

Resources for Children's Workers

Children and Young Persons

Assemblies of God Queensland



A WORD OF INTRODUCTION:

The ACC Queensland has released these Resources to assist you, the training developer for your local church, with information that can be used in the development of your own Training Element for your Children's Ministries.

As outlined previously it is essential that all children's workers and key church personnel receive not only a copy of your church policies and procedures but a level of instruction in the procedures of your children's ministry.

As we would love to hand you a resource manual that covers absolutely everything you need it would be impossible so we are providing you with a collection of resources for your information and use in you own development of what is needed for your Children's Ministry.

You will notice that it includes the previous procedures for handling abuse in your local church which, if you were an existing church before October 2007, you would have already 'signed-off' on in your Board meeting. These are still active and you can reincorporate them into your new Local Church Policies and Procedures and teach them in your Training Programme.

A Hint: If you are a small church and feel that policy development is a new area to you may like to contact other small churches in your region and develop a working group of 4 or 5 and then share out the development load. You could even join together for training days and policy review. It will cut your workload down as you will only need to do a portion of what you would do as a solo agent!

If you have any information to improve this document please send this to the Review Committee c/- the ACC State Office.

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Section 1:

Introduction

This manual is aimed at providing a resource for the development of an Induction and Training Process for children's workers within a local church. It provides some (as apposed to all) of the resources needed plus some helpful explanations and information that will assist the person developing the local church Induction and Training Programme.

Objectives:

The objectives of this manual are:

1. To provide explanation and background behind the State Policies
2. To provide a platform for training and induction in local church ministries that deal with children and young people
3. To establish clear recommendations of practices in all churches associated with ACC Qld
4. To suggest strategies that a local church can minimise the risk of abuse to children and young people who are part of their ministries
5. To provide information so that churches handle any cases of or suspected cases of abuse in a manner that is consistent with current legislation and with a heart for pastoral care

Scope of Training:

It is suggested that the following people be included in any training that is conducted within the local church:

Pastors
 Youth Workers
 Staff members
 Board members (Governance level is very important as they are the people who carry the liability should there be a problem)
 and Volunteers

You may like to invite to your training sessions others who may be interested e.g.

Parents,
 Church Ushers, deacons or Elders
 Volunteers not directly involved with the 'classes' (ladies who prepare food, chaps who provide occasional transport and the like) and other church workers.

The more who understand the more assistance you can get in running a smooth and safe programme.

Code of Conduct:

During your local Policy and Procedures document development you will need to develop a Code of Conduct for your ministry.

Here are the three mentioned before:

Codes of Conduct outline expected minimum standard behaviour in any ministry. There are three Codes that are relevant to this document.

1. *The ACC National Ministers Code of conduct which is applicable to all ACC Credentialed ministers within Australia*
2. *The Children's Worker Code of Conduct which does not preclude the above but covers all Children's Workers whether Credentialed or not*
3. *The Code of Behaviour for Children/Young People attending the Ministry. More will be discussed about this later on.*

Download the ACC ministers Code of Conduct from the ACC website. Remember it applies to Credentialed Ministers of the ACC in Australia. From this you can develop your own code. Some areas will be applicable and others related to the credential person. This becomes the basis of your local Code of Conduct.

Your local Workers Code of Conduct should be given to anyone you are recruiting into your ministry whether they be a paid worker or a volunteer. Ensure you give them opportunity to ask questions about the code so they are satisfied that they understand what is expected of them. Once they have read the code and are happy and agree to abide by it, have them sign off to that effect (Signature and Date). Often on the Induction checklist is a great place to keep this bit of information.

You also need to develop a Code of Conduct for the Children/Young People that will be part of your programme. The best time to do this is at registration. Make sure the parents know what is expected of their child and how you will deal with any breaches. Ensure they are aware you will be entering into a consultative process with the Parent/Guardian to bring resolution to any ongoing problems. Most behaviour problems are pre-empted or managed through good classroom behavioural management practices but should this not bring about the necessary outcome it may be necessary to enter into a process of consultation with the parent to develop a strategy to meet the problem.

Not only does the parent need to be aware of the Code of Conduct but so should the children. They should be made aware that good behaviour allows them to continue in the programme, it is set for the safety of the other children and will allow the maximum fun to be had by all (not just the one!). Think of an innovative way to introduce the children to this code.

A few questions.....

Why have a Recruitment Process?

A clear documented recruitment process

- Enables you to clearly screen everyone that is allowed into your Children's/Youth Ministry.
- Shows you have enacted a correct process in relation to your Duty of Care
- Provides you with an evidence trail to show you executed your Duty of Care

It also makes the person aware of the seriousness of their activity.

Why have Induction?

The simple answer is new workers need to know all the information from the beginning rather than spending a "life-time" discovering what they should have been doing from the start.

What are Procedures?

Many ask why have procedures when we have a Policy. Can't everyone just make sure they are doing the Policy? Why do we need to write everything down? Surely everyone knows this is how we do it?

We only wish it was true! But the larger an organisation grows the more information must be documented so that all are aware of the way you do what you do and why you do it. Lines of communication must be clear and information written down so it can be repeated, passed on to newcomers and readily available to all.

So does that mean small organisations don't really need to write out their procedures? Two answers. No organisation, especially a church expects to be small forever. It is against the whole reason you start a church! Secondly, the best time to start writing is when everything is small and simpler. Then it can grow with the organisation – leave it to later and it will become a nightmare!

Why have training?

Apart from the obvious reasons such as:

- Improved Skills
- "All singing off the same hymn-sheet" - Principle
- Consistent paperwork and feedback
- General awareness of practice and procedure
- Introduction of new policies, procedures or practices
- Information
- Opportunity for questions interaction and feedback
- Etc...

Basically you are required under the Act to provide orientation and training for anyone who engages in ministry to children.

Section 2: Organisational Procedures:

Every organisation has 'ways' that they go about their 'business'. These are a reflection of their Mission Statements or Vision Statements or Core Values or Statements of Faith or Doctrinal Statements or a selection of the above depending on your terminology.

Policies and Procedures are helpful when they are documented to ensure

1. All actions are in line with the organisational core beliefs
2. All are aware of what you stand for and what actions do not agree with the organisational core beliefs
3. All actions/beliefs can be communicated clearly to new comers
4. There is common agreement on reason for being and the scope of how you will go about this.
5. That actions are accurately repeatable enabling a sense of quality and professionalism to be achieved
6. That any action follows legal and organisational requirements so liabilities are met and Duty of Care is achieved.

Often in church life this is mentioned as reflecting the 'culture' of the church/department/organisation through its actions.

Policies clearly state what you stand for organisationally and Procedures describe how they will be kept.

It is often clear to our church environment what are our Core Beliefs, we have Statements of Faith to reflect that but what about how the Local Church does church in its environment. For example we may have a Vision to 'Impact our community by caring for families'. Therefore we need to have policies that safeguard, for example, the safety of Children in your complex/building/rented hall or privacy of the family's personal details so no one can ...sell them to a 'Telemarketer'.

Policies and Procedures are good things. The key things to remember that when documenting them they should be clear and concise and ensure they are efficient in what they do.

It has been the recommendation of the State that each church develop a manual for their Children's/Young Peoples Ministries. Here is the extract from the previous document:

Departmental Manuals¹

It is recommended that each church develop a departmental manual used for the induction and training of staff.

This Child Protection Policy will be an important part of that manual.

The manual must include specific instructions regarding the safe conduct of all ministries to persons under 18 years of age.

The Ministry Manual must cover areas such as:

Screening of workers (specific instructions)

Registration of children

Child drop off and collection protocols

Teacher identification protocols

Adult visitor protocols

Toileting procedures

Nappy changing protocol

Child contact guidelines

On Campsite and Outings Protocols

Examples of Organisational Procedures you might like to include might be:

General Conduct:

Procedure for General Conduct with Children²

- Speaking to or 'counselling' with children will be conducted in the 'open' within full view of others and at no time BEHIND CLOSED DOORS.
- When counselling children. Males counsel males, females counsel females. At no time shall a male council a female child without an adult female in attendance.
- When taking children on a camp or outing they must be accompanied by no less than two teachers, who are not family members.

¹ AOG Child Protection Policy 2001

² AHCC

- It is preferable that, where practical, children attend the toilet in groups. Children under the age of 7 years should be accompanied when attending the toilet. Two adults should accompany children to the toilet.
- Physical contact between adults and children needs to be treated with care. Contact with areas of the body apart from arms, legs and shoulders should be avoided. If the child indicates contact is unwelcome it should be ceased immediately. **No child is to be grabbed or hit in anger or as a means of discipline.**

Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity

Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity³

Team members need to be sensitive to cultures and family traditions different from their own. These cultures and traditions may affect the degree of participation of children and young people in activities and games. No pressure should be applied to children and young people from other cultures and traditions; only encourage participation. Team members need to show respect for authority structures in other cultures and traditions. Team members must not make statements about other religions and cultures that reflect ignorance, bias or ridicule.

Recruitment

Your process of recruitment and screening is a very important part of ensuring that you have only the right people in your Children/Young Peoples Ministry.

We all like.....

- ✓ Keen and willing workers and this is the first criteria to be filled.
- ✓ They also need to be competent and trustworthy
- ✓ They need to be inducted and trained correctly
- ✓ The need to agree to abide by the policies and procedures of the Ministry and the Church
- ✓ They need to be screened and Police checked (Blue Carded)

The previous AOG Queensland Child Protection Policy (2001) suggested the following to assist in the process of recruitment and screening of workers:

³ BCC

Screening of Workers in Child Related Ministries⁴

The most effective strategy against abuse within the ministry of the church is prevention. With that in mind the leadership makes no apology for adopting stringent measures when it comes to the screening of prospective workers in child related ministries, or in ministries that deal with children under 18 years of age. Every worker must be screened.

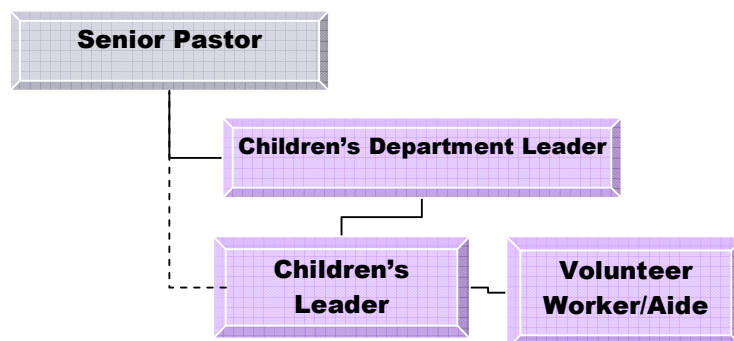
a) Suitability Cards (the Blue Card)

In Queensland, the issue of screening of persons wishing to work with children is dealt with through the application for and issuing of a Suitability Card under the Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000 (the Blue Card). It is a requirement by those intending to work in child-related ministries to obtain such a card. There is an application fee for an employee applying for a blue card. There is no cost for a volunteer worker. *See the section on Blue Cards which is part of this manual.*

Reporting Structure

Every church ministry needs a valid reporting structure. Design one, in consultation with your Pastor that is both workable and reflects the requirements of your churches organisational structure. Remember Legal liabilities can hinge on clear reporting pathways.

Place it in a diagram so it can be clearly seen and understood. Design a structure such as the one below.



Interfacing with Church Policies and Constitution

It is important that the group/committee consider in their development of a Policies and Procedures Manual for your local church that it does not conflict with these other key documents:

- Local Church Constitution
- Church Policies and Procedures Manual
- ACC State requirements
- Any general laws and local council requirements

⁴ AOG Qld Child Protection Policy 2001

Programme and Planning

PPPPP: were all taught Proper Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance
Can I now add: Proper Prior Planning Prevents Potential Post Programme Painful Procvilities

What this is saying is that planning your programme ahead of time (we are not saying the morning before!) allows you time to apply the correct checks on issues such as risk, safety, protection and supervision to name a few.

It would be advisable to adopt a practice of working with your leaders in submitting to you their lesson plans for at least a few weeks in advance (the bigger the programme the more prior planning necessary) so you can discuss with them any arrangements and considerations that need to be made on.....

- √ the safety of the games played,
- √ the equipment used
- √ any food allergies certain children may have
- √ any predictable behavioural issues that may be encountered and adjusted for
- √ Transport details
- √ Space used and personnel required
- √ Etc

This means a proper Risk Management Strategy has been devised.

Present this process to them in your Training and Induction times then it will become standard procedure.

Ask for it to be **documented** for your records (maybe a form you can design will help them and standardize what you will need to read).

Review them and give feedback as to the workability of their proposals

Ensure you receive afterwards a **report** of any issues that arose in the execution of the programme so they can be addressed for next time.

Training

The key to you making this all work in your environment is to spend time ensuring all who need to know do know. We are talking about two important processes that must be done. (Your are required ethically and legally to prepare your workers)

These two processes are:

- Induction
- Training

Induction is the process of orientation that you take any new workers through before they commence ministry in your department. It should involve

everything from awareness of the physical facilities and processes you following managing the department to the culture, vision and goals of the department.

They must be aware of their liabilities, oversight pathways, any Code of Conduct they will need to adhere to and any Policies they will need to abide by. It is a requirement in every area these days that people are aware of what is required of them before they agree to engage in an activity. Most of the time this is done on an informal basis and you may like to have for them copies of Codes and Policies etc that they can take away to read. It is also a very helpful practice to develop checklist of all the things you need to tell them as we all have a tendency to miss things out if it is left to our memories. At the end ask them if they have any questions and then have them sign off on the checklist to say you covered everything (make sure you file these in your records).

Training should be one of the things a new recruit should agree to undergo as a member of your team. We are not talking here about going to Bible College - but don't discourage them if they are interested! The training we are talking about is upskilling of your workers through regular opportunities to keep them current in your department.

Things you should and could do in your training times:

- Make them aware of any new government requirements especially in the areas of Child Safety
- Update them on your programme for the year and give opportunity to share the good things that have been happening
- Train/refresh their skills in specific topics like Witnessing to a Child, leading a child to the Lord, Praying for a Child to receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, Behaviour Management, Planning programmes, Small Group dynamics etc
- Specifically train them in all Policy and Procedures associated with Children/Young People's Ministry. Use your Policy and Procedure Manual that you have developed.
- Ensure all workers understand all Child Safety Procedures and in information that will assist them in recognising issues such abuse and protection.
- Bring in special community/Christian speakers to improve their understanding in areas relating to special needs areas.

When you have completed your training session have your attendees sign off that they attended and file this in your records (make sure you list the topics you covered). You may like to give them a certificate that reflects their attendance and the topics covered to recognise their time spent remaining current with their ministry.

Liabilities and Legalities⁵

Note that all churches need to have displayed in a prominent position near their entrance a sign indicating they are a Child Safe area.⁶

Sign-in/Sign-out procedures

The sign-in/sign-out form is now a requirement in many areas of Children/Young People's Ministry and should become a regular practice each time you meet.

You will need sign-in/sign-out forms particularly in the following areas:

- Whenever children start or leave your care
- Whenever children are toileted
- Whenever special activities are arranged like a trip to the park or outings

Make this form your friend!

Keep them in your records.

Ensure they are signed, dated and clear to read.

Don't allow people to treat them as a joke or take them lightly.

Allow space to enter any extra information.

Hope you will never have to use them but be confident you can find them if asked.

The same guardian/parent must sign-in and sign-out a child from any programme that is run by the church. Should a different person want to sign-out a child, written permission to do so is required from the person who signed the child into the programme⁷.

If a complaint is made these may be your most treasured item!

Some churches already have used these forms to demonstrate their correct duty of care in cases of suspicion of abuse and misadventure.

Develop the procedure that works for you.

Ensure workers and parents are trained in the use of your procedure.

Work your system without fail don't let one fall through the gaps.

Encourage feedback from your workers and parents on how you can make this more effective.

DON'T LET ANYONE TELL YOU THIS IS NOT NECESSARY.....They will not carry the liability and agree that happens when the systems are challenged through an incident.

Enrolment of Children

⁵ This section needs advice from Graham Corney and Ian Young

⁶ This needs to be confirmed from the Child Safe Dept.

⁷ This requirement has been recommended by ACS as cases have arisen where estranged couples have "kidnapped" a child against the wishes of the guardian.

All children/Young People should be formally enrolled into your programme. This should happen at least once a year or some do this after every school holiday break.

The parents/guardian should fill out a form for each child and complete the form in full.

Any new enrollees should be placed through this process before you accept the child. You may like to develop a “visitors form” or “guest for a day” form for children/young people who are likely to only attend once. Make sure you do ask all the key issues. Ensure all visitors have a badge displaying their visitor status.

The following information should be on this enrolment form:

- Standard Name and contact details, names of other siblings in your programme
- Nomination of who can pick up and drop-off the child
- Emergency contact details
- Any special pick-up arrangements
- Any special facts you need to know to ensure the child is safe e.g. the parent/guardian may need to alert you to allergies, dietary requirements, behavioural issues(ADHD), any home situation issues that could affect their behaviour (recent Divorce), any medical issues (maybe they are epileptic). *Please note these details cannot be asked for directly but can be asked to be volunteered by the parent/guardian in the light of effective duty of Care of the child.*
- Any restrictions you have on children entering your programme (e.g. Maybe you do not take children that are not toilet trained, strict pick -up times, Code of Behaviour for Children,)
- A signed declaration by the Parent/guardian
- Where necessary, a Privacy statement or reference to where they can view the churches Privacy Statement. (See Policy document for explanation)

File these forms in a secure place as they contain personal details.

If there is mention of a special area of need on the form for the child (e.g. they are highly allergic to peanuts and could go into anaphylactic shock if exposed), then ask the parent/guardian if you can make the workers aware of this and inform them at your next workers meeting. Some other issues may only need their permission to make the teacher aware so they can modify their programme to accommodate the child or at least be alert to any extra moral support the child may need.

Job Descriptions

Everyone likes to know what they are in for when they ‘sign up’ to help. Job descriptions are a great way of concisely outlining to someone what will be required of them as they undertake this area of ministry.

Some areas to consider including are:

Reporting Structures

List of task areas (make these larger general areas as a detailed task list could be too much information at this stage)

Skills and Qualifications needed

Hours required and when they will function

Objectives for the position

How review, evaluation, upskilling are done

Scope of latitude in their innovation

See the AOG Assist website for sample job profiles.

Section 3

Blue Card

Queensland State specific policies and procedures:

Each State and Territory within Australia has laws and practices peculiar to that state. Queensland has a number of these. It is very important that we are aware of these and ensure in the development or adoption of any Interstate initiatives within our Church or Children's/Young People's Ministries are scrutinised against our state's laws.

Some of these are:

1. The Blue Card and its requirements
2. Mandatory reporting requirements on abuse
3. Reporting agencies and Child Services

Background

Under the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act of 2000* a form of Police check for those working with children (young people under 18 years of age) is required. In Queensland this is the Blue Card. This includes all people who work in a paid or voluntary capacity that provide services to children and Young people.

⁸The Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian

The Commission is an independent statutory authority which promotes and protects the rights, interests and wellbeing of children and young people in Queensland.

The work of the Commission is regulated by the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000*.

The Act requires people who work with children under 18 in particular categories of businesses, paid or voluntary employment to be screened – the Working with Children Check.

What is the Working with Children Check?

The Working with Children Check is a detailed national check of a person's criminal history, including any charges or convictions.

The Commissioner also considers disciplinary information held by certain professional organizations for:

- Teachers
- Child care service providers
- Foster carers
- Nurses, midwives, and certain health practitioners.

In addition, information from police investigations into allegations of serious child-related sexual offences will be taken into account, even

⁸ CCYPCG Information Sheet "The Blue Card"

if no charges were laid because the child was unwilling or unable to proceed.

A person whose application is approved is issued with a positive notice (letter) and a blue card. If a person's application is refused, they are issued with a negative notice which prohibits them from working in the categories of employment or carrying on businesses defined by the Act.

If people do not comply with their obligations under the Act, penalties apply, including fines and terms of imprisonment.

Who should apply?

People requiring a Blue Card may be employed or Volunteers in your church who are providing services or conducting activities mainly directed towards children/Young People. This include workers in youth groups, Children's Church, Sunday School, Kid's Clubs, Chaplaincy, Playgroups, Volunteer helpers in these areas, crèche, Camp workers etc. Note this will also include workers who go to one-off events such as rally's and camps or drive transport for these activities.

As well as those listed above the ACC in Queensland require the following people to hold Blue Cards:

- All Pastors and credentialed Ministers in a church
- All Board (Governance) Members of a local church

It is also highly recommended that you also look at having participants in these activities obtain a Blue Card:

- Ushers, Deacons and Elders
- Staff Members
- Trainers in college and ministry training programmes (that take students who are under 18 years of age)
- Altar Workers

Note: Teachers are not exempt from requiring a Blue Card when working in your Children/Young People's Ministry

Note: There are different applications for Paid and Volunteer workers

Note: There are some exemptions and these should be checked on the website. Carefully consider who is exempt and what the conditions are for exemption. Also is that person going to be operating occasionally outside those conditions e.g. you have a Mum who has their child in one of the classes and she assists the teacher regularly? One weekend the child is home sick and this woman goes to enter the class her child is normally in..... unfortunately she can't as she is now outside the scope of her exemption.

It is also necessary for proper screening process be put into place by your church. This must include the Blue Card but not be limited to it. Other areas you may include in your screening process could be:

- Local Church membership
- Attendance criteria
- References

Interview by the Pastor Maturity of Faith

You need to keep a record of the process and this can often be simply done through a simple checklist or form you fill out as you take someone through the process. These should also be kept as evidence the correct screening for the applicant has taken place.

Please note: The ACC in Australia requires all its credentialed ministers to undergo a Police Check before issuing and reissuing credentials. This is irrespective of how often they work with children. In Queensland this is the Blue Card. Details of your Blue Card (number and expiry date are kept by the State office). If you are applying for credentials you will need to submit a photocopy or details of your Blue Card before your application will be considered. Renewal of your Blue Card is your responsibility and to keep State records current you should notify the state office of your new expiry date or any other outcomes from your application.

For more information on who can hold a Blue Card check the website at: <http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au>

Application Procedures

Application is made by using the Application Forms that can be found on the www.bluecard.qld.gov.au

Record keeping by the church

Your church is required to keep a list/register of all Blue Card holders their names, numbers and expiry dates. It is also the churches responsibility to ensure these are kept current (both the Blue Cards and the Records!). Keep it with all key documents so it can be accessed and keep up to date.

Sample Blue Card Registers are available from the following website and can be downloaded and used to develop your own church's register: <http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au>

Renewal

Due diligence should be maintained on monitoring the expiry and renewal of Blue Cards. As of November 2006

Blue Card holders may continue working after their card has expired provided their card has not been suspended or cancelled and the Commission has received a renewal application at least 30 days before the expiry of the card.⁹

Circumstances for updating the CCYPCG

The commission must also be notified when there has been a change in circumstance such as below:

⁹ CCYPCG Letter Nov 2006 "Notification of changes to legislation governing Blue Card screening"

¹⁰The commission now provides forms to make it easier to notify us when there have been a:

- Change in details
- Change of name
- Lost or stolen card
- Ceasing of child-related employment
- Ceasing of child-related business or change to business details

These forms are available from the Commission's website at www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au

For all other information about Blue Cards you should check the following web addresses:

www.bluecard.qld.gov.au

www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au

You should check the website regularly to familiarise yourself with the requirements and to stay current in all areas pertaining to these areas. Remember that Children's Ministries is considered as a High Risk area and careful regular updating and monitoring will minimize risk in these areas of ministry.

¹⁰ CCYPCG Letter Nov 2006 "Notification of changes to legislation governing Blue Card screening"

Section 4:

Risk Management

Risk Management (AS/NZS 4360) is the process of assessing/identifying, strategising, and monitoring areas of risk within an organisation or area in this case Ministry to Children and Young People. Risk Management is managing risk.

¹¹What is a risk management strategy?

A risk management strategy is a set of policies and practices tailored to specific services environments to protect children from harm.

The strategy should identify and evaluate potential harm to children in the service environment and detail the procedures to help manage the identified sources of harm in order to foster child-safe environments.

From the 17 January 2005 employers and businesses were to have a written Risk Management Strategy in place. As of the 1st January 2007 the elements of that strategy have been defined and you must have a written risk management strategy that complies with the new regulation in place. Failure to have this now becomes subject to a penalty by law.

¹²*Under the legislation, service providers must take reasonable steps to prevent foreseeable harm to children and young people in their care.*

Please note that:

The strategy must be **written**

It must be updated **annually**

Generally most risk management assessments follow the following 5 step process: (there are many around that your church may have followed with similar steps this is fine but check that it is similar to this process with equivalent stages)

- Step 1. Consider the environment
- Step 2. Identify the risks
- Step 3. Analyse and Evaluate the risks
- Step 4. Develop and Implement strategies to manage risk
- Step 5. Monitor and Review

Holding a Risk Assessment meeting

¹¹ CCYPCG "Safe Environments for young people – Risk management strategy compliance -1 January 2007"

¹² CCYPCG "Safe Environments for young people – Risk management strategy compliance -1 January 2007"

Firstly, you need to invite a group of people who can help in the establishment of your Risk Management Strategy (RMS). This group should be representative of the key 'parties' involved in this ministry e.g. Workers, Pastors, Church Governance and Parents of Children etc. Ask yourself "Who are the key stakeholders?"

Once you have worked this out invite them to take some time out and meet with you to help with the development of a RMS. Most will say they have no experience in this, you need to explain that as long as they are bright thinkers, have a heart for the ministry and have the right attitude they are the material you want. It does help if they also bring to the table some experience; nice to have but not a prerequisite.

- Don't have too many or too few participants both can be a problem.
- Make it at a time when they can give you a few hours (especially for your first meeting). It will take a while for all to get the gist of what you are doing and therefore become productive participants.
- Make it comfortable as they will be sitting a long time. Lots of 'yummies', tea and coffee always ease the load.
- Set out an agenda so there is specific direction and purpose of the meeting.
- Spend a moment explaining how you will go about this review.
- Work out how a record of the discussion will be kept.

Set out the major areas you will review and deal with them one by one.

These may be:

- Organisations current policies and procedures
- Organisational culture, values and objectives
- Human Resources: staff and volunteers
- Key Stakeholders: parents, children, workers
- Facilities
- Execution of Programme
- Resources and Finance

Step 1: Consider the environment

To start the risk assessment process off you must consider the environment in which your church operates. Some things to consider are, but not limited to the following:

- Church location
- Where you hold your children's church or children's event
- The openness of your church, (access points to the building etc.)
- Toilet locations, (are the male toilets to close the children's area or do children have to pass the toilets to access the children's area)
- Industrial area or residential

Step 2: Identify the Risks

One of the ways to do this is by raising the major areas one by one and brainstorming ideas from the group. Start this by posing questions such as:

Can anyone identify areas of concern regarding risk to child safety?

Have we had any incidences where safety has been an issue or could have been a problem?

Has anyone expressed concern over any areas?

If you were to guess where our weakest areas were, what would you say?

Are we missing or needing to strengthen anything in our current policies and procedures?

Are we screening people in accordance to CCYPCG requirements?

Is our record, reporting and response system working and adequate?

Is there an event management issue we need to improve?

Are all travel and away-from-home activities evaluated well?

Get them talking. Do not let one dominate, get them to clearly identify the risk area, and move on to the next idea (don't get stuck on one and trying to solve it – that comes later). Record their ideas – using a white board is great for this. If an issue is raised that really fits into another area have someone record it for later and move on. Don't reject any opinions at this stage.

Once you have completed this for each area, develop a list (you may like to clump similar items together) and you can now move on to the next Step.

Step 3. Analyse and Evaluate

In this step you need to go over each area on the list. You are now looking for the following:

The level of the risk (a red/amber/green system can work very well)

Identify the source of the risk

Analyse the existing controls on that area

Identify the likelihood of the occurrence of that risk

Now you can sort your list according to the levels.

Step 4. Develop and Implement Controls

You are now ready to discuss how to remove, minimise or control that risk. Go through each "red light" or high level risk first.

Against each risk you are looking for a strategy that will remove, minimise or control it.

Discuss it, come up with a strategy and list the strategy against the risk.

You should be developing by now a table that has the Risk, the Priority and The strategy for dealing with it. The strategy will need to define any actions that will be taken, the people who will be involved, who will be responsible for its completion and any resources/finances that may need to be released.

You now make your way through the priority levels until you have developed strategies for each listed item of risk. Some will be simple e.g. fix the broken window others will be more complex such as redesign your toileting procedures.

This is the material you now can develop into a report that needs to be:

- Presented to the Board of the Church for ratification and minuting.
- Copied for those who have tasks to complete

- Retained on file as evidence you have undergone a process of risk assessment.

Step 5: Monitor and Review

As with most things in this area the first one will be a big one but as you do this on a regular basis the list should diminish significantly.

The key is regular review!

You are now required by law to do this annually. This is a minimum requirement and you may like to do it half yearly or once a term.

Ask the group 'how can we monitor this risk'?

Set the next date for the review.

Some things to remember at this stage:

- All this is a waste of time if you now forget about it (not to mention the legal implications for your church)
- You will need to follow people up to keep things moving
- The best time to tackle these tasks is straight away – they are easier to do when they are fresh in your memory.
- See if you can develop ways of ongoing reporting and monitoring that will help in your ensuring there is no neglect of the processes you put into place. There are many mentioned in this manual such as; having your people do a risk assessment on each of their activities before they run a programme, develop checklists and forms that can give you feed back, spot check on high risk areas, talk with a larger variety of stakeholders in the in-between periods and ask if they notice anything etc.

Developing Policies

There are a number of core policies that have been developed by ACC Qld and they have been sent with this Manual for your church to accept and implement but there may be a need to also set some local policies that are unique to your situation.

How do I identify these?

- Well they could be **facility** related e.g. no child is allowed outside a classroom unless accompanied by an adult; rationale – you are renting a facility that does not have a fence around the area where the Children's church is being held.
- They could be **church culture** related e.g. We believe church families should worship together on Sunday so all children will remain in the service until after the praise and worship; rationale – you cannot drop off your child before church as there will be no one there in the rooms to look after them.
- They could be **church location** related e.g. Only babies are allowed in the crèche, no toddlers or small children; rationale – your cry room is the size of a postage stamp and to have Mothers, babies and other children in there would require you take a number to breathe!

These policies can be transitional and need to be constantly reviewed as they can be out of date quickly. Also they do need to be review if circumstances change like you change facilities.

Reporting to Board

It has been mentioned above but it warrants a further reminder that the Risk Assessment Report needs to go to the church Board to be presented and minuted as done.

There are two parts to this scenario: ***the Church Board has the responsibility*** to ensure an evaluation of risk has been done and that is was reasonable and that the person allocated to oversee this is resourced to implement the changes needed. The department completes the assessment and presents a reasonable report to the Board of their findings and how it will be implemented and monitored.

The Board should ask for regular updates on progress on the implementation.

Strategic Planning

It seems a mote point at this stage to say that this is not a last minute thing. All programmes should involve a certain amount of forward planning. The value of this is immeasurable.

Here are some reasons:

- It ensure you have the correct resources for the event
- It ensures all who will participate will know what is required of them and any guidelines on their participation
- It allows you to budget for the event
- It allows you to check each activity and stage against your Duty of Care and legal liabilities
- It allows you to check if you are covered by you insurance for all contingencies
- It allows you assess risk and implement and strategies that are necessary to minimise risk in the event
- It allows you to ensure you have adequate staffing required for the event
- It allows you to identify any special needs that you need to prepare for ahead of time (e.g. children's allergies or disabilities)
- It is less heartache for the Leader!

Here are some Strategic Planning issues that can help make what can be an overwhelming task in risk management more “Manageable”.

1. Plan programmes ahead of time
2. Require feedback in written form but provide them with simple easy to fill out proforma's to speed up the reporting side.
3. Do include date and signature on each item of feedback and file it where you can find it again
4. If you are the person are not “administrative” then find someone who is to watch over you!
5. If you are not a good planner then find someone who is and get them to set is up for you so all you have to do is run it.
6. Don't leave reports, preparation and organisation to the last minute. Eventually even a rubber band build for stress breaks.
7. Train your people in what you want done and why it is important to do it well.
8. Write down your policies and procedures for the sake of the repeatability, comprehension and evidence of prior knowledge.
9. Check all new activities before they are initiated

The CCYPCG regularly hold seminars to assist organisations in the process of Risk Management and information regarding those can be obtained from their website:

www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au and we highly recommend that representatives from your church attend these seminars.

Quote from the *CCYPCG Safe Environments for young people Child Protection Managing the Risks Resource Book June 2007:*

3.2 Activities

Ongoing review of procedures, such as looking at incidents and ‘near misses’, is an essential part of your risk management strategy.

Planning your activities

Often the person who delivers an activity is responsible for its planning. It is important the person doing the planning is aware of your organisation's child and youth-friendly policies and plans the activities in a way which supports children and young people.

An important part of planning any activity is assessing the actual and potential risks to everyone involved. Conducting a risk assessment is an effective way to do this.

When doing a risk assessment and planning your activities, consider:

- the number of people taking part
- their age and gender mix
- the age range of the participants
- the type of activity
- the environment where the activity will take place (online, by telephone, face-to-face)
- the particular needs of individual participants, and
- the policies and procedures of your organisation.

In addition, there are a number of basic principles you should take into account when planning activities, including:

- maximizing opportunities for children and young people to enjoy themselves and have fun
- ensuring your activities support the interests and wellbeing of children and young people
- being aware that children and young people should not be left unattended
- ensuring staff know where children and young people are at all times, and what they are doing
- providing constant adult supervision over any activity using potentially dangerous equipment
- ensuring children and young people are supervised by appropriate numbers of adults depending on numbers and age of children and type of activity, and
- ensuring no dangerous behaviour by children and young people is allowed.

Safe environments for young people Child protection - managing the risks

Providing your activities

When providing activities, there is the opportunity for fulfilling interaction with children and young people, but there are also potential risks to those taking part. These could be relatively minor, such as someone not enjoying the activity, or they could be more serious, for example, an accident in which someone is injured.

The chance of something happening to the children and young people in your care and the extent of the risk will depend on the type of activity you are providing.

However, there are certain things you can do to help minimize the risk and maximize the benefits for children and young people.

Activity induction

Before your activity goes ahead, it is a good idea to provide an induction about what will happen, regardless of whether it is a 'one off' activity or an activity conducted over a period of time. Provide this information to parents, carers and the children or young people taking part.

Your organisation, or the person conducting the activity on your behalf, should ensure the induction:

- clearly identifies what should happen and what is expected of the activity
- highlights anything that may be of concern to parents, carers, children or young people
- answers any questions people may have
- lets people know what will happen if anything goes wrong, and
- lets people know who they can talk to if they have any issues or concerns.

From the perspective of parents, carers, children and young people, the induction should:

- provide an opportunity to ask questions and clarify issues
- help them understand what is expected of them
- make them aware of what will happen if an issue arises, and
- let them know who to contact if they have any concerns in the future.

An induction is a good opportunity to provide people with your organisation's Code of Conduct. You may also have a separate Code of Conduct for staff, parents, carers, children and young people.

Drop off and pickup of participants

Children and young people may be dropped off before an activity and picked up afterwards by their parents or carers. In other instances, children and young people may make their own way to and from an activity.

On their way to or from an activity, children and young people may be exposed to potential risk. You should have procedures in place to minimize these risks.

There is no set protocol for addressing this issue and strategies may vary from organisation to organisation. However, some considerations could include:

- agreeing with parents on a set procedure for drop off and pick up arrangements, including whether a child or young person makes their own way to and from an activity, or will be dropped off and picked up
- ensuring there is a buffer period where a staff member arrives before an activity starts and stays back for a certain amount of time after it ends
- establishing a procedure to be followed if a parent or carer is delayed in picking up a child or young person, and
- establishing a procedure to be followed if a parent or carer fails to notify you that they will be late and doesn't arrive to pick up the child or young person within the buffer period.

Location

It is important to consider whether the place in which you are providing an activity is safe and friendly to children and young people. If you own or lease the area, you may have direct control over the location and facility. In other instances, you may only use it from time to time. In this case, there may be a greater risk, as you will have less control over the area.

Some things to consider when thinking about the location of an activity could include:

- inspecting the location to ensure it's safe, or that things haven't changed since you were last there
- ensuring the location is appropriate for the activity and for the young people involved
- ensuring the availability of first aid equipment and consumable items relating to the activity
- addressing transport issues, if it's not where you normally conduct your activities
- checking whether there is adequate shade and water available if the activity is to be outdoors
- ensuring there is adequate lighting and that it's in good working order, and
- checking whether there are any potential risks created by other people or activities close to where you will be operating.

Equipment

Although some activities for children and young people don't require equipment, many do. If you need equipment for your activities, consider whether:

- the equipment is appropriate for the activity, the age range and capabilities of the children and young people participating
- there is enough equipment for the number involved in the activity. If not, have a system in place to ensure that everyone gets a chance to use the equipment safely and in the way it was intended to be used, and
- the equipment is in good working order and safe for children and young people to use.

Supervision

Supervising an activity is a critical element in providing any service, particularly for children and young people. Supervision will usually be provided by your employees or volunteers. Some aspects to consider include:

- ensuring supervisors are appropriately qualified, well trained and have current competencies
- ensuring there are enough people to supervise the number of children and young people involved in the activity
- making supervisors aware of their rights and responsibilities as well as the rights and responsibilities of all others involved in the activity, and

- ensuring supervisors adhere to the policies and Code of Conduct of your organisation.

Staff that supervise or provide an activity are often in a position to build relationships with the children and young people in your organisation. These relationships should be positive and contribute to the interests and wellbeing of children and young people.

Monitoring activities

It is important to take an active interest in what actually occurs at each activity. You should determine how well staff and volunteers are performing their duties and whether they are acting in an ethical and appropriate way.

It is not uncommon for organisations to consider that they are “child and youth-friendly” because they have a policy stating that no person should be left alone with a child or young person at any time. It is a good idea to identify the objectives and any risks and design appropriate strategies such as:

- supervising staff
 - conducting random audits of activities
- Safe environments for young people Child protection - managing the risks
- doing performance appraisals for employees and volunteers
 - conducting surveys to find out how the participants felt about activities
 - rotating staff to supervise different activities, and
 - monitoring the development of children and young people as a result of the activities and addressing any deficiencies.

By implementing a combination of strategies, the chance of inappropriate behaviour occurring is decreased, and your commitment to creating a friendly environment for children and young people is enhanced.

The surrounding environment

When conducting an activity, be aware of the surrounding environment. Make adjustments or allowances if it impacts on, or has the potential to impact on, the interests and wellbeing of the children or young people in your care.

Some things to consider about the surrounding environment could include:

- whether there are designated areas for spectators so children and young people do not confuse spectators with employees and volunteers from your organisation
- the location’s proximity to roads, dangerous obstacles, or waterways
- whether toilets, drinking fountains or taps are a substantial distance away from the activity, requiring a spread of supervision
- whether there is a lack of shade or shelter, and
- if there are any places where children or young people could hide, or in which other people could be concealed.

Who is responsible for what?

It can be easy to overlook the need to clearly identify who is responsible for what when providing an activity. This could include responsibilities such as:

- Who will check the site before it is used?
- Who will bring the equipment and check to see if it works beforehand?
- Who will do any setting up that needs to be done?
- Who will be responsible for delivering the actual activity?
- Who will stay behind until everyone has left?

This list is by no means exhaustive. The point is everyone needs to be aware of their roles and responsibilities when delivering an activity, so you need to have:

- clear job descriptions, duty statements or role descriptions which outline a person's role in a particular activity
- an induction for staff before the activity which outlines what is expected of each person, and
- a risk management plan for the activity, including risk identification and analysis, and documented procedures to prevent 'foreseeable harm'.

Section 5

Workplace Health and Safety

The state of Queensland is governed by the following legislation:

- **Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995**
- **Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 1997**

These can be found and downloaded from the Workplace Health and Safety divisional web site: - www.whs.qld.gov.au

¹³What you must do

To make Queensland workplaces healthier and safer, you must fulfill your obligations under the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995*.

If a [regulation](#) exists for specific risks at your workplace, you **must** do what the *Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 1997* says to prevent or minimize the impact of the risk.

If there is a [Code of Practice](#) – previously known as an Advisory Standard - about a risk at your workplace, you **must** either:

- do what the Code says; **or**
- adopt and follow another way that gives the same level of protection against the risk; **and** ensure you take reasonable precautions and exercise proper diligence.

If no regulation or code of practice exists about a risk at your workplace, you **must** choose an appropriate way to manage exposure to the risk, take reasonable precautions and exercise due care.

Duty of Care:

What is Duty of Care?

Duty of care places into a legal form a moral duty to anticipate possible causes of injury and illness and to do everything reasonably practicable to remove or minimize these possible causes of harm.

Duties within the Acts are to be complied with so far as 'reasonably practicable'. This allows the duty holder to choose the most efficient means of controlling risk from a range of possibilities. The duty holder must show that it was not reasonably practicable to do more than what was done and that they had taken reasonable precautions.

¹³ From the QLD Workplace Health and Safety Web site

A number of factors are taken into account to determine what would be reasonable and practical. These factors include the:

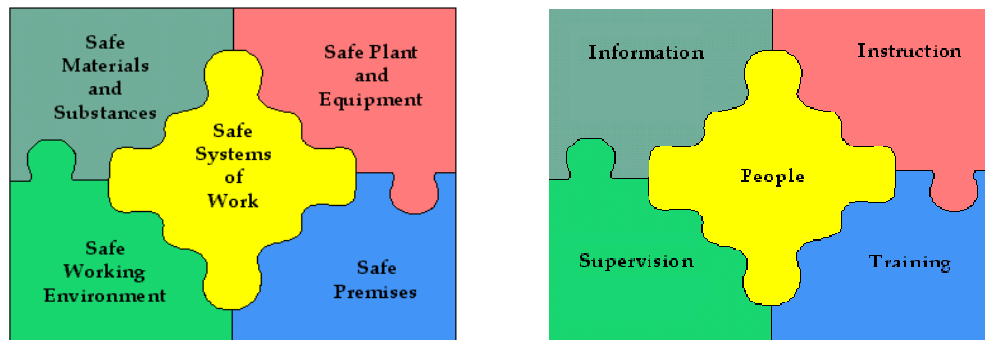
- *Nature and severity of the hazard;*
- *Knowledge of severity of the hazard;*
- *Knowledge of solutions;*
- *Availability of solutions;*
- *Common standards of practice;*
- *Cost of solutions.*

Codes of practice are an example of 'common standards of practice' that could be used in court to illustrate what the employer, manufacturer etc should have been doing in order to prevent or control a hazard.

In summary, employers, manufacturers, designers, suppliers, persons in control of workplaces and persons who erect or install plant and equipment must ensure:

- *Safe Property*, which includes premises (safe access and exit), safe plant and equipment, materials and substances (raw materials, chemicals, products, stock etc).
- *Safe Systems of work*, which includes your work practices, manufacturing processes, standard operating procedures and your administration procedures.
- *Safe People*, which includes providing them with suitable information, instruction, training and supervision. For example the safe use of plant and equipment, materials and chemicals and information about the working environment and health and safety generally.

If you think of the duties in terms of a jigsaw puzzle, it's not complete (safe) if a piece is missing.



Who is responsible?

Health and Safety Acts specify who is responsible in relation to their role in a workplace as outlined below. A person may be responsible in more than one capacity, for example employer and manufacturer. It is not a defense for any person to argue that someone else had an overlapping responsibility. The requirements vary between States and Territories, but typically cover:

- [Employers](#)
- [Persons in control of workplaces](#)
- [Manufacturers, designers and suppliers](#)
- [Persons who erect and install plant and equipment](#)
- [Employees](#)

Employers

The definition of an employer includes self-employed persons. Employers have the day to day responsibility for the health and safety of employees. These general duties are to:

- Provide safe plant, equipment and systems of work and ensure they are properly maintained.
- Provide safe materials and substances and systems of work so they can be used, handled, stored and transported without risks to health and safety of employees.
- Provide information, instruction, training and supervision so those employees can carry out their jobs without risk to their health and safety.
- Protect the health and safety of visitors.
- Provide and maintain a healthy working environment.
- Provide information to employees about plant and substances including precautions and conditions for use; health and safety risk; results of tests or research carried out on plant or substances.

Persons in Control of Workplaces

This includes any person who is in control of a workplace but is not the employer of that workplace, such as a building or property owner or manager. This is significant if you lease your premises. The building owner has a duty to ensure that visitors and persons who are occupying or using the premises as a workplace are safe. This duty is to ensure:

- Safe access to and exit from the premises;
- Fire protection systems;
- Safe structures and fixtures (including the maintenance of lifts);
- Safe roofing and air conditioning ducts, etc.

Manufacturers, Designers and Suppliers

The legislation requires that manufacturers, designers and suppliers of plant and substances (e.g. raw materials or chemicals) consider the health and safety of persons who are intended to use the plant or substances. The legislation requires manufactures, designers and suppliers to:

- Ensure safe plant and substances.
- Carry out and arrange for research, testing or examination. Any risks to health and safety that are discovered need to be eliminated or minimised from plant or substances.
- Provide information on the use of plant and substances and results of any relevant tests and research.

Prior to these obligations being legislated for this group, dangerous machinery could arrive at a workplace unguarded. The problem and expense to rectify design faults was passed on to the employer. Such practices are unacceptable today. These obligations are dealt with in more detail in the section on [Plant and Equipment](#).

Persons who erect and install plant and equipment

Businesses installing plant are responsible for the safety of their own employees and those people at the installation site. Once installed, machinery and equipment does not pose a health and safety hazard when properly maintained and used.

Employees

Employees have an obligation not to harm another employee or another person (e.g. customer) in the workplace. This includes not engaging in bullying, skylarking or any other behaviour that puts a fellow employee at risk. A breach of this duty could result in a fine.

Employees must also not misuse/interfere with health and safety equipment. For example, removing a safety guard or disengaging an emergency stop button on a dangerous machine.

**** Tip ****No one person's obligations in the workplace outweigh or supersede another person's obligations.

Basically everyone has an obligation for Workplace Health and Safety no matter what level you are.

Safety in the Workplace

There are two aspects to safe workplaces:

1. Each is entitled to work in an environment of safety (e.g. you should check your surroundings for possible hazards, not be asked to lift objects that are hazardous to your health or be placed in compromising situations). Use the Risk management approach to deal with hazards that are identified.
2. Each has a duty to ensure they do not contribute to unsafe practices (e.g. you should always tidy up, remove harmful objects to safe places and never leave a child in a vulnerable situation).

Safety also involves access to correct fire and first aid equipment. Electrical equipment should be checked by an electrician according to legal requirements. Noise levels for sustained activities should be checked regularly.¹⁴ Teacher to student ratios are checked so that adequate assistance is available to you to complete your programme.

Emergency Procedures

As part of your risk assessment review you should establish emergency procedures for major contingencies. You can get assistance from organisations such as the Fire Department etc to develop your plans.

Along with the plans you should develop a simple set of procedures to follow if an alarm is raised. Determine what issues require lockdown and what do not. Identify who must be contacted and who will be in charge if an alarm is raised. Don't forget to have a run through with you staff to ensure you have not overlooked anything.

Make sure the Emergency procedures are placed in every room or strategic location so anyone can access them to initiate the correct response.

Also ensure you have Fire Evacuation Diagrams displayed in every room and you hold a practice once a year. Fire Drills are required by your Insurance

¹⁴ See ACS Manual "Protecting Property and People". Available through the ACS office.

Policy to be held once a year this includes whole of church so ensure you don't forget the Sunday School!

Lockdown Procedures

Each ministry should develop a simple step by step process for "lockdown" should the need arise.

- Display it in each location your ministry uses.
- Develop a way of letting everyone know that is different to your fire and evacuation so it cannot be confused with an evacuation process.
- Clearly list on the process how you report, who is in charge and who can lift the lockdown.
- Ensure a report is written up of the incident once it is finished so all can be clear of the circumstances and processes.

Emergency Help Details¹⁵

In general your church should develop an easy reference list of Emergency Service numbers. The full list could for example be laminated and placed on the wall in the reception or main office or where it can be easily accessed in times of emergency. It is also our recommendation that you place an emergency list above every phone in your church building that gives Emergency Number 000 and your street address (use specific street name and number so it can be read clearly too emergency services). You may also like to include a call number for break-ins (this could be an elder's number or pastor's mobile phone or someone on the Board who will act as an oversight of such a situation). These are often printed (on bright coloured paper) with large lettering and laminated. Assume it may be someone who is a visitor to your church who may need to ring up.

Remember the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian is not an emergency service.

These are services that can help you if you need help urgently.

If you are in danger or need help right now contact:
For Fire, Ambulance or Police Dial 000

The [Queensland Police Service](#) has a number of dedicated units across Queensland to investigate matters relating to children and young people. If you wish to report an incident involving a child or young person, contact your local Juvenile Aid Bureau (JAB). If you do not have a local JAB, contact your local police station.

If you need someone to talk to about a problem contact:

Kids Help Line (24 hours a day - 7 days a week)

Phone: 1800 55 1800 (free call)

Website: www.kidshelp.com.au

Email: kidshelp@squirrel.com.au

¹⁵ Duane

If you need urgent help from the Department of Child Safety contact:
 Crisis Care (24 hours a day - 7 days a week)
 Phone: 1800 177 135 (outside Brisbane - free call) or 3235 9999 in Brisbane

There may be others you wish to add to your list. Ensure these numbers are kept current.

Electrical equipment

It is important that all electrical equipment is used, stored and transported in a safe manner.

All safety test checks should be carried out as required by law. ([AS/NZS 3760 In-service safety inspection and testing of electrical equipment](#))

Extreme care should be taken with cords, leads and power points.

If in doubt ask a mum with a toddler to safe check your room – they will tell you what their child can get into!!!

Test and Tag table

Category	Portable electrical equipment	Type 1 or 2 safety switch (fixed)	Type 1 or 2 safety switch (portable)
Construction work	At least 3 monthly intervals by a competent person.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the inbuilt test button (at least monthly). An operating time/current test by a competent person at least annually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the inbuilt test button – immediately after it is connected and immediately before it used, first time each day. By a competent person, at least every 3 months.
	Specified electrical equipment	Type 1 or 2 safety switch (fixed)	Type 1 or 2 safety switch (portable)
Manufacturing work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If equipment is double insulated, at least every 12 months by competent person. If not double insulated, at least every 6 months by competent person and connected to a safety switch. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the inbuilt test button – at least every 6 months. An operating time/current test at least every 12 months by competent person. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the inbuilt test button – daily or before each use, whichever is longer. By a competent person, at least every 12 months. <p>Note: From 1 March 2008, portable safety switches are not to be used in manufacturing work. Installed safety switches must be used.</p>
Service work	At least 12 monthly intervals by a competent person or connected to a safety switch.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the inbuilt test button, at least every 6 months. An operating time/current test by a competent person, at least every 12 months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the inbuilt test button at least every 3 months or before each use, whichever is longer. An operating time/current test by a competent person, at least every 12 months.
Office work	At least 5 yearly intervals by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the inbuilt test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the inbuilt test

	a competent person or connected to a safety switch	button at least every 6 months. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An operating time/current test by a competent person, at least every 2 years. 	button at least every 3 months. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An operating time/current test by a competent person at least every 2 years.
Rural industry work (all plug in equipment)	Visual examination before each use.		
Rural industry work (Specified electrical equipment used under stated electrical risk factors)	Either: test and inspect every 12 months or protect with a safety switch.	Recommended push button test every three months.	Recommended push button test every three months.

First Aid

All churches should be equipped with an adequate First Aid Kit and a trained person to operate it. You might like to survey your church to see who have current First Aid Certificates and who are trained Medical professionals. If you do not have anyone it would be worth your while to send someone to the various courses that are available. See the Red Cross website for information.

A record of any incident must be kept. This should be kept with your records.

Ensure no one is given medication (i.e. Even Panadol, Aspirin etc without a check of their medical history or better still find the Parent before you administer any ointments or medicines.)

If you have a child who has severe reactions to certain substances and special procedures/medications need to be administered ensure their teacher/leader is aware of this and that they are trained to respond appropriately.

Food Handling

All food handling (preparation, distribution and storage) should be carried out with strict adherence to food preparations standards (<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au>) and with special attention to any children with food allergies.

Here are some considerations:

Plan in advance what will be given in the way of food and drink.

Check each food item against your database looking for children with food allergies

If unsure send home a memo that gives parents opportunity to give feedback

Be very careful in food preparation for cross contamination

Check all food rewards and prizes

Consider your "menu" from a child's point of view as too much difference can make them feel discriminated against.

Watch for other children who bring in food from outside.

Be especially alert at 'away from home base' activities.
Do not assume the child will manage their own food intolerances.
Supervise at all times.
Best practice is to keep-it-simple.

Hygiene and Medical Safety

Children's Hygiene and medical safety is a broad and diverse area. Ensure if you accept children with medical conditions your workers can cope with the responsibility placed on them. When confronted with a special need take time to discuss with your workers and leaders what will be required and if you are to accept the child what you will need to put into place to manage the issue. Don't be afraid to ask the parent for time to consider the issue and they can be of assistance in giving you ways of handling a child with special medical needs. They may also need to personally supervise the child to allow the child access to the programme.

Children with contagious illnesses should not be allowed to attend.

Parents should also be aware that if a child was contagious during the programme but symptoms did not present until after contact then they have a responsibility to notify you as soon as they can and you will need to notify parents immediately of the potential problem.

Section 6

Managing Problems and Behaviour: #1

Abuse

The following has been included as it is the policy by the ACC (Qld) on Child Abuse. This policy was sent to all churches in 2006 and along with its companion document it was to be accepted by every Church Board in the ACC (Qld) as their policy. A Board Minute should be identified in the Church Board Minutes attesting to its acceptance. It was then to be acted upon within the local church through their screening of workers, implementation of safe activities and training for all workers in identifying the signs of Child Abuse.

It is included here as it has not been superseded but the Policies for ACC (Qld) churches have been expanded to cover a broader range of areas. It is still a matter of highest importance in the development of Child Safe Environment. Please read carefully and understand your legal and ministerial responsibilities in these areas. If you need to revise you current policies and procedures please do this and recognise you are required by law to develop a Specific Risk Management Strategy for the area of harm. This must be available if requested by the CCYPCG.

The key components for your Risk Management Strategy for Child Protection have been listed in their publication: CCYPCG 06-287 NOV

The CCYPCG are currently in 3-phase development plan.

Phase 1: The CCYPCG have been offering training in Risk Management Since the beginning of 2006. The Legislation governing the need for a Risk Management Strategy has been in place longer (see CCYPCG AUG 05-170). As of the 1st January 2007 every organisation involved with working with children and Young people is to have in place a Risk Management Strategy producible on request.

Phase 2: Is the Monitoring and Auditing of those affected by the legislation.

Phase 3: Is a process or applying sanctions and enforcement of the Legislation for people who fail to put this into place.

Topic 1: Sexual Abuse¹⁶

1. Statement

As a church we abhor any kind of child abuse and take any incidence of abuse within the church very seriously indeed. We find the sexual abuse of children to be particularly abhorrent. This series of protocols concerning such sexual abuse has two goals. The first is to provide a way in which the church can minimise risk in this area to the children and those under 18 years of age within the ministries of the church. Secondly, for the sake of the victims, it is our desire to ensure that all

¹⁶ QLD AOG State policy and procedural document as of / /

cases of sexual abuse are handled in a consistent and thorough manner. In an effort to ensure the best interests and on-going safety of any victims, the Eldership requires that the following procedures be followed in cases of known or suspected sexual abuse.

2. Definition

Sexual Abuse

“Sexual abuse occurs when someone in a position of power to the child or young person uses his or her power to involve the child/young person in sexual activity. This can include a range of behaviours including sexual suggestion, exhibitionism, mutual masturbation, oral sex, penile sex or other penetration of the genital or anal region.”¹⁷ Sexual behaviour involving a child is ALWAYS abuse since the child is considered to be unable to alter and/or understand the perpetrator’s behaviour due to that child’s early stage of development and/or powerlessness in the situation.¹⁸

3. Mandatory Reporting/ Duty of Care

There are some people in Queensland that have a legal obligation to report suspicions of child abuse to the appropriate authorities. These include:

1. Medical practitioners under the Health Act 1937;
2. Commissioner for Children & Young People under the Commission for Children & Young People Act 2000;
3. Family Court personnel, including court counsellors, mediators, welfare officers and registrars under the Family Law Act 1975;
4. Under the Child Protection Act 1999, an authorised officer of the department or a person employed in a licensed care service must report harm caused to a child in residential care;
5. Under the Juvenile Justice Act 1992, a detention centre employee of the department must report harm, or suspected harm, caused to a child in a detention centre;
6. Licensees of child care services under the Child Care Act 2002 where abuse/allegations relate to the child care service; and
7. Staff members of a State or Non-State school under the Education and other Legislation (Student Protection) Amendment Act 2003.

While the clergy (as a specified category) are currently exempt from mandatory reporting requirements (although some Pastors or other

¹⁷ *Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect – Mandated Notification Guidelines*, Family and Youth Services, 2003, p.5

¹⁸ Adapted from *Reporting Child Abuse*, South Australian Child protection Council, 1994, p. 4

workers may fall within some of the categories listed above), the Eldership requires that all cases of child sexual abuse or suspected child sexual abuse within the church of which a Pastor, staff member, worker, church member or attendee becomes aware be reported to the Department of Families (DOF) or the Queensland Police Service (QPS) as soon as possible.

4. Responding to Suspected Sexual Abuse

As a church we have a moral responsibility to children in our care to ensure that we provide a safe and protected environment for them to grow and be nurtured.

We are absolutely and thoroughly opposed to child sexual abuse of any kind and believe that:

8. At all times the abused person must be protected from further abuse.
9. The alleged abuse and its alleged perpetrator ought to be reported to the Department of Families (DOF) or the Queensland Police Service (QPS) as soon as possible.
10. The alleged perpetrator must be reported as well to the leadership of the local church as soon as possible.
11. In the case of a person with denominational credentials, a report must also be made to the State headquarters of the denomination as soon as possible.
12. The alleged perpetrator should be no longer in a position to abuse.
13. Support and counselling should be offered to the abuse victim and the family.
14. If the alleged abuse is confirmed by investigation, the perpetrator should face the full legal implications of his/her actions and that any pastoral care offered should be in line with that policy.
15. The family of the perpetrator should be offered appropriate pastoral care.

Everything must be done to ensure the ongoing safety of the child concerned along with any other child in the alleged perpetrator's circle. Indeed, the child is the primary concern and ALL other concerns (including the guilt or innocence of the alleged offender) must be secondary. This does not mean that the alleged offender is to be considered guilty without due investigation, but that the child's concerns and safety come first. In no way must any child or children be left in a hazardous situation or in a possibly hazardous situation.

Any person in the church who becomes aware of, or who suspects, sexual abuse within the church or its ministry must take immediate action to report that abuse or suspected abuse to the Department of

Families or the Queensland Police Service and to the leadership of the church (see below, p. 6).

5. Characteristics of a Perpetrator of Child Abuse

The church believes that the safety of children within its ministry is of paramount concern. The culture of the church includes accountability at all levels, and this area of the protection of children within the church's ministry is no exception.

With that in mind the attention of all workers/volunteers/pastors is drawn to the following list of characteristics that often apply to the person who is carrying out or who intends to carry out abuse.

It must be stressed that one or two characteristics on their own do not necessarily indicate that the person is an abuser, or a potential abuser. However, several characteristics together provide reason to raise concern – such a person would need to be observed closely.¹⁹

If there is no known victim or suspected victim, the worker who has concerns about someone else with respect to the following characteristics, must report their observations to the Children's Pastor or Youth Pastor, or to an elder or other senior leader (e.g., Pastor, Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor, Regional Pastor) within the church. In this situation there is no need to make a report to the Department of Families or the Queensland Police Service.

If there is a victim or suspected victim, then the reporting process outlined below must apply. That is, a report must be made as soon as possible to the Department of Families or the Queensland Police Service as well as to the church leadership.

a) General Indicators

1. Majority of an abuser's relationships are with children. (Abusers don't relate well to people of their own age).
2. Is overly friendly with children.
3. Has low self-esteem, poor self image (possibly due to emotional deprivation as a child).
4. Can be seen to be in the church for only a short period of time and seeks to join the children's' ministry. They can seem obsessive when they say they "love" children.
5. Can be found wandering around children's church areas etc.
6. May remove himself/herself mid-way through a church service to have time with children who may be in the toilets.
7. Gives articles of his/her clothing to a child as gifts, e.g., a cap, a jacket, footy-shirt etc. This is an attempt to demonstrate ownership of the child.
8. Carries photos of children other than his/her own, often indicating that these children love him/her.

¹⁹ The following list of characteristics is adapted from Kids R Us, *Protect the Child*, pp. 12ff

9. Gives extreme affection to children, e.g., front-on close hugging, always touching or flirting.
10. Withdrawn, placid.
11. Can be single or married. In fact some figures show that 47% of child abusers are married. May be experiencing marital problems, but not necessarily.
12. Over-emphasis upon morality – are legalistic and inflexible. Could well be a reflection of his/her own bad actions.
13. Strong denial of offence or any intention to offend.
14. Convincing in protests of innocence – has developed this as a defence mechanism.
15. Avoids screening processes, or attempts to do so.
16. Attempts to engineer opportunities to be alone with a child, e.g., babysitting (targets single parents), child minders at conferences
17. Offers to take or takes child shopping or on an outing. Offers to pick child up from school.
18. Dislikes submission to authority, prefers to work alone, and is negative (or dismissive) when sexual abuse topics are raised.
19. Spends considerable time with children.
20. Voices opinion on sex education, suggesting that children are not taught properly.
21. Can be of any personal or social make-up, e.g. extrovert, introvert, married, single, old, young, rich or poor. While the majority of abusers are male, they are not limited to that particular gender.

b) **Domestic indicators**²⁰

1. Shows improper behaviour towards developing daughter.
2. Showers with children at an inappropriate age.
3. Expects an open door policy in the bathroom.
4. Attempts to get children on lap, even when child or adolescent resists.
5. Exhibits inappropriate hugging and/or kissing.
6. Attempts to shut down mother – daughter communications.
7. Children don't want to be home alone with their father or male member of the family.
8. Is jealous of daughter's (or sister's) boyfriend.
9. Daughter is treated like a wife in conversation or decisions.

6. Sexual Abuse Notification Procedure

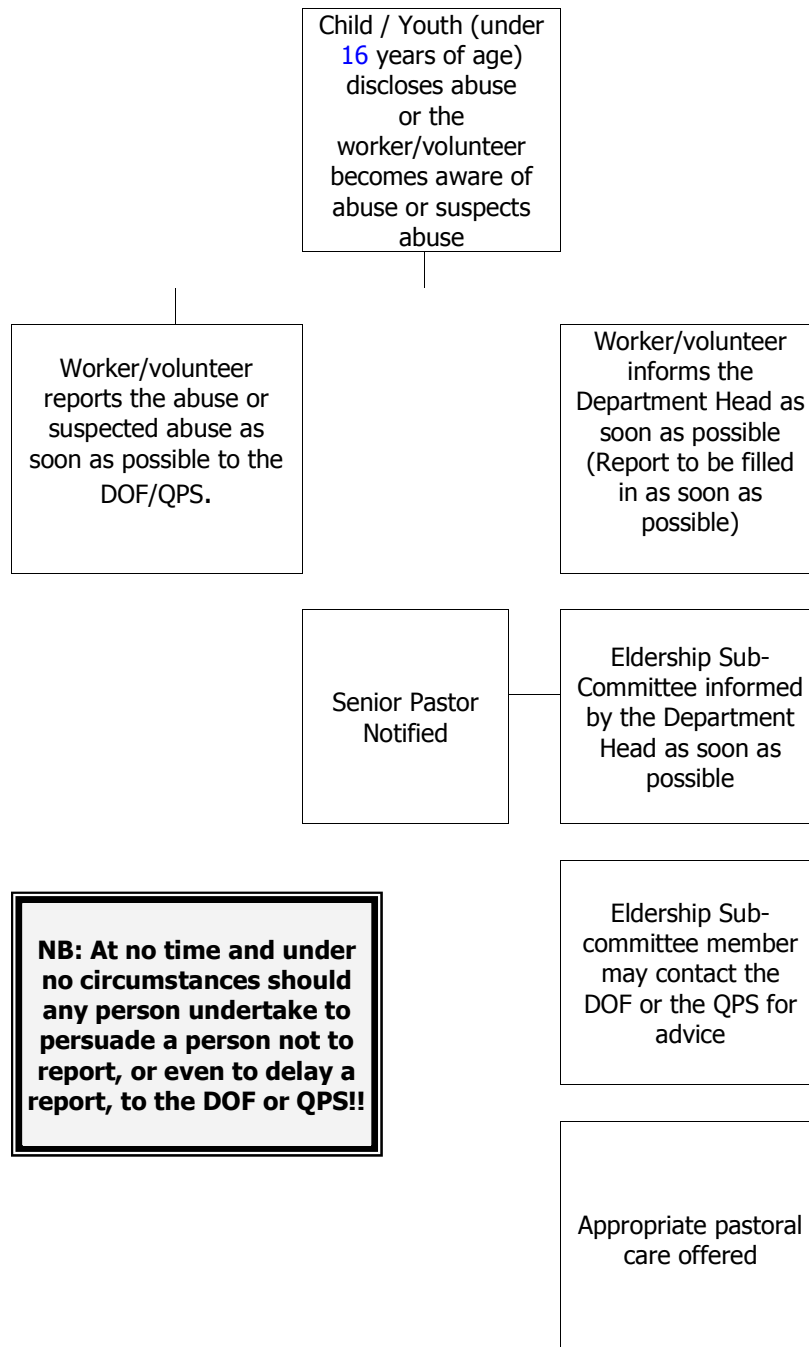
a) **When the victim is under eighteen years of age**

The following diagram outlines the procedure to be followed when someone in the church becomes aware of sexual abuse or suspects sexual abuse involving a child or youth under 16 years of

²⁰ Adapted from Ibid., p. 13

age.

Please note: If the alleged perpetrator is a church worker/volunteer/Pastor please specific information for the appropriate reporting protocol.



b) Responding to a Child who Discloses Abuse

If the victim is under eighteen years of age then they fall within the province of Family and Youth Services. Under this policy the church worker/volunteer or Pastor is obligated to report such abuse **as soon as possible** to the Department of Families or the Queensland Police Service. It matters little that members of the clergy, as a specified category, are not currently mandatory reporters under any Queensland legislation. This policy makes such reporting **compulsory** for all workers or volunteers or pastors involved in every level of ministry within the church.

At the same time the worker/volunteer/pastor is to begin the process of informing the church leadership through the department head. This will involve the completion of a written report.

However, all cases of reporting begin with the worker becoming aware of the sexual abuse or suspected sexual abuse.

One way that this may occur is through disclosure by the victim. When a child under 18 begins to share with the worker an experience of abuse the following guidelines should be followed.

The worker/volunteer/pastor should:

1. Listen carefully to the child.
2. Reassure the child that the worker believes the child.
3. Reassure the child that the abuse is not the child's fault. The child is not responsible for the abuse.
4. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling someone, and that the worker is pleased that the child has shared this with the worker (Perpetrators often threaten a victim in an attempt to ensure silence).
5. Acknowledge that it is hard to talk about these things.
6. **Not press the child for details.** It is not the worker's role to conduct an investigation, and asking leading questions may in fact prejudice any subsequent investigations.²¹
7. Not make promises that the worker cannot keep (e.g. confidentiality).
8. Tell the child that certain adults need to be informed who can protect them so that the abuse can stop.
9. As soon as possible after the conversation, contact the Department of Families or the Queensland Police Service and submit a report.
10. Concurrently or as soon as possible after contacting the Department of Families or the Queensland Police Service submit a verbal and then a written report to the relevant Department Head.
11. Make notes of the conversation held whilst the facts are still fresh in the mind of the worker/volunteer/pastor.

²¹ Child protection Council, 1994, p.8

The worker/volunteer/Pastor to whom the child is disclosing the sexual abuse, must work hard at not showing emotions such as disgust, horror, disbelief or panic in front of the child. These will serve to reinforce to the child their feelings of disgrace and shame. They might also cause the child to lose confidence in the worker and not disclose other experiences.²²

c) If the victim is now 18 years of age and over

In the case of a person 18 years of age or over who has disclosed their own childhood abuse, an attempt ought to be made to counsel them to see the wisdom of reporting their situation to the police. This has a two-fold result. It will give the opportunity to begin the process of closure for the victim, but it will also alert the authorities to the identity of the alleged perpetrator and appropriate action to protect other children, or even to solve other cases where abuse has occurred, will be taken.

While reports concerning people who are 18 or over ought not to be made without their consent, the worker/volunteer/pastor who has become aware of the situation may well have cause to believe that other children under the age of 18 could be at continued risk from the alleged perpetrator.

In that case, then the procedure above for reporting such suspicions to the Department of Families (or the Queensland Police Service) and the leadership of the church must be followed AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

d) Reasonable suspicion

The report procedure must be followed as soon as possible after a child or young person discloses the abuse to the worker/volunteer/pastor. Rarely, if ever, do children lie about abuse. Every disclosure must be taken very seriously indeed.

If a child informs the worker/volunteer/pastor that the child knows someone who has been abused, then a report should also be made. If the child identifies the victim then that information can form part of the report. However, the child could actually be speaking of itself. So even if they don't name this "friend" reasonable suspicion of their own abuse has been raised, and a report must be made.

If a child displays some of the symptoms of abuse, then reasonable suspicion has arisen and a report should be made. A list of behavioural indicators and physical indicators of abuse appears below. However, it is important to recognise that one or two indicators alone do not necessarily mean that abuse is occurring. The worker should try to see if there are any patterns of indicators emerging. If there is any doubt, the Department of Families or the Queensland Police Service should be contacted for advice.

²² This section adapted from *Protect the Child* developed by KIDS R Us., p.19

If someone else who is in a position to know (perhaps a relative, friend, neighbour or sibling of the child/young person) informs you that a child is suffering abuse then this procedure must be followed.²³

e) Some behavioural indicators associated with sexual abuse²⁴

The sexually abused younger child may:

1. Engage in persistent and inappropriate sexual activity, e.g. rubbing genitals against an adult, playing games that echo the abuse, sexual themes in artwork or stories.
2. Have a detailed understanding of sexual behaviour beyond what would be expected at their age.
3. Display regressive behaviour (bedwetting, speech loss, infantile or immature behaviour).
4. Suffer sleep disturbance and night terrors.
5. Inhibition to play.
6. Serious difficulty relating to peers and/or adults.
7. Constant complaints of headaches or abdominal pains.
8. Sudden appearance of material goods (given as gifts).
9. Sexually inappropriate language.
10. Outside interests may wane.
11. Onset of fears and phobias.
12. Lack of concentration or significant change in school performance.

As they become older, the child may present with some of the following in addition to the above:

13. Exhibit delinquent or aggressive behaviour.
14. Show signs of depression.
15. Display injurious behaviour such as:

- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Self mutilation
- Attempts at suicide
- Prostitution

f) Some physical indicators associated with sexual abuse

There may be some physical indicators associated with sexual abuse. Obviously all bruising and bleeding in the genital areas, breasts, or in the lower abdomen or thighs are prime indicators, as are complaints of soreness in these areas. Sexual abuse is indicated in the case of early pregnancy or infections including

²³ Adapted from South Australian Child Protection Council, 1994, p. 9, and FAYS 2003, pp. 9-10

²⁴ Adapted from South Australian Child Protection Council, 1994, pp. 6 ff. and *Protect the Child*, pp. 7-8

STDs.²⁵

The Queensland Criminal Code covers the practice of Female Genital Mutilation of any kind except for a “sexual reassignment procedure” or a medical procedure that has a “genuine therapeutic purpose”. Under this Code anyone who performs FGM on another person commits an offence. FGM therefore needs to be reported in terms of this policy in the same way as sexual abuse (Queensland Criminal Code, Chapter 29, Ss 323A, 323B).

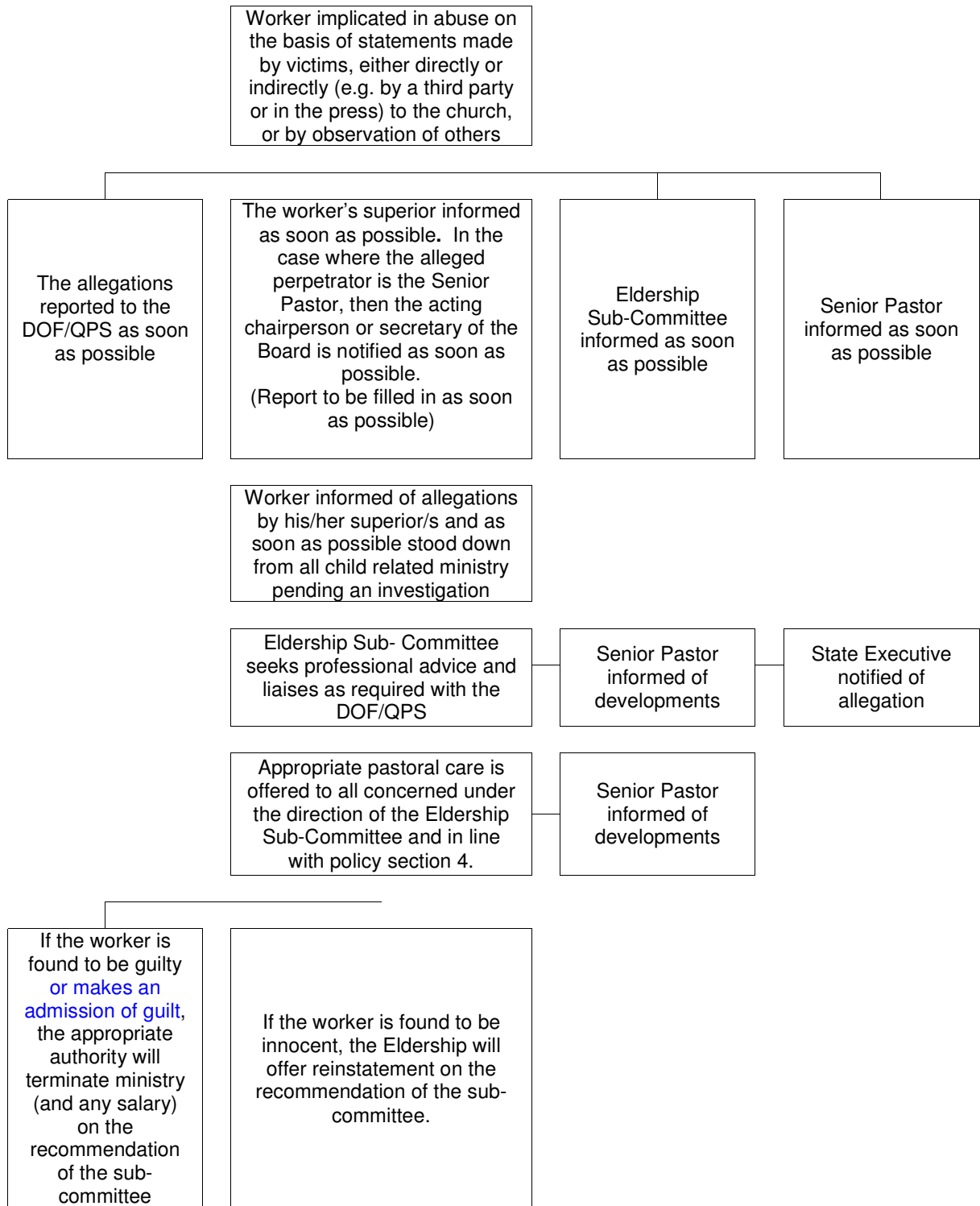
g) When the alleged perpetrator is a church worker/ volunteer/ Pastor

In outlining the procedures for dealing with allegations of child abuse made against church workers, volunteers or pastors, the Eldership requires that the principles stated under section 4, *Responding to Suspected Abuse*, (p.42) apply as they would in any other circumstance.

In addition, although any accused person is essentially innocent until proven guilty, it is a requirement of the Eldership that the worker/volunteer/Pastor (designated by the term “worker” in the following table) should be *as soon as possible stood down from all child related ministries* pending an investigation. In the case of a paid staff member, salary will continue during this time of investigation. To expedite proceedings the process outlined in the following diagram should be adopted.

If the alleged perpetrator is a pastor or a person holding any Assemblies of God credential, then the State Executive must also be informed of the allegations.

²⁵ Adapted from *Protect the Child* pp. 7-8



c) Additional internal checks

Each church should put in place additional internal checks that must be completed before a person can be appointed. The following protocols established by Paradise Community Church are worth adopting.

“All people who desire to work in a child related area must also have the recommendation of their pastor or regional pastor.

They must then attend a formal interview with the Children’s Pastor or Youth Director. During the interview a detailed application form will be completed in which the prospective worker or staff member will agree to a police check, and provide a name of a personal referee other than their pastor. They are then given a copy of the Departmental Manual, including the Child Protection Policy.

The prospective staff member must then attend an induction-training meeting in which all aspects of the Child Protection Policy of the church will be outlined. The candidate will complete an induction checklist and then sign it to indicate agreement with the policy.

Other departmental training may also be required by the individual department.

Once the prospective staff member has successfully completed the induction process, and has received a favourable result on successfully obtaining a suitability card, the department head may appoint them for an eight-week probationary period.

Upon completion of the eight weeks, the department head may (but not necessarily) then appoint the prospective worker to a regular position within the ministry.

All staff members and workers in child related ministry are expected to attend staff accountability days at least bi-annually where any developments in Child Protection Policy will be canvassed. A form similar to the induction check list will be completed and signed.”

8. Staff/Worker Induction and Training

As part of its commitment to the minimisation of the risk of abuse within its ministries the church requires all staff -- workers, volunteers and pastors -- to attend an induction session including a detailed presentation of the Child Protection Policy and strategies adopted by the church.

Each worker/volunteer/pastor must complete a checklist and sign

indicating his/her agreement with the policies.

The eldership reserves the right to enlist professionals and experts in the field of child protection to address the workers/volunteers/pastors from time to time. It will be compulsory for all invited staff to attend these seminars.

In addition, biannual staff accountability days will be conducted by individual departments in which any developments in Child Protection Policy will be canvassed.

Specific department protocols in the area of child protection will be addressed in an on-going fashion with the relevant workers and at the staff accountability days.

9. Dealing with People with Child Sexual Abuse Histories

As in all situations the primary concern of the church lies with the victims and potential victims of those with histories of child sexual abuse.

The Eldership's concern is with the apparent high level of re-offending that exists among people with this kind of history, and the patent responsibility of the church to protect the most vulnerable members of its community.

The Eldership recognises that child sexual abuse is a choice of the perpetrator and that despite the abuser's own personal history, that abuser has freely chosen to abuse children. He or she is directly responsible for past actions and must be held accountable for any future actions.

The following controls must be read in that light.

Certainly, it is the hope of the Eldership that all people who attend the church will come to healing and that includes past abusers. Nevertheless, the eldership will do everything in its power to protect the children of the church during this process.

The Eldership believes further that child sexual abuse thrives in an atmosphere of secrecy. Therefore it requires all offenders to be open, transparent and accountable in an effort to defeat the secrecy and darkness that breeds child abuse.

The Eldership requires all people with child sexual abuse histories as perpetrators, who wish to attend Church or Church related activities, to sign a contract with the church and keep to its conditions.

That contract must cover the following:

1. A willingness on the part of the offender to have his/her name and appropriate details to be made known to all Pastors, elders, and key leaders in all children's, youth and sporting ministries in the church, and to any other person that the eldership sub-committee

deems appropriate. The offender must also be willing to have his/her name recorded on the Partner's Database in line with this policy.

2. The offender must agree to never be alone with a child on church property or at any church function, or function attended by church personnel including home fellowship groups and private parties.
3. The offender must agree to not become involved in any church activity or small group without the PRIOR permission of the Senior Pastor or his/her nominee. The eldership is aware that even so-called "harmless" areas of ministry such as "welcoming people at the door" is fraught with difficulty, since it results in a "normalising" of the offender. What single mum would not agree to have the offender baby-sit her kids when he/she has been greeting her warmly at the church door for three years and she has no idea of his/her history?
4. The offender must agree to not become involved in any church activity (except for public meetings) or event where children participate.
5. The offender must agree to never attend any church hikes, trips, church camps or overnight stay or conference where children are present. If children arrive unexpectedly, then the offender agrees to make immediate arrangements for his/her departure.
6. The offender must agree to never become involved in counselling ministry.
7. The offender must agree to not have any contact at the church or at home or at any other place with any other people known to have histories of child abuse.
8. The offender must agree to regular meetings with a designated church leader for accountability and pastoral care purposes.
9. The offender must contact that leader or the Senior Pastor, or if both are not available, another pastor, the moment that he/she is having difficulty with his/her history or with temptation in this area. The offender must agree to immediate open and frank acknowledgement of such difficulties so that referral to professional help can be arranged and checks and balances protecting the children of the church and the offender will be put in place.
10. The offender must be prepared to obey the direction of pastoral staff or of eldership in all matters dealing with his personal conduct at church, or at church functions, whether or not children are present.
11. The offender must agree never to approach, initiate conversation with, or continue conversation with a child on church property or at any church function.
12. The offender must agree to NEVER accept invitations or offer to baby-sit, hold or care for a child or baby, even for a moment, and even if others are in the room.

13. The offender must agree to never allow any family from the church with children to visit him/her in the home. If the family insists then BEFORE the visit the offender must contact the Senior Pastor or his/her nominee, who will apprise the family of the possible risk factors from the point of view of the church's duty of care.
14. Similarly, the offender must agree not to visit any church family with children in their home – whether or not others are present.

10 Concluding Statement

In adopting this policy the concern of the Eldership and of the church is primarily for the protection of the children who are such an important part of the church's ministry. As a church we make no apology for this Policy's bias toward victims and toward children in general.

We believe that for a church to be derelict in its duty of care toward the most vulnerable members of its community would be a tragedy.

It is our hope and our prayer that we will be ever vigilant and ever protective of the child's right to hear about and learn about the Lord Jesus Christ and His love for them in a safe environment.

That is also our commitment!

Appendix A:

Extracts from the Child Protection Act 1999

The Definition of Harm

What is “harm?”

- (1) “harm”, to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing;
- (2) It is immaterial how the harm is caused.
- (3) Harm can be caused by:
 - (a) Physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or
 - (b) Sexual abuse or exploitation

Protection from Liability for Notification

Protection from liability for notification of, or information given about alleged harm.

- (1) This Section applies if a person, acting honestly,
 - (a) notifies the chief executive or another officer of the department that the person suspects a child has been, is being or is likely to be, harmed; or
 - (b) Gives the chief executive, any authorised officer, or police officer information about alleged harm to a child.
- (2) The person does not incur liability for giving the notification or information.
- (3) Also, merely because the person gives the notification or information, the person cannot be held to have -
 - (a) Breached any code of professional etiquette or ethics; or
 - (b) Departed from accepted standards of professional conduct

Appendix B:

Notifying the Department of Families (DOF) or the Queensland Police Service (QPS)

In the process of notifying DOF with respect to child abuse or suspected child abuse:

- You do not have to be able to prove that the abuse has occurred
- Your identity as a notifier will remain confidential in accordance with Section 186 of the Child Protection Act 1999
- You are immune from civil liability for reporting your suspicion providing you are acting honestly (section 22 Child Protection Act 1999)
- You are not breaching any code of professional etiquette or ethics, nor are you departing from any accepted form of professional conduct when you act honestly in making a report

Under section 186 of the Child Protection Act 1999, your identity will be kept confidential unless it is necessary to disclose your name in the course of “official duties” to another person acting in the course of “official duties” e.g. a police officer, or where the court deems that the identity of the notifier is evidence of critical importance to the proceedings and that failure to admit it would prejudice the proper administration of justice, or where you have consented to the release of your name.

Christian workers/volunteers/pastors/church members and attendees ought to understand that confidentiality in the counselling room is NOT to be held to be of higher value than a child’s right to protection and safety. Consequently, the church requires child abuse and suspicion of abuse to be reported to DOF no matter what the source of the information.

To make a notification contact the Department of Families on:
(07) 3224 8045 or 1800 811 810

Topic 2: Other forms of Abuse

Here is an extract from the website for
Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian²⁶

Section 1: Child Abuse and Child Protection

1.1 What is harm to children?

The *Child Protection Act 1999* (section 9) states:

- 1) 'Harm' to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.
- 2) It is immaterial how the harm is caused.
- 3) Harm can be caused by –
 - a. physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect, or
 - b. sexual abuse or exploitation.

1.2 Categories of harm

Physical Harm

Harm may take a number of forms including:

Physical harm or non-accidental physical injury

Physical harm may include beating, shaking, burning, biting or grabbing hard enough to leave a mark, throwing a child or strangulation, to the extent that there are lasting physical effects.

The fact that an injury is inflicted determines the existence of harm and the need for intervention.

Many non-accidental injuries result from excessive physical discipline. Non-accidental injuries include bruises, welts, lacerations, abrasions, fractures, burns, bleeding, serious head or internal injuries and even the death of children and young people. Physical training programs for children and young people that do not take into account the strength, skills, coordination, and level of emotional development of the individual child or young person can be harmful. What may motivate one child or young person may be physically harmful to another. Practices such as giving extra tasks to children as 'punishment' can be dangerous to their health, especially if they are tired. The administration of illegal or inappropriate drugs and medications that may affect a child or young person's physical or psychological development may also be a form of harm.

Emotional harm

Emotional harm of a child or young person includes constant criticism, belittling, teasing, and withholding praise and affection or constant yelling. It can also be caused by a failure to provide the psychological nurturing necessary for a child or young person's physical and emotional growth and development. For example, ignoring a child or

²⁶ Information collected from web site visited 8th June 2006.

http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/pdf/risk/workbook/workbook_partA_section1-1.4.pdf
http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/pdf/risk/workbook/workbook_partA_section1.4-1.5.pdf

young person or using unusual or demeaning punishments. Children and young people respond to encouragement and positive support. Drawing attention to the child or young person's failures or shortcomings, demeaning their performance in front of others or in private, is inappropriate and can be emotionally abusive. Negative feedback should be used sparingly and only in relation to inappropriate actions or behaviours and not the young person themselves. Providing constructive advice and praising positive behaviour is a much more productive approach. Avoid negative comments based on physical attributes such as weight, lack of coordination or physical appearance.

Neglect

Neglect includes the ongoing failure to provide a child with the basic necessities of life and adequate supervision needed for optimal growth and development. It also includes a failure to use available resources or seek treatment to meet the child or young person's needs. In an extreme form this could involve abandonment of the child or young person.

Sexual harm (see also the previous discussion on this specific topic)

Sexual harm takes many forms, from sexual jokes, innuendo in conversation and showing pornographic images to a child, to sexual touching and invasive acts. It also includes exposure, fondling, voyeurism and exhibitionism, sexual intercourse, involvement with pornography and child prostitution.

This can occur between a child or young person and a person who is older, or has power, authority or control over a child. This authority provides an opportunity for the older person to use force, trickery, emotional bribery or blackmail, or other emotional pressure. It can also involve secrecy, misuse of power and distortion of adult-child relationships. It is important to note that children aged under 16 cannot legally consent to sexual acts. Sexual activity is a criminal offence even if the child has, or appears to have, consented. Even young people over 16 can be subject to sexual harm where there is improper use of power or authority. Forced consent is not an excuse in these cases.

The possible effects of harm²⁷

Effects and indicators of harm can be both physical and behavioural. The indicators of emotional harm noted below can be indicative of any of these types of abuse. Indicators can include:

Physical harm:

- bruising
- broken bones
- possible brain damage
- sometimes death
- anxiety or low self esteem, and

²⁷ (SOURCE: *Working with Children* booklet, *Dealing with issues*)

- may become abusive.

Neglect:

- malnutrition or poor weight gain
- insufficient medical care
- begging or stealing food or money due to hunger
- missing out on a substantial amount of school
- physical or intellectual developmental delays
- lack of hygiene and clothing appropriate to the weather and the occasion
- inappropriate supervision eg. children left uncollected for a long period, and
- being required to supervise other children to a non-age appropriate degree.

Emotional harm:

- low self esteem
- eating disorders
- becoming depressed or suicidal
- anxiety
- delays in physical growth and development, and
- engaging in self destructive behaviour.

Sexual harm:

- feeling betrayed, sad, fearful and angry
- feelings of guilt, negative effect on relationships
- difficulty in trusting others
- confusion about sexual identity
- low self esteem
- difficulty dealing with emotions
- poor body image
- abuse of alcohol or drugs
- eating disorders
- becoming depressed or suicidal, and
- risk of sexually transmitted disease and pregnancy.

1.3 Stopping child abuse

Child abuse is anything which individuals, institutions or processes do (or fail to do) which directly or indirectly harms children in the 'here and now' and/or damages their prospects of safe and healthy development into adulthood. Child abuse affects the whole community, not just the child and family involved. Stopping child abuse starts with us. Everyone, including parents and caregivers, professionals, neighbours, workmates, families and friends, are needed to protect children and young people in our communities.

What you can do to help keep kids safe²⁸

1. **Be available** to listen to the children in your life. What they say is important - and be aware of the non-verbal communication too.

²⁸ SOURCE: National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN)
Website: www.napcan.org.au

2. **Offer parents support** instead of criticism. Raising children can be hard.
3. **Ask for help** if you are stressed and caring for a child. Call the Child Abuse Prevention Service 1800 688 009.
4. **Act if you suspect abuse.** Talk to child abuse prevention services in your state - many little concerns might reveal a big problem.*
5. **Stop child abuse before it starts.** Take practical steps to protect the children in our communities.

***Note:** In Queensland, The Department of Child Safety and Queensland Police Service are the agencies that investigate reports of harm or suspected abuse.

1.4 Child Protection in Queensland – a snapshot

The following extracts from 'Children and Young People in Queensland– a snapshot' provide insights into child abuse and child protection trends in this State.

Abuse and neglect

In recent years, the key measures of child abuse in Queensland have shown large increases.

However, these are not a simple indication of changes in the level of child abuse and neglect. Other factors, including changes in legislation, improvements in data collections and media attention increase the likelihood of cases being reported.

Several inquiries and investigations into child protection services in Queensland have focused attention on the services and have increased public awareness of child abuse and neglect.

In 2003-04, there were 25,009 children and young people subject to notifications of harm or risk of harm, up from 22,027 in 2002-03 and 19,575 in 2001-02. Based on the population of 0 to 17 year olds, the rate of children with notifications in 2003-04 was 26.2 per 1,000, an increase from rates of 23.3 in 2002-03 and 20.9 in 2001-02.

Characteristics of children

In 2003-04 in Queensland, rates of children suffering substantiated neglect and emotional abuse were highest for children under one year of age, but decreased with increasing age¹. Rates of children suffering substantiated sexual abuse were highest for five to 14 year olds. Young people aged 15 to 17 had much lower rates of abuse, but made up a larger proportion of sexual and physical abuse cases.

The Project Axis report *Child Sexual Abuse in Queensland: The Nature and Extent* (QCC & QPS, 2000) highlighted factors which affect the reporting of child sexual abuse, which to some extent, affect the profile of children with substantiations:

- most disclosures of abuse are made months or years after the incident occurred, particularly when the offender was known to the child
- children may not disclose abuse as they may not recognise the activity as abnormal or abusive,

they may be fearful, embarrassed or ashamed, or they may lack the skills to communicate the abuse, and

- children are most at risk of sexual assault between the ages of seven and twelve years.

The following table indicates the frequency of different types of harm occurring in 2003-04.

In 2003-04 Indigenous children experienced much higher levels of child abuse than non-Indigenous children – as in previous years.

The data suggests that particular groups of children may be at higher risk of abuse or neglect.

These are:

- very young children, who are particularly at risk of emotional abuse and neglect
- Indigenous children, who are particularly at risk of neglect
- girls and young women, who are more at risk of sexual abuse than males
- children living in step or blended families
- children living in single parent families, and
- children with either a younger mother or a younger father.

Age is one of the factors that child protection workers take into consideration when determining the response to a notification, with younger children regarded as the most vulnerable. Therefore allegations of abuse of very young children are treated with highest priority (AIHW, 2005).

Child abuse and neglect are complex issues. Research has shown that risk factors can be linked to a range of personal, family and social issues. These include parents being the victims of abuse as children, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, domestic violence, marital conflict, limited support, social isolation, and low income and financial stress (James, 2000). The reality is that in many instances a range of interacting factors operate. Intervention, education and support programs need to recognise the complex and interacting nature of risk factors and be tailored to the particular risk factors and vulnerable groups.²⁹

1.5 Receiving and reporting disclosures of harm

Disclosures of harm

When confronted with disclosures of harm to children and young people, organisations should respond professionally and in the best interests of the child or young person subjected to the alleged harm. Any disclosure or suspicion of harm must be acted on. To make sure you respond as quickly as possible to any disclosures of harm, ensure your organisation:

- has policies and procedures in place for responding to a disclosure, including

²⁹ SOURCE: 'Children and Young People in Queensland – a Snapshot'. This annual publication is accessible through the Commission's website at www.cvypcq.qld.gov.au.

- what immediate action your organisation should take regarding the child or young person
 - how to receive the disclosure and document what is said
 - who to notify, and
 - a description of the role of relevant authorities.
 - knows how to support everyone involved in the disclosure of harm, and
 - knows how to respond to the media, if relevant.
- You should protect a child or young person's right to privacy if you believe media attention would have a detrimental effect on them.

Suspicion of harm

You have 'reasonable grounds' to suspect harm if:

- a child or young person tells you they have been harmed
- someone else, for example another child, a parent, or a staff member, tells you that harm has occurred or is likely to occur
- a child or young person tells you they know someone who has been harmed (it is possible that they may be referring to themselves)
- you are concerned at significant changes in the behaviour of a child or young person, or the presence of new unexplained and suspicious injuries, or
- you see the harm happening.

Disclosures of harm may sound like:

- "I think I saw...."
- "Somebody told me that...."
- "Just think you should know...."
- "I'm not sure what I want you to do, but...."

Any disclosure of harm is important and must be acted upon, regardless of whether:

- the harm to a child or young person has been caused by a person from within or outside your organisation, or
- the child or young person disclosing the harm to you is from within or outside your organisation.

Irrespective of the source of the harm, i.e. whether from within your organisation (internal) or outside your organisation (external), a disclosure may be made to a member of your organisation.

It is crucial to have procedures in place so any disclosure from an adult, child or young person is dealt with efficiently and effectively. Make sure that staff, volunteers, parents and children are given information about these procedures and, where appropriate, training to use them effectively.

What to do when a disclosure is made:

Stage one – receiving a disclosure

There is no one set of rules to follow when a child or young person tells you that harm has occurred to them, or another person discloses an incident of harm to a child or young person. However the following actions may be of assistance:

Don't panic. You may be the first person to whom the disclosure is made. Your reaction may determine whether the person making the disclosure trusts you with the information. It is important you:

- don't react in a shocked or critical way, and
- tell the person you are glad they have told you.

Find a private place to talk. (in open area where others can see you, never be alone behind closed doors with the child by yourself.)

Privacy may help the person making the disclosure feel more comfortable and less concerned about telling you what they have to say, especially if they are a child or young person.

Listen. When presented with a disclosure of harm, don't say, "I won't tell," and don't promise to keep secrets. You should:

- reassure the person they have done the right thing in telling
- say you need to tell someone else who can help them, and
- reassure them you will only tell someone who will make them safe.

Believe the person

It is not up to you to judge whether a child, young person or anyone else is telling the truth – always act on the basis that what you have been told is the truth. Remember, it is not up to you to decide if what you are being told did or did not happen.

Don't ask leading questions

Leading questions are those that tend to suggest an answer, for example:

- "Did 'X' touch you?"
- "Did they touch you where your underwear goes?"

Don't put words in the person's mouth – let them tell you what happened, and if you need to clarify anything, ask non-leading questions such as:

- "Tell me what happened."
- "What happened then?"
- "Can you tell me about that?"

It is not your role to investigate allegations of harm. Only ask enough questions to confirm the need to report the matter to the Queensland Police Service or the Department of Child Safety. The safety of the child or young person is paramount. Unnecessary questions or interviews could cause distress, confusion and interfere with any subsequent investigation authorities undertake.

Take detailed notes

At the first opportunity after a disclosure has been made to you, make notes of what occurred.

Include information such as:

- dates
- times
- location, and
- who is present.

Include a detailed description of:

- exactly what the person disclosing said, using 'I said,' 'they said,' statements
- the questions you asked
- any comments you made, and
- your actions following the disclosure.

If you are taking notes as the disclosure is occurring, explain why you are doing it and why it is important, i.e. to ensure an accurate record for any subsequent investigation. If the disclosure is being made by a child or young person, remember to explain this to them in a way that is appropriate for their age and understanding. Any reports or documentation on disclosures of harm must be kept confidential and secure, with access strictly limited and on a 'need to know' basis.

Stage two – reporting a disclosure

Suspicions of harm which may involve an offence against a child or young person must always be taken seriously. Your organisation's first responsibility is to report it either to the Queensland Police Service or the Department of Child Safety, after confirming that you should. This should be done by the person to whom the disclosure was made, as they will have the best knowledge of what was said.

Under no circumstances should an organisation:

- conduct its own investigation to substantiate claims
- hold its own internal hearing (a 'kangaroo court'), or
- attempt to mediate a settlement of the matter instead of notifying relevant authorities.

Investigations conducted by your organisation could lead to:

- the destruction of evidence by an accused person
- intimidation of the person disclosing the information, or
- intimidation of the child or young person being harmed (if the disclosure was made by somebody else).

The Queensland Police Service

The Queensland Police Service will investigate disclosures of suspected or substantiated harm to children or young people. This is usually done by officers of the Juvenile Aid Bureau or Child Abuse Unit. If a disclosure is made to you, contact your closest Juvenile Aid Bureau or local police station and tell them you suspect, or have been told of, someone who has been harmed.

When contacting the police, they will want to know information such as:

- the details of any disclosure of harm
- the name, age, and address of the child or young person harmed
- where the child or young person is at that point in time
- any identifying information regarding the alleged perpetrator of the harm, and
- your details.

The Department of Child Safety

Where the disclosure indicates that harm may have been caused by a family member, or where parents are not acting to protect their child from harm, the incident must be reported to the Department of Child Safety through your local service centre. Disclosures of harm related to shared family care or residential services for children and young people must also be reported to the Department of Child Safety. However, where the disclosure of harm indicates a criminal offence may have taken place, such as sexual assault of a child or young person, the matter should also be reported to the Queensland Police Service.³⁰

Any actions should be undertaken in consultation with independent legal advice and in accordance with your organisational charter.

Source of Harm: Possible Actions

Internal: Immediate Short to Medium Term Long Term

Staff Contact the Queensland Police Service or the Department of Child Safety

- support all parties, including
 - the person making the disclosure
 - the person receiving the disclosure
 - the child or young person who has been harmed, and
 - the alleged perpetrator
- suspend the alleged perpetrator from duties until the matter is resolved
- have the alleged perpetrator undertake alternative duties

If allegation is proven:

- terminate the employment
- terminate the volunteer involvement

If allegation is not proven:

- activate grievance procedures Clients
- support all parties, including:
 - the person making the disclosure
 - the person receiving the disclosure
 - the child or young person who has been harmed, and
 - the alleged perpetrator
- determine whether the client, as an alleged perpetrator, is allowed:
 - back on the premises
 - to participate in activities
 - in areas where children and young people are – while the matter is being investigated by the Queensland Police Service or Department of Child Safety

If allegation is proven:

- determine if the client's involvement with the organisation will be allowed to continue.

³⁰ SOURCE: *Working with Children* booklet, *Dealing with Issues*. More information about providing support to people involved in the disclosure is available in this booklet.

- If allegation is not proven
- activate grievance procedures

External

- allow the Queensland Police Service or the Department of Child Safety to undertake an official investigation
- support the person who made the disclosure, the person who received the disclosure and the child or young person who has been harmed

Stage three – providing support

The following table provides some possible courses of action for your organisation, depending on where the alleged harm originated.

Source of Harm	Possible Actions		
Internal	Immediate	Short to Medium Term	Long Term
Staff	Contact the Queensland Police Service or the Department of Child Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support all parties, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the person making the disclosure - the person receiving the disclosure - the child or young person who has been harmed, and - the alleged perpetrator • suspend the alleged perpetrator from duties until the matter is resolved • have the alleged perpetrator undertake alternative duties 	If allegation is proven: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • terminate the employment • terminate the volunteer involvement If allegation is not proven: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • activate grievance procedures
Clients		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support all parties, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the person making the disclosure - the person receiving the disclosure - the child or young person who has been harmed, and - the alleged perpetrator • determine whether the client, as an alleged perpetrator, is allowed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - back on the premises 	If allegation is proven: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determine if the client's involvement with the organisation will be allowed to continue. If allegation is not proven: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • activate grievance procedures
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to participate in activities - in areas where children and young people are – while the matter is being investigated by the Queensland Police Service or Department of Child Safety	
External		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allow the Queensland Police Service or the Department of Child Safety to undertake an official investigation • support the person who made the disclosure, the person who received the disclosure and the child or young person who has been harmed 	

Information collected from web site visited 8th June 2006.

http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/pdf/risk/workbook/workbook_partA_section1-1.4.pdf

http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/pdf/risk/workbook/workbook_partA_section1.4-1.5.pdf

Section 7

Managing Problems and Behaviour: #2

Other issues

Toileting

Toileting procedures need to be written according to the following factors:

- Whether you accept full or emergency toileting scenarios
- At what age you allow entrance to your programme
- Crèche procedures
- Special considerations regarding the placement of your toilet facilities to your activity.
- The number of assistants available
- Length of your programme

You must keep a sign-in/sign-out form for all toileting activities and it should contain a place where the supervisor can enter any observations e.g. child has lost their underwear, assistance was given by the adult etc. This log needs to be kept in your files in case a complaint is made.

Medical Issues and Unwell Children

You should not accept children into your programme who are unwell (non-disability issues). Alert parents that should a child become ill after the programme vent they should notify you as soon as possible particularly if the medical issue is contagious. You should have a list of all contact phone numbers and make other parents aware that a child has exposed the programme to a particular illness so they can be alert to any symptoms. A notice should also be posted in the programme next time you meet as a precaution.

Use of Technology, Internet

Care should be taken in the use of any video, television programmes, audio and Internet material in programmes.

Children react in different ways to some visual material and parents often have a very diverse opinion of what their children can watch or be exposed to. It is our strong recommendation that any material be viewed by a cross section of workers before showing and permission from the parent should be obtained when showing this material especially any non-Christian material.

As children are more familiar with using the internet for both information gathering and entertainment programmes that give access to the internet should ensure all safeguards are in place that prohibits access to inappropriate material. Note: Now with visual material also available over even

mobile phones they should also be considered a way a child may access inappropriate material.

Quote from the *CCYPCG Safe Environments for young people Child Protection Managing the Risks Resource Book June 2007*:

3.5 Computers, email, Internet and mobile phone use

Computers, email, the Internet and mobile phones create many opportunities for children and young people, but they also create potential risks which you need to manage. It is important to be aware that children or young people accessing computer games, the Internet, multi-media websites and on-line chat rooms while unsupervised could be exposed to:

- potential abusers
- hateful and violent content
- computer viruses and hackers
- flame wars (the exchange of abusive or insulting messages), and
- websites providing information on harmful or illegal activities.

As a result, it is important your organisation has clear, consistent policies and procedures in place on the use of computers, email and the Internet. These should apply to employees, volunteers and the children and young people to whom you provide services. When developing policies on the use of computers, email and the Internet, consider addressing issues such as:

- appropriate and inappropriate screen savers
- what files are appropriate or inappropriate to store on your organisation's computers
- the sending and receiving of appropriate and inappropriate emails
- the appropriateness of images or text posted on your website
- the type of sites considered appropriate or inappropriate for children or young people to access
- the type of sites staff can access
- the messages your organisation's website sends to other people
- the disclaimers or notices you place on your website, and
- what links to other organisations' websites are appropriate from your website.

Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Strategies you should consider to reduce the risk of inappropriate access could include:

- ensuring Internet-ready computers are not easily accessible in isolated rooms
- actively monitoring children and young people's online activity

- instructing staff, children and young people on the dangers of Internet use
- watching for monitors that 'go blank' or rapidly change scenes when you enter a room
- looking for recording media (e.g. DVD's, memory sticks) hidden in unlikely places
- instructing children and young people not to give out personal information like addresses, phone numbers, schools or clubs they attend while online
- learning to audit computer use history
- telling children and young people that some people tell lies, and it is easy for them to do it online, and
- telling children and young people never to arrange to meet someone they have met online without permission.

A good way to help children and young people understand the dangers of the Internet, while encouraging their interest, is to ask them to find material on Internet safety.

A more interactive approach may be to provide educational games and puzzles which show children or young people how to use computers and the Internet safely in a fun and challenging way.

Useful advice and tips and safe Internet use for children and young people and your organisation's staff, are available from:

- NetAlert: www.netalert.net.au
- kids.ap (Innocence in Danger –Asia/Pacific): www.kidsap.org

The Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA) also provides information and advice on Internet use, and offers advice on Internet material suitable for children and young people. The ABA's website is at www.aba.gov.au or ph: 1800 226 667 (freecall).

Software that acts as a filtering or blocking mechanism is an option commonly used to protect children and young people from exposure to negative websites. While this type of software has its merits, it should not be relied on in the place of regular supervision.

Issues like drugs, alcohol

A statement should be included in your Procedural Manual that states clearly that "All activities involving children and young people should be drug, cigarette and alcohol free." This applies to all leaders and participants.

General Behaviour Management

Here is an example of Dealing with Challenging Behaviour³¹ from Brisbane City Church

○ **Managing Problem Behaviour**

Discipline of a child or young person is the responsibility of the leaders and the Department Head and /or Pastor. Serious discipline issues, which may require action outside the program, will be brought to the attention of the Child's or Young Person's parents and the Department Head or Pastor, if required. If a child's or young person's behaviour is unacceptable, do not let it "get to you" where you grab, hit or yell at the child. **This is not acceptable.** A leader is required to respond appropriately rather than react. Remember that positive encouragement is always better than negative punishment.

In the event that a child's or young person's behaviour is unacceptable then the following questions to the child may be helpful:

- What are you doing?
- What are the Rules?
- What happens when you break the rules? (Refer strategy below)
- Is this what you want to happen?
- What do you want to do now?
- What will happen if you disrupt again?
- Do you want to work at this?
- I see you have chosen to leave (follow through and take the child or young person to parents)
- **Strategy**
 - Discuss rules/rights - all informed - always give a choice - effective warning - in class action - time out.
 - Be firm and give clear instructions.
 - Compliment good behaviour to reinforce.

³¹ BCC

Behaviour Management Policy

Brisbane City Church Children's Church will operate on a three strike system. A child or young person will be given three chances to correct unacceptable behaviour. Once a child or young person has exceeded these boundaries their parents will be asked to collect them for the remainder of the morning.

Always be aware of the child's or young person's nature as some may have learning difficulties and need extra instruction. If this is the case then the boundaries for that particular child may be extended. This does not mean that we accept their behaviour rather there may be other insinuating circumstances for their lack of adherence to instructions. Consistency is one of the keys to correcting most problem behaviours.

Strategies

- Be clear and to the point when explaining boundaries
- Explain to the child that there are always consequences for their behaviour and that they have the power choose
- Always maintain consistency. If a child knows they can exceed boundaries without discipline then they may continually cause disruptions
- Use positive reaffirming words
- Let the child know your expectations. A child will always try to win your approval, so always compliment the child if they have met your expectations.
- Be firm and give clear instructions.

No one likes to discipline children however it should never be seen in a negative light. The root word of discipline is disciple. When we discipline children we are using a form of discipleship whereby a child is being equipped to become more Christ-like like. "After-all isn't that what God teaches us through His correction".

Section 8

Activities away from the church premises

CONDUCTING A HOME VISIT

Below are the suggestions provided by a selection of churches for you as ideas and information. Again they are not considered comprehensive but will stimulate the design of your own policies and procedures.

Visitation is an important element of any effective Children's ministry. Visiting a child at home;

- Encourages the child
- Develops an awareness of issues that the child may be faced with
- Builds relationships with the child and their family
- Demonstrates the caring nature and commitment of the church nevertheless, visitation must be handled carefully to ensure the personal safety of children and reputation of workers is maintained.

Clearly designate who can do home visitations and under what circumstances. Clearly outline the do's and don'ts of a home visit. Also include a reporting process so you can track what has eventuated from the visit.

When visiting it is necessary to

- Dress appropriately and carry identification/wear official name badge
- Where possible make an appointment with the parent/guardian and inform them who and how many will be coming, Also give them any idea what the visit is about.
- Where possible and appropriate, visit in pairs (eg .Leader and assistant)
- When the door is answered clearly state your name and who you represent.
- Stay outside the home and in full view unless specifically requested to enter

Do NOT enter the home where:

- There is no clear ministry purpose
- Children are at home with no adult present
- The only adult present is of the opposite sex to you

- You have any reason to believe your safety or reputation may be compromised.

Where there is potential for compromise, then another person of opposite sex should accompany you on the visit.

CONDUCTING ACTIVITIES AWAY FROM CHURCH PREMISES.

Camps and outings may be conducted as part of the Children's Ministry program. While these activities are encouraged it is acknowledged that they may expose children to an added degree of risk. It is essential that this risk be managed appropriately so that the safety of children and leaders is maintained. Furthermore, in the advent of an accident it is important that due care by leaders can be demonstrated.

Develop an Outing Form

Designate who completes the form and how many weeks prior to the event it needs to be submitted

Set your guidelines on numbers of leaders, ratio's of children to leaders; ratio's of male to female leaders.

Set some policies and procedures: You need to develop your own and ensure they are consistent with any CCYPCG guidelines. Also ensure they are current if you have previously set guidelines for a past event. Ensure you have included any new procedures that may need to be developed if you are going to a new location. (Below are the suggestions provided by a selection of churches for you as ideas and information).

Some examples:

- At least one leader must be the same sex as the children attending the camp or outing ...adhere to your ratios policy as mentioned above.
- Never be alone with a child, always in two's.
- Leaders are not permitted to shower with children, or observe them showering. If Shower monitors are required for smaller children then work in two's and stand at the entrance to the shower block and be discrete and respect the privacy of the child.
- Ensure you have set a toileting policy where necessary for the age group.
- If the group is mixed then any behaviour policies e.g. boys are not to visit girls in their dorms and visa versa, etc
- Where campsites do not have leader's quarters, never be alone in the sleeping quarters with a child.

- Night hikes – no adult is walk off alone with a child or small group and do not allow any children to walk off without supervision. The group must stay intact with all leaders visible.
- Children are not permitted to get into bed together.
- Before taking children on a camp or outing an information Letter will need to be completed returned to you before a child can attend the camp or outing.

Here is a list of what an information letter and permission Form might include:
You may need to include further questions depending on the activity and also if there are changes to any Government requirements. Review these questions for each event.

- Name & Address of child attending camp or outing
- Dates of camp/outing, time frames
- Location and contact details for campsite and name of camp commander
- Accurate time of departure and return to the church or pickup/drop-off point (nearest 15 minutes)
- Method of transport e.g. church bus, parents or leaders vehicles etc
- General description of activities to be undertaken e.g. hiking, swimming, watching videos etc.
- Cost of event and suggest an amount if the child will need any other expenses (i.e. if there is a shop on site)
- Details of any medication that may need to be administered to the child
- Whether the child is an Ambulance subscriber
- Medicare No.
- Parent/Guardians contact phone number or address during camp or outing
- Indemnity statement
- Check insurance policies are current and cover the proposed activities.
- Where transport by vehicle is involved, licenses of drivers must be checked by the Children's Coordinator to ensure they are valid for the class of vehicle being driven and they have insurance and what the capacity of occupants should be. Also ensure all permissions are received e.g. from the parents if a young person driving, parents of any passengers etc
- If there is any doubt as to the roadworthiness of a vehicle, then that vehicle must not be used.
- Identification and blue cards for all attending.
- Map of location
- Code of Behaviour for participants

- Any special policies that you wish to implement (e.g. mobile phone usage times, visiting from outsiders,
- Any contingency details i.e. cancellation due to rain, etc

Outings and Activities

Quote from the *CCYPCG Safe Environments for young people Child Protection Managing the Risks Resource Book June2007*:

3.3 Special events

There may be occasions when your organisation attends an event held by another organisation or individual. In these situations, be aware that you may lose a certain amount of control over the event or activity. As such, it is worth ensuring that attendance at such an event will not compromise your commitment to providing a safe environment for children and young people.

Questions to ask could include:

- Do you have enough information about the event to decide whether it will contribute positively to the wellbeing and development of the children and young people in your care?
- Have you provided enough information to parents or carers so they can make an informed decision about whether they want their children to attend?
- Will attending such an event create risks for the children and young people in your organisation?
- If the event could pose risks, have you evaluated them and developed procedures to minimize those risks?
- Do you know if the event organizers are committed to an environment which is safe and friendly for children and young people?
- Have they developed policies and procedures supporting such an environment?

Examples could include:

- whether the location is secure
- whether there is a 'no pass outs' policy
- whether there are policies or procedures in place around the availability of alcohol or illegal substances, and
- whether the event organizers have shown a commitment to creating a child and youth-friendly environment – if not, are you still prepared to attend the event?

Special events allow you to provide additional opportunities to children and young people. It is up to you to ensure that the experience is positive and fits with your child and youth friendly approach to providing activities.

Travel Policies to and from events

These may need to be developed for any special event.

Some things to consider:-

- Travel arrangements
- Drop off and pick up arrangements
- Staff qualifications
- Insurances
- Vehicle maintenance
- Identification
- Emergency Contacts and Procedures
- Supervision
- Blue Cards holders
- Maps of the venue outlining meeting areas, times

Please note: that if an 'away' activity includes crossing a state border you must ensure you have complied with the other state's legislation regarding Child Protection. Ensure you have all your bases covered for both States and this should be included in all your risk management strategies for that event!

Promotions and Advertising

Quote from the *CCYPCG Safe Environments for young people Child Protection Managing the Risks Resource Book June 2007*:

3.4 Promotions and advertising

When promoting the activities and services your organisation provides, ensure your key messages highlight your commitment to providing friendly environments for children and young people.

Promotional activities or advertising can offer opportunities for an organisation, such as:

- Fundraising
- promoting an upcoming event
- conducting membership drives, or
- highlighting achievements.

To promote these activities, you may wish to provide a photograph for use in newspapers, flyers, posters or on a website. Be aware of the issues surrounding the use of images of children and young people. You are legally obliged to ensure the identities of anyone under 18 remain confidential in certain situations e.g. where a child may be a victim of a criminal offence or if a child is in care. If in doubt about releasing information, err on the side of caution and seek legal advice.

Ask yourself:

- Do you have permission from the parent or carer of the child or young person to use the image?

- Have you asked the children or young people how they feel about the use of the image, asked their permission and given them input into how it will be used?
- Have you provided enough information about how the image will be used so the parent, carer, child or young person can give informed consent?

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- When providing information on the use of the image, was it an age-appropriate way so the child or young person could understand?
- Have you formatted digital and electronic images so they cannot be altered if downloaded – for example in PDF?
- How will others interpret the image?
- Does the image portray the child or young person in a demeaning way?
- Does the use of the image exploit the child or young person in any way?
- Where the child or young person should not be identified, could the image identify them?
- If a picture of a child or young person in your organisation is taken for promotional purposes, will it be used for any other purpose?
- Has the parent, carer, child or young person given permission for the image to be used in the future in any other way?
- Will you put the child or young person at risk if you allow them to be photographed?
- Who will see the promotional or advertising material containing the image?
- Have you considered whether the section of the Child Protection Act about confidentiality has been addressed?

The answers to these questions should help you decide whether it is appropriate for photographs of children and young people to be used in various contexts. If you believe it is, keep a record of why you decided to grant permission for an image of a child or young person in your care to be used.

There is nothing wrong with using an image of child or young person to promote your organisation in an appropriate manner. However, it is important to consider all the issues involved, and to make a decision which is in the best interests of the child or young person.