

## **Abuse Policy**

Policy approved by the Board of Directors, July 19, 2014

- 1 Students Nova Scotia will not tolerate any form of harassment, physical, sexual, emotional, verbal or psychological abuse, or neglect.
- 2 Harassment is defined as but not limited to any unwanted physical or verbal conduct that offends or humiliates, including gender-based harassment. It can be a single incident or several incidents over time. It includes threats, intimidation, display of racism, sexism, unnecessary physical contact, suggestive remarks or gestures, offensive pictures or jokes. Harassment will be considered to have taken place if a reasonable person ought to have known that the behaviour was unwelcome.
- 3 Physical abuse is defined as but not limited to the use of intentional force that can result in physical harm or injury to an individual.
- 4 Sexual abuse is defined as but not limited to any unwanted touching, fondling, observations for sexual gratification, any penetration or attempted penetration with a penis, digital or object of the vagina or anus, verbal or written propositions or innuendos, exhibitionism or exploitation for profit including pornography.
- 5 Emotional abuse is defined as but not limited to a chronic attack on an individual's self-esteem. It can take the form of name calling, threatening, ridiculing, berating, intimidating, isolating, hazing, habitual scapegoat, blaming.
- 6 Verbal abuse is defined as but not limited to humiliating remarks, name calling, swearing at, taunting, teasing, continual put downs.
- 7 Psychological abuse is defined as but not limited to communication of abusive nature, sarcasm, exploitative behaviour, intimidation, manipulation, and insensitivity to race, sexual preference or family dynamics.
- 8 Neglect is defined as but not limited to any behaviour that leads to a failure to provide services which are necessary such as withdrawing basic necessities as forms of punishment, failing to assess and respond to changes in health status and refusing or withdrawing physical or emotional support.
- 9 This policy covers all board members, as well as all employees, volunteers, independent contractors, etc.
- 10 All suspected violations of this policy should be brought to the attention of the Board Officers and the Executive Director.

- 11 Complainants and those who are accused of violating this policy will have hearings with the Board Officers and Executive Director at the earliest possible moment, separately or together depending on the complainant's preference. Hearing notes will be collected and conserved in case of subsequent civil or criminal proceedings.
- 12 Those found in violation of this policy may be suspended without pay or dismissed.
- 13 Violations of the Canadian Human Rights Act, the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act or the Criminal Code of Canada will be referred to the relevant authorities.
- 14 Individual Board and Staff Members who violate this policy are personally liable for any financial damages incurred as a result of their actions.
- 15 Board and Staff Members must provide written acknowledgement that they have read this policy before assuming their duties.
- 16 The President is responsible for implementation of this policy with respect to Board Members and the Executive Director. The Executive Director is responsible with respect to other members of the staff.
- 17 The Executive Director is the organization's media representative in cases of enquiries related to this policy.