



**Safe Places** is a City of Swift Current initiative that began in 2016. In collaboration with Sheldon Kennedy and Respect Group, we developed a Youth Certification program, the first of its kind in Canada, with the purpose of adopting a community approach to safeguarding youth against bullying, abuse, harassment, and discrimination (BAHD).

We believe that all youth deserve to feel safe, to have positive relationships and experiences whether at home, school or at play. Safe Places is now able to offer the Youth Certification initiative as a safeguarding solution that other organizations and communities can easily implement through an online platform.

### **Youth Certification Overview**

- Anyone over the age of 18 can become Youth Certified.
- Individuals apply to become Youth Certified via an online portal
- All approved individuals receive a Certificate accessible via their online dashboard
- A person's certification is valid for 4 years from the date they took their Respect Group training
- Certified individuals feature in the Safe Places Public Directory

Documents Required as part of the application include:

- Criminal and Vulnerable Sector Background Check (valid within 3 months of application)
- Copy of Fingerprints (if applicable)
- Respect in School or Respect in Sport Certificate (completed within 1 year of application)
- 2 Pieces of Government issue ID (1 photo)
- 1 Headshot to be used for Public Directory Identification

### **Background Checks & Annual Declaration**

Safe Places reviews all background checks to determine the eligibility for Safe Places - Youth Certification in line with the eligibility criteria. All positive record checks are reviewed by a committee considering the potential risk to youth in their role, nature of offence and timeline determined by the National Pardon Centre of Canada.

To maintain Safe Places certification status and appear in the public directory, individuals are required to complete an annual declaration available through their online account.

The declaration requires confirmation of the following within the last year:

1. Any new offence which an individual has been charged with
2. Any new activity related to suspected, under investigation or facing criminal charges or any other charges, including those from a sport body, private tribunal or government agency

### **Public directory**

All Certified individuals appear in the [Safe Places Public Directory](#) and are searchable via a name search or associated organization.

### **Recertification**

Individuals will be required to complete all steps again after their 4-year certification expires.



### **Affiliated Organizations**

Organizations can easily adopt the Youth Certification quality standard by becoming affiliated with Safe Places. We currently have two options available for implementation:

1. Organizations independently manage the program
2. Safe Places managed the program on behalf of your organization

Affiliation fees, benefits and services are dependent on capacity, implementation preferences and resources available. Organizations are provided with an 'Affiliated' logo demonstrating their association with Safe Places.

### **The Benefits of Safe Places – Youth Certification**

- The Safe Places process ensures that anyone with prior unsuitable convictions cannot be Youth Certified; therefore, limiting their opportunity to connect with youth.
- Safe Places is a relatable initiative that demonstrates an organizations' effort for culture change and a quality standard that demonstrates that they prioritize the safety of youth.
- Safe Places empowers people to have the confidence to recognize and act when they see signs of bullying, abuse, harassment, and discrimination.
- Safe Places provides a platform to limit the opportunity for abusers to take advantage of youth and recognize that inappropriate behaviors will not be tolerated.
- Safe Places actively makes organizations and communities more accountable to their members in their effort to eliminate inappropriate actions and behaviors that have previously been acceptable, tolerated, gone unnoticed or unreported.
- Individuals working across multiple programs as parents, volunteers and coaches adhere to one standard that is recognized by multiple agencies.
- Safe Places provides all affiliated organizations with resources, education, and tools to support youth
- Database associated with the online portal tracks users and certifications and provides reports for organizations
- Public Directory provides real time certification status
- Online Portal digitally manages certification status for users and organizations

For more information on how Safe Places certification can be mandated and implemented as a safeguarding solution by your organization contact Safe Places Manager Kelly Schafer by email [k.schafer@swiftcurrent.ca](mailto:k.schafer@swiftcurrent.ca) or call 306.778.1677

To find out more about the other programs and services offered by Safe Places visit [www.SafePlaces.ca](http://www.SafePlaces.ca)