

Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide - Abuse Prevention Policy

Revision: 1

Effective date: 2021-Jul-27

1. Policy Statement

This policy establishes how Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide will prevent the physical, emotional, and sexual abuse of children, youth, seniors and other vulnerable adults by its employees and volunteers. Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide seeks to create a welcoming and nurturing environment and has zero tolerance for those whose actions may jeopardize the safety, health, or innocence of those in the organization's care.

2. Definitions

Because abuse takes many forms, it can be broken down into the following subtypes, all of which are prohibited within the scope of this policy:

- Physical abuse: Injury intentionally inflicted on a child, youth, or vulnerable person
- Sexual abuse: Contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a youth and an adult, two youth, or a vulnerable adult and a caregiver
- Emotional abuse: A mental or emotional injury to a child, youth or vulnerable person that results in an observable and material impairment in an individual's growth, development, or psychological functioning
- Elder abuse: Any action by a person in a position of trust that results in harm to or jeopardizes the well-being or safety of any elder person
- Neglect: Failure to provide adequate care for an individual
- Economic abuse: Deliberate misuse of the money or belongings of an individual

3. Guidelines

3.1 Personnel Screenings

Safeguards in the hiring process will be used to eliminate from consideration any candidates who display characteristics that could classify them at a high risk for violating this policy. The required screenings and background information will depend on the positions and its level of involvement with children, youth, seniors, and vulnerable persons.

3.2 Vulnerable Persons

Candidates for positions that involve regular interaction with children, youth, senior citizens, and vulnerable persons will be screened and selected using the following:

- Standard Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide employment application that includes a signed authorization to perform necessary background checks

Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide - Abuse Prevention Policy

Revision: 1

Effective date: 2021-Jul-27

- Criminal background checks in any and all provinces where the candidate has lived
- Sexual offender registry checks in any and all provinces where the candidate has lived
- Driving records and any applicable certification if the position requires the transportation of children
- In-person or virtual interview of the candidate
- If hired, criminal and sexual offender registry checks will be conducted every five years for those who regularly work with children, youth, seniors and vulnerable persons.

All information collected about candidates will be reviewed and used to determine if they are appropriate for the respective position. If hired, all information collected during the hiring process will be included in the employee's permanent file, which will be maintained over the course of his or her employment with Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide .

Personnel screenings are required regardless of current employment status with Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide. Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide employees seeking to transfer into a position that involves working with children, youth, seniors and vulnerable persons must undergo the same review process as new hires.

3.3 Structural Guidelines for Programs

All Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide programs are designed to encourage safe interactions between employees and children, youth, seniors, and vulnerable persons. The following guidelines are meant to keep established safeguards effective:

- Employees are restricted from being alone with children, youth, senior citizens and vulnerable persons where they cannot be easily observed by others.
- Employees are not allowed to implement new activities or programs for children, youth, senior citizens and vulnerable persons without Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide's consent. Request for new activities or programs should be submitted in writing to management.
- Written permission must be obtained from a parent or guardian before any employee transports children, youth, senior citizens and vulnerable persons in the name of Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide.
- Children under the age of 12 placed in the care of Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide will only be released to a parent, legal guardian or person designated by a parent or legal guardian.

Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide - Abuse Prevention Policy

Revision: 1

Effective date: 2021-Jul-27

3.4 General Conduct

In an effort to provide a safe and healthy environment for both mind and body, the following guidelines are meant to guide Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide employees during their interactions with children, youth, seniors and vulnerable persons. These guidelines do not and cannot outline every situation that may be encountered while on the job, requiring employees to act with a certain degree of personal discretion. Because a certain action is not prohibited in this section does not mean it is acceptable behaviour. Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide reserves the right to take disciplinary action against employees whose actions are found to be inappropriate regardless of whether they appear in this section:

- Employees will treat all children, youth, seniors and vulnerable persons with respect and consideration. Treatment must be fair and equal, and must not be based on sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, or economic or social status. All efforts must be made to avoid favouritism, or the appearance of favouritism.
- While representing Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide, employees must not possess, distribute, use or allow others to use any alcohol or drugs.
- Employees must not use harsh or inappropriate language, degrading punishment or any type of restraining device in the name of behaviour management.
- Employees must not participate in or allow others to engage in any form of hazing.
- Employees must not have sexual contact with children, youth, seniors and vulnerable persons.
- Employees must not dress, undress, shower or bathe with or in the presence of children, youth, senior citizens and vulnerable persons.
- Employees must not use physical punishment in any form.
- Employees are prohibited from sharing sleeping locations with children, youth, senior citizens and vulnerable persons. This includes beds, tents, hotel rooms and other similar areas. Employees can sleep in open areas as long as the area is large enough for employees to have their own defined sleeping areas and other employees are also present.
- Employees must not discuss their own sexual history, preferences or fantasies nor their use of illicit or pornographic materials while in the company of children, youth, senior citizens and vulnerable persons.

Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide - Abuse Prevention Policy

Revision: 1

Effective date: 2021-Jul-27

- Employees are not allowed to possess any sexually oriented materials (books, magazines, videos or clothing) when conducting business in the name of Taigh Sgoile na Drochaide.
- When one-on-one discussion or counselling is warranted, employee interactions with children, youth, seniors and vulnerable persons will take place in an area that allows for private conversation while remaining in the view of others.

If, for any reason, employees feel there is a need to make an exception to these guidelines, they must submit to their supervisor a written description of the incident and why their actions were necessary. The report will be reviewed for wrongdoing. A copy of the original report along with any additional findings made by the reviewer will be included in the employee's permanent file.

3.5 Training

Training is mandatory for all volunteers and staff members who regularly work with children, youth, senior citizens and vulnerable persons. Training materials and procedures may include, but are not limited, to the following:

- In-house video presentations
- Handbooks
- Policies
- Instructions for reporting incidents
- Refresher courses

Training programs and materials will be reviewed annually. In addition to completing mandatory training, volunteers and staff are expected to respond to and report all allegations or complaints of abuse in an appropriate manner

Revision History & Approval

Revision	Date	Approved by
1	2021-Jul-27	Kenneth MacKenzie