
Screening Of Volunteer 4-H Leaders

In 1999, a committee comprised of 4-H staff, Alberta 4-H Council members and Key Leaders reviewed the existing screening procedures and found they no longer met the standards set by other 4-H programs and youth organizations in Canada. The committee designed new procedures to ensure 4-H clubs provide a safe environment for young people to learn and grow. These screening procedures were piloted in 1999 and were introduced province-wide in September 2000.

- Under the 4-H Leader Screening Policy, all new 4-H leaders must be screened as part of their leader application process. Leaders must re-certify every 5 years. Leaders can begin working as a 4-H leader as soon as they are elected by their club. New leaders remain on non-certified status until their application is approved by the Provincial Screening Committee and they have completed Level One Leader Training. Non-certified leaders must always have another leader or parent with them when they are working with 4-H members.
- The process for becoming a certified 4-H leader consists of the following:
 - ◊ New and re-certifying leaders receive the Leader Application Package from the 4-H club's General Leader. This package includes: 4-H Leader Application Form, three Reference Forms, the Criminal Record Check Information letter, and 4-H Leader Job Descriptions.
 - ◊ The leader completes the application form.
 - ◊ The leader gives the reference forms to the three people who the leader has identified as references on their application form. These individuals complete the reference forms and send them directly to the Provincial Screening Committee.
 - ◊ The leader takes the Criminal Record Check Information letter to their local police station and requests a criminal record check. The police will complete the search and return the results to the applicant.
 - ◊ The leader sends the completed application form and results of the criminal record check to the Provincial Screening Committee by December 15.

Notes for new leaders:

Training is a mandatory part of the leader registration process. New leaders must complete one of the following Level One Leader Training activities within 12 months of being approved by the Provincial 4-H Screening Committee.

1. Level One Leader Training workshop given by your 4-H district. Times and locations are set by your district council - check with your district council rep. or Key Leader. You can also attend a workshop in another district.
2. Level One Leader Training session at Alberta 4-H Leaders' Conference or any of the other Provincial Project Leader training events (BUD, PELF). Applications are in the Alberta 4-H Magazine.
3. Individual study of the 4-H Leaders' Information Manual. An exam that is available from your regional 4-H office or the 4-H website (www.4h.ab.ca - found under Applications - Leaders Quiz) must be completed.

Notes for existing leaders:

- Existing leaders are rescreened once they have completed five years of leadership since their last screening. The year of screening is listed on the club registration print-out that your club leader receives in the club start-up package. If you have had a break in service of more than two years, or it has been more than five years since your last screening, you must be screened as a new leader this year.
- 4-H leaders who have already received "approved" leader status within the last five years only need one reference, along with the application and criminal record check. This reference must be from a 4-H related source (e.g. a parent or leader in your 4-H club). The Provincial 4-H Screening Committee will inform the applicant, the club leader and Key Leader of the results of the screening process as soon as results are processed.

Questions And Answers About 4-H Leader Screening

Why do 4-H Leaders have to be screened?

The primary purpose of 4-H Leader Screening is to provide a safe environment for young people to learn and grow. We cannot ignore the fact that there are people who are potential risks to 4-H members. If we do not have a screening program, then we are putting our members at unnecessary risk. The second purpose is to protect the good name and financial stability of the 4-H program. If an incident of abuse occurred, and 4-H did not have a screening procedure in place, then the entire program could be vulnerable.

Will my personal information be kept confidential?

The Provincial Screening Coordinator and each member of the provincial screening committee has signed an oath of confidentiality that all information will be kept confidential and only be used to make screening decisions. After the committee has finished its work, the documents are stored in a secure cabinet in a provincial 4-H office and remain under the control of Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development.

Should I register all parents as leaders, just to be on the safe side?

No. Registering all parents, regardless of their role in the club creates unnecessary work for both the parents and the screening committee. However, you should carefully look at the role of each parent. Those who help out occasionally at club meetings with marking record books, or providing refreshments are valuable helpers, but are not “leaders”. However, those who work with members on an ongoing basis should be registered as leaders. As leaders, they must be screened, but they will also receive recognition for their leadership work with certificates, pins and possibly travel awards.

What happens if our club doesn't participate in leader screening?

If a 4-H volunteer has not been approved by the Provincial 4-H Screening Committee and continues to act as a leader, the membership will be sent a letter advising them that if the volunteer does not cease involvement immediately, the club will not be considered in good standing and will therefore not be eligible to receive support from higher 4-H entities.

If you have other questions about leader screening, please talk to your key leader or 4-H specialist in your region.

All leaders must submit their screening documents and ensure their references have been provided to the screening committee by *December 15th*.

Above Suspicion - Protecting Yourself

As more cases of sexual abuse are revealed through the media, there are bound to be situations where there is doubt about the guilt of the accused. Sometimes allegations are actually *“unfounded”* and often the accused is acquitted because of insufficient evidence and we are left to wonder whether or not the individual was really *“guilty”*. Because of this uncertainty and the fact that the media is quick to jump in, a career can be easily tarnished or a reputation damaged even if the person is innocent. As a result, some people are urging those who care for children not to show any kind of physical affection whatsoever.

This kind of instruction is an over-reaction, part of the backlash against the new measures for working against child abuse. It is important to be caring and to encourage children by being warm and affectionate. An extra effort by a child deserves a friendly *“pat on the back”* or a *“tousling of the hair”*. Being touched in positive and appropriate ways means *“I like you”* and *“you belong here”*.

There are sensible ways for volunteers to continue to show warmth to children while still protecting their own integrity.

1. Make a point of showing affection to all your children in open places where others can see and share in the warmth. If you are comfortable with others watching what you are doing with children, you are probably okay.
2. Touch children in safe places on their bodies and avoid private places. The back, the head and the shoulders are acceptable; the buttocks, the breasts, the thighs and the groin are not acceptable.
3. If a child is hurting or feeling ill and needs to be examined, ensure that another person of the same sex as the child is present in the room while you are carrying out the examination. If possible, leave an examination of private places to health professionals. Don't force the child to remove clothing for an examination.
4. If a child is sad and needs to be comforted, show affection by placing your arm around a shoulder and giving a gentle hug or a good squeeze from the side.
5. If the child needs to have a private conversation with you, remove yourselves the necessary distance from the others but stay in view of the group or leave a door slightly ajar.
6. If possible, try to remove yourself from a *“one on one”* situation. Gain permission from the child to have a second *“support”* person present during conversations.

A Child Is Hurting . . . How Can I Help?

In today's rapidly changing society, there is a growing need to learn more about subjects such as child abuse and teen suicide. These two issues have traditionally been considered so reprehensible that people refuse to believe they happen and avoid talking about them. However, society is gradually starting to accept the fact that these situations do exist and need to be dealt with. People you know and care about can be involved and or affected.

As 4-H leaders and active participants in your local communities, you are at the forefront of prevention and care. With this in mind the Alberta 4-H Council and Alberta Agriculture and Food suggested an educational manual on child abuse and teen suicide for 4-H leaders, in addition to our current leader screening program, to help support and protect our members. The purpose of this manual is to provide you with ways to recognize children in need of help and determine what steps you can and should take to ensure their well-being.

Through your involvement in 4-H you have come forward to say, *"I care about kids enough to spend time with somebody else's children."* You plan and create activities based on the needs of children . . . and these usually result in *"fun times"* with opportunities for easy-going communications. These are times when abused children feel safer about talking. You need to know how to recognize when a child is hurting and how to help.

The underlying values of 4-H volunteers interested in helping a child or adult who is hurting are as follows:

- a belief in the value of human life; that every life is precious;
- a belief in life enhancement; a belief in promoting healthy individuals, families and communities;
- a belief that protection of the child is a society, community and personal responsibility;
- a belief that we can work effectively towards protection of the individual by being educated and collaborating with others.

Children are dependent on you for their safety and well-being and have a right to be protected from abuse and neglect. Child abuse is anything that endangers the development, security or survival of child. There are at least four kinds of abuse:

1. **Physical** - the intentional use of force on any part of a child's body that results in serious injuries.
2. **Emotional** - anything that causes serious mental or emotional harm to a child.
3. **Sexual** - the improper exposure of a child to sexual contact, activity or behaviour.
4. **Neglect** - any lack of care which causes serious harm to a child's development or endangers the child in any way.

Keeping alert to the signs of abuse requires a caring watchfulness.

Even if the child says nothing, your suspicions can be aroused by general signs such as

- eating or sleeping disturbances
- overly compliant or overly aggressive behaviour
- chronic anxiety or withdrawal behaviour
- abuse of alcohol and or drugs

It is important to keep in mind that these signs do not necessarily mean the child is being abused. They can however, act as warning signs to watch the child carefully, and to look for more noticeable evidence of abuse.

Indicators of Physical Abuse

Physical signs might include the following:

- bruises or welts on face, torso, back or thighs; bruises that reflect the shape of the item used (example: rope, belt buckle) or numerous bruises of different colours;
- immersion burns or burns reflecting the shape of the item used (example: stove burners, iron, cigarette);
- bite marks;
- lacerations and abrasions;
- dislocation of shoulders, hips and so on;
- head injuries;

The child may

- be wary of physical contact with adults
- be reluctant to wear shorts or a bathing suit
- seem afraid of parent or other person
- be frightened in the face of adult disapproval
- be apprehensive when others cry
- show extremes of behaviour - aggressive or withdrawn
- be over-anxious to please
- may openly approach any adult including strangers

Indicators of Emotional Abuse

Child's appearance may not indicate or suggest the extent of the difficulty.

Child may appear clean, well groomed and well nourished.

Child's facial expression and body carriage may indicate sadness, depression, timidity or held-back anger.

The child may

- self-mutilate, suffer depression, attempt suicide
- appear overly compliant, passive, shy
- show episodes of very aggressive, demanding and angry behaviour
- fear failure, have trouble concentrating or learning and give up easily
- be either overly boastful or negative about him or herself
- constantly apologize

Indicators of Sexual Abuse

Physical evidence of sexual abuse is rare. Often with young children, abuse is not intercourse but touching, which may leave no physical signs. Where physical evidence is present it may be

- soreness in the genital area
- unusual, detailed sexual knowledge
- inappropriate provocative behaviour
- fear of normal physical contact, particularly by adults
- torn, stained or bloody clothing
- pain or itching in genital area or throat, difficulty going to bathroom or swallowing

The child may

- display unusual interest in sexual matters
- use language and make drawings that are sexually explicit
- fantasize excessively
- show fear of closed spaces

Indicators of Neglect

The child may

- have poor hygiene, or lack of medical or dental attention
- have sores in the mouth
- be very underweight and gain weight when offered proper nutrition
- be consistently dirty or dressed inappropriately for weather, or wear torn clothing
- often be hungry or thirsty
- often be tired or listless
- demand a lot of physical contact and attention
- assume role of parent or adult in the family

If you notice any signs that you believe to be indicators of some type of abuse, you can let the child know that you care by saying something like *"Is something troubling you that you want to tell me about?"* If the child says no, an appropriate response may be *"If you ever feel like talking, I'll be here for you."*

Children who are abused, regardless of the method, suffer from a variety of physical and or psychological damage. For example:

- their general health may be impaired
- they may be permanently disabled or suffer learning disabilities
- they may have a distorted self-concept
- their self-esteem may be low
- they will likely learn that it is OK to hurt those they love
- they may be mistrustful
- if sexually abused they will likely be confused about their sexuality and sexual expression
- they may feel stigmatized and think of themselves as victims and therefore powerless

A Child Is Hurting . . . How Can I Help?

Damage that is done to children returns to haunt all of us when children who have been abused never fulfill their potential. Some of them may become violent adults who lash out at others in their communities or in their families. Stopping the abuse of children should be one large step in ensuring a less dangerous world and a brighter future.

A child who discloses a situation involving abuse requires an understanding response

1. Believe in the child.
2. Listen openly and calmly.
3. Reassure the child.
4. Write down the facts.
5. Report immediately to the proper authorities.
6. Keep the information confidential.

1. Believe in the child.

There have always been cynics who say that children have terrific imaginations and that stories about abuse are just part of their fantasy worlds. For most children, abuse is not a fantasy. Children do not describe something they know nothing about.

Children who disclose sexual abuse, for example, often do not attach the same moral values of right and wrong to the event as adults do. Usually what they describe is their own perception of the event and their feelings about it. They may describe something that is confusing to them, such as a promise they were forced to make about keeping the sexual activity a secret. Or they may be preoccupied with a concern about being awakened in the night to do something that they do not understand and is a “*nuisance*” to a drowsy child. Often children are more upset by the accompanying threats or psychological manipulation than they are about the actual violation itself. They may fear that by telling they will be responsible for causing trouble in the family.

Keep in mind that the child is coming to you because of powerful feelings of confusion, fear, betrayal or hurt. Trust that the child is speaking to you from a great need. So open your heart and let the child know you believe what you are hearing.

2. Listen openly and calmly.

As the child speaks, you may be overwhelmed with your own feelings of anger, pain and perhaps also fear. At the time of disclosure, put your own feelings aside. (You will have time to explore them later). Be emotionally available to the child and listen. Give your full attention to the child and nod understandingly as the story is told. Do not be judgmental or disparaging of the child, his or her abuser, or anyone in his or her family.

To ensure that the child’s message is not overheard, move away from onlookers. If you are inside, try to find a private place. It is wise to leave the door slightly ajar.

Never place yourself in a potentially compromising position.

Do not ask probing questions. Just listen to what the child has to say. Do not promise to keep the information a secret. The child needs to know that you cannot do that; you must tell someone who can help.

3. Reassure the child.

Let the child know that you believe him or her. Do not in any way let the child think that he or she is to blame for the abuse. Tell the child that what has happened is not his or her fault. Assure the child that you will try to get some help to make things better. You may also be able to assure the child that he or she can count on your support and friendship.

4. Write down the facts.

As soon as possible after listening to the child, prepare a written report. Do not do this in the child's presence. Describe the child's disclosure in the child's words, if at all possible. If you are at any time inferring something from what the child has said, then you should very clearly indicate this. If the child has named someone, write down the identity of that person as the child has described it. Write down as much as you know about the incident, even if it seems incomplete. Record the child's name, address and telephone number and the date, time and place where the disclosure took place. The information you record will be needed by an investigator and possibly a court, should the case proceed to that level.

It is important to understand that some children "recant" or deny having been abused even after they have disclosed to someone. There are several reasons why children might do this. They may feel guilty for causing trouble for their abusers. They may be trying to protect their families. Your written report will be especially helpful in such cases. Remember you are helping a child in need.

5. Report immediately to the proper authorities

To report suspected child abuse phone the operator and ask for 1-800-387-5437 (KIDS) (Child Abuse Hot Line) or consult your telephone directory under Government of Alberta for the nearest Alberta Children's Services District Office.

Reporting suspected child abuse is a moral and legal responsibility. The Child Welfare Act states that any person who has reasonable grounds to believe a child is in need of protective services must report those suspicions. Any person who is found guilty of not reporting his or her suspicions can be fined up to \$2,000 or put in prison for a period of not more than six months.

The Act also states that the duty to report overrides any right of confidentiality or privilege a person in a profession or occupation may claim, except for the confidential relationship that exists between a solicitor and a client.

No action may be taken against a person reporting, unless it is done maliciously or without reasonable and probable grounds for its belief.

Reports received by Alberta Children's Services are confidential and the name of the persons reporting are not shared with anyone unless they are required to testify in court.

The responsibility for investigating reports lies with child welfare staff of Alberta Children's Services, with assistance from the police where appropriate.

Refrain from initiating further interviews with the child after receiving the child's first disclosure. It is in the child's best interests to be interviewed by the responsible authorities who are trained and authorized to carry out investigations.

The responsibility for notifying parents about an investigation also rests with Alberta Children's Services or the police.

6. Keep the information confidential.

Tell only those persons who must know. Example: Give the child's name and details of the disclosure to Alberta Children's Services or Child Abuse Hot Line personnel only.

Do not break the child's confidence by telling anyone else.

A Child Is Hurting . . . How Can I Help?

Summary of Procedures for Reporting Child Abuse

1. Believe the child.
2. Listen openly and calmly. Do not probe for more details.
3. Reassure the child.
4. Write down what you hear, using the child's words, but not in the presence of the child.
5. Report immediately to the proper authorities. Phone the operator and ask for the **Child Abuse Hot Line 1-800-387-5437 (KIDS)** or phone an Alberta Children's Services district office. (Consult your telephone directory under Government of Alberta.)
6. If the disclosure occurs during a resident 4-H event (camp, seminar, and so on), inform the program supervisor that a disclosure has been received. Keep the child's name and details of the abuse confidential. The supervisor is to be notified so that he or she may facilitate access to the child for interviews by Alberta Children's Services during the program.

Child Abuse
Hot Line
1-800-387-KIDS (5437)

While offering support, refrain from initiating further interviews with the child.

Do not notify the parents; that is the responsibility of the appropriate authorities.

Keep the information confidential.

An Adult is Hurting - How Can I Help?

The Child Welfare Act in Alberta states that any person who has reasonable grounds to believe a child is in need of protective services must report those suspicions. In this Act, "child" means a person under the age of 18 years.

In the 4-H program there are youth between the ages of nine and 21. Therefore, 4-H members between the ages of 18 and 21 will not be protected under the Child Welfare Act. You may even have a fellow volunteer, staff member or counsellor disclose a case of abuse to you. What do you do when an adult discloses?

An adult who discloses a situation involving abuse also requires a sensitive and understanding response.

1. **Believe in the person.**
2. **Listen openly and calmly.**
3. **Reassure the person.**
4. **Share information about options and support services.**
5. **Keep the information confidential.**

Chances are this will be the first time this person has shared this information with anyone. Let him or her talk and ventilate his or her feelings. Avoid being shocked or angered as this will only victimize. If you react this way, instead of opening up more, this person will limit the disclosure because he or she will be more concerned about whether or not you can handle it.

Be caring and be there for that person. How you handle a disclosure of abuse from an adult is very similar to how you should handle a disclosure from a child except for the reporting of the abuse.

Reporting of adult abuse does not come under legislation and therefore is done by the victim should he or she decide to, or with his or her consent. The exception is adults who are not competent to make the decision as to whether or not to report.

Following are some options available to the victim:

1. If the abuse occurred when this person was under 18 years of age, he or she may call the 24 hour, toll-free, **Dial-a-Law** number 1-800-332-1091 and talk to someone who can give advice on the law. There may be the possibility of receiving compensation through the Financial Benefits for Victims of Crime Program.
2. Anyone with a child abuse concern can receive appropriate referrals for counselling from the **Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-387-5437 (KIDS)**.
3. He or she may report the abuse to the police where it may be treated as assault under the criminal code.
4. In the case of a sexual assault, past or present, the person may contact a Sexual Assault Centre.

Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse Crisis Line (24 Hour):	1-403-237-5888
Edmonton Sexual Assault Centre: (Crisis Line)	1-780-423-4121
Fort McMurray Sexual Assault Program:	1-780-791-6708
Lloydminster Sexual Assault Centre:	1-306-825-8255

Since this adult trusted you enough to open up and share some painful experiences, he or she is also trusting you to keep this information confidential.

A child is hurting, an adult is hurting - there is a lot you can do to help!

Youth Suicide Prevention

Basic Information About Suicide

The origin of depression in teens is complex. They experience many underlying feelings connected to physical, psychological, emotional and social changes. Some of these feelings are boredom, restlessness, discontent, irritation, anger, inadequacy, rejection, failure and incompetence. It is often one or a combination of these feelings that motivates their behaviour and masks depression.

Adolescence is a time of exploration through trying on new roles and identities. Teens are on the bridge between childhood and adulthood facing many changes and many *"firsts"*. They form their identity against this backdrop of change. Many behaviours are motivated by the basic needs of security and acceptance. This developmental stage is oriented to action as well as soul-searching.

Why do people commit suicide?

The suicidal person feels a tremendous sense of loneliness, isolation, helplessness and hopelessness. For the young person, these feelings may be caused by family conflicts, a divorce or separation, the death of a parent, the break-up of a romance, the move to a new school or pressure to succeed at school.

Suicidal people feel that they can no longer cope with their problems and that suicide may be the only way out. A lot of people think about suicide at some point in their life. Most people find that these thoughts are temporary and that things do get better. Suicide is a needless and permanent solution to short-term problems.

A Child Is Hurting . . . How Can I Help?

Alberta Mental Health Help Line
1-877-303-2642

Warning Signs

One sign alone does not mean that a person is suicidal. Several signs at one time, however, may mean that the person is seeking help. A few of these signs are:

Physical

- Purchase of the means of suicide; example: pills, rope, weapons
- Loss of appetite (or gain) - most lose
- Loss of weight (or gain) - most lose
- Sleep disturbance
- Lack of interest in appearance
- Poor hygiene
- Self-mutilation
- Putting out cigarettes on wrists
- Pulling out hair
- Slashing and so forth
- Chronic fatigue or tiredness
- Physical health complaints

Emotional

- A sudden lifting of sadness, depression, or withdrawal which may indicate that the decision to commit suicide has been made
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Unrealistic expectations about performance, career, self, and so on
- Feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness
- Feelings of anxiety or uneasiness
- Mood swings of a radical nature - from happy to sad and back again very quickly
- Thoughts of inadequacy and *"I can't"*
- Prolonged tearfulness or irritability (can be very angry)

Behavioural

- Previous suicide attempts or gestures
- Sudden mood changes or significant behavioural changes
- Giving away one's personal possessions; packing one's belongings
- Themes of death, depression and suicide in art work and writing
- Impulsively - using charge cards excessively, stealing
- Reckless behaviour - driving unsafely
- Abuse of alcohol or drugs
- Change in sexual behaviour or promiscuity
- Sad face, stooped posture
- Can be very demanding of others

Cognitive

- Significant decline in, or neglect of, school work frequently coupled with expressions of helplessness and apathy
- Concentration difficulties
- Memory disruptions
- Trouble making decisions, not sure what they want or need
- Ambivalence
- Slowed, fuzzy thinking
- Confusion
- Psychological exhaustion

Many of these indicators can be normal reactions to daily stress and strain. **The key to recognizing depression is to identify indicators not typically seen in an individual's behaviour.** Remember, you are looking for increased frequency and intensity in the above depressive clues.

What To Do

When you suspect that a person may be suicidal, you may become nervous and anxious. This is a normal feeling. It may help if you remember the following:

1. **Believe or trust your suspicions** that the individual may be self-destructive.
2. **Communicate your concern** for the well-being of the person. Be an active listener and show your support.
3. **Be direct.** Talk openly and freely and ask direct questions about the person's intentions. Try to determine if the person has a plan for suicide (how, where, when). The more detailed the plan, the greater the risk.
4. **Get professional help.** Encourage the person to seek help from a school counsellor, minister or someone else who can help with the problems. If the individual resists, you may have to get the necessary help for him or her. Know your community resources.

What Not To Do

- 1 Do not allow yourself to be sworn to secrecy by the suicidal person. You may lose the confidence of that individual for a while, but you may save a life.
- 2 Do not leave the person alone if you believe the risk for suicide is immediate.
- 3 Do not act shocked at what the individual tells you.
- 4 Do not debate whether suicide is right or wrong. This may make the person feel more guilty.

A Positive Note

People have a will to live, a will that can once again become dominant. With proper guidance or treatment, the hopelessness disappears and the potential suicide victim can be restored to full, active and happy living. Help is available. You may be an important part of that help and a vital first link in assuring that professional assistance is obtained and that a life is saved. If you need help for yourself or a friend, call a crisis line near you.

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The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1986 Herbert J. Grover, State Superintendent

Summary of Steps for Dealing With Suicide

1. **Believe it!!!**
2. **Encourage the person to talk about the problem.**
3. **Determine the seriousness of the situation.**
4. **Remove the means if possible (guns, pills, ammunition, and so on).**
5. **Encourage the person to get professional help, accompany them if possible.**
6. **Consult with family members, friends or helping agency.**
7. **Maintain contact with the suicidal person.**

A Child Is Hurting . . . How Can I Help?

Alberta Mental Health Help Line
1-877-303-2642

Crisis Lines

Here are some numbers to call for more information or help.

Alberta

Kids Help Phone **1-800-668-6868**
Alberta Mental Health Board Help Line (24 Hrs) **1-877-303-2642**

Calgary

Distress Line (24 hours) **1-403-266-1605**
Teen Line (5 pm - 11 pm) **1-403-264-8336 (264-TEEN)**
Youth Drug Line (4 pm - 11 pm) **1-403-269-3784 (269-DRUG)**

Edmonton

The Support Network Crisis Line (24 hours) **1-780-482-4357 (482-HELP)**
Information/Referrals **1-780-482-4636**
Salvation Army Crisis Line **1-780-429-0230**

Northern Alberta

Athabasca, Fort Chipewyan, Lac La Biche, Wabasca/Desmarais Crisis Line **1-800-565-3801**
Fairview Crisis Line **1-780-835-2120**
Fort McMurray - Helpline/Teenline **1-780-743-4357**
Cold Lake Crisis Line Help Line **1-780-594-3353**
Vegreville - Help Line (24 hours) **1-780-632-7070**
Vermilion - Crisis Centre **1-800-661-4606**
Edmonton Yellowhead Region, Drayton Valley, High Prairie Distress Line **1-800-232-7288**

Central Alberta

Southern Alberta

Calgary and Area - Distress Centre **1-403-266-1605**
Southern Alberta - Distress Centre **1-877-303-2642**

You can also phone the Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) in your local area. See your local phone book for the number.

Child Abuse
Hot Line
1-800-387-KIDS (5437)

Alberta Suicide Prevention Programs

Alberta

Alberta Mental Health Board Help Line (24 Hrs) 1-877-303-2642

Suicide Information & Education Centre (www.suicideinfo.ca) 1-403-245-3900

Calgary

Canadian Mental Health Association 1-403-297-1700

Edmonton

Canadian Mental Health 1-780/414-6300

The Support Network *information/referrals 1-780/482-4636

Northern Alberta

Fort McMurray - Some Other Solutions - Suicide Prevention Program 1-780-743-8605

Grande Cache - Suicide Prevention Resource Centre 1-780-539-7142

Grande Prairie - Suicide Prevention Program 1-780/539-6680

Central Alberta

Red Deer - Suicide Prevention Services 1-403/342-4966

Southern Alberta

Lethbridge - Lethbridge Family Services 1-403/327-5724

Medicine Hat - Canadian Mental Health Association 1-403/504-1811

If you have any further questions, concerns or comments you may also contact:
Mark Shand, 4-H Specialist – Programs 403/948-8508 (RITE line toll free 310-0000)

The material in A Child Is Hurting . . . How Can I Help? has been adapted from the following:

Put The Child First Training Package

Prepared by: Canadian Council on Children and Youth

Child Abuse: What Is It? What To Do About It?

Prepared by: Alberta Social Services.

Protocol and Guidelines for Child Welfare Workers and School Personnel

Prepared by: The Child Welfare Implementation Project, Alberta Social Services in consultation with Alberta Education and Alberta School Trustees Association, September 1986

Public Education Manual

From: The Suicide Prevention Program in Grande Prairie

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1986
Herbert J. Grover, State Superintendent

Child Abuse: Fact Sheet

Prepared by: Office for the Prevention of Family Violence

How Do I Address Conflict In My Club?

Conflict is a normal part of life. Healthy conflict can lead to positive changes in personal relationships and organizations. Negative conflict can, however, be very destructive and can sap energy from a group.

The most important idea for you to remember in resolving conflict in your club is to remain neutral and try to uncover the cause of the conflict. When you understand the cause of conflict, you can begin to address how to resolve it. Small conflicts in your club can indicate larger problems. Always seek the cause.

Conflict is usually caused by misunderstandings, personality clashes, differences in values or goals, unclear responsibilities, lack of resources or change. Some conflicts can be avoided by being pro-active, that is, by discussing potential areas of conflict in an open and honest manner, before the conflict arises. Conflict resolution is not about making people happy. Conflict resolution is about effectively putting an issue to rest, so that it does not keep arising. When we resolve conflict there is no clear “winner” or “loser”.

It takes common sense, patience and practice to effectively help people in conflict. Remember that conflict is normal and cannot be avoided. If constructively managed, it can create growth and development in people and groups.

Use open communications in conflict resolution to help define problems and discover solutions. Both parties need to state their problems. Hear them out. As the neutral person, look for areas of agreement. When you are trying to develop a plan of action, remember that you can only request behaviour changes. You can't change another person's attitudes, perceptions or personality.

To begin to resolve conflicts you will need to:

- Stay calm and try to keep the group calm.
- Clearly define the problem.
- Try to draw out feelings and meanings.
- Stay neutral.
- Be creative in seeking solutions.
- Propose a joint problem solving approach.
- Help the group look for an active solution where everyone wins.

Don't try to “save” the group. Allow them to work out their conflicts themselves as much as possible.

To manage conflict effectively, you need to:

- Describe issues clearly.
- Clarify what is being said.
- Paraphrase to confirm understanding.
- Analyze situations.
- Support others.
- Ask others what they are hearing.
- Listen responsively and attentively.
- Offer relevant information.
- Suggest alternatives.
- Accept other points of view.
- Avoid explaining the other's behaviour.

Be easy on giving “advice”.

Dealing With Someone Who Is Angry

1. Acknowledge their feelings.

"I can see this is a problem for you." Don't say *"I understand how you feel"*. You get angry sometimes too. You need to recognize that this is truly how the person feels at that point. This will give them the message that you are receptive to their situation.

2. Keep paraphrasing the facts.

Angry people spout a lot of phrases. Continue to just focus on the facts (for example who is involved, when this took place and what happened).

3. Don't get caught up in their behaviour.

Sometimes angry people display aggressive behaviour. If you feel that you are not in danger and that the person will not become abusive, then ignore the physical behaviour (for example talking with their hands, facial expressions).

If you are fearful that the person will harm you, then exit the situation as soon as possible. Let the person cool off before you continue to discuss the problem.

4. Handle the verbal "stuff".

Personal attacks, profanity, sarcasm, exaggeration - we tend to let our emotions run our thoughts. Try to ignore all the *"stuff"* and focus on the facts. This will also help you to stay on track and not be distracted by the *"stuff"*. However, if you do not tolerate attacks or profanity, again, exit the situation and approach the person again after they have had time to control their anger.

5. Focus on the solution rather than the problem.

Let's face it, the problem is in the past. Let's try to keep moving forward. This may mean making amends or putting something in place so that the next time you encounter the situation you have a method of dealing with it.



Alberta 4-H Grievance Procedure

Responsibilities

Every 4-H club is autonomous and therefore must manage its own affairs and resolve all of its own internal conflicts. Problems should be handled at the level at which they arise (club, district, and so on).

4-H clubs and councils are responsible for upholding the image and philosophy of 4-H. They promote the merits of 4-H and provide leadership to the organization.

Grievance Procedure

4-H clubs and district and regional 4-H councils must use the Alberta 4-H Grievance Policy in the event that a conflict cannot be resolved internally. In the event of a conflict:

1. The parties involved must make every effort to resolve the grievance at the local level. Using a local, mutually acceptable mediator is recommended.
2. If unsuccessful, the appellant shall obtain a copy of the Alberta 4-H Grievance Policy and follow the procedures outlined including forwarding a written grievance to the next level within the 4-H council structure (club to district, district to region). The highest level that any grievance can go is to the Provincial Appeals committee of the Alberta 4-H Council. However, every effort should be made to solve the situation and prevent further escalation at the level of the conflict.

Ways to Prevent Grievances

1. Every person involved in 4-H is responsible for the physical, emotional and mental well-being of others in 4-H.
2. Become familiar with the 4-H mission, philosophy, vision, and policies.
3. Make sure your 4-H clubs and councils have written constitutions. A constitution outlines the group's rules and regulations. Update the constitution regularly. A constitution should meet the group's needs. It is important that every group follow its constitution.
4. Keep rules short and simple. Avoid creating rules that cannot be enforced.
5. Program information and rules should be given to the member's family at the start of the 4-H year. Clubs may choose to have parents sign an agreement form acknowledging the club constitution and/or rules.
6. Every club and council must plan programs that meet the needs of 4-H members. Give copies of the program plans to the members' families.
7. Elect club executive and leaders annually. Encourage shared leadership and delegation of responsibility.
8. Separate your role as a volunteer from any personal business. This avoids the perception that you are in a conflict of interest.
9. Be a positive role model. Practice a code of conduct based upon the purpose and philosophy of the 4-H program.
10. Keep confidential and sensitive information confidential. Protect the integrity of the people concerned.
11. Always keep the needs and safety of the members first.

A copy of all the Alberta 4-H Program Policies are available in your club binder, from your Key Leader or 4-H specialist in your region or on the 4-H web site under Resources.

Policy # 9.02
Alberta 4-H
Grievance Policy

Alberta 4-H Insurance Information

Policy # 8.04
Alberta 4-H
Insurance
Policy
Refer to Policy:
#4.01, 4.02,
5.03, 9.01

Each year, the Alberta 4-H Council purchases several types of insurance policies on behalf of registered 4-H leaders and members. In specific cases, adult volunteers assisting the 4-H program are also covered. These policies provide coverage for general liability, accident including lost income and accidental death and dismemberment and Directors' and Officers' liability.

A. General Liability Insurance

There was a time when an accident was an accident and an apology would do. Today, that same accident could bankrupt you. We all do things that, given a second chance, we would do differently. Usually no harm is done, but suppose someone is injured or property is destroyed? Do you have the money to hire a lawyer? Could you pay for the damage you have caused? For most of us, the answer is a definite NO! Purchasing liability insurance ensures that, in most cases, money and legal expertise will be available when unfortunate accidents occur.

How Does Liability Insurance Work?

The actual policy is written in precise legal language which, to most people, is quite confusing. The basic principles on which coverage is based, however, are really quite simple:

1. There must be property damage or injury to a person(s).

The policy does not cover your injuries or damage to your property. The idea is to protect you from claims made by others.

2. If you are legally responsible, you (the insurance company) must pay for the damages.

Most claims don't make it as far as a court room. In the majority of cases, representatives for the insurer and the claimant will negotiate and agree on a settlement that is fair to each party.

3. You must not have intentionally caused the damage.

If you meet this criteria, and the loss is covered by the policy, the insurer will provide (and pay for) legal council as well as pay the final settlement amount up to a maximum of \$5,000,000.

4. Medical payments

Those costs in excess of provincial health plans, are covered. This includes expenses for injuries caused by an accident on premises, or on ways (walkways, and so on) next to premises you own or rent, or for injuries sustained due to your operations anywhere in Canada. Payments are made regardless of fault, up to a limit of \$2,500 for reasonable expenses you have incurred.

This coverage was designed for immediate out of pocket expenses you may incur before a claim can be processed, ie. first aid at the time of an accident, necessary ambulance, hospital, professional nursing or funeral services.

5. It is important to note that liability insurance does not replace automobile insurance.

If you use your own vehicle on 4-H business (including driving 4-H members), your automobile policy will be the first to respond to an accident claim. To ensure that you have coverage when you need it, prior advise your insurance broker. It's important that your insurance company has full information before any accident that might occur.

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Alberta 4-H Insurance Information (continued)

Who is Covered?

An insurance policy includes a specific definition of who is covered. By limiting the number of people for whom protection is given, the insurance company can make an accurate assessment of how much premium to charge.

The 4-H insurance policies covers the Alberta 4-H Council, 4-H members, leaders and volunteers (such as parents and resource people) assisting the Alberta 4-H program. Your 4-H club's members and leaders are automatically covered when your club registration form is received at the 4-H office.

Please Note:

- The 4-H policy excludes bodily injury and property damage coverage related to 4 H activities involving automobiles, water craft eight metres or more in length, all-terrain or motorized snow vehicles or their trailers and any vehicle used in activities related to any speed or demolition event. Water craft less than eight metres in length that are used to transport people or property, for a fee, are also excluded as are any whitewater or ocean borne activities. 4-H clubs that engage in these activities may wish to carry alternative insurance policies specifically designed for the inherent risks involved. Please contact BFL CANADA Risk and Insurance Inc. at 1-888-244-6709 for further information.
- The policy does not cover youth younger or older than the official 4-H age limit.

Why Won't the Insurance Cover Youth Younger than the 4-H Entry Age? Insurance companies consider young children a high risk. Even very level-headed, responsible young people haven't yet had the time needed to develop sound judgement. A parent knows that it is human nature for young children to copy older children and adults. However, the differences in size, coordination and experience can have disastrous consequences. Also, 4-H was not designed with small children in mind. For their safety, and the safety of others, they should not be participants in 4-H activities.

What Should I do if an Accident Occurs? While it is important to offer what assistance you can, especially where injuries are involved, never admit you caused an accident. By admitting guilt, you put yourself and your insurer in a bad legal position which could become a significant problem for 4-H in the event the loss is not covered under your insurance policy. You may advise that you will forward details of the accident to your insurance company.

As soon as possible, phone BFL CANADA Risk and Insurance Inc. in Ottawa, Ontario at 1-888-244-6709 or fax 613-722-7829.

Provide as many details as you can.

You must promptly report all injuries and property damage. Your insurance company is in the best position to decide whether coverage will apply and whether settlement should be attempted.

Alberta 4-H Insurance Information (continued)

B. Accident Insurance including Loss of Income and Accidental Death & Dismemberment

This coverage provides medical expense benefits for 4-H members, leaders and volunteers who are injured while participating in 4-H activities. A schedule of benefits are available for extreme accidents that result in death or dismemberment, maximum payable is \$10,000.

Loss of Income Insurance

Covers 4-H leaders and adult volunteers who are: (a) under the age of 65 years or over the age of 16, and (b) gainfully employed on a full-time or permanent part-time basis. In the event of a 4-H related accident resulting in the leader or adult volunteer suffering total loss of income, pay out is for a maximum of \$200 per week for 104 weeks, commencing on the 8th day of disability.

Covers Alberta 4-H members who are: (a) under the age of 65 years or over the age of 16, and (b) gainfully employed on a full-time or permanent part-time basis. In the event of a 4-H related accident resulting in the member suffering total loss of income, pay out is for a maximum of \$100 per week for 26 weeks, commencing on the 8th day of disability.

Claims

In the event of a claim, phone Marguerite Stark at 403-948-8510 to report the incident. The 4-H Branch will report the incident to the insurer who will contact you directly.

Cost of Coverage?

The cost for coverage is collected through the Council system and paid by the Alberta 4-H Council on your behalf.

Think Safety First!

It is important that 4-H leaders, members and others assisting 4 H activities take every normal precaution to prevent mishaps from occurring.

C. Directors' and Officers' Liability

This coverage is for elected Directors' and Officers' (including past, present and future Directors' and Officers') volunteering at the council level including council committees. In the event of an allegation against a council or committee, this insurance will protect you and the 4-H council. If a claim is brought forward, you must contact Marguerite Stark at 403-948-8510 to report the incident.

Need More Information?

The above information has been approved by the insurance companies and is provided for explanation only. In all situations, the actual wording and conditions of the written policies apply. Anyone wishing to review the policies may contact the individual brokers or:

Marguerite Stark
Head, 4-H Branch
Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
Phone 403-948-8510 or Fax 403-948-2069

If your club decides to use parent release forms, a sample is provided in the Appendix.

