



<b>Title:</b> Disclosure Policy	<b>Internal/ External</b>
<b>Department:</b> Recreation and Leisure	<b>Policy Number</b> RL-010
<b>Approval Date:</b> February 18, 2014	<b>Implementation Date:</b> February 19, 2014

## BACKGROUND

The Town of Paradise Recreational Programs provide a safe and enjoyable environment for children. The best interest of the child is of the utmost importance and as such it is the duty of all department staff to place a child's safety as their number one priority.

This policy was approved by Council on February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014 ( M14-072).

## OBJECTIVE / PURPOSE

This policy aims to provide a standard procedure for dealing with disclosure of abuse for children participating in Town of Paradise Recreational Programming.

## DEFINITIONS

'*disclosure*' refers to the act or an instance of exposure, where and incident of act is revealed by another person.

'*abuse*': Child abuse refers to any form of physical, psychological, social, emotional or sexual maltreatment of a child whereby the survival, safety, self-esteem, growth and development of the child are endangered. There are four main types of child abuse: neglect, emotional, physical and sexual (RCMP, 2008).

## POLICY STATEMENT

If a recreation employee of the Town of Paradise experiences disclosure of abuse or suspect's abuse of a program participant, it is their duty to report the incident to the Department Manager. This policy is governed by the *Child and Youth Care and Protection Act* and all incidence of disclosure are to be handled with the utmost care and discretion on the part of Town Staff.

## GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

### 1. Department Responsibilities

- (i) The Department's responsibility above all is to provide supervision and safety for all participants and a safe and supportive workplace for all staff.

- (ii) To provide training to all staff with a special seminar on how to report when you suspect abuse or if abuse is reported to you.
- (iii) Ensure that there is a Manager available in the event an employee requires their assistance, guidance and support in filling out an *Incident Form*

## 2. Employee Responsibilities

- (i) The main responsibility of employees working within Department of Recreation Programming is to maintain discretion and to provide a safe environment for all participants.
- (ii) It is the legal duty of employees to report any disclosure of abuse or suspicion of abuse as outlined in Section 11 of the *Child and Youth Care and Protection Act* (as outlined below). For the Town of Paradise this reporting will be solely to staffs Department Manager. The Department Manager will then report as required by Section 11 of the *Child and Youth Care and Protection Act*.
- (iii) Staff shall never inform the parent, guardian or any family member of the child, that disclosure or suspicion of abuse has occurred.
- (iv) Employees are responsible for filling out an *Incident Form* with the assistance of their Department Manager

**Section 11 of the *Child and Youth Care and Protection Act* states that all individuals, who have information that a child is or may be in need of protective intervention, shall immediately report the matter to a director, social worker, or peace officer. All information provided to the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services will remain confidential and an action does not lie against the informant unless the making of the report is done maliciously or without reasonable cause.**

## 3. Employee Training

Upon hire every employee with the Town of Paradise recreational programming will be provided staff training. This training will include a description of possible indicators of abuse as well as the procedure to be followed in cases of abuse or suspicion of abuse.

## 4. Procedure For Reporting Suspected Abuse

If an employee suspects abuse or a child discloses information/instances of abuse to an employee the following procedure is to be followed:

- (i) Employees should talk to the child privately, away from distractions of other people and remain visible to other staff
- (ii) Employees are not responsible for interviewing or questioning the child. However, they should take notes of what the child does disclose willingly.
- (iii) Report the disclosure/suspicion to the Department Manager as soon as possible.
- (iv) The Manager will then contact Child, Youth and Family Services.
- (v) Complete Incident Report: include dates, times, descriptions and circumstances of disclosure using the child's terminology where appropriate. Include any behavior or physical signs which may have been observed. Attach any notes that were taken during the time of disclosure.

- (vi) Be available for interviewing with Child, Youth and Family Services, Social Worker or the authorities.

#### 5. Abuse Involving Staff Member and Child

If a child discloses to an employee that another staff member has allegedly abused him/her, it is the responsibility of the employee to report directly to the Department Manager and fill out an incident report, regardless of the employee's relationship with the accused staff member.

#### 6. Site Visits by Registered Social Worker

As governed by Section 14 of the Children and Youth Care and Protection Act 2010:

- a. *A person who has custody of or who is entrusted with the care of a child who is the subject of an investigation under this Act, shall, when requested to do so by a manager or a social worker,*
  - i. *Identify the child; and*
  - ii. *Permit the child to be visited, observed and interviewed by a manager or social worker, in private where in the opinion of the manager or social worker it is appropriate, at a place where the child is located.*

If a social worker visits a Town Recreational program site and requests and interview with a participant, the following steps are to be followed:

- (i) Contact the Department Manager
- (ii) The Manager will ask for valid Provincial Government ID and note the following information on an *Incident Form*; Social Workers name, ID#, and contact information. Without providing this information the Social Worker will not be permitted to interview the participant.
- (iii) Provide the Social Worker with a quiet place to interview the child.

#### 7. Parent Contact

If any staff member or the Department Manager is approached by a parent(s) or guardian(s) regarding disclosure or suspicion of abuse they are to inform the parent(s) or guardian(s) of their legal obligation to report such incidents as per Section 11: *Duty to Report* of the Children and Youth Care and Protection Act.

As per Section 14 of the Children and Youth Care and Protection Act 2010, employees are not permitted to notify parent(s) or guardian(s) of a visit from a social worker. Notifying parent(s) or guardian(s) is the role of the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services.

If an employee is approached by a parent(s) or guardian(s) concerning a child being interviewed or observed by a social worker while attending a Town program, the following procedure is to be taken:

- (i) Contact the Department Manager who will;
- (ii) Provide the parent or guardian with a copy of Section 14 of the Children and Youth Care and Protection Act 2010 as stated in above section 6 of this policy. Give the parent(s) or guardian(s) the telephone number for the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services 729-4612 or 752-4619

Chief Administrative Officer: Roelmeijer Cunniff Date: April 10/14