



tips for youth workers

JUNE 2007

KIDS MATTER TO US at The Salvation Army

Summer months provide great opportunities to try out new ministries in our local settings. New ministry opportunities mean new resources, new children through our doors and new ministry workers. With all the planning and organizing necessary to set up these ministries it is sometimes easy to overlook the most important planning step that is needed: screening of volunteers. As a denomination, The Salvation Army desires to provide families with a safe place to bring their children. **What are you doing to ensure children's safety?**

Here are three simple steps that will help protect children who come through your doors and prepare volunteers to minister to those children:

STEP ONE

STATEMENT OF APPLICANT TO WORK WITH CHILDEN AND YOUTH

– This form is to be completed by each children and youth ministry worker. It allows you to outline your previous experiences of youth work and references. A copy of this form is to be kept by the corps officer or immediate supervisor. Another copy is to be forwarded to DHQ who will forward same to the territorial personnel department for comparison to The Salvation Army's Child Abuse Registry. Form available from www.salvationist.ca, just search for "children and youth ministry forms".

STEP TWO

POLICE RECORDS CHECK – ALL volunteers or employees who will have contact or direct access to children at the corps or ministry unit **MUST** complete and submit a police records check. A police records check is to be submitted every three years and any transfer volunteers must submit a police records check as well. You will need to check with your local police station for these forms and their policies. If you require further direction, please contact your divisional headquarters.

STEP THREE

UNVEILING THE REALITIES OF CHILD ABUSE DVD – All children and youth ministry workers are required to view this DVD. The DVD is available through the territorial personnel dept at THQ or can be ordered online at www.salvationist.ca/catalogue and go to "teacher resources". After viewing this DVD an "Acknowledgement of Viewing" form is to be signed and submitted to the corps officer. (Form available from www.salvationist.ca, just search for "children and youth ministry forms".) The video outlines signs of abuse, how to handle a disclosure and steps to protecting yourself from allegations.

We have the responsibility and opportunity to provide children with a safe place. The news is full of situations where children have been abused. We need to recognize that abuse happens and that it has happened within The Salvation Army. It is our job to work together to show families that **"YOUR KIDS MATTER TO US"** at The Salvation Army.