



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 ensures that all information relevant to child protection is:

- reported to the Department Head, regardless of its apparent importance to the staff member who first becomes aware of it.
- assessed by the Department Head or another skilled staff member.

This policy applies to all information relevant to child protection, including:

- disclosures, incidents, allegations, complaints and other information which relate to child protection or a child's, young person's or adult's safety, welfare or wellbeing.
- information about incidents which may have already occurred and information which suggests the possibility of a future incident.
- in some cases, information relating to an adult victim (which may indicate a possible risk to others including children).

2. Relevant to:

All pastors, staff, volunteers and students.

3. Procedure

Awareness of Abuse / Possible Abuse

- 3.1 When a staff member / volunteer is informed of an allegation of child abuse there is reason to suspect that a child / young person has been abused, and/or is in immediate danger, the staff member must contact the Department Head or their nominated reporter immediately.
- 3.2 You may get this information, for example:
- when a child or young person tells you something
 - when an employee, volunteer or student tells you something
 - when someone else tells you something
 - when you observe something.
- 3.3 An *Allegation of Child Abuse Notification* form (F-003) must be completed by the staff member within 24 hours of receiving the disclosure. Get as much information as possible on the form, most importantly name, age and whereabouts of the child / young person.
- 3.4 This is to be given to the Department Head or nominated reporter as soon as possible, and then kept within confidential departmental records.
- 3.5 If you are still unable to report this to a paid staff member, you are able to make a report to DoCS (13 2111) or let them know your concern about what has happened.



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Assessment

3.6 The Department Head or nominated mandatory reporter will then assess the risk of harm. A report to DoCS is made when there are current concerns about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of a child for any of the following reasons:

- neglect
- the parents or caregivers have not arranged necessary medical care (unwilling or unable to do so)
- risk of physical or sexual abuse
- parent or caregiver's behaviour towards the child causes or risks psychological harm (emotional abuse)
- incidents of domestic violence and as a consequence a child is at risk of serious physical or psychological harm (domestic or family violence).

A report can also be made for

- Group of children or young people
- An unborn child, where the child may be at risk after his or her birth
- Homeless children and young people

3.7 Please refer to 'Report DoCS Checklist' (F-002).

Young People 16-17 years

3.10 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.

3.8 The Department Head will inform the General Manager or Executive Pastor (City or Hills) that a allegation of child abuse has been made to a staff member, and if a report is to be made to DoCS.

3.9 The General Manager will make relevant contact with the Senior Pastor regarding the matter / report.

Reporting to DoCS

3.11 If there are reasonable grounds to make a report, the Department Head or nominated reporter will use the 'Report DoCS Checklist' (F-002) and 'Allegation of Abuse Notification' form (F-003) and contact DoCS.

Mandatory Reports (Children 0- under 16 years) – 13 3627

General Report (young people 16 – 17 years) – 13 2111



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As a minimum, DoCS needs to be able to identify and locate the child. Vol ID: 9
 Information that assists this, such as the child's school or child care centre, is
 also helpful. Doc ID: 4.14

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- 3.12 It is essential that no staff member discuss details of the allegation with the alleged perpetrator as this may prejudice possible legal proceedings.
- 3.13 It is the role of staff to be an advocate and primary support for the young person during the investigation.
- 3.14 The Department Head has the responsibility to ensure that all staff members involved in issues of child protection receives a debriefing and ongoing support and education. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

4. Documentation relevant to this procedure

Report DoCS Checklist F-002
 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