnerabilities that are much less obvious but nonetheless real.

- the bereaved
- both partners in troubled marriages
- the survivors of childhood abuse
- people of any age during illness or other crisis

*This policy has been prepared with the help of a coalition of faith partners and reflects a shared commitment among the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Unitarian Universalist and United Churches, and the Pentecostal Assembly. It also reflects that church coalition's cooperation with Volunteers Canada, Scouts Canada, Sports & Recreation Canada, and other caring partners.*