

Convention Owner Initiative

Duncan BC

Jul 5

Dear friends and workers,

Welcome to Duncan Convention in Beautiful British Columbia. As we look forward to our upcoming days at the convention, we want to communicate a few guidelines that could help our time together be safe, restful, and profitable.

Some of Jesus's strongest words of reproof were for those who would harm children (Matt 18:6). As we look forward to conventions, we appreciate that Jesus modelled respect, nurturing, and protection that children should be able to expect from adults entrusted by God with their care. Children inherently have an innocent, trusting nature and come into this world dependent upon adults. When that trust is breached, there are life-changing consequences, so we understand that children require and deserve vigilant protection.

Each one of us can and must play a part in safeguarding our children at the convention. Parents can help by having open and ongoing dialogue about body safety in general and about safety at convention specifically.

The news in recent months of abuse involving both workers and friends across Canada and the USA has alarmed us all. This abuse has included child sexual abuse as well as emotional, physical, and psychological abuse, and it has also occurred among both friends and workers here in the province of BC. All forms of abuse, sexual as well as emotional, are damaging and may leave the victim with lifelong trauma. There is no doubt that we all want to minimize opportunities for any kind of abuse. While we respectfully agree and are happy to voluntarily host (provide the location/venue) for Duncan Convention to be conducted, we also have taken a zero-tolerance approach to any of this behaviour on our property. Any allegation will be taken seriously with proper reporting and real transparency.

In addition, it has been recently brought to our attention that Robert Corfield, a visiting senior brother worker, who stayed in the basement of our home during Duncan Convention last year, is a self-confessed pedophile. This has not been widely reported in BC, so we do feel it's our duty to inform the Duncan Convention attendees of this and urge you to please speak to your children if they had any negative encounters. You likely can understand how we are feeling and see how it is entirely appropriate to take a serious and cautious approach to the convention, especially knowing that this particular situation

was entirely avoidable; Robert Corfield's CSA behaviour was known by the out-of-province senior worker(s) years ago.

Considering all of this, we feel particularly compelled to create a welcoming environment where all feel safe and at home. Here are some guidelines for Duncan Convention:

- Convicted and alleged child sex offenders (CSA) are not invited.
- There will be no communal, multi-person dorm sleeping. Please stay off-site, use an RV or bring a private tent. If you cannot afford a tent, we can help.
- We will provide shaded, day rest areas, in the former dorm areas.
- There will be no Wi-Fi password provided to any guests.
- Minors must have a designated adult/guardian responsible for them at all times. Absolutely no drop-offs and/or minors attending without a guardian.
- If younger children need to use the restroom during a meeting, a good practice would be for them to not go alone but be accompanied by their guardian or responsible sibling.
- All those that would like to listen remotely instead of attending in person are welcome to do so via the call-in number.

If any kind of sexual abuse happensdo not keep silent. Report it to the authorities (Call 911) immediately and inform both the workers and owners of the property as soon as possible. Chat with your children before arriving about what to do if they feel uncomfortable at any time.

Please remember that we are all guests of the convention grounds owners/hosts throughout preps and convention. Conventions are a free, non-commercial event held on private property and are only open to invited, safe guests. As guests, we want our behaviour to be appropriate, safe, and respectful. Happy children, enjoying being together with their friends, is an appreciated hallmark of our gathering each year. With this in mind, we encourage parents to visit with their children about safe behaviour while attending. Let's all invest in keeping the children and vulnerable as safe as possible.

You can help by taking the Ministry Safe course: <https://ministrysafe.com/> . This program is not just for ministers but for everyone. It was created by two attorneys with extensive experience in child sexual abuse among faith-based groups.

As well, our convention season will soon arrive this summer and for many, it won't be an easy time. Some of us are looking forward to being together again and feel it's exactly what will help. There are others who are more reluctant, and understandably so, because of the breach of trust that has occurred. Feel free to attend or not. We understand your feelings and support your decision, either way. Emphatically, there will be no judgment on this very personal decision.

Should there be any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out and call us. We appreciate your help in ensuring our time together is enjoyable and spiritually beneficial.

Call-in number: Duncan Convention 778-561-3415

Sincerely,

Bruce & Rachel Munro