

SAFE CHURCH TEAM

The Safe Church Team helps the churches of Classis Eastern Canada develop safe and wholesome communities for everyone, free from abuse, through the following means:

(1) *Education*: Provide information and training for councils, congregations, and pastors on the dynamics of abuse, the prevention of abuse through fostering healthy relationships and boundaries, and the development and implementation of abuse prevention policies.

(2) *Healing*: Help churches develop healing communities for both victims and offenders of abuse and help to ensure that appropriate assistance is available for victims and offenders within the church community. The Safe Church Team will also manage a counseling fund to support survivors of abuse in seeking appropriate counselling and therapy. The Classis Eastern Canada Safe Church Team Counselling Fund will operate with the same terms of reference as the fund managed by the former *Survivor Support Ministry of Eastern Ontario* but will now be a restricted CEC fund administered by the CEC treasurer under the direction of the Safe Church Team treasurer. It will operate with utmost confidentiality.

(3) *Advisory Panel and Advocates*: Form advisory panels, when needed, to respond to an allegation of abuse, following the guidelines and procedures established by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. The team will also ensure that the appellant has a designated advocate, as provided in the process approved by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. These functions will be performed, using the definitions of abuse and guidelines for churches established by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, and consulting with the Director of Abuse Prevention for the Christian Reformed Church and similar teams in other classes, as needed.