

Sexual Safeguarding Policy
Adopted by Mt Toby Friends Meeting
July 10, 2022

We acknowledge the importance of Spirit, trust, confidentiality, and common sense in our religious community. This policy recommends steps to: (i) minimize the risk of incidents of sexual misconduct, (ii) specify steps to be followed at the time of an allegation, and (iii) clarify the responsibilities of committees, trustees, and the Mount Toby community as a whole in reducing risk and responding to allegations.

This policy applies to the sexual safeguarding of children when they are participating in childcare or religious education provided at the meetinghouse, as well as when children are participating in activities sponsored by Mount Toby at other locations. At other times, parents or guardians are responsible. The policy applies to the sexual safeguarding of adults when misconduct occurs at the meetinghouse or during Mount Toby sponsored events.

Reducing Risk of Sexual Misconduct

Committees: A separate Sexual Safeguarding Committee is not recommended. Current committees may discern what actions, events, or modifications of physical space could help reduce risk.

Trustees: Only Trustees have legal responsibilities for Mount Toby property and insurance issues. Our insurance policy obliges Trustees to undertake specific steps if legal action is taken against Mount Toby in cases of alleged sexual misconduct.

The Community: We all have a role in maintaining a culture of sexual safeguarding. Everyone in the Mount Toby community is responsible for reducing risk and is encouraged to make suggestions to committees or the meeting Clerk.

Responding to an Allegation

Designated Responders: Three Designated Responders are the first point of contact for the Mount Toby community. We recommend that every September one Designated Responder be designated each by the Trustees, by C&C, and by the Meeting Clerk. Designated Responders will serve for one year. Care & Counsel will publish Designated Responder names in the Newsletter and email Announcements and Ministry & Worship will announce the names after meeting.

Trusted Elders: Trusted Elders offer advice and counsel to Designated Responders on mobilizing support. If an incident involves children, Trusted Elders will provide advice on contacting the Department of Children and Families for guidance and on “mandated reporting.” We recommend that Designated Responders maintain a roster of Trusted Elders who have a professional background and relevant experience and are willing to serve as “on-call” resources. Designated Responders can update the roster as needed.

Mount Toby Community: The whole community has a role in counteracting misconduct, such as bringing an incident to the attention of a Designated Responder or participating in discussions to work through an incident that becomes divisive.

Pathways for Responding:

We recommend three pathways for responding to incidents: emergencies, non-emergencies and further actions (see diagram below). How each pathway will be followed will be discerned by Designated Responders on a case-by-case basis.

Emergencies are when there is a need to call emergency services or seek immediate medical help.

Non-Emergencies are when someone raises a concern or makes an allegation to a Designated Responder.

Further action may include continuing support from Mount Toby, revision of committees' risk reduction procedures, revision of response steps by Designated Responders, and/or discernment by the whole meeting of a way forward if an incident becomes divisive.

Three Indicative Pathways

