



**VULNERABLE  
POPULATION PROTECTION  
POLICY  
&  
PROCEDURES HANDBOOK**

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## **Purpose**

The purpose of this handbook is to provide the leadership and membership of TEAM a detailed explanation of its Vulnerable Population Protection Policy & Procedures and to offer specific guidelines to follow when an incident is recognized or suspected. It is extremely important for anyone involved with the various ministries of TEAM to be familiar with this information prior to an incident's occurrence.

The specific guidelines are to be followed when incidents of abuse, or suspected abuse, come to light. Definitions of terms used in this handbook are provided in the Policy. Fundamental philosophical and doctrinal issues are also addressed.

The heart of the Policy is to instill confidence and ensure that everyone, regardless of position or status, is treated in a godly manner while bearing in mind that the focus of this Policy is the safety and security of our children and other vulnerable people in our care. There is no intent, in any way, to usurp a parent's role as a primary caregiver and guardian of their children. However, the responsibility of the parent, as well as the mission, is to provide a safe and secure environment for all children and vulnerable people in our care.

## **Philosophy and Value Statement**

“And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea” (Matthew 18:5–6, NIV).

Children and vulnerable people are seen as gifts from God to be nurtured and watched over. Because of the value placed on children and vulnerable people, TEAM will prohibit anyone from participation in our ministry who has, as an adult, abused children or any vulnerable person. TEAM acknowledges that offenders can be forgiven for their actions, restored and have an active role in reaching the lost world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. However, TEAM does not believe it is appropriate to have such people as part of its mission.



## **Child Safety and Protection Network**

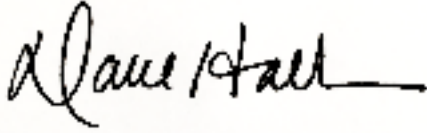
TEAM is a part of the Child Safety & Protection Network (CSPN). According to their website,<sup>1</sup> the CSPN is “a collaborative network of mission agencies, faith based NGOs and international Christian schools intentionally and strategically addressing the issues of child protection.”

The CSPN began in September 2006 and now has more than 112 organizations participating in the network. To see a list of participating organizations, please visit the Agencies page on their website.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information, please visit <https://www.cspn.org/>.

# Vulnerable Population Protection Policy

Document No.	
Effective Date	12/1/16
Revision Date	10/23/2020
Revision No.	2
Approval Signatures: 	

## 1. Purpose

This Vulnerable Population Protection Policy (“Policy”) establishes guidelines for conduct that is specifically related to the vulnerable populations TEAM is responsible for protecting, including correction and discipline for offenses of vulnerable population abuse (as defined herein).

## 2. Policy

- 2.1. Our policy is **zero tolerance** for any abuse of a vulnerable person (hereinafter, every reference to “abuse” will mean abuse of a vulnerable person). TEAM will not knowingly accept into membership anyone with an adult history or record of confessed or proven vulnerable population abuse or domestic abuse. Also, no one who confesses to having, or is proven to have, abused a vulnerable person will be allowed to continue in service or employment, whether the offense was committed during their time in TEAM or previous to that. TEAM will permanently dismiss any personnel found to have been involved in any abuse. Anyone who comes into the organization intending to fill a prominent role with vulnerable persons must undergo a thorough background check and is subject to additional application procedures.
- 2.2. It is the policy of TEAM to not accept any applicant who has at any time during their adult life been convicted, pled guilty or no contest to, or found civilly liable for, abuse. Should information of a prior adult conviction, plea of guilty or no contest, or finding of civil liability for abuse not previously reported by an applicant or member come to light, that individual will be dismissed without opportunity to be reinstated at a future date. TEAM will permanently dismiss any member or employee found to have been involved in any

abuse.

- 2.3. Missionaries dismissed from TEAM for reason of abuse will not be allowed to return to or participate in any TEAM training or ministry.
- 2.4. In the event of child sexual abuse concerning possession, distribution or manufacturing of child pornography, that information and evidence will be immediately forwarded to the appropriate civil authorities for whatever action they deem appropriate.
- 2.5. All incidents of abuse, alleged and actual, will immediately be reported to the supervising Senior Director (“SD”) and/or the Personnel Group for immediate review and monitoring. TEAM will report the issue to the civil authorities in accordance with the law under the supervision of secured legal counsel. The reporting individual, or individuals with knowledge, may have a separate reporting obligation as well.

### 3. Revision History

Date	Revision No.	Change	Reference Section
12/2016		This Policy replaces the Child Protection Policy of 2004	
08/28/17	1	Modified language in medical care response to account for the remote areas in which TEAM personnel serve	9.4.1.
10/23/20	2	Removed <i>Procedures When Working With Children</i> from Policy, as same information appears later in Handbook  Added language regarding ongoing personnel training  Added language regarding incident report summaries  1) Updated child/VP language to bring consistency throughout the Policy and Handbook. 2) Removed direct reference to the Legal Department and replaced with the Personnel Group. 3) Updated TEAM member language (“staff” to “personnel”) to be consistent throughout. 4) Made changes to reflect TEAM's current organizational structure (“CEO” to “International Director”) and reporting procedures (“Senior Director and/or Personnel Group”)	Formerly 9.3.  9.2.1.2.  10.6.  Entire Policy

### 4. Persons Affected

- 4.1. All TEAM members, employees, volunteers and others involved with agency programs (“TEAM personnel”) are included in the scope of this Policy.

## **5. Board Parameters<sup>2</sup>**

- 5.1. TEAM personnel will be only those who are new creatures in Christ, who have a deep love for Him, and who are motivated by that love to involvement in the global spread of the Gospel of Christ and the growth of His Church.
- 5.2. All TEAM personnel wholeheartedly and without mental reservation agree to the Statement of Faith. (Constitution, Article III, Section 1 and Article VIII, Section 3).
- 5.3. TEAM personnel accept the Bible as their final authority for life and conduct and hold that prohibitions on moral conduct as stated in the Old and New Testaments are, therefore, applicable and binding (excluding civil and ceremonial laws of the Old Testament). (See 5.1).
- 5.4. TEAM believes in creating a culture of responsibility, grace and trust, dependent on the Holy Spirit and the spiritual maturity of TEAM personnel, in the application of biblical guidelines for moral conduct.

## **6. Administrative Policy**

- 6.1. TEAM values boys and girls of all ages and races and all members of the vulnerable populations in its care. The Bible teaches that vulnerable populations are gifts from the Lord and that all adults have a solemn, God-given responsibility to care for them properly.
- 6.2. Within the limits of the organization's jurisdiction, TEAM will do everything possible to ensure the protection of vulnerable populations from harm and abuse.
- 6.3. TEAM expects and requires proper moral and ethical conduct toward all vulnerable populations.
- 6.4. Protecting vulnerable populations as specified herein is TEAM's primary goal. TEAM, however, recognizes that the reputation of an individual, church or agency can be seriously harmed by a false report of abuse and therefore will also seek to protect innocent parties, and avoid, if possible, false claims and false reports of abuse.
- 6.5. Healthy human relationships between adults and vulnerable persons include expressions of proper care and affection, guided by biblical standards of morality, ethics, compassion and prudence.
- 6.6. Every person serving with TEAM has the privilege of being a role model for the vulnerable persons with whom they come in contact.

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<sup>2</sup> Board parameters are set by the Board and can only be changed by the Board.

## 7. Definitions

- 7.1. Accused. A person (whether an adult or a child perpetrator as described in Section 7.8.1 below) who is alleged to have committed an act of vulnerable person abuse, a serious violation of this Policy, or has been charged with a crime involving vulnerable person abuse.
- 7.2. Administrative Leave. Relieving the accused of assigned duties, or restricting those duties, pending further notice from the accused's TEAM supervisor.
- 7.3. Adult. Any person who is eighteen (18) or older.
- 7.4. Child. Any person under the age of eighteen (18).
- 7.5. TEAM Personnel. TEAM members, employees, volunteers and others involved with agency programs.
- 7.6. Victim. An individual who is actually or allegedly the target of vulnerable person abuse or inappropriate behavior.
- 7.7. Vulnerable Population/Vulnerable Person(s). Any person under the age of eighteen, certain physically or emotionally handicapped persons, or in some cases the dependent elderly. Hereinafter referred to as "VP".
- 7.8. Vulnerable Person Abuse (TEAM Definition). The treatment of a VP, often in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power, which involves inappropriate, immoral or threatened behavior to or with a VP, or which endangers or impairs the health or welfare of a VP. VP abuse can be perpetrated with or without the consent of the victim. It can occur in a one-on-one encounter or in a group setting. VP abuse is recognized under four categories: child-to child cases (defined in Section 7.8.1), sexual abuse (defined in Section 7.8.2), physical abuse (defined in Section 7.8.3), and neglect (defined in Section 7.8.4). TEAM also recognizes and takes seriously emotional abuse toward VPs, which has the potential to diminish the sense of identity, dignity and/or self-worth of the VP. Under this Policy, emotional abuse shall be considered and subject to the administrative protocol for "inappropriate behavior."
  - 7.8.1. Child-to-Child Cases. Should the victim and the accused both be under the age of eighteen, conduct will typically be considered VP abuse if there is a difference based on (i) age [defined as a difference of three or more years (1095 days)] between the victim and the accused, or (ii) there is a difference in responsibility, trust or power between them. If neither (i) or (ii) exists, then what would normally be defined as VP abuse will be considered "inappropriate behavior," with an action plan put in place to address the behaviors of concern and their consequences.



- 7.8.2. Sexual VP Abuse is the involvement of a VP, knowingly or unknowingly, in sexual activity by an adult or a child (as defined above) that includes but is not limited to:
- 7.8.2.1. Verbal: Remarks which include sexual threats, solicitation, sexually explicit language (whether in person, on the telephone, via text messaging or internet), or any verbal expression with the intent to arouse or stimulate.
  - 7.8.2.2. Visual: Indecent exposure; showing or taking suggestive pictures or pornographic images of genitals; the showing of unclothed persons, any sexual activity, or simulated sexual activity such as masturbation or intercourse; or peeping, leering, or staring.
  - 7.8.2.3. Physical Touch: Physical contact (or penetration by penis, fingers, or any other body part or object) with a victim's clothed or unclothed genitals, pubic area, buttocks or female breast; or causing a vulnerable person to perform any of these acts. This category also includes masturbation in front of or to the victim, and rubbing, holding or kissing for the purpose of sexual gratification.
- 7.8.3. Physical VP Abuse is any act which results in a non-accidental physical injury. Such acts may include, but are not limited to: slapping, punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, burning, holding under water, pulling hair or holding against one's will.
- 7.8.3.1. Physical discipline by a parent of their own child, such as spanking or paddling, is not considered abuse as long as it is not unreasonably severe corporal punishment, where "unreasonably severe" is defined as significant deviation from what is culturally appropriate during the period of time in question.
  - 7.8.3.2. Unreasonably severe corporal punishment of the VP by the accused would include:
    - 7.8.3.2.1. Actions resulting in physical injury, including bruises (it is recognized that a small percentage of children and some elderly adults bruise very easily, and that fact shall be considered).
    - 7.8.3.2.2. Inconsistent, arbitrary punishment designed not to educate, but to instill fear.
    - 7.8.3.2.3. Punishment that is inappropriate for the age or maturity of the VP.
    - 7.8.3.2.4. Punishment resulting from unreasonable expectations or demands on the VP by the caregiver.

7.8.3.2.5. Punishment that is the result of a caregiver losing control during discipline, including discipline being administered in anger.

7.8.4. Neglect is the failure of an adult to provide for the development of the VP in all spheres: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter, and safe living conditions, in the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caregivers, and that causes, or has a high probability of causing, harm to the VP's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. This includes the failure to properly supervise and protect the VP from harm as much as feasible. Neglect also includes depriving a VP of the VP's basic needs of food, clothing, warmth and shelter, emotional and physical security and protection, medical and dental care, cleanliness, education and supervision.

## **8. Responsibility**

- 8.1. TEAM's International Director is responsible for overall enforcement of this Policy.
- 8.2. TEAM's Personnel Group is responsible to review this Vulnerable Population Protection Policy & Procedures Handbook annually, and to ensure that these policies are communicated to and training is implemented for all TEAM personnel.

## **9. Procedures**

- 9.1. Screening. TEAM takes the following steps to put forth best efforts to screen out VP abusers:
  - 9.1.1. Written Applications. Written applications for all TEAM personnel positions in which the applicant will work with VPs requires the applicant to disclose their:
    - 9.1.1.1. Specific history of employment and volunteer work with VPs;
    - 9.1.1.2. Answers to questions related to inappropriate behavior or abuse of VPs.
  - 9.1.2. References. TEAM requires at least three written references for all applicants who will be working with VPs, and has developed a set of reference inquiries that are designed to obtain information regarding any past problems while working with VPs.
  - 9.1.3. Interviews. TEAM conducts interviews with all applicants and has developed a standard set of inquiries about past experience with VPs.
  - 9.1.4. Background Checks. TEAM requires background checks for all adult TEAM personnel from the U.S. or Canada, including criminal records checks relating to any conviction involving abuse of VPs, whether children or adults.

- 9.1.5. Zero Tolerance. TEAM does not employ or accept as a volunteer anyone with a prior conviction or confirmed history of VP abuse or related offenses during their adult life.
- 9.2. Training.
  - 9.2.1. TEAM Personnel Training.
    - 9.2.1.1. Initial Training. All TEAM personnel who are appointed following the implementation of this Policy will complete TEAM's Vulnerable Population Protection Training as a condition of their engagement with TEAM. TEAM volunteers may be exempted from this requirement in certain instances in which they will not be likely to interact with VPs.
    - 9.2.1.2. Ongoing Training. Any TEAM personnel who has never taken this training will be required to complete it. TEAM personnel who regularly work with VPs will be required to take refresher training at regular intervals.
- 9.3. Reporting Violations of this Policy.
  - 9.3.1. Reporting within TEAM. Any TEAM personnel (“reporter”) who has reason to believe or suspect for any reason [including but not limited to (i) the report of the victim, (ii) the reporter’s own observations, and/or (iii) any information received from a third party] that any VP is currently or has historically been the victim of VP abuse by another TEAM personnel or anyone else associated with TEAM (such as a TEAM partner who is or was working with TEAM at the time of the abuse) shall be obligated to report the VP abuse in strict compliance with this Policy. This reporting obligation is not contingent on the perceived validity or severity of the VP abuse. The reporter shall refrain from conducting any investigation of the allegations, and shall do the following:
    - 9.3.1.1. Immediately Report to Senior Director and/or Personnel Group. Report the incident or suspicion immediately to the applicable Senior Director and/or TEAM’s Personnel Group following the procedures outlined in the Vulnerable Population Protection Policy & Procedures Handbook.
    - 9.3.1.2. Senior Director’s Reporting Obligation. Any Senior Director who received a report must forward the report to the Personnel Group immediately.
    - 9.3.1.3. Confidentiality. Once the report has been made to TEAM, except as required by law or this Policy, the reporter shall keep the matter confidential.
  - 9.3.2. Knowledgeable Party Reporting to Outside Authorities. The law may require any knowledgeable parties to report their knowledge to the appropriate civil authorities. It is the responsibility of the knowledgeable party to determine

whether they have a civil reporting obligation in the country where the incident occurred and/or in the home country of the accused.

- 9.3.3. TEAM Reporting to Outside Authorities. TEAM will make any reports required by law to the appropriate officials in the home country(ies) of the accused and the victim, and in the country where the incident occurred.
- 9.4. Procedures When a Sexual Assault Occurs.
  - 9.4.1. Medical Care. When sexual assault and/or rape is alleged or suspected, it is the responsibility of the Senior Director to help the victim by ensuring that they attain appropriate medical care. In some locations, a medical facility equipped to administer appropriate rape protocol may be available. Time is of the essence and a caring, professional medical response is a foundational first response.
- 9.5. Investigative Protocol for a Violation of the Policy.
  - 9.5.1. Process. The process for the investigation of a report of a breach of this Policy is set forth in TEAM's Vulnerable Population Protection Policy & Procedures Handbook.
  - 9.5.2. Cooperation. All TEAM personnel are required to fully cooperate with any internal or authorized external investigation as a condition to their continued employment or association with TEAM.
- 9.6. Outcomes of Investigations and Resulting Administrative Actions by TEAM. The actions that will be taken by TEAM at the culmination of an investigation of a breach of this Policy will depend upon the findings as follows:
  - 9.6.1. Finding That VP Abuse was Committed. When, at the culmination of the investigation, the credibility of the reporter and of the report have been substantiated and the report sufficiently corroborated to conclude that it is more likely than not that the accused did in fact engage in VP abuse (a preponderance standard), TEAM will take administrative action in accordance with this Policy, depending upon the type of VP abuse, as follows:
    - 9.6.1.1. Termination. The accused will be terminated without the opportunity to resign.
    - 9.6.1.2. Accused Classified as Ineligible for Future Service. The accused will not be eligible for future service or employment with TEAM, and not allowed to be present on any property owned or occupied by TEAM.
    - 9.6.1.3. Missionary Spouse of Accused Asked to Resign. Where the accused is married to a spouse who is also TEAM personnel ("spouse"), the spouse

shall be given an opportunity to resign in good standing, but if the spouse does not do so, the spouse shall also be terminated from TEAM.

- 9.6.1.4. Sending Church Notified. In order to provide proper accountability for TEAM missionaries, a notice describing the accusation and the ultimate determination by TEAM will be sent to the accused's sending church and in some cases to the accused's donors.
- 9.6.1.5. Employment History for Accused Changed. In cases where VP abuse is determined after the accused has resigned or retired from TEAM, TEAM's records shall be changed retroactively to accurately reflect the new information.
- 9.6.1.6. Special Consideration for Minors of Missionaries. Any accused who committed VP abuse before the age of 18 will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, taking into account such factors as age, seriousness of the offense, acknowledgement of responsibility and effective treatment.
- 9.6.1.7. References. Accurate employment references will be provided to other organizations considering employment of the accused. If TEAM becomes aware that the accused is later employed by another organization where the accused has access to VPs, TEAM will promptly disclose to such organization the reasons for the termination of the accused.
- 9.6.1.8. Records of Outcome. A Statement of Findings ("SOF") will be filed in TEAM's records.
- 9.6.2. Finding That VP Abuse was not Confirmed. If there is no substance to the allegations or if TEAM has been unable to affirm the allegation under a preponderance standard:
  - 9.6.2.1. Provisions of Assistance for Restoring the Good Name of the Accused. TEAM may work with the accused to restore their good name and reputation, and to create a workable plan for the future so that the accused can effectively resume their job duties and ministry responsibilities. If it becomes evident, however, that the accused is unable to perform their duties, then TEAM reserves the right to transfer and/or terminate the accused to allow TEAM to proceed with its mission.
- 9.6.3. Finding of Inappropriate Behavior but not VP Abuse. Where the allegations are sufficiently corroborated for TEAM to conclude that inappropriate behavior did occur that, though serious in nature, does not meet TEAM's definition of VP abuse, then TEAM will handle the matter as "inappropriate behavior." This category is also utilized when inappropriate sexual behavior occurs between two minors less

than three years (1095 days) apart in age, and there is no significant threat or coercion.

9.6.4. Termination. TEAM reserves the right to terminate the accused's relationship with TEAM at its discretion, based on the circumstances of a particular case. In cases of termination, later application and restoration to service in an assignment not related to VPs may be possible if the behavior and its causes were effectively treated.

9.6.5. When the Accused is a Child. Any TEAM missionary whose child has been determined to have committed sexual abuse or to have initiated inappropriate sexual behavior with another child will be asked to follow through with the action plan put in place to resolve the causes and effects of the abuse or inappropriate behavior. Failure to do so will lead to termination of their relationship with TEAM. Reapplication would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and involve effective treatment and other factors.

9.7. Cost of Investigations. The proportional cost associated with all investigations in connection with this Policy shall be paid for by TEAM.

9.8. Related Policies.

9.8.1. Moral Conduct Policy.

## **10. Investigation**

10.1. If employed by TEAM, the accused shall be notified by the Personnel Group and/or secured legal counsel in person (including virtual meeting and/or telephone) and in writing of the charge that has been made, and that an investigation is being conducted.

10.2. TEAM's secured legal counsel will initiate and implement an Investigating Committee.

10.3. The Investigating Committee will take all necessary actions to either substantiate or dismiss the charge. This includes interviewing the accused. It may include travel to, or recalling individuals from, the field. Expert advice may be sought from outside neutral resources.

10.4. If the charge is substantiated, the Investigating Committee will report the facts to the Personnel Group and secured legal counsel, who will initiate appropriate administrative procedures.

10.5. The International Director will be kept informed throughout the investigation process.

10.6. The Personnel Group will share quarterly incident report summaries with the International Director. Consolidated incident report summaries will be shared with the Compliance Committee.



## **Conduct for Vulnerable Population Safety**

### **Introduction**

The welfare and safety of VPs are paramount in TEAM's policies and procedures. TEAM's intent is to provide a safe and loving environment where children and VPs are nurtured and cared for in a way that allows them to become all they are capable of being. This includes valuing them, regarding them positively and treating them with respect and care.

Having a common set of expectations will also serve to protect adults interacting with VPs from invalid reports of inappropriate behavior. By putting these guidelines into place, an adult's interaction with a VP is much more transparent to others and less likely to be interpreted incorrectly. Adults<sup>3</sup> (including members, employees and volunteers) assume the full burden of setting and maintaining clear, appropriate boundaries in all interaction with VPs.

The definitions and guidelines below take into consideration international definitions of VP sexual, physical, and emotional abuse and neglect. In light of our very multinational workforce, we have followed the models provided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ("the Convention"), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN). 193 of the 195 countries in the world today are United Nations members. Built on varied legal systems and cultural traditions, the Convention is the most widely ratified human rights treaty of non-negotiable standards that should be respected by governments. UNICEF's mission is to protect the rights of every child, and thereby upholds the Convention's standards by working with governments and partners worldwide to prevent and respond to violence against children. Likewise, ISPCAN is the only international non-profit organization that brings together the range of professionals that work toward the prevention and treatment of child abuse, neglect and exploitation.

TEAM also works very closely with other Christian mission agencies in both prevention and response, agreeing to use similar VP abuse definitions and codes of conduct.

TEAM has made a commitment to abide by local law. With regard to the treatment of VPs, where local law is not inconsistent with the laws of the United States and are more prescriptive or strict than the guidelines here, the local law must be followed.

Our intent is not to be overly prescriptive in how parents raise their children or interact with other VPs in their care. However, these guidelines need to be succinct and clear, using language that is generally understood by speakers of English and is consistent with other networks and external bodies that are

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<sup>3</sup> Throughout this document the term "adult" refers to anyone 18 years of age or older.

also seeking the best for VPs. We assume that each person will use good judgment in applying these guidelines in their family and/or work setting.

The most effective way to prevent abuse of VPs is to be vigilant. By being vigilant in adhering to the following standards for interaction with VPs, we hope to protect VPs from abuse.

This Code of Conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following expectations of personnel.<sup>4</sup>

### **Within the Work Situation**

In any situation with VPs we should use as many of the following safeguards as possible with a minimum of at least one. This will reduce risk and demonstrate professionalism and wisdom resulting in healthy interaction with VPs.

#### **Visibility**

All work with VPs should be planned in a way that minimizes risks as far as possible. This includes being visible to other adults when working with VPs.

This can be accomplished by planning activities in areas where other adults are present and at a time when other activities are occurring. It can also be accomplished by installing windows in all classrooms and other rooms occupied by VPs or by keeping doors open.

#### **Overcoming Isolation**

At least two unrelated<sup>5</sup> adults should be present in group work with VPs. An appropriate number of adults of each represented gender should supervise youth events, especially overnight activities.

Isolation is also overcome by avoiding being alone with one child or VP. For example, take two or more children to the bathroom together, rather than only one; drop off siblings last in a carpool or take your own child along when providing rides, or employ the principles of visibility (explained above) or accountability (explained below).

#### **Accountability**

All personnel are expected to interact with VPs in a mature, capable, safe, caring and responsible manner, with a high level of accountability. All personnel are responsible for giving and accepting feedback from others in order to maintain a high level of professionalism and integrity in interactions with VPs. All supervision also reduces risk. Program administrators should periodically, randomly and unannounced, inspect classrooms, offices, work areas and other areas where VPs and adults are together. Personnel are required to report any policy violations on the part of any VP care worker.

When ministry to a VP involves one-on-one contact, the following procedures should be followed, as applicable:

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<sup>4</sup> Throughout this document the term “personnel” refers to TEAM members, employees, volunteers and others involved with agency programs.

<sup>5</sup> Not from the same family.



- Always be accountable to other adults regarding your interactions with VPs.
- Obtain parent/guardian permission for each child prior to any activities, such as a retreat, youth activity, transporting a child, tutoring, overnights and similar activities.
- Counseling or other necessary confidential meetings with VPs should be done in a place where the adult and VP are visible to others, such as in an office with a window in the door, and only when another adult is in close vicinity, aware that the meeting is occurring, and willing to stay in the vicinity until it is completed. Counseling sessions are to be no longer than 40 minutes and if there is a chance of longer needs, prior permission must be obtained.
- In an emergency situation, such as needing to transport a VP alone or supervise a VP alone, find an additional person to be involved if at all possible, or notify whoever is available.

### **Balancing Power and Control**

When working with VPs, balance the age, size, strength, power and authority between personnel and the VP to help to lower risk. This can be done by such things as sending two same-age children to the bathroom together with an adolescent or adult helper, dropping off siblings last in a carpool or having a friend play in the room while talking to a student after school.

### **Supervision**

#### **Differential Treatment**

Adults should avoid favoring or showing differential treatment to a particular VP to the exclusion of and in the presence of others, or excluding VPs in a derogatory or embarrassing way in the presence of others.

#### **Within the Work Situation, the Family, or Other Settings Where Children Are Present:**

#### **Technology**

Technology should be used appropriately to protect VPs from abuse and exploitation. For example, filters can be used to prevent individuals from showing inappropriate internet content to VPs. There should be no expectation of privacy on the part of any worker while using any agency computer.

#### **Discipline**

Discipline should be used to teach and correct rather than punish. Our intention here is to clarify which actions are more likely to approach physical or emotional abuse than they are to be good, healthy forms of discipline. The following actions may involve abuse and are to be avoided: derogatory name-calling, ridicule, humiliation or shaming, publically singling out a child for negative treatment or exclusion, yelling at (loud speech that harms by bringing emotional degradation) or belittling a VP or other forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

Other behaviors to be avoided include: hitting (including slapping) or any behavior that assaults a VP. Also to be avoided are pushing or holding a VP against their will outside the goals of protecting them from danger, providing them medical care or keeping them from harming themselves or others.

Physical discipline by a parent of their own children, such as spanking or paddling, is not considered abuse as long as it is reasonable, not done in anger, and causes no bodily injury to the child. No agency worker is to administer spanking to any child except their own.

## **Touch**

Because healthy, caring touch is valuable to VPs but unhealthy touch is abusive, the following guidelines apply:

- Touch should be in response to the need of the VP and not the need of the adult.
- Touch should be open rather than secretive. For example, a hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the VP rather than the adult. It should be with the VP's permission and resistance from the VP should be respected.
- Touch should always communicate respect for the VP. Adults should avoid doing things of a personal nature for VPs that they are able to do for themselves, including dressing, bathing, etc.

The following signs of affection are generally appropriate: verbal praise, side hugs, or shoulder to shoulder hugs. For smaller children: touching their hands, faces, shoulders and arms, arms around their shoulders (when culturally appropriate), hugs, or holding them when others are present.

The following behaviors are inappropriate or may be perceived as inappropriate and should not be engaged in: touching buttocks, chests, genital areas or thighs except to keep infants, young children or other VPs clean or healthy; showing affection in isolated areas or when alone with a child; sleeping with a child not your own or lying on a bed with a child not your own; flirtatious or seductive looks; any form of affection that is unwanted by the child or VP; sexually suggestive or explicit language; showing sexually suggestive pictures or videos or playing sexually suggestive games with a child or VP; or any behavior that could be interpreted as sexual in nature. No adult except a parent should apply sunscreen to any child or administer any form of massage.

Adults should monitor each other in the area of physical contact with VPs, helping each other by pointing out anything that could be misinterpreted.

## **Verbal Interaction**

Adults should use words to support and encourage a VP, such as praise, positive reinforcement, and appropriate jokes. Inappropriate verbal interaction includes the following: shaming, belittling, humiliating, name calling, using harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate the VP, cursing, or making derogatory remarks about the VP, their family and/or their place of origin.

Inappropriate verbal interaction also includes inappropriate comments that relate to physique or body development, telling derogatory or sexual jokes, making sexually suggestive comments, telling inappropriate secrets or inappropriately discussing sexual encounters or desires with VPs. All pictures

of children or VPs are to be taken only with parental or guardian approval and/or permission obtained prior to taking the picture.

## **Final Comments**

### **Parent Involvement**

Parents are responsible for knowing where their children are at all times. Therefore, parents should be notified and give permission before any activities. For example, before transporting a child, keeping a child after school, a youth activity or when tutoring a child. Parents should be encouraged to make unannounced visits to program activities.

### **Monitoring VP-to-VP Behavior**

The following actions may involve abuse or inappropriate behavior of one VP to another and are to be avoided: bullying, hazing,<sup>6</sup> derogatory name-calling, ridicule or humiliation, publically singling out another VP for negative treatment or exclusion, VP-to-VP inappropriate sexual touch, and inappropriate sexually explicit language.

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<sup>6</sup>Harassing, exacting humiliating tasks as a form of initiation into a group, playing rough practical jokes upon.

## Code of Conduct Acknowledgement Form

This acknowledgement is to be updated at regular intervals for those whose assignments involve work with children or other vulnerable populations. It is the responsibility of the Personnel Group to ensure all personnel sign this form.

I acknowledge that I have read the above (Conduct for Vulnerable Population Safety), agree to abide by it and have completed TEAM's Vulnerable Population Protection Training.

I declare that I have not engaged in sexual abuse, physical abuse, a pattern of emotional abuse or neglect of a child or other vulnerable persons. If I have engaged in any of these abusive actions, they have been reported to the Personnel Group and I have either successfully concluded the required follow-up or am engaged actively in it. Further, I have never been the subject of a complaint, disciplinary action or dismissal by an employer, church, ministry or other volunteer organization following an allegation of any such acts. Nor have I been the subject of an investigation of such acts by civil authorities. If I have been the subject of an allegation of such acts, regardless of the outcome of the allegation, I have notified the appropriate Senior Director, whose responsibility is to notify TEAM's Personnel Group, or I have notified the Personnel Group directly.

I understand my responsibility to report abuse and other inappropriate conduct toward a child or vulnerable person to the Senior Director and/or Personnel Group who will implement the vulnerable population safety administrative procedures.

I understand TEAM takes allegations of vulnerable person abuse seriously and that abuse in any form will not be tolerated. I understand that TEAM will cooperate with civil authorities in the investigation of any report of abuse.

I have read this acknowledgement form and voluntarily sign it.

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Name

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Date

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Position

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Area of Assignment

## TEAM's VP Abuse Response Process

Stage	Players	Steps	Time	Goal
<b>Initial Disclosure to Friend/Family Member</b>	Alleged Victim, Friend/Family Member receiving disclosure	Listen well, assure them they did the right thing to tell, take only information as they volunteer, and let them know you'll help them.	24-48 hours	Listen well, provide reassurance and support.
<b>Initial Report by Friend/Family Member to SD or Personnel Group (SD makes an immediate report to the Personnel Group)</b>	Friend/Family Member whom Victim told, SD, the Personnel Group	Make report to SD and/or Personnel Group. SD to complete Initial Report form, add other known information, relay to the Personnel Group, and provide medical and supportive care. TEAM will follow civil reporting laws.	24-48 hours	Ensure report information is in writing, ensure confidentiality, report to the Personnel Group, ensure safety of alleged Victim.
<b>Preliminary Investigation</b>	"Need to Know" Leaders, Friend/Family Member who reported it, Victim & Parents, Others interviewed	Investigation Team is formed to review Initial Report, assess credibility of Reporter and reliability of initial report by interviewing Person who reported it, Victim, Parents, and Others who can inform credibly/reliably, initiate extended investigation or complete Statement of Findings (SOF) Action Plan as needed.	48-72 hours	Either determine report unfounded, complete outcome document and give care as needed OR determine initial report credible and move to extended investigation and support reporters.
<b>Extended Investigation</b>	Investigative Team, TEAM Leader, outside Consultant, all interviewed, Member Care	Inform "Need to Know" Leadership, place alleged Offender on administrative leave, collateral interviews, interview additional Victims, alleged Offender interview, ask for others to interview and re-interview as needed.	10-90 days	Support Victims and Parents, provide support/accountability to alleged Offender, learn all possible details of what occurred, assess corroboration or lack of it, identify other Victims, determine whether behaviors meet TEAM's definition of abuse.
<b>Closure</b>	Investigative Team, TEAM Leadership, Victim, Offender, Local Community, Partners	Finalize SOF, determine and carry out needed administrative action, report to civil authorities, communicate to key players, file notes, implement debrief process and recommend system improvements (school, office, etc).	2-7 days	Document findings and conclusions, determine administrative actions, create action plan for follow-up care needed, determine changes to any system and provide closure to key players.
<b>Follow-up Care</b>	TEAM Leadership, Victim, Offender, Families, Member Care, Counselors	Vet Counselor to provide followup care, provide resources for counseling, periodic follow-up until action plan is completed successfully or further administrative action needed and make recommended system changes.	6 months to several years	Provide counseling to work through the causes and effects of abuse/inappropriate behavior and heal from abuse. Implement the recommended system changes.

## **TEAM's Procedure for Administrative Action Regarding Abuse**

### **Vulnerable Person Abuse**

Anyone who is known or determined to have committed abuse of a VP at any time during his/her adult life is not eligible for service or employment. The basis for this is our concern for VPs, our desire to provide them with a safe environment, the high rate of recidivism of those who struggle with abusive tendencies and our corporate inability to provide a reasonable level of accountability for those who struggle with this issue. If such a person is presently employed by or serving with TEAM, he/she will have his/her relationship with TEAM terminated immediately, with no later opportunity to be reinstated. As a further restriction, he/she will not be allowed to accompany a member for an assignment or be on TEAM properties. There is no option of resignation.

### **Cases Initiated by Children**

Any personnel whose child (under the age of 18) has been determined to have initiated inappropriate sexual behavior or abusive sexual behavior with another child or VP will be asked to follow through with an appropriate action plan put in place to resolve the causes and effects of the inappropriate or abusive sexual behavior. This is applicable for missionaries in all situations, or members/volunteers/staff in the context of any TEAM relationship or event. Such factors as age, age difference between the child initiating the behavior and the VP experiencing the behavior, seriousness of the offense(s), acknowledgement of responsibility, and effective treatment will be taken into account. Failure to comply with the action plan may lead to termination of the member's relationship with TEAM. Reapplication would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, taking into account such factors as age, seriousness of the offense and acknowledgement of responsibility. Reapplication also necessitates having successfully completed effective treatment and other factors listed above.

### **Reporting**

TEAM has clear protocols for reporting cases of abuse to appropriate civil authorities.

### **Provision of References Following Termination<sup>7</sup>**

If TEAM is asked to provide a reference for someone whom TEAM determined was more likely than not to have committed VP abuse, TEAM will disclose the reasons for termination if the accused has access to VP. Further, if TEAM becomes aware that they are later employed by another organization where they have access to VPs, TEAM will make that organization aware of the reasons TEAM terminated the individual's membership.

In order for the home church to provide proper accountability and support to the terminated individual, an Outcome Notice will be sent to the senior pastor or equivalent, and in most cases to all donors and supporting churches.

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<sup>7</sup> Appropriate communication includes the statement that the individual's relationship has been terminated by the organization (rather than implying that the person has left the organization voluntarily).

## Recognizing Signs of Abuse and Neglect

The first step to helping VPs who have been abused or neglected is to recognize the signs. This quick guide is designed to help identify possible signs of VP maltreatment. The presence of one or more of these signs does not necessarily mean that a VP has been abused or neglected; some symptoms may also be indicative of VPs living under highly stressful circumstances. In addition, living in poverty is not considered abuse or neglect.

### Possible Symptoms of Sexual Abuse

A **child** who exhibits the following signs may be a victim of sexual abuse<sup>8</sup>:

- Has difficulty walking or sitting
- Experiences bleeding, bruising, or swelling in their private parts
- Suddenly refuses to go to school
- Reports nightmares or bedwetting
- Experiences a sudden change in appetite
- Demonstrates bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual knowledge or behavior
- Becomes pregnant or contracts a sexually transmitted disease, particularly if under age 14
- Runs away
- Reports sexual abuse by a parent or another adult caregiver
- Attaches very quickly to strangers or new adults in their environment

A **vulnerable adult** who exhibits the following signs may be a victim of sexual abuse<sup>9</sup>:

- Has bruises around the breasts or genital area
- Experiences unexplained venereal disease or genital infections
- Suffers from unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding
- Has torn, stained, or bloody underclothing
- Reports being sexually assaulted or raped

### Possible Signs of Physical Abuse

A **child** who exhibits the following signs may be a victim of physical abuse:

- Has unexplained injuries, such as burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes
- Has fading bruises or other noticeable marks after an absence from school
- Seems scared, anxious, depressed, withdrawn, or aggressive
- Seems frightened of parents or caregivers and protests or cries when it is time to go home
- Shrinks at the approach of adults
- Shows changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Reports injury by a parent or another adult caregiver
- Abuses animals or pets

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<sup>8</sup> All signs of child maltreatment were adapted from the Child Welfare Information Gateway. This information is available online at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/>.

<sup>9</sup> All signs of vulnerable adult maltreatment were adapted from the Washington State Department of Health & Social Services. This information is available online at <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/>.

A **vulnerable adult** who exhibits the following signs may be a victim of physical abuse:

- Has injuries such as bruises, black eyes, welts, lacerations, broken bones, and rope marks
- Has open wounds, cuts, punctures, untreated injuries in various stages of healing
- Shows any physical signs of being punished or restrained or has broken eyeglasses/frames
- Laboratory finds evidence of either an overdose or underdose in medication
- Reports being hit, slapped, kicked, or mistreated
- Shows sudden change in behavior
- Is not allowed to see visitors alone

### **Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse**

A **child** who exhibits the following signs may be a victim of emotional abuse:

- Shows extremes in behavior, such as being overly compliant or demanding, extremely passive, or aggressive
- Is either inappropriately adult (e.g., parenting other children) or inappropriately infantile (e.g., frequently rocking or head-banging)
- Is delayed in physical or emotional development
- Shows signs of depression or suicidal thoughts
- Reports an inability to develop emotional bonds with others

A **vulnerable adult** who exhibits the following signs may be a victim of emotional abuse:

- Is emotionally upset or agitated
- Is extremely withdrawn and non-communicative or non-responsive
- Exhibits unusual behavior usually attributed to dementia (e.g., sucking, biting, rocking)
- Shows nervousness around certain people
- Reports being verbally or mentally mistreated

### **Possible Signs of Neglect**

A **child** who exhibits the following signs may be a victim of neglect:

- Is frequently absent from school
- Begs or steals food or money
- Lacks needed medical care (including immunizations), dental care, or glasses
- Is consistently dirty and has severe body odor
- Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs
- States that there is no one at home to provide care

A **vulnerable adult** who exhibits the following signs may be a victim of neglect:

- Is dehydrated or malnourished
- Has untreated bed sores
- Lacks personal hygiene
- Has unattended or untreated health problems
- Lives in unsafe or unsanitary conditions (e.g., fleas, lice, soiled bedding, fecal/urine smell)
- Reports being mistreated



## Tips for Talking with VPs About Possible Abuse

It may be particularly difficult for VPs to disclose an incident of abuse to a parent or caregiver particularly if the alleged offender is someone known to the VP and/or the family. The goal of talking with a VP is to listen, to document what is seen and heard, and then to work with TEAM in establishing the appropriate course of action.

### Asking Questions

- Begin with familiar non-threatening subjects.
- Avoid leading questions.
- Use simple language.
- Use caution when asking questions that can be answered with yes/no.
  - “Is everything okay at home?” This is a yes/no question.
  - A better approach would be “When I look at (or read) your work, it seems to me like you are saying that you feel worried or upset about some things. Can you tell me about that?”
- Ask for a narrative first, before moving on to open-ended questions.
  - “Tell me what happened.” or “What else do you remember?”
- Who, what, when, where, why, and how are the best kinds of questions; use yes/no questions only for clarification.
- A good way to avoid confusion is to use questions that are simple, direct, and open-ended. (Be sensitive to confused or inappropriate replies.)

### Things to Consider

- Don’t talk to the VP in a public setting.
- Let the VP tell their own story.
- Don’t ask questions that imply guilt: “Why did you wait so long to tell someone?”
- Allow the VP express emotions.
- Remain calm and avoid responding in a way that will cause uneasiness or fear in the VP.
- Avoid making judgments about the VP or the alleged offender.
- Do not make promises you can’t keep (for example, telling the VP you will keep this a secret).

### Responses

- When responding to a disclosure, listen to the VP as openly, calmly, and quietly as you can.
- Tell the VP that you:
  - Believe listening to them is important
  - Are glad they told you
  - Know it was not their fault
  - Will find help for them
- Say things like:
  - “It is not your fault in any way.” (VPs often believe it is their fault.)
  - “You are very brave to tell me about what happened.” (VPs may feel afraid to tell.)
  - “I love you and want to help.”

## **Closure**

As you finish your conversation, it is important to:

- Spend time discussing how the VP feels about the situation, and any concerns, fears or expectations they may have.
- Reaffirm they are not to blame.
- Emphasize the VP did the right thing by telling you.
- End on a positive note.

## Reporting Procedures

**Make an initial report to the Senior Director and/or to TEAM's Personnel Group immediately.**

Following the care given to the VP, the adult's second duty is to inform the Senior Director and/or the Personnel Group.

Several principles guide this process:

**All known or suspected abuse or inappropriate behavior must be reported, including both those initiated by adults and those initiated by other children.**

It is often incorrectly assumed that incidents between same or similar aged children can be handled between the families if the children are repentant and show no signs of being affected. Approximately 50 percent of a similar organization's cases involve child-to-child incidents. If the children involved do not get appropriate counseling, there is a significant percentage who repeat the behavior with other children. Thus all child-to-child incidents are to be reported regardless of the perceived severity.

**There is no statute of limitations on internal investigations.**

Some legal systems make provision for a statute of limitations on investigating abuse incidents, allowing offenders to avoid prosecution or liability if a certain amount of time has passed since the offense was committed. TEAM will, however, respond to reports of abuse, no matter how old, because of the importance to the victim, other VPs, and the organization itself. Thus reports will be taken and the internal investigation process followed, whether the reports are of abusive actions currently happening, or reported by now adult MKs regarding incidents that occurred to them as children living on TEAM centers or attending TEAM schools or committed by TEAM personnel.

**We assist victims who are reluctant to report.**

Because of the danger offenders pose and the importance we place on the care and protection of VPs, the organization will take responsibility for investigating reports of VP abuse, rather than expecting parents of VPs who are victims to pursue claims independently.

Some believe that if parents of victims do not desire an investigation of an abusive action against them, the organization should not pursue the reports. However, if reports were not investigated, then alleged abusers would continue to have access to other VPs and possibly abuse them. TEAM cannot allow potential abusers to remain in the organization and have access to other VPs because a victim does not want the report pursued. We often find that victims are willing to report abuse but do not want to be perceived as pushing an investigation. Failing to pursue reports of abuse would have the additional impact of preventing additional victims from obtaining the safety and treatment needed to overcome the effects of the abuse. TEAM will therefore investigate reports, even if victims are hesitant to pursue them independently. When victims or their parents are reluctant due to fear of reprisal, lack of understanding of other potential victims, or lack of current symptoms, TEAM will seek to provide support, education, and care to them while pursuing the internal investigation.

### Confidentiality

Confidentiality is critical both to protect the victim from further harm through exposure and to preserve the integrity of the process, and TEAM expects that a "need to know" position will be strictly

adhered to throughout the reporting process. Thus the individual receiving the report is not to widen the circle of “need to know” people beyond the Senior Director or Personnel Group to whom they make the report. Thus, for example, a person’s direct supervisor, or other mid-level management is not included in the reporting process.

### **Making the report to the Senior Director and/or Personnel Group involves two priorities:**

1. Putting whatever is learned in writing, using TEAM’s Vulnerable Population Abuse or Neglect Reporting Form, as soon as possible so that it is remembered fully and accurately.
2. Reporting it to the Senior Director and/or Personnel Group immediately without taking any other action or doing any preliminary investigation.

The report to the Senior Director and/or Personnel Group is to be done immediately, preferably in-person, but, if that is not possible, by phone, videoconference, fax or email.

The reporting duties are individual and no supervisor, administrator or board member may impede or inhibit the reporting duties, and no person making a reasonable report will be subject to any sanction by TEAM.

Reporting the information regarding a case of possible VP abuse or neglect to another personnel member, volunteer or person other than the Senior Director and/or Personnel Group breaks agency procedure and will not be a substitute for making the mandated report to the Senior Director and/or Personnel Group.

### **Reporting Procedures for Missionaries**

#### **Initial Response by Senior Director**

When the Senior Director receives such a report, s/he initiates the following procedure:

1. Receive the report and complete the Vulnerable Population Abuse or Neglect Reporting Form (see Appendix).
2. Contact the Personnel Group concerning the matter within 24 hours and send TEAM’s Vulnerable Population Abuse or Neglect Reporting Form.
3. Ensure care and protection for the victim has been provided.
4. Make sure the VP victim receives any necessary medical attention.

The following sections provide details on each of the steps above.

#### **Receive the report and complete TEAM’s Vulnerable Population Abuse or Neglect Reporting Form**

The Senior Director will confer with the individual reporting the incident as soon as possible and explain the corporate procedures followed in dealing with the incident.

No matter how minor in the eyes of the individual receiving the information, and regardless of the ages of the individuals involved, including behavior that occurred between two children, the following

procedures are to be followed.

To protect the victim from further harm through exposure and to preserve the integrity of the process, TEAM expects that a “need to know” position will be strictly adhered to throughout the reporting process. Thus, the Senior Director maintains this task him/herself. No other members of the Leadership Team or community members are to be involved at this stage. It is presumed the parents of the victim are part of the “need to know” group unless they are themselves involved in the abuse or pose a threat. The alleged offender is not to be advised of the report at this point.

The Senior Director is to make the report directly to the Personnel Group without trying to handle it on the local level. Because abuse of VPs has such a huge impact on their lives, and VPs by nature are vulnerable to abuse by adults, and because VP abuse has such an impact on those involved, TEAM recognizes the importance of a diligent and consistent response to reports by staff specifically trained and tasked with this job. Thus, TEAM Leadership and Board have determined that this is one responsibility that is not delegated to the TEAM areas or entities. The Personnel Group, in utilizing secured legal counsel, is tasked with prevention and response. This process is aimed at utilizing personnel who have the most training in the area of abuse to help evaluate the scope and seriousness of an incident and whether it requires further review and investigation. We follow these procedures carefully.

This TEAM Vulnerable Population Protection Policy & Procedures Handbook will guide the process. If the Senior Director is not familiar with these procedures, he or she should review them first.

When victims or their parents are reluctant to report due to fear of reprisal, lack of understanding of other potential victims or lack of current symptoms, the Senior Director will seek to provide support, education and care to them while moving forward with the report.

The Senior Director completes TEAM’s Vulnerable Population Abuse or Neglect Reporting Form with those who are bringing the report. This report contains only those facts that are known at the time and is based only on the information given by the reporter and any additional information known without any further questioning of the victim. No additional interviews or investigation should take place. All those involved will be asked not to pursue anything further or disclose any facts to anyone until a response has been received from the Personnel Group or secured legal counsel. If the Senior Director runs into any complicating factors, or there is a need to alter procedures, or the Senior Director becomes unsure of how to respond, the Senior Director is to contact the Personnel Group for advice and assistance.

**Contact the Personnel Group concerning the matter within 24 hours, and send the Vulnerable Population Abuse or Neglect Reporting Form**

Immediately contact the Personnel Group to report the incident and email TEAM’s Vulnerable Population Abuse or Neglect Reporting Form to the Personnel Group. It is expected this will take place within 24 hours unless extenuating circumstances such as travel are involved.

Email: [safety@team.org](mailto:safety@team.org)

**Provide care and protection for the victim**

The Senior Director will ensure that the VP is safe. This involves ensuring the alleged offender has no further access to or contact with the VP. It also may involve changing the environment to provide a

renewed sense of safety or moving the VP and their family to a safer location. It also includes obtaining any needed medical attention and counseling to deal with immediate physical and emotional needs.

**If sexual abuse involving INTERCOURSE is reported, it is vital to do the following:**

- *Get the victim to a safe place as soon as possible.*

The victim's safety should be your first priority.

- *Ask for help.*

Report to law enforcement, your Senior Director, and/or the Personnel Group immediately.

- *Get the victim medical attention.*

A medical facility can provide help for physical injuries, screen for STDs or pregnancy, and help collect and preserve evidence if the victim chooses to pursue criminal action immediately or at a later time. If possible, the victim should not shower or clean up or change clothes. If changing clothes is unavoidable, put all the clothing the victim was wearing in a paper bag, not a plastic bag. Specially trained hospital staff will collect evidence as part of the rape kit.

If the victim chooses to pursue legal action, immediately or at a later time, it is important to preserve and collect physical evidence. Effective evidence collection must occur no later than 72 hours after the assault.

Entities are responsible to determine ahead of the need where medical facilities are available within close reach of their personnel that have medical staff trained to do rape assessments and also have on hand any medications needed.

## TEAM's Vulnerable Population Abuse or Neglect Reporting Form

This report should be completed for every alleged abuse or neglect report no matter how minor, how preliminary, and even if the offender is a minor. It is to be submitted to the Senior Director or the Personnel Group within 24 hours. (The Senior Director then submits this form within 24 hours to the Personnel Group.)

Submit this form to the Personnel Group by emailing: [safety@team.org](mailto:safety@team.org)

Date of report: \_\_\_\_\_

Person making report, position and relationship to victim: \_\_\_\_\_

Date abuse allegedly occurred: \_\_\_\_\_

Ministry Area/Department making the report: \_\_\_\_\_

### Identified Victim:

VP/Victim's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: M F

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

Age/Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary language: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Parents'/Guardian's home country: \_\_\_\_\_

Names and ages of other siblings: \_\_\_\_\_

### Alleged Offender:

Alleged offender's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: M F                      Marital Status: S M D W

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary language: \_\_\_\_\_

Job: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to identified victim: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Primary Member Organization (if applicable) and home country: \_\_\_\_\_

**Receiving Entity Information:**

Senior Director/Personnel Director name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Report:**

Describe what occurred specifically, including where, when, specific actions, number of times it occurred, any threats, etc.

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What led you to suspect/become aware of the abuse/neglect?

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Date, time and setting in which you became aware of the suspected abuse/neglect:

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Date, time and setting of incident (if known):

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Anecdotal records that support suspicion of abuse/neglect?

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**Previous reports:**

Are you aware if the perpetrator has been accused or convicted of other abuse/neglect in the past? If so, please describe:

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Are you aware if the VP/victim has experienced other abuse/neglect in the past? If so, please describe:

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**Other Victims:**

Who might be potential other victims (classmates, siblings, others who were in the same location, attended the same event, etc.)?

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**Others with Knowledge of the Report:**

Who else knows about the alleged abuse/neglect? List names, relationship to the victim, job, phone.

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Was the alleged abuse/neglect reported to a government, law enforcement or a child protective service agency? If so, list agency name, name of person the report was given to, agency address, phone number, email address. Also list name, job, and phone number of the person who gave the report, and the report reference number if known.

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**Family Dynamics:**

Describe the parents' or guardian's relationship and interaction with the VP.

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Describe the parents' or guardian's reaction to the VP's report of alleged abuse/neglect.

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**Support system:**

Describe the family's support system (relatives, community, church, etc.).

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Describe any arrangements that have already been made for counseling, and/or support for the family.

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**Arrangements for Safety:**

Describe the arrangements that have been made to ensure the VP's safety (both from the alleged offender and to protect the VP from repeating the abusive behavior with other VPs).

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Describe the parents' or guardian's awareness of the seriousness of the report and their understanding of TEAM response procedures, etc.

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**Additional Information** (use reverse if necessary):

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**Post-Report Standard Procedure**

When the Personnel Group or TEAM's secured legal counsel receives the report, the following procedure is initiated:

- Follow civil reporting laws in the applicable countries.
- Form a Preliminary Investigation Team.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Assess the reliability of the reporter and the credibility of the report.
  - If it is determined by the Investigative Team that there is no indication that abuse or other inappropriate behavior occurred/that the report is not credible or reliable, prepare a Statement of Findings to that effect, which is approved and signed by the Personnel Group and secured legal counsel.
- Carry out the Action Plan to a successful conclusion.
- If the information gathered indicates that the report is reliable and credible indicating abusive or other inappropriate behavior the process moves to the next step, the Extended Investigation.

## Recommended Resources

Anderson, B. (1992). *When child abuse comes to church: Recognizing its occurrence and what to do about it*. Bethany House Publishers.

Kraizer, S. (2012). *The safe child book: A commonsense approach to protecting children and teaching children to protect themselves*. Touchstone.

Langberg, D. M. (2012). *On the threshold of hope: Opening the door to healing for survivors of sexual abuse*. Tyndale House Publishers.

Stafford, W. (2007). *Too small to ignore: Why the least of these matters most*. WaterBrook.

Tracy, S. R. (2009). *Mending the soul: Understanding and healing abuse*. HarperCollins Publishers.