



PC WILDERNESS CAMPS

SAFE PLACE POLICY

A summary of the Abuse Protocols & Staff Handbook

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the commitment of Peace Country Wilderness Camps (PCWC) to do everything possible to insure the protection of all who attend our camping program and to recognize our Duty of Care to all people to whom we are responsible. The following procedures are intended to balance the spiritual responsibilities of PCWC with its moral, ethical and legal obligations under the Dominion of Canada and the Province of Alberta. It is our desire to protect vulnerable persons from all forms of abuse and to protect camp workers from false allegations and free them for ministry.

We have developed this plan on two fronts:

1. SCRIPTURAL BASIS FOR POLICY

- a. "The body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ....but God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together."
1 Corinthians 12, 24b, 25, 26 ESV
- b. "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."
Galatians 6:2 ESV
- c. "For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another."
Galatians 5:13 ESV
- d. "But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints." Ephesians 5:3 ESV
- e. "Abstain from every form of evil." 1 Thessalonians 5:22 ESV

2. CULTURAL BASIS FOR POLICY

- a. People entrusting loved ones to the care of PCWC need assurance that the camp is a safe place.
- b. Vulnerable persons need attention and affection and therefore may be easy targets of abuse.
- c. Children may be easy targets of abuse because they have a natural curiosity and are taught to respect and obey authority figures.
- d. Abuse and false allegation have lasting and far reaching effects.

This **policy** has three purposes:

1. To provide a safe and secure environment for our campers.
2. To train our volunteers, enabling them to better deal with this important issue.
3. To protect our volunteers, providing them an atmosphere for service where unfounded accusations of misconduct are staved off by our "Duty of Care". (see definition on page 7 of the Abuse Protocols & Staff Handbook)

BASIC QUALIFICATIONS FOR STAFF

Peace Country Wilderness Camps affirms that child abuse in all its forms is both sinful and criminal. It is our desire to provide a safe environment for all our campers and staff. All persons who have a ministry within PCWC must meet the following requirements:

1. They are born-again believers in Jesus Christ
2. They agree to our Statement of Faith
3. All persons have been screened by means of the **Selection Process** and have been trained in dealing with issues of child abuse either by attending Spring Roundup, LIT, or reviewing PCWC's Staff Handbook prior to staffing a PCWC camp.
4. The camp shall never hire staff or volunteers with a prior conviction of sexual abuse. Even if the known "offender" has repented, perhaps served time in prison and had extensive counseling, it is not a sign of 'un-forgiveness' to prevent them access to vulnerable persons. Rather, it is a dangerous mistake to present temptation to them.

(taken from page 9 of the Abuse Protocols & Staff Handbook)

Selection Process (taken from page 8 of the Abuse Protocols & Staff Handbook)

- a. Recruiting and Screening of Camp Staff, paid and volunteer
 - i. Those persons responsible for recruiting shall screen potential workers. This should include the use of:
 1. Position description
 2. Application form including references
 3. Volunteer interview
 4. Criminal Record check including a Vulnerable Sector Verification search
 - ii. The Executive Board will determine the basis on which they will refuse an applicant for a particular position.
- b. Training of Camp Staff
 - i. PCWC is free to institute any other form of supervision; training and instruction which it feels will lessen the possibility of abuse. (i.e. LIT, Spring Roundup)
 - ii. Camp workers shall be given instruction which will lessen the probability of an allegation subsequently being made against them.
- c. Confidentiality
 - i. All related materials and information will be maintained in appropriate confidential files, available only to authorized personnel.

Ministry Responsibilities

1. Volunteers should be aware of risk and be able to assess the situation for safety.
 - a. Good risk management starts by acknowledging the risks that are involved in offering services and programs. The leadership is responsible to ensure risk assessment is completed and to develop specific procedures, identifying potential dangers and anticipating the kinds of difficulties that may arise. (taken from page 8 of the Abuse Protocols & Staff Handbook)

2. Volunteers are encouraged to attend the pre-camp meeting as set by the Director along with all morning staff meetings.
3. All volunteers are expected to follow PCWC's Code of Conduct and behavioral expectations. (See pages 4-6 of the Abuse Protocols & Staff Handbook)
4. All volunteers are required to agree with PCWC's Statement of Faith and be a born-again Christian. (See page 3 of the Abuse Protocols & Staff Handbook)
5. All volunteers are expected to attend Spring Roundup (See page 9 of the Abuse Protocols & Staff Handbook) and must sign the Signature of Compliance form stating that they understand and submit to PCWC Safe Place policy.

PROGRAM MAINTENANCE

(See pages 8 & 9 of the Abuse Protocols & Staff Handbook)

1. Training will be completed on an annual basis, ensuring all staff are appropriately educated and informed of any changes.
2. Records (taken from page 10 of the Abuse Protocols & Staff Handbook)
 - iii. Records shall be kept of the names and addresses of parents, campers and staff.
 - iv. The camp shall maintain a central registry with a file for each camp worker which shall contain recruiting, screening and supervision information. In addition the camp shall maintain a central registry with a file for each camper in the Camper Registration database.
 - v. Where abuse is alleged or has occurred, records shall be kept relating thereto, indefinitely.
 - vi. Access to the registry shall be limited on a need-to-know basis to the Board Chairman or board members of committees responsible for recruiting staff.
3. An assessment of risk will be completed by camp leadership, identifying potential dangers and anticipating the kinds of difficulties that may arise.
4. Current criminal record checks for all volunteers will be obtained every three years to ensure accuracy.

Reporting (taken from page 12 & 13 of the Abuse Protocols & Staff Handbook)

Responding to an Allegation or Disclosure

1. When the situation calls for it, camp workers shall respond on a human and spiritual level. Thus, when a person makes it clear he wants to be listened to, it is always appropriate to do so. At the same time, common sense should prevail, so that the human or spiritual response does not interfere with the police investigation. For example, asking leading questions about the details of an allegation, or showing photographs of the alleged offender,

before the police arrive will interfere with the subsequent police investigation.

2. If possible, a response should not be made which in and of itself would cause the person responding to become a witness in a court proceeding.
3. When an allegation surfaces, the camp worker shall be asked to temporarily step aside from his duties, pending the outcome of the police investigation into the allegation.
4. When questionable conduct surfaces, which in and of itself would not interest the police, such as extended hugging, spending time alone with a camper in private, or any other conduct which might pose a danger to a vulnerable person, steps shall be taken to prevent a reoccurrence.

Action

1. Remember that physical and sexual abuse is a criminal offence. By law you must report any situation where “a child may be in need of protection” (Alberta Child Welfare Act) to the immediate supervisor who in turn will report to the Board Chairman. The Board Chairman is required to report the offence to an agency. Once the situation is reported, the agency is responsible for taking action to protect the camper, contacting the police, arranging a medical examination and informing the parent or guardian.
2. The victim is to maintain as much control over their situation as possible (when they will tell, whether you accompany them, etc.), telling only those who need to know.
3. Document everything that happens between camp worker and camper as well as others involved in the situation including as much of the conversation as possible.

Conclusion

These guidelines are designed to create a safe environment for vulnerable persons and to prevent abuse and sexual misconduct. The prevalence of abuse and sexual misconduct in society at large demands a sober and serious response from all members of society. The gospel requires no less of a response on the part of Peace Country Wilderness Camps.

Signature of Compliance:

(Please submit this document to the Director you are working with or directly to PCWC Secretary, Amy Heyn)

RR2, Site 10, Box 82, Sexsmith, AB T0H 3C0
780.832.1139
amydheyn@gmail.com

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I have read, understood and submit to Peace Country Wilderness Camps Safe Place Policy as laid out in this summary of the Abuse Protocols and Staff Handbook, understanding that I am responsible for following all policy and procedure as written in the Handbook.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____