

**Assemblies of God in
Australia
New South Wales**

**Child Protection
Policy
and
Procedures**

2005 Edition

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

The policy has been adapted from the Assemblies of God South Australia Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2004. Used with permission.

This policy document has been submitted to the NSW Department of Community Services (DOCS). Their recommendation and comments have been taken into consideration in the final draft of this manual.

Adapted for the Assemblies of God NSW by David Goodwin based on NSW legislation applicable as at the time of writing (2005).

Contents

1.	Introduction	5
2.	Legislation	5
3.	Objectives	6
4.	Policy Statement	6
5.	Scope of Policy	6
6.	What is Child Abuse?	7
7.	Responding to Suspected Child Abuse	8
8.	Screening of Workers in Child/Youth Related Ministries	18
9.	Staff/Worker Induction & Training	22
10.	Dealing with People with Histories as Child Sexual Abusers	24
11.	Evaluation and Concluding Statement	26
	Appendix A: Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect	27
	Appendix B: Working with Children Check	28
	Appendix C: Prohibited Employment Declaration	30
	Appendix D: Mandatory Reporting	32
	Appendix E: Child and Youth Related Ministry Clearance Form – <i>Sample Form Only</i>	35
	Appendix F: Reporting Department of Community Services	37
	Appendix G: Confidential Internal Written Report – <i>Sample Form Only</i>	38
	Appendix H: Behavioural and Physical Indicators of Abuse	40
	Appendix I: AOGNSW Child Protection Training Strategy	43
	Appendix J: Contract between Church and Person with a History as a Sexual Abuser	45
	Bibliography	47

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

1. INTRODUCTION

Children and young people have the right to be emotionally and physically safe at all times. These policy and procedures have been developed for the protection of children and youth who are within the ministries of Assemblies of God in Australia New South Wales (AOGNSW) churches.^a

2. LEGISLATION

At the time of the writing of this policy, there were three major items of legislation that created obligations for AOGNSW. These are:

- [Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998](#)
- [Child Protection \(Prohibited Employment\) Act 1998](#)
- [Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998](#)

Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998

- [Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998](#)

Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998

- [Child Protection \(Prohibited Employment\) Act 1998](#)

Under the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998, any AOGNSW church:

- I. Will not commence employing a person in a child-related position without first requiring them to disclose whether or not they are a 'prohibited person'
- II. Will not commence employing, or continue to employ, in child related employment, a person that has been identified as a 'prohibited person'

Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998

- [Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998](#)

^a The terms "youth" and "young person" in this policy refer to young people who are 16 -17 years of age. "Children" refers to those 15 years and under.

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

Under the Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998, any AOGNSW church: is required to:

- I. Report the Commission for Children and Young People of the name and other identifying details of any employee against whom relevant disciplinary proceedings have been completed by the church, irrespective of the findings (except where the allegation has been proven to be vexatious, mischievous or false)
- II. Provide details of child abuse allegations/convictions against employees to the Commission
- III. Report the Commission of any applicants for child-related employment, rejected as a result of risks identified through employment screening processes
- IV. Ensure that records of all information required to be submitted to the Commission for Children and Young People are retained by the church.

3. OBJECTIVES

These policy and procedures concerning child abuse have the following goals:

- To provide a way in which the church can minimise the risk of abuse to children and youth within the ministries of the church.
- To ensure that all cases of abuse or suspected abuse are handled in a consistent and thorough manner.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

As a group of churches we abhor any kind of abuse and take very seriously any incidence of abuse within the church. Children and youth are trusting and vulnerable and therefore the church has a particular responsibility to ensure that it takes every reasonable step to ensure that all children and youth who are within the ministries of the church are safe and free from the risk of abuse and that suspected or known instances of abuse are dealt with consistently and appropriately.

5. SCOPE OF POLICY

All pastors, staff members and volunteer workers associated with ministry to children or youth within the ministry of any church aligned with AOGNSW are expected to comply with this policy and the associated procedures. (These persons will be designated by the term "worker" throughout this policy.)

This policy covers the following areas:

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

- Understanding what child abuse is
- Identifying child abuse
- Responding to situations of suspected or known child abuse
- The screening and training of staff and volunteer workers associated with ministry to or care of children or youth within the ministry of the church
- Protocols for protecting children and young people within the church from persons with a known history of abusing children

6. WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse is categorised in four ways:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect

These forms of abuse can be described as follows:

- I. **Physical abuse** is commonly characterised by physical injury resulting from practices such as punching, beating, shaking, biting, burning or otherwise harming a child.
- II. **Sexual abuse** occurs when a person who is older or bigger than the child, such as an adult or an older child, uses their power or authority over the child or takes advantage of the child's trust to involve them in sexual activity. This sexual activity does not just mean sexual intercourse; it means any sexual activity including flashing, fondling, masturbating and oral sex.
- III. **Emotional abuse** tends to be a chronic behavioural pattern directed at the child/young person whereby their self esteem and social competence is undermined or eroded over time.

A child/young person can also experience emotional abuse by being exposed to a dysfunctional environment which includes domestic violence.

- IV. **Neglect** is characterised by the failure to provide for the child/young person's basic needs. This can occur through direct and deliberate action or by omission or deliberate inaction to care for the child/young person."

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

It is accepted that physical abuse, emotional abuse and neglect may occur to varying degrees of severity and therefore warrant differing responses according to the degree of severity.

Sexual behaviour however 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.^b Therefore all forms of sexual abuse regardless of the degree of severity warrant the same level of response.

7. RESPONDING TO SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

A. Foundational Principles

Everything must be done to ensure the ongoing safety of the child or youth 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.

B. Mandatory Reporting/Duty of Care

Under the Children & Young Person's Care & Protection Act 1998, a wide range of people are required to report to the Director-General instances in which they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been or is being abused or neglected if the suspicion is formed in the course of the person's work. This work may be either paid or voluntary, or in carrying out official duties.

A mandatory reporter is any person who delivers health care, welfare, education, children's services, residential services, after school hours care, disability services, or law enforcement services to children in the course of their paid or professional work.

A person who holds a **management position**, either paid or voluntary, in any of these services and the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of these services, is also a **mandatory reporter**. For example, workers and helpers who have reason to believe a child is at risk of harm is not a mandatory reporter but their supervisor, being in management, is, whether or not the supervisor is paid.

Our advice from DoCS is that those who supply services that a church normally provides, such

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

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

as children's services and children's camps would be considered mandatory reporters.

Such people are termed "mandated notifiers" and include a wide range of people as follows:

A mandated notifier may be a person who:

- In the course of their professional work or other paid employment delivers health care, welfare, education, children's services, residential services, or law enforcement, wholly or partly, to children.
- Holds a management position in an organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of health care, welfare, education, children's services, residential services, or law enforcement, wholly or partly, to children. Managers include pastors and children's church and youth leaders as they are in management roles

If a person to whom this applies has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of harm, and those grounds arise during the course of or from the person's work, the person must, as soon as practicable, report to the Director-General the name, or a description, of the child and the grounds for suspecting that the child is at risk of harm.

Under Section 29 of the NSW Children & Young Person's Care & Protection Act 1998, persons reporting a suspicion of abuse or neglect, in good faith, are granted legal protection and their identities remain confidential.

Notification of suspected abuse or neglect is not a breach of professional etiquette or ethics. Although only mandated notifiers have a legal responsibility to report, everyone has a moral responsibility with respect to notification.

Although special exemptions may apply to ministers of religion, AOGNSW does not seek this exemption.

C. Notification Procedures

In line with this policy it is a requirement of AOGNSW that where a Pastor, staff member, worker or volunteer becomes aware of or suspects an incidence of child abuse that the following actions are carried out as soon as possible after he or she forms the suspicion:

- The alleged abuse and its alleged perpetrator must be reported to DoCS as soon as possible. It is expected that this would take place within 24 hours of the information first coming to the attention of someone in the organisation.

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

- The alleged abuse and its alleged perpetrator needs to be reported as well to the Senior Pastor/Department Head/Eldership/Board of Directors of the church as soon as possible
- In the case of a person with denominational credentials, a report must also be made to the State headquarters of AOGNSW as soon as possible

Please see diagram 1 for a detailed outline of the notification procedures where the alleged abuser is not in a place of ministry within the church.

Please see diagram 2 for a detailed outline of the notification procedures where the alleged abuser is in a place of ministry within the church.

1. Notification Procedures Where the Alleged Abuser is not in a Position of Ministry Within an AOGNSW Church

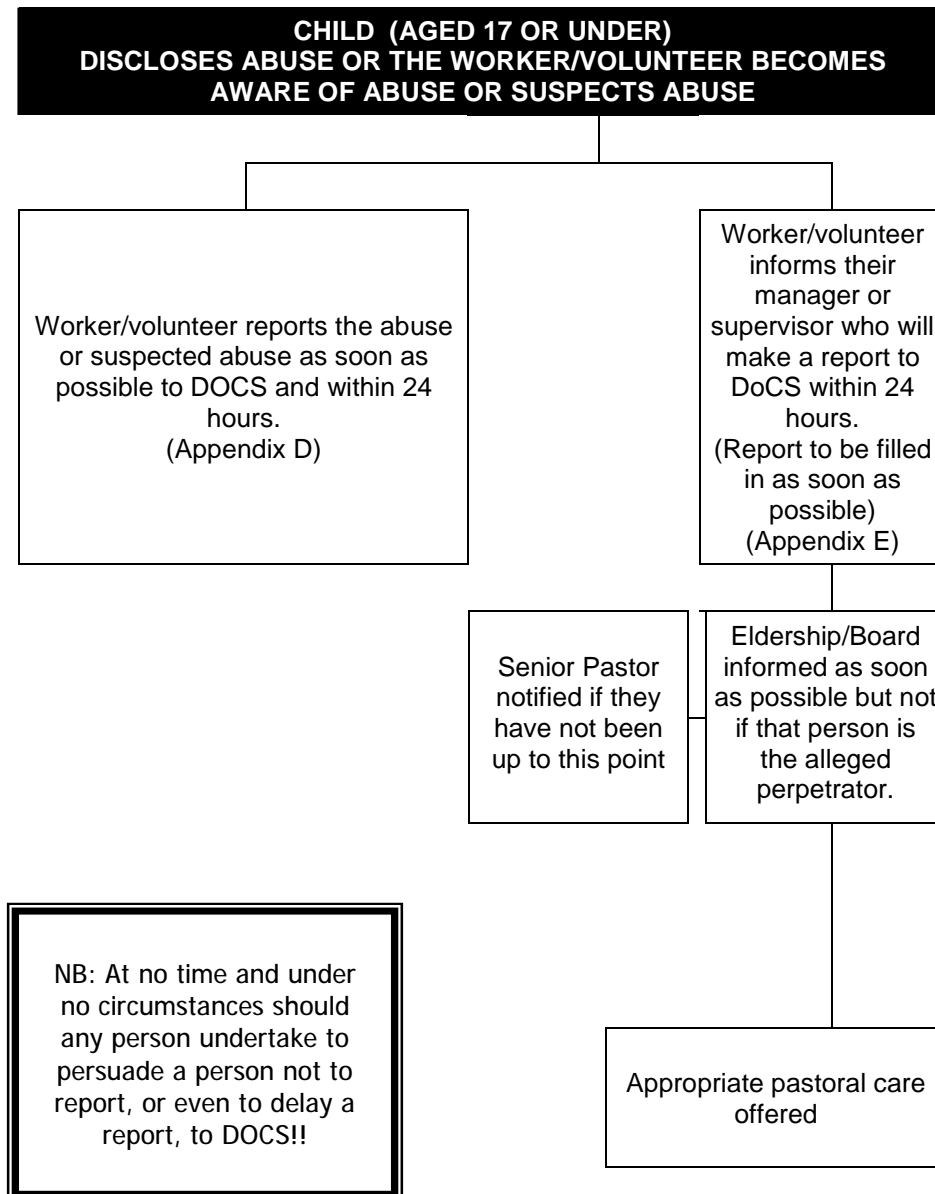
The following diagram outlines the procedure to be followed when someone in an AOGNSW church becomes aware of abuse or suspects abuse involving a child or youth 17 years of age or under and the alleged perpetrator is not in a position of ministry within the church.

Please note: If the alleged perpetrator is a church worker/volunteer/Pastor please go to diagram 2 for the appropriate reporting protocol.

Note, in no way does this procedure encourage the questioning of children. This is to be avoided as it may well contaminate evidence. This is the role of DoCS and Police.

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

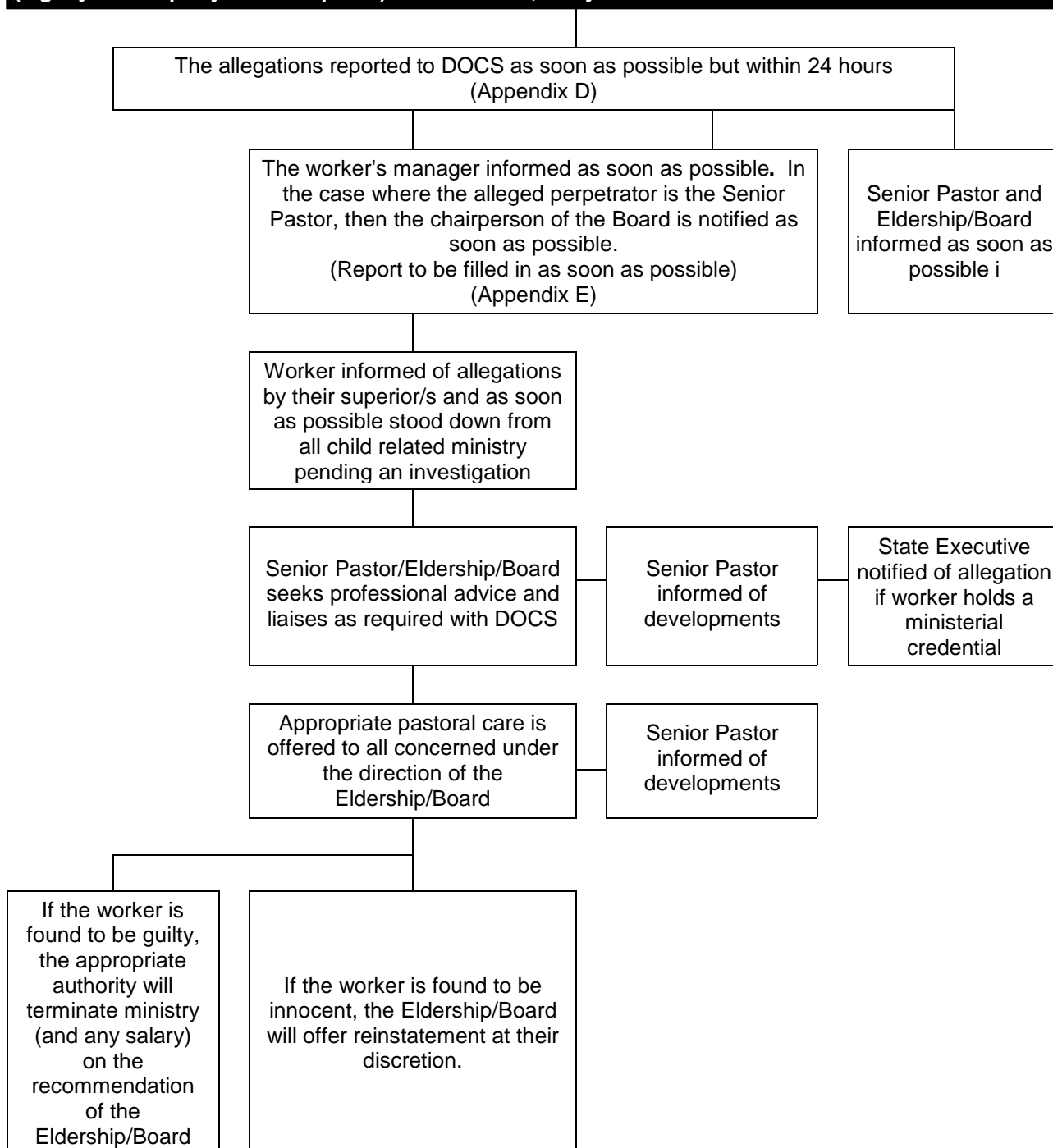
Diagram 1



AOGENSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

Diagram 2.
**Notification Procedures Where the Alleged Abuser is an AOGNSW Church
Worker/Volunteer/Pastor**

Worker implicated in abuse on the basis of statements made by victims, either directly or indirectly (e.g. by a third party or in the press) to the church, or by observation of others



AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

2. Notification Procedures Where the Alleged Abuser is an AOGNSW Church Worker/Volunteer/Pastor

In outlining the procedures for dealing with allegations of child abuse made against AOGNSW church workers, volunteers or pastors, the principles stated above 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 AOGNSW that the worker/volunteer/Pastor (**designated by the term “worker” in the following table**) should be stood down as soon as possible 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 2 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.

To make a report of child abuse from across NSW for the cost of a local call, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

- General Public: 132 111
- Mandatory Reporters Only: 13 DOCS (dial 13 3627).

An allegation of child abuse is a very serious matter and must be handled with a high degree of sensitivity. What follows is an outline of the process that must take place. This extends what has already been discussed above. In addition to consulting these procedures it is important that the procedures outlined by the Department of Community Services (DOCS) are also consulted. They have an extensive source of support materials that may be accessed through the DOCS website.

D. Forming a Reasonable Suspicion that Abuse or Neglect Has Occurred

It is important to realise that it is not essential to have absolute proof that abuse or neglect has occurred before following the notification procedures outlined in this policy. All that is required is that the worker has formed a reasonable suspicion that abuse or neglect has occurred.

Reasonable grounds to report suspected abuse or neglect may include the following:

- When a child/young person tells a worker they have been abused.
The report procedure must be followed as soon as possible after a child or young person discloses the abuse to the worker. Every disclosure must be taken very

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

seriously indeed.

- When a child/young person informs the worker that the child knows someone who has been abused.

The report procedure should also be followed in this situation and if the child identifies the victim then that information can form part of the report. However, the child could actually be speaking of themselves. 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 someone else who is in a position to know (perhaps a relative, friend, neighbour or sibling of the child/young person) informs worker that a child is suffering abuse.

Any information received from a person who is in a position to provide reliable information should always be taken seriously and the notification procedures outlined in the policy must be followed.

- When the worker makes observations of a particular child/young person's behaviour and/or injuries.

*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 and physical indicators of abuse appears in Appendix F) **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, DOCS and your leader should be contacted for advice.***

E. Forming a Reasonable Suspicion that a Person is a Perpetrator

In addition to the abovementioned grounds for suspecting possible abuse it is important that all workers within the church exercise appropriate vigilance against those who would perpetrate abuse upon children.

With this 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

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, Youth Pastor, Department Head, or to an elder or other senior leader (e.g.,

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

Pastor, Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor, Regional Pastor) within the church. **In this situation there is no need to make a report to DOCS.**

If there is a victim or suspected victim, then the reporting process outlined in this document must apply. That is, **a report must be made as soon as possible to DOCS and to the church leadership.**

a) General Indicators of a Child Sexual Abuser^c

- Majority of an abuser's relationships are with children. (Abusers often do not relate well to people of their own age and come to look for affirmation from children instead of their peers).
- Is overly friendly with children.
- Has low self-esteem, poor self image (possibly due to emotional deprivation as a child).
- 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.
- Can be found wandering around children's church areas etc.
- May remove themselves mid-way through a church service to have time with children who may be in the toilets.
- Gives articles of his/her clothing to a child as gifts, e.g., a cap, a jacket, footy-shirt etc. This can be an attempt to demonstrate ownership of the child.
- Carries photos of children other than his/her own, often indicating that these children love him/her.
- Gives extreme affection to children, e.g., front-on close hugging, always touching or flirting.
- Withdrawn, placid.
- 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.
- Over-emphasis upon morality – are legalistic and inflexible. Could well be a reflection of his/her own bad actions.
- Strong denial of offence or any intention to offend.
- Convincing in protests of innocence – has developed this as a defence mechanism.
- Avoids screening processes, or attempts to do so.
- Attempts to engineer opportunities to be alone with a child, e.g., babysitting (targets

^c The following list of characteristics is adapted from Kids R Us, *Protect the Child*, and Goodwin 2000:

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

single parents), child minders at conferences

- Offers to take or takes child shopping or on an outing. Offers to pick child up from school.
- Dislikes submission to authority, prefers to work alone, and is negative (or dismissive) when sexual abuse topics are raised.
- Spends considerable time with children.
- Voices opinion on sex education, suggesting that children are not taught properly.
- 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 ^d

- Shows improper behaviour towards developing child
- Showers with children at an inappropriate age
- Expects an open door policy in the bathroom
- Attempts to get children on lap, even when child or adolescent resists
- Exhibits inappropriate hugging and/or kissing
- Attempts to shut down communications between child and other parent.
- Children don't want to be home with their father or male member of the family alone. (Note other gender also applies)
- Is jealous of daughter's (or sister's) boyfriend (other gender also applies).
- Child is treated like a spouse in conversation or decisions

F. Responding to a Child Who Discloses Abuse

One way in which a worker may become aware of abuse is through disclosure by the victim. When a child under 16 begins to share with the worker an experience of abuse the following guidelines should be followed.

The worker should:

- Listen carefully to the child.
- Reassure the child that the worker believes the child. It is essential to understand that rarely do children fabricate allegations of abuse and therefore all disclosures of abuse should always be believed.

^d Adapted from Ibid., p. 13

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

- Reassure the child that the abuse is not the child's fault. The child is not responsible for the abuse.
- 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).
- Acknowledge that it is hard to talk about these things.
- 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.^e
- Not make promises that the worker cannot keep (e.g. confidentiality).
- Tell the child that certain adults need to be informed who can protect them so that the abuse can stop.
- As soon as possible after the conversation contact DOCS and submit a report. (See Appendix D: Reporting DOCS)
- Concurrently or as soon as possible after contacting DOCS submit a verbal and then a written report to the Senior Pastor or relevant Department Head. (See Appendix E: Confidential Internal Written Report, p.38)
- Make notes of the conversation held whilst the facts are still fresh in the mind of the worker.

The worker, to whom the child is disclosing the 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.

G. Where the Victim is Now 16 Years of Age or Over

Victims who were abused at under sixteen years of age, but disclose the abuse after they have reached the age of 16 years are no longer the province of DOCS. A notification to DOCS should nevertheless be made as the perpetrator may have ongoing involvement in child-related activities. The notification may assist DOCS in gathering a complete picture of the perpetrator's offending.

A report should also be made directly to the state police department.

In the case of a person 16 years of age or over who has disclosed their own childhood abuse,

^e Child protection Council, 1994, p.8

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

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 16 or over ought not to be made without their consent, the worker who has become aware of the situation may well have cause to believe that other children under the age of 16 could be at continued risk from the alleged perpetrator.

If that is the case, then the procedure above for reporting such suspicions to DOCS and the leadership of the church must be followed as soon as possible.

H. Ongoing Care and Support

- If the alleged abuse has occurred within the realm of the ministry of an AOGNSW church, appropriate actions must be taken so that the alleged perpetrator can no longer be in a position to abuse
- Support and counselling should be offered to the abuse victim and the family
- 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
- The family of the perpetrator should be offered appropriate pastoral care

8. SCREENING OF WORKERS IN CHILD/YOUTH RELATED MINISTRIES

The most effective strategy against abuse within the ministry of the church is prevention. With that in mind AOGNSW requires that the following procedures be adhered to in the screening of prospective workers in child related ministries, or in ministries that deal with young people. Every worker must be screened and approved before being appointed. The Senior Pastor, Children's Pastor, Youth Director or relevant Department Head is to use a form similar to the *Child and Youth Related Ministry Clearance Form* (A sample of this form is found in Appendix E) to record that the clearance checks outlined below have been conducted before any appointment is made.

A. Internal Pastoral Check

All people who desire to work in a child or youth related area must have the recommendation of their pastor or regional pastor. Where a pastor is unable to provide an adequate

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

recommendation a character reference will be required.

They must then attend a formal interview with the Children's Pastor, Youth Director or relevant Department Head. During the interview a departmental application form will be completed in which the prospective worker or staff member will agree to do a police check and attend the AOGNSW Child Protection Training Program.

B. Engagement/Employment of Childcare Workers

All childcare workers employed or in any way engaged by AOGNSW churches in paid or voluntary childcare must fill in the Working With children Check (Appendix B) and the Prohibited Employment Declaration (Appendix C) and go through a screening and referee check process as follows. This process must be carried out under the supervision and to the satisfaction of the Child Protection Officer.

Prohibited Employment

The Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 makes it an offence for a person convicted of a serious sex offence (a prohibited person) or a Registrable Person under the Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000, to apply for, undertake or remain in, child-related employment. It does not apply if an order, from the Industrial Relations Commission or the Administrative Decision's Tribunal, declares that the Act does not apply to a particular person.

Section 5 of the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 defines a serious sex offence as an offence involving sexual activity or acts of indecency that was committed in NSW and that was punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment for 12 months or more even if the sentence was not served, or, an offence involving sexual activity or acts of indecency that was committed elsewhere and that would have been punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment for 12 months or more if it had been committed in NSW.

Child-related employment means any employment where at least one of the essential duties of the position, involves direct contact with children where that contact is not directly supervised. Section 3 of the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 specifies that child-related employment is employment:

- *involving the provision of child protection services*
- *in pre-schools, kindergartens and child care centres (including residential child care centres)*
- *in schools or other educational institutions (not including universities)*
- *in detention centres (within the meaning of the Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987)*
- *in refuges used by children*

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

- *in wards of public or private hospitals in which children are patients*
- *in clubs, associations or movements (including of a cultural, recreational or sporting nature) having a significant child membership*
- *in any religious organisation*
- *in any entertainment venues where the clientele is primarily children*
- *as a babysitter or childminder that is arranged by a commercial agency*
- *involving fostering or other child care*
- *involving regular provision of taxi services for the transport of children with a disability*
- *involving the private tuition of children*
- *involving the direct provision of health services*
- *involving the provision of counselling or other support services for children*
- *on school buses*
- *at overnight camps for children*

Under this Act:

- It is an offence for a prohibited person to **apply for**, or **remain in** child related employment.
- Employers must ask existing employees, both **paid** and **unpaid**, and preferred applicants for employment to declare if they are a prohibited person or not.
- All child-related employees **must** inform their employers if they are a “prohibited person” or remove themselves from child-related employment. A prohibited person is someone who has been convicted of a serious sexual offence or, who has had a finding for a charge of a serious sexual offence proven in court, even if a conviction was not recorded.
- Penalties are imposed for non compliance.

The Child Protection Officer must therefore ensure that all child-related prospective employees must complete the AOGNSW Working with Children Prohibited Employment Declaration.

Database/Authority Clearance

Each AOGNSW churches will maintain its own central database listing all the people in the church. For the sake of security, the governing body of the individual church will designate a Child Protection Officer who will be authorised to add, or change, information in the database. This person will go through the Working with Children Check process and be the approved person to relate to the Commission of Children and Young People on behalf of the church.

Any department head or pastor must check the church database before making any

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

appointment of workers or staff.

It is recommended that beside the name in the database there will be two boxes. The first will be an indication of whether or not the person has submitted a Working with Children Check and a Prohibited Person Form. If they have not had these forms completed, the box will be blank. If the check and the forms have already been carried out the date in the relevant box will indicate the date on which the forms were completed and/or the results of the check became known to the church. **In no circumstances should any worker or staff member in child related ministries be appointed without that box being completed.**

Note the forms for volunteer workers (apart from Pastors) are not at this point of time sent in to the Commission of Children and Young People but are to be kept on file in a secure place).

The second box is adjacent to the words, “**Additional ministry information to be accessed.**” If that box is checked then the Pastor/ Department Head must first contact the Senior Pastor/Eldership/Board before proceeding with any appointment.

The appearance of a tick in the second box may not necessarily indicate a negative result on the working with children check.. There could be a variety of reasons why additional information is advised and if this box is checked under no circumstances should a person be appointed to a ministry position without consultation with the Senior Pastor/Eldership/Board.

It is also recommended that completion dates obtained from the Child and Youth Related Ministry Clearance Form (Appendix C, page 23) be transferred into the data base for future reference.

No confidential information or personal history records will appear in the partners' database.

C. Working with Children Check

All paid staff members of a church are required to submit to a Working with Children Check and complete a Prohibited Person Form before appointment, regardless of whether or not their ministry directly involves children. The same applies for all pastors, whether or not they are paid.

All volunteer workers whose ministry causes them to relate to children and youth in any way are required to submit to a police check before being appointed.

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

D. Underage and Occasional Workers

AOGNSW recognises the need in churches to use underage and occasional workers in their children's and youth programs. Therefore in these cases, and subject to the Senior Pastor/Department Head's discretion, it is possible to have volunteers who have not had a Working with Children Check and completed a Prohibited Person Form on roster provided they are supervised by a worker who has been and have, completed all AOGNSW Child Protection Training and departmental training.

An occasional worker is defined as a person who is not on a regular roster but is called upon to assist only where unforeseen circumstances have arisen.

It is recommended that underage workers only attend Module 1 of the AOGNSW Child Protection Training. Module 2 of the AOGNSW Child Protection Training program is not recommended as it contains material suitable only for a mature audience. The underage worker should complete the appropriate Departmental Training and should always be supervised by a fully trained and checked senior worker.

9. STAFF/WORKER INDUCTION & TRAINING

As part of its commitment to the minimisation of the risk of abuse within its churches AOGNSW requires all staff -- workers, volunteers and pastors -- to attend the AOGNSW approved Child Protection Training Program.

The AOGNSW Child Protection Training Program for church workers has been developed in conjunction with _____ (a full outline of the training is in **Appendix G**).

AOGNSW Child Protection Training Program consists of 2 modules:

Module 1 - Child Protection Orientation Training, which will provide a basic understanding of child abuse and reporting from a Christian perspective and develop skills in the following areas:

- Be aware of the underlying principles of church child protection policies
- Be aware of the fundamental biblical teaching of human dignity and the care of children
- Be able to appropriately respond to the issue of child abuse in a church setting
- Be aware of the importance and legal responsibilities in confidentiality
- Be aware of and able to use church protocols
- Be able to develop skills that foster a prevention model in child protection

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

Module 2 - Child Abuse Notification Training, will include the current Government approved training module for mandated notifiers.

- Be aware of how their own values, attitudes and experiences will impact on their understanding of child abuse and neglect and their responses to children and young people who may have been abused and neglected
- Be aware of the importance of maintaining a child/young person focus and perspective when considering the possibility of child abuse and neglect
- Be aware of and understand their legal responsibility to report suspected child abuse and neglect
- Be able to recognise suspected child abuse and neglect

Other ministry specific departmental training will also be required by individual departments following the completion of AOGNSW Child Protection Training eg children's church training.

Once the prospective worker has successfully completed the induction process (as outlined in Appendix C) the department head may appoint them for a probationary period, or according to individual church policy.

All staff members and workers in child and youth related ministry are expected to attend an annual Child Protection accountability day where any developments in Child Protection Policy will be canvassed (this procedure may be done internally or by the approved AOGSA training provider). Churches will be notified annually by the AOGNSW approved training provider of any changes and developments in Child Protection Policy.

A. Departmental manuals

All departments dealing with people under 16 years of age will develop a departmental manual to be used in the induction and training of staff and workers.

The AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and procedures will be an important part of that manual.

In addition specific instructions regarding the safe conduct of the ministry will be included in those manuals.

Departmental instructions must cover possible abuse risk areas relevant to the Department's ministry.

For example the Children's Ministry Manual must cover areas such as:

- Screening of workers (specific instructions)

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

- 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

If required the appropriate resources may be obtained from Paradise Community Services (AOGNSW approved training provider).

10. DEALING WITH PEOPLE WITH HISTORIES AS CHILD SEXUAL ABUSERS

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 AOGNSW'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 AOGNSW 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 AOGNSW that all people who attend the church will come to healing and that includes past abusers. Nevertheless, the AOGNSW churches will do everything in their power to protect the children of the church during and after this process.

The AOGNSW 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 AOGNSW requires all people with child sexual abuse histories as perpetrators, who wish to attend an AOG Church or AOG Church related activities, to sign a contract with the AOG

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

church and keep to its conditions (See Appendix H).

That contract must cover the following:

- I. 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 church Database in line with this policy.
- II. 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.
- III. 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 AOGNSW 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 has been greeting her warmly at the church door for three years and she has no idea of his history?
- IV. The offender must agree to not become involved in any church activity (other than Sunday Services), church small group, or church sporting event where children participate.
- V. 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.
- VI. The offender must agree to never become involved in counselling ministry.
- VII. 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.
- VIII. The offender must agree to regular meetings with a designated church leader for accountability and pastoral care purposes.
- IX. The offender must contact that leader or the Senior Pastor, or if both are not available, another pastor, the moment that he or she is having difficulty with his/her history or

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

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.

- X. 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.
- XI. The offender must agree never to approach, initiate conversation with, or continue conversation with a child on church property or at any church function.
- XII. 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.
- XIII. 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 appraise the family of the possible risk factors from the point of view of the church's duty of care.
- XIV. Similarly, the offender must agree not to visit any church family with children in their home – whether or not others are present.

11. EVALUATION AND CONCLUDING STATEMENT

In adopting this policy the concern of AOGNSW and its churches is primarily for the protection of the children who are such an important part of the church's ministry. With this in mind this policy will be reviewed on an annual basis canvassing the opinions and concerns of the AOGNSW Executive, AOGNSW churches, pastors, workers and training providers, as well as independent advice from DOCS and the appropriate professionals in the Child Protection field.

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

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!

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT^f

There are different forms of child abuse. These include neglect, sexual, physical and emotional abuse.

Neglect

Child neglect is the continued failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child with the basic things needed for his or her proper growth and development, such as food, clothing, shelter, medical and dental care and adequate supervision.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is when someone involves a child or young person in a sexual activity by using their power over them or taking advantage of their trust.

Often children are bribed or threatened physically and psychologically to make them participate in the activity.

Child sexual abuse is a crime.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is a non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child caused by a parent, caregiver or any other person.

It includes but is not limited to injuries which are caused by excessive discipline, severe beatings or shakings, cigarette burns, attempted strangulation and female genital mutilation.

Injuries include bruising, lacerations or welts, burns, fractures or dislocation of joints.

Hitting a child around the head or neck and/or using a stick, belt or other object to discipline or punishing a child (in a non-trivial way) is a crime.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is behaviour by a parent or caregiver which destroys a child's confidence resulting in significant emotional disturbance or trauma. This can include a range of behaviours such as excessive criticism, withholding affection, exposure to domestic violence, intimidation or threatening behaviour.

^f Source http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/html/child_protect/abuse.htm

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

APPENDIX B: WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

(Attachment 3, Working with Children Check)

First Name:
Middle Name:
Surname:
Previous Names / Aliases:
Gender: (Please tick)
 Male Female

Date of Birth. Place of Birth (city, state, country):
Address
Are you to be employed in a paid or voluntary capacity?

I certify that the above information is accurate and understand that if I have provided false or misleading information it may result in a decision not to employ me, or, if already employed, may lead to my dismissal.

I am aware that if considered for employment in a child-related position, several screening processes will be undertaken to ascertain my suitability, including:

- a national criminal record check for offences involving sexual activity, acts of indecency (whether involving child or adult), child abuse or child pornography.
- a check for relevant apprehended violence orders taken out by a police officer or other public official for the protection of a child/ren.
- checks for completed relevant disciplinary proceedings involving child abuse, sexual misconduct or acts of violence in the workplace which involve children, are directed at children or take place in the presence of children.

I understand that convictions, or charges that are proven in court but that do not proceed to a conviction, relating to sexual activity, acts of indecency, child abuse or child pornography will automatically prohibit my employment in a child related position. I am aware that if I am a "registrable person" under the *Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000*, I am prohibited from employment in a child-related position.

I consent to these checks being conducted and am aware that if any relevant record is identified, additional information relating to that record may be sought by an approved screening agency from sources such as courts, police, prosecutors and past employers to enable a full and informed assessment. I understand that if additional information is not

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

obtained, an approved screening agency may provide an assessment about me to an employer that is not based on all relevant available information.

I acknowledge that any information obtained as part of this process may be used by Australian Police Services for law enforcement purposes, including the investigation of any outstanding criminal offences.

I acknowledge that the outcome of assessment of information obtained through the Working With Children Check may be provided to my current or prospective employers for employment screening purposes.

Name (Block letters): _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Commission for Children and Young People Tel: 02 9286 7220 Fax: 02 9286 7201

www.kids.nsw.gov.au/check

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

Appendix C: PROHIBITED EMPLOYMENT DECLARATION

Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998

The Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 makes it an offence for a person convicted of a serious sex offence (a prohibited person), or a registrable person under the Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000, to apply for, undertake or remain in, child-related employment. It does not apply if an order from the Industrial Relations Commission or the Administrative Decisions Tribunal, declares that the

Act does not apply to a particular person.

Section 5 of the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 defines a serious sex offence as an offence involving sexual activity or acts of indecency that was committed in NSW and that was punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment for 12 months or more, even if the sentence was not served, or, an offence involving sexual activity or acts of indecency that was committed elsewhere and that would have been punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment for 12 months or more if it had been committed in NSW.

Child-related employment means any employment, where at least one of the essential duties of the position, involves direct contact with children where that contact is not directly supervised. Section 3 of the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 specifies that child-related employment is employment:

- involving the provision of child protection services
- in pre-schools, kindergartens and child care centres (including residential child care centres)
- in schools or other educational institutions (not including universities)
- in detention centres (within the meaning of the Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987)
- in refuges used by children
- in wards of public or private hospitals in which children are patients
- in clubs, associations or movements (including of a cultural, recreational or sporting nature) having a significant child membership
- in any religious organisation
- in any entertainment venues where the clientele is primarily children
- as a babysitter or childminder that is arranged by a commercial agency
- involving fostering or other child care
- involving regular provision of taxi services for the transport of children with a disability
- involving the private tuition of children
- involving the direct provision of health services
- involving the provision of counselling or other support services for children
- on school buses
- at overnight camps for children.

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

Under this Act:

- it is an offence for a prohibited person to apply for, **undertake** or **remain** in child-related employment
- employers must ask existing employees, both **paid** and **unpaid**, and preferred applicants for employment to declare whether they are a prohibited person or not
- all child-related employees **must** inform their employers if they are a 'prohibited person' or remove themselves from child-related employment. A prohibited person is someone who has been convicted of a serious sexual offence or, who has had a finding for a charge of a serious sexual offence proven in court, even if a conviction was not recorded.
- penalties are imposed for non compliance.

I am aware that I am ineligible to apply for, undertake or remain in, child-related employment if I have been convicted of a 'serious sex offence' as defined in the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 or if I am a 'registrable person' under the Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000.

I have read and understood the above information in relation to the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 and understand my responsibilities and obligations under this Act.

I declare that I am not a person prohibited by the Act from seeking, undertaking, or remaining in child related employment.

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Note: Seek legal advice if you are unsure of your status as a prohibited person.

Commission for Children and Young People Tel: 02 9286 7220 Fax: 02 9286 7201

www.kids.nsw.gov.au/check

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

APPENDIX D: MANDATORY REPORTING

A mandatory reporter is any person who delivers health care, welfare, education, children's services, residential services, after school hours care, disability services, or law enforcement services to children in the course of their paid or professional work.

A person who holds a management position, either paid or voluntary, in any of these services and the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of these services, is also a mandatory reporter.

Our advice from DoCS is that those who supply services that a church normally provides, such as children's services and children's camps would be considered mandatory reporters.

If you answer YES to the following questions, under NSW legislation, you are a mandatory reporter.

As part of your paid or professional work, do you deliver the following services to children OR do you manage any of the following services to children?

- Children's services
- Education
- Law enforcement
- Residential services
- Community services/welfare
- Health care
- Disability services
- Out-of-school hours care

Information on mandatory reporting is outlined in the Children and Young Person's (Care and Protection) Act 1998 and is available at www.austlii.edu.au/

When must I make a report?

You must make a report to DoCS when you have current concerns about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of a child for any of the following reasons:

- the basic physical or psychological needs of the child or young person are not being met (neglect)
- the parents or caregivers have not arranged necessary medical care (unwilling or unable to do so)
- risk of physical or sexual abuse or ill-treatment (physical or sexual abuse)
- parent or caregiver's behaviour towards the child causes or risks psychological harm (emotional abuse)

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

- incidents of domestic violence and as a consequence a child is at risk of serious physical or psychological harm (domestic or family violence).

The mandatory reporting obligation does not arise in relation to young people (aged 16 and 17). You can still make a report about a young person who you believe is at risk of harm, however the young person should be involved in the decision to report, unless there are good reasons for excluding them. If a young person is against a report being made, you can still make a report but must tell DOCS about the young person's wishes. DoCS must consider these wishes when deciding how to respond to the report.

To make a report you need to call the DOCS Helpline 13 3627 (or 13 DOCS for easy memory).

Helpful information for DoCS includes:

- full name, date of birth (or approximate age), address and phone number of the child/ren you are concerned about
- full name (including any known aliases), approximate age, address and phone number of the parents or carers
- a description of the child and their current whereabouts
- why you suspect the child is at risk of harm (what you have seen, heard or been told)
- whether a language or sign interpreter may be required, whether support is required for a person with a disability or an Aboriginal agency is involved
- your name and contact details (only for mandatory reporters).

Sometimes you may not have all of this information. As a minimum, DoCS needs to be able to identify and locate the child. Information that assists this, such as the child's school or child care centre, is also helpful.

As a mandatory reporter, what happens when I make a report?

Your report to DoCS will remain confidential. This means that your name and contact details will not be disclosed to anyone without your consent. No agency may disclose to a parent, alleged perpetrator, employer or other person the identity of a person who makes a report to DoCS.

When DOCS receives your report, we are required by law to make an assessment and determination as to whether the child is actually at risk of harm. The information you provide within a report will inform what further action is needed. Other considerations include the child or family history held by DOCS.

We assess all reports to determine the most appropriate action to ensure the safety, welfare

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

and wellbeing of the child. This might involve talking to the child, their family or other important people in the child's life (such as relatives, teachers or child carers), or talking to people who work with the child or their family (such as counsellors, health professionals or family support workers).

Not all reports will lead to further assessment or investigation. This may be because there is insufficient information or reason to believe that the child or young person is at risk of harm.

As a reporter, you will be informed about the type of action that will be taken, based on your report.

Feedback on your report

In most cases, feedback is provided to reporters about actions taken as a consequence of their report. When you make a report, DOCS Helpline will inform you about the initial action that will be taken.

Mandatory reporters will also be advised in writing about this initial action plan, and if relevant, provided with details of the identified DOCS Community Services Centre looking after the case.

Staff from DOCS may wish to contact you again, to help in the assessment of the safety, welfare and wellbeing of the child or young person.

The level of detail and information provided to reporters will depend on the circumstances of the case.

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

**APPENDIX E: CHILD AND YOUTH RELATED MINISTRY CLEARANCE FORM – SAMPLE
FORM ONLY**

This form is to be completed by the Children's Pastor, Youth Director or relevant Department Head and no person can be involved in any child related ministries until clearance has been gained for all sections below.

Name of recommended worker _____

Area of child related ministry _____

Pastoral Clearance

Pastor's approval gained: yes no date _____
(Character reference if required – please attach)

Comments: _____

Leaders initial _____

Data Base/Authority Clearance

Authority clearance checked on database: yes no date _____

Comments: _____

Leaders initial _____

Working with Children Check and Prohibited Person Declaration

checked on database: yes no date _____

Comments: _____

Leaders initial _____

AOGNSW Child Protection Training Requirements

Have training requirements been met: yes no date _____

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

AOGNSW Child Protection Orientation Training: date _____ int _____

AOGNSW Child Abuse Notification Training: date _____ int _____

Department Manual and Induction Training: date _____ int _____

Name of Leader _____ Signature _____

Name of Worker _____ Signature _____

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

APPENDIX F: REPORTING DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

In the process of reporting DOCS with respect to child abuse or suspected child abuse:

- You do not have to be able to prove that the abuse has occurred
- You may request a consultation with a departmental worker before formally reporting abuse or neglect
- Your identity as a notifier will remain confidential in accordance with Section 13 of the Child Protection Act
- You are immune from civil liability for reporting your suspicion in good faith (Section 12 (b) Child Protection Act).
- You are not breaching any code of professional etiquette or ethics, nor are you departing from any accepted form of professional conduct when you report in good faith.
- You are entitled to feedback about the way that your notification is being dealt with by DOCS.
- Any ongoing feedback will need to be negotiated between yourself and the departmental worker involved.

Under section 13 of the Child Protection Act, 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 attenders 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 DoCS no matter what the source of the information.

To make a notification contact the 24 hour Child Abuse Report Line 13 1478 and follow their instructions.⁹

⁹ This page is based on information in the leaflet *Reporting Child Abuse*, South Australian Child Protection Council, 1994

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

APPENDIX G: CONFIDENTIAL INTERNAL WRITTEN REPORT – SAMPLE FORM ONLY

In accordance with this church's policy, all incidences of child abuse or suspected child abuse (including those involving staff/workers/volunteers/pastors associated with the church) are to be reported to DoCS and reported to the Department Head who will as soon as possible pass the information to the Eldership sub-committee. This form to be filled out by the one making the report to the Department Head, preferably in the presence of the Department Head, will facilitate that process.

In no way, nor under any circumstances, is anyone in the church to attempt to persuade someone not to report, or even to delay reporting, DoCS in the case of child abuse or suspected child abuse.

If the person making the report is nervous about reporting to DoCS the Department Head can assist, or even make a joint notification.

Date: _____

Has DoCS been notified? _____ Date of notification: _____

Child's name (s) _____

Name of person making report: _____

Name of person suspected: _____

Please record what has been observed or what information has been received by whom, when, where and who else may have been affected.

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

How did the person making the report become aware of this situation?

Name of Department Head _____ Signature: _____

Date referred to Senior Pastor/Eldership/Board _____

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

APPENDIX H: BEHAVIOURAL AND PHYSICAL INDICATORS OF ABUSE

The following lists include common behavioural and physical indicators of abuse. It should be noted that in most instances the appearance of one or more of these indicators do not necessarily indicate that abuse is taking place and that caution should be exercised in drawing conclusions based on only a few indicators.

1. Sexual Abuse

Some behavioural indicators associated with sexual abuse include:^h

The sexually abused younger child may:

- 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
- Have a detailed understanding of sexual behaviour beyond what would be expected at their age
- Display regressive behaviour (bedwetting, speech loss, infantile or immature behaviour)
- Suffer sleep disturbance and night terrors
- Inhibition to play
- Serious difficulty relating to peers and/or adults
- Constant complaints of headaches or abdominal pains
- Sudden appearance of material goods (given as gifts)
- Sexually inappropriate language
- Outside interests may wane
- Onset of fears and phobias
- 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:

- Exhibit delinquent or aggressive behaviour
- Show signs of depression
- Display injurious behaviour such as:
 - Drug and alcohol abuse
 - Self mutilation
 - Attempts at suicide
 - Prostitution

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

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

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 STDs.ⁱ

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

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

2. Physical Abuse

Some behavioural indicators associated with physical abuse include:

- Unduly wary of physical contact with others
- Unduly frightened by a parent or caregiver
- Express little or no emotion when hurt
- Unduly compliant, shy, withdrawn, passive and uncommunicative
- Offer unlikely explanation of injuries
- Unusually nervous or hyperactive, aggressive, disruptive and destructive (both to self and others)

3. Emotional Abuse

Some behavioural indicators associated with emotional abuse include:

- Withdrawal or pleaser
- Unduly compliant, passive and undemanding
- Have a low self esteem
- Extremely demanding, aggressive and angry
- Antisocial and destructive
- Depressed and suicidal
- Attention seeking

4. Neglect

Some behavioural/physical indicators associated with neglect include:

- Dirty
- Constantly sick/tired
- Indiscriminate use of affection
- Constantly miserable and irritable
- Alienated from peers, withdrawn, pale listless, beg or steal food
- Engage in delinquent acts, vandalism, and drug and alcohol abuse
- Poor social skills
- Skin problems
- Careless dress
- Sadness/grief

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

APPENDIX I: AOGNSW CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING STRATEGY

AOGNSW Child Protection Training Strategy Aims:

- Decrease the risk of children becoming vulnerable to exploitation and victimisation.
- Encourage the provision of a secure and safe environment for children where the best interest of the child is paramount.
- Provide a pathway of training that equips church staff and volunteers with the knowledge and skills to ensure principles of care, protection and safety are implemented.
- Actively work towards the development of training, policies and guidelines that embraces child protection principles.
- Provide a standard of care that encompasses industry and community standards; legislation; and community expectations.
- Implement in 2004 a Child Protection Training Program which invites participation by Assemblies of God Churches in NSW (but not limited to).
- Consult with, network and cooperate with Government Departments and human service agencies in the provision of training.

Training Providers To be confirmed

Training Structure To be confirmed

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

MODULE 1: CHILD PROTECTION ORIENTATION TRAINING(2.5HOURS)

Introduction	This session aims to provide participants with an overview of the training program and understanding of why this training program has been developed. (It will also include the setting of group norms and establishing of a safe place atmosphere).
Child Abuse – A Christian Perspective	This session aims to provide participants with an understanding of positive and responsible caring attitudes towards child abuse using underlying Christian principles.
AOGNSW Church Policy & Procedures	This session aims to provide participants with an overview of the AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

MODULE 2:CHILD ABUSE NOTIFICATION TRAINING(7 HOURS)

	To be confirmed

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

APPENDIX J: CONTRACT BETWEEN CHURCH AND PERSON WITH A HISTORY AS A SEXUAL ABUSER

Sample Form Only

1. I declare that I am willing to have my name and such details as the Senior Pastor/Eldership/Board see fit, communicated to all Pastors, Elders and key leaders in all children's, youth, and sporting ministries in the church, and to any other leader that the Senior Pastor/Eldership/Board might nominate. I also agree to have my name recorded on the Church Database in accordance with the Child Protection Policy of this church.
2. I agree NEVER to 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. I also agree NOT to become involved in any church activity or small group without the prior permission of the Senior Pastor or his/her nominee.
4. I also agree NOT to become involved in any church activity (other than Sunday services), church small group, or church sporting event where children participate.
5. I also agree NEVER to attend any church hikes, trips, church camps, overnight stays or conferences where children are present. If children arrive unexpectedly, then I agree to make immediate arrangements for my departure without fuss and at my own cost.
6. I also agree NEVER to become involved in the counselling ministry or to be involved in counselling others in any way.
7. I also agree NEVER to have contact at church or at home or at any other place with other people known to have a history of child sexual abuse.
8. I also agree to regular meetings with a designated church leader for accountability and pastoral care purposes.
9. I also agree to contact the Senior Pastor or that leader, or if both are not available, another pastor, **the moment** I experience difficulty or temptation in this area of sexual interest in children. I also agree to open and frank acknowledgment of such difficulties so that professional referral and checks can be made.
10. I also agree to commit myself to obey the direction of pastoral staff or the Eldership in all matters dealing with my personal conduct at church, or at church functions, whether or not children are present.
11. I also agree NEVER to approach, initiate conversation with, or continue conversation with a child on church property or at a church function.
12. I also agree NEVER to accept invitations to, or offer to, baby-sit, hold or care for a child or a baby, **even for a moment**, and even if others are in the room.
13. I also agree NEVER to allow any family from the church with children to visit me in my home. If they insist, then BEFORE the visit I agree to contact the Senior Pastor or their nominee, who will appraise the family of the possible risk factors from the point of view of the church's duty of care.
14. I also agree NEVER to visit any church family with children in their home – whether or not others are present.
15. I understand that failure to comply with the above mentioned requirements will forfeit my right to attend Name of church or any of its activities.

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

FULL NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

WITNESS (1) FULL NAME: _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE: _____

WITNESS (2) FULL NAME: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

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REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

The policy has been adapted from the Assemblies of God South Australia Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2004. Used with permission.

The following resources were also used:

Family and Youth Services, *Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect – Mandated Notification Guidelines*, Human Services, Government of SA, 2003

Kids R Us Australia, *Protect the Child (undated)*

South Australian Child Protection Council, *Reporting Child Abuse*, Department for Family and Community Services, 1995

Goodwin David 2000 Child Abuse in the Church. Kidsreach, Windsor.

Layton, Robyn A (2003) Our Best Investment: A State Plan To Protect and Advance the Interests of Children.

Tabor College NSW website. <http://www.tabornsw.edu.au/>

Contains comprehensive safety and protection protocols

RECOMMENDED WEBSITE ADDRESSES FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Recommended booklets can be downloaded: *Do you work with children or young people? Are you a mandatory reporter? And Spot it, help stop it.* Both available from www.community.nsw.gov.au.

Mandatory reporter booklet

http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/documents/mandatory_book.pdf

Making a report: checklist

http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/documents/mandatory_check.pdf

Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998

http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/caypapa1998442/

Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998

http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/cpea1998401/

Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998

AOGNSW Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2005

http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/cfcaypa1998397/