

NORTHSIDE CHRISTIAN CENTRE INC.
CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES POLICY STATEMENT
RELATING TO THE STATEMENT ON THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN
FROM SEXUAL ABUSE - NATIONAL EXECUTIVE PRESBYTERY (JUNE 1994)

Revised - 29/4/97

This policy statement is a result of a discussion paper (*please see Addendum 1*) by the Assemblies of God in Australia National Executive Presbytery and is the Children's Ministries Policy for Northside Christian Centre Inc.

The Scripture gives us the responsibility to minister to children and ensure their safety and care at all times. It is vital that we adopt a policy that will help us protect our children against abuse. We recommend that the following matters be adhered to at all times within all Children's Ministries as defined in the documents of Northside Christian Centre Inc. under the covering of Northside Christian Centre Inc.

1. In response to our biblical responsibility as expressed in our Mission Statement we will endeavour to provide a quality ministry to all our children.
2. Children's Workers are responsible for the safety and welfare of the children while under their care. We will do all in our power to protect the children in our care from abuse or molestation. Proper care should also include suitably trained workers with regard to first aid.
3. All Children's Workers must have character/professional references from people within Northside Christian Centre Inc. testifying to their trustworthiness to work with children.
4. Children's Workers must complete an application (*please see Addendum 2*) form that identifies prior experience with children's work and why they want to work with children. These forms and references must be submitted to the Senior Minister of Northside Christian Centre Inc. for his approval and he will then present them to the church Board of Directors for ratification.
5. All Children's Workers must have the endorsement of the Senior Minister and eldership of Northside Christian Centre Inc. before being appointed or used in any aspect of the Children's Ministries of Northside Christian Centre Inc.
6. Any problems, difficulties or suspicions concerning a Children's Worker's relationship and behaviour with any child must be brought to the immediate attention of the Senior Minister of Northside Christian Centre Inc., or his delegate, whichever is deemed to be most practicable.
7. There will be no unauthorised activities with the children involved in the Children's Ministries of Northside Christian Centre Inc. Children's Workers should not arrange activities with the children or any child off the church property except when there are at least two workers present. These two workers should not be related to each other and not of the same household. The departmental leader must be notified and his or her approval obtained before any activity can be arranged. Parents must be notified in advance and in writing of the arrangements and of the names of the Children's Workers who will care for their children.
8. Children's Workers should not visit children alone at their home or any other place. The Children's Workers should ensure that their time with children is in public view. There will be no secretive or unauthorised clubs or meetings.

9. Children's Workers should be careful of their conduct with children in their care at all times. Behaviour that may be wrongly perceived should be eliminated. Children's Workers should not show excessive affection for children in their care, they should not physically touch them frequently nor should they ever express inappropriate feelings towards any child or children.
10. Parents should be permitted to visit any activity and should be encouraged to participate in activities with children if they are readily known by the Children's Workers. If they are not well known or familiar to the Children's Workers, approval for visiting or participating in children's activities should be sought from the leaders of the Children's Ministries of Northside Christian Centre Inc. Elders, leaders and pastors are also encouraged to attend activities.
11. Children's Workers should ensure that children in their care who wish to use toilets at the church or during any activity away from the church are adequately supervised by adult leaders or parents.
12. All Children's Workers will wear name tags clearly displaying "Northside Christian Centre" and their name. Persons without official name tags will not be permitted to minister in the Children's Ministries of Northside Christian Centre Inc.
13. The Senior Minister of Northside Christian Centre Inc. must be contacted immediately in the event where sexual abuse by a Children's Worker is suspected. The matter must be kept confidential to protect the child and his or her family. The Senior Minister of Northside Christian Centre Inc. will advise the victim's parents of any suspected abuse as soon as is reasonably practicable. The Senior Minister of Northside Christian Centre Inc. and the elders will handle the reporting of any alleged act to the appropriate authorities; however this decision does not override any right or responsibility a parent feels he or she may have in reporting such matters.
14. Any Children's Worker who is suspected of child abuse in any form shall be relieved of his or her position in the Children's Ministries of Northside Christian Centre Inc. until investigation by the Senior Minister of Northside Christian Centre Inc. and the elders has been completed, or, in the event where an appropriate authority has been notified, the completion of its investigation.

ADDENDUM 1



ASSEMBLIES OF GOD IN AUSTRALIA

A Statement on the Protection of Children from Sexual Abuse

June 1994

This statement is a result of a discussion paper by the National Executive Presbytery and is circularised for your interest.

The Scripture gives us the responsibility to minister to children and ensure their safety and care at all times. It is vital that we adopt a policy that will help us protect our children against abuse. We recommend that the following matters be adhered to at all times:

1. In response to our biblical responsibility we will endeavour to provide a quality ministry to all our children.
2. Workers are responsible for the health and safety of the children while under their care. We will do all in our power to protect the children in our care from abuse or molestation.
3. All children's workers must have references from people within the assembly testifying to their trustworthiness to work with children.
4. Children's workers must complete an application form that identifies prior experience with children's work and why they want to work with children. These forms and references must be submitted to the senior minister for his approval and he will then take them to the church board for ratification.
5. All workers must have the endorsement of the senior minister and the eldership before being appointed or used in children's ministry.
6. Any problems, difficulties or suspicions concerning a worker's relationship and behaviour with any child must be brought to the attention of the senior minister immediately.
7. There will be no unauthorised activities with the children. Children's workers should not arrange activities with the children or any child off the church property except when there are two workers present. These two workers should not be related to each other and not of the same household. The departmental leader must be notified and his or her agreement obtained before any activity is arranged. Parents should be notified of the arrangements and the names of the workers who will care for their children.
8. Children's workers should not visit children alone at home or any other place. The workers should ensure that their time with children is in public view. There will be no secretive or unauthorised clubs.
9. Workers must not give children gifts without the departmental leader's knowledge.
10. Workers should be careful of their conduct with children at all times. Behaviour that may be wrongly perceived should be eliminated. Workers should not show excessive affection for children, they should not touch them frequently nor should they ever express inappropriate feelings towards the children.
11. Parents are always permitted to visit any activity and should be encouraged to participate in activities with children. Elders, leaders and pastors are also encouraged to attend activities.
12. Leaders should ensure that children who wish to use toilets at the church or during any activity away from the church are adequately supervised by adult leaders or parents.
13. Staff should wear name tags and persons without official name tags should not be permitted to minister to children.
14. The senior minister should be contacted immediately in the event where sexual abuse by a leader or children's worker is suspected. The matter must be kept confidential to protect the child and his or her family. The senior minister will advise the victim's parents of any suspected abuse as soon as is reasonably practicable. The senior minister and the elders will handle the reporting of any alleged act to the appropriate authorities; however this decision does not override any right or responsibility a parent feels he or she may have in reporting such matters.
15. Any leader or children's worker who is suspected of child abuse shall be relieved of his or her position in children's ministry until any investigation by the senior minister and the elders has been completed, or, in the event where an appropriate authority has been notified, the completion of its investigation.

ADDENDUM 2

NORTHSIDE CHRISTIAN CENTRE INC.

**APPLICATION FOR LEADERSHIP
IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES**

SURNAME: _____ CHRISTIAN NAMES: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: () _____ (Home) _____ () _____ (Work)

AGE: _____ MARITAL STATUS: _____

PROPOSED AREA OF INVOLVEMENT: _____

REASON FOR WISHING TO BE INVOLVED IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRY: _____

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE IN CHILDREN'S WORK: _____

PLEASE GIVE THE NAMES OF TWO REFEREES WITHIN NORTHSIDE CHRISTIAN CENTRE, NOT RELATED TO YOURSELF, WHO CAN CONFIRM YOUR MORAL SUITABILITY TO BE INVOLVED IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRY.

1. _____ PHONE: _____

2. _____ PHONE: _____

HAVE YOU BEEN BAPTISED IN WATER? [] YES [] NO

BAPTISED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT? [] YES [] NO

HAVE YOU READ NORTHSIDE CHRISTIAN CENTRE'S POLICY REGARDING CHILDREN'S MINISTRY?
[] YES [] NO

ARE YOU WILLING TO ABIDE BY THE POLICIES AND WORK UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF NORTHSIDE CHRISTIAN CENTRE'S LEADERSHIP?
[] YES [] NO

APPLICANT'S DECLARATION

I, _____ declare that I have not been convicted of any criminal offences relating to the physical or sexual abuse of children. I consent to my Senior Minister, or his delegate, making enquiries to confirm police records, and he may contact referees to establish my suitability for involvement in children's ministry.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE ____/____/____

SENIOR MINISTER'S ENDORSEMENT

I, _____ as Senior Minister of Northside Christian Centre Inc., having checked with referees and police records am satisfied as to the suitability of the abovenamed applicant to work in the Children's Ministries of Northside Christian Centre Inc.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE ____/____/____