

Vol ID: 4Doc ID: 4.aPage: 1 of 3

SAFE PROCEDURE MANUAL

Protecting & Supporting Children and Young People

Responding to a child / young person who discloses abuse P-201

1. Policy Statement

Hillsong Church is strongly committed to the protection and wellbeing of all children and young people from all forms of abuse and neglect. Hillsong Church ensures that any allegations or disclosures of abuse are handled promptly and with care.

This policy applies when:

- a child (0 to under 16 years old) or young person (16 to 17 years old) may be at risk of harm, or may have been assaulted.
- someone else who tells you that a child or young person is at risk of harm or has been assaulted.

This disclosure could occur for example in the children's ministry, youth ministry, SAFE presentation, connect group.

It is the responsibility of staff and volunteers to:

1. be familiar with Hillsong Church's Child Protection Policy;
2. know the generally accepted indicators of abuse;
3. know the expectations of the NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS) in reporting alleged or expected abuse.

2. Relevant to

All pastors, staff, students and volunteers.

3. Procedure

It is the responsibility of all pastors, staff and volunteers to:

3.1 Listen to the person and take it seriously

- Regardless of your own opinions about the likely accuracy of the information or seriousness of the situation, take it seriously and let the person see that you are taking it seriously.
- Listen carefully.
- Reassure the child/young person that they have done the best thing in informing you.

3.2 Don't probe or investigate

Avoid asking too many questions. Listen to the person's story and take notes. It's not your role to investigate the complaint. (Legal cases can be weakened due to inappropriate questioning). Do not investigate the matter yourself.

3.3 Report internally and / or externally

- Where an allegation of abuse has been made to a pastor / staff member / volunteer / student, or they has reason to suspect that a young person has been abused, and/or is in immediate danger, the staff member must contact their Supervisor / Department Head immediately.
- Fill out the Allegation of Child Abuse Notification form (F-003) form to the best of your ability.



SAFE PROCEDURE MANUAL

Protecting & Supporting Children and Young People

3.4 Support the person

- Help the person to feel safe and comfortable.
- Explain what will happen next (see 3.6).
- Ensure that the church and/or other agencies offer to address the welfare and legal needs of the person.

3.5 Recent sexual assault

If a sexual assault may have occurred less than 72 hours ago, advise the person not to shower or wash themselves or change clothes as a medical examination may be required. Make notes of what they tell you and of any visible injuries, and record the date and time.

Immediately contact your supervisor (by phone or in person) and discuss with DoCS / Police and your nearest hospital or sexual assault service.

Children's Hospital (Westmead) – 9845 2400

Royal North Shore Hospital
Building 30, Block 1A
Pacific Highway, St Leonards 2065
Ph: (02) 9926 7580
Ph: (02) 9926 7111 (24 hrs)
Fax: (02) 9906 5495

Liverpool Hospital
Level 3, Health Services Building
Campbell & Goulburn Streets
Liverpool 2170
Ph: (02) 9828 4844
Ph: (02) 9828 3000 (24 hrs)
Fax: (02) 9828 4800

Westmead Hospital
Hawkesbury Road
(PO Box 533)
Westmead 2145
Ph: (02) 9845 7940
Ph: (02) 9845 5555 (24 hrs)
Fax: (02) 9845 8328

Rosemeadow Sexual Assault Service
5 Thomas Rose Drive
Rosemeadow 2560
Tel: (02) 4633 4100
Tel: (02) 9828 3000 (24 hrs)
Fax: (02) 4633 4111

Blacktown/Mt Druitt Sexual Assault
Service
Blacktown Community Health Centre
Unit 1, Marcel Crescent
Blacktown 2148
Ph: (02) 9881 8700
Ph: (02) 9845 5555 (24 hrs)
Fax: (02) 9671 6360

Royal Prince Alfred Hospital
Missenden Road, Camperdown 2050
Ph: (02) 9515 9040
Ph: (02) 9515 6111 (24 hrs)
Fax: (02) 9515 9041

Bankstown Community Health Centre
36 - 38 Raymond Street
Bankstown 2200
Ph: (02) 9780 2777
Ph: (02) 9828 3000 (after hours)
Fax: (02) 9780 2899

NSW Rape Crisis Centre 9819 6565,
1800 424 017
St George Hospital
Social Work Department
Gray Street, Kogarah 2217
Ph: (02) 9350 2494
Ph: (02) 9350 2495
Ph: (02) 9350 1111 (24 hrs)
Fax: 9350 2206

Vol ID: 4SAFE PROCEDURE MANUAL Doc ID: 4.aProtecting & Supporting Children and Young People Page 3 of 3

3.6 Privacy and communication

Explain to the person as soon as possible, preferably before they disclose to you, that the law requires paid staff to report to DoCS if a child under 16 (them or someone else) is at risk of harm.

Let the person know exactly who will be told about the matter:

- you will tell your Supervisor (or Department Head), and Senior Representative within the church
- you will tell DoCS and/or police if appropriate
- DoCS will contact the person's family.

Under no circumstances try to contact the alleged perpetrator. This could endanger the person and complicate police investigations. If the alleged perpetrator comes to, or is at the church / agency, ask them to leave immediately.

Do not contact a non-offending parent or a supportive family member. (Leave this to DoCS).

Do not disclose to any person (including team members who don't need to know), the name of (or identifying information about):

- the child or young person
- the alleged perpetrator
- the person who reported the case to the agency.

4. Documentation relevant to this procedure

Notification of Incident Form F-001
Allegation of Child Abuse Notification Form F-003

5. Revision record

Date Issued	Description of Change
November 2005	Issue 1 – Draft
March 2006	Issue 1 - Approved