

Encompass Church – Fusion Youth Edition (additional to ACC and Encompass Child Protection Policy)

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FUSION YOUTH 2014 UPDATED

Encompass Church, being committed to providing a safe environment for every child and to protect you as a leader from any unpleasant complaints, wishes to emphasize the importance of our ACC Kids R Us Victoria Child Protection Policy 2005.

Please note that this document does not negate the Victorian Australian Christian Churches Child Protection Policy (2005 version) but rather details its application by taking into account our facilities and the programs being delivered.

VIC ACC Policy Information Location

The table below details the location of further details in the VIC ACC manual which can be found on our church¹ and/or ACC² website.

Subject	Location in VIC ACC Manual
Child Protection Policy Outlines	
Anti-Abuse Policy	Page 5 & 22
Summary of Child Protection Policy	Page 36
Policy for Camp & Out of Church Activities	Page 6
Policy for Foyer & House Meetings	Page 7
Policy for Toilets	Page 7
Policy for Visitors to Children's Programs	Page 8
Policy for Stewards & Ushers	Page 9
About Child Abuse	
Characteristics of an Abuser	Page 3
Definition & Types of Child Abuse	Page 15
Symptoms of Child Abuse	Page 17
Dealing with Child Abusers who attend your church	Page 67
Reporting Suspected Child Abuse	
What to do when a Child reports Abuse	Page 23
Some Questions Answered	Page 27
Procedure for Reporting Suspicious Behaviour	Page 9
Procedure for Reporting Suspected Abuse	Page 27
Sample of Child Abuse Report Form	Page 44

¹ www.encompass.org.au

² <http://accvic.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/KRUChildProtectPolicy2005.pdf>

Encompass Church – Fusion Youth Edition (additional to ACC and Encompass Child Protection Policy)

SCREENING POTENTIAL LEADERS

PASTORAL REFERENCE, ATTENDANCE AND INVOLVEMENT IN ENCOMPASS CHURCH

When the youth pastor is looking to recruit new leaders, they look for people who have been consistently serving in the church for 12 months or more.

The youth pastor asks for recommendation from other pastors who know people within the church that might be suitable. The youth pastor will also check the name of other recommended recruits by the pastoral team.

Once a person has been recommended by the Encompass pastoral team and the youth pastor will approach the person to see if they are interested in the role in the youth ministry.

EXPECTATIONS AND POLICY

The youth pastor will present a clear picture of what youth ministry involves to the potential recruit by explaining to them the role and expectations of a leader in this ministry. If a potential recruit is interested they will be given an **Application Form**, a **Job Description and Expectations** outline and a **Child Protection Policy (Fusion edition)** to read. Once the applicant has read through the documents, it is then their choice whether to apply for the leader's position in the youth ministry.

APPLICATION & WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

When the potential leader fills out the application, it is communicated that they must have a working with children check, if they don't already. The application requires the leader to sign off on and agree to the Fusion Child Protection Policy document and the Job description and expectations. They also have to attest to their ability to work with children and past history.

INTERVIEW

Once the youth pastor receives the application, they follow up any loose ends and then an interview is arranged with the Youth pastor and another male pastor on staff (interviews with males always done in twos).

This interview is designed to be able to know a lot about the emotional and spiritual background of an applicant and their ability to work with children in a safe manner.

In this interview, the youth pastor will ensure the applicant has applied for a WWC. They will be informed that no leader can work in the youth program with a Working with Children check. Key aspects of the child protection policy are outlined in this interview.

After this interview, the youth pastor will make calls to the given referees and will give the applicant feedback 3 days later as to whether their application has been successful.

3 MONTH TRIAL

If an applicant is successful, they will undergo a three month trial to ensure that they are suitable for the job. A meeting at 3 months is arranged to see whether the new leader will stay and they will be given feedback on their performance.

CONDUCT POLICY

- Do not kiss a child or coax a child to kiss you.
- Do not engage in front hugs or extended hugging or any tickling/or poking. **We encourage physical contact to be limited.**
- Do not touch a child where a full bathing suit covers. Do not touch in any way that could be perceived to be potentially sensual or sexual. **Males, refrain from having physical contact with girls wherever possible.**
- Never be alone with a child.
 - If it is necessary to speak to a child alone, it will be done in the sight of other leaders yet out of hearing view. It is not to be done in a secluded place. If a child wants to speak to you about something of a deeply personal nature, you must let your Pastor know.
 - Do not engage in personal private conversations on social media, email and over the phone with children. Your relationship with them must be public so that you and the child are protected.
 - Do not visit or meet up with a child alone without another adult leader present, who is not related to you. If you do plan to have a group outing with 2 or more youth, you must get permission from your Youth Pastor first. Parents of the children must be informed of this directly and annual permission forms signed by parents and handed in for each student.
 - Do not ever drive a child on your own.
- Do not touch a child when disciplining them.
- Do not carry or sit a child on your lap or knee.
- You must not play roughly with or speak unkindly to a child.
- Fusion Leader Tag must be worn by all adult leaders to be easily identifiable by youth and parents.
- Adults and parent visitors must wear “visitor” tags and be kept under supervision of adult leaders. Visitors are not to be left alone with children.
- Never leave a child alone and unsupervised.
- Be aware of your reporting obligations as outlined in **Part B** of the ACC VIC Child Protection Policy 2005.

CAMP AND OTHER OUT OF CHURCH ACTIVITIES

Extra provisions on top of conduct policy

- Never be alone with a child, always in two's
- Never be alone in the sleeping quarters with a child.
- Shower and toilet monitors work in twos and stand at entrance to shower and toilet block. Ensure you are never alone with a child in a bathroom.
- Children are not permitted to get into bed together.

Encompass Church – Fusion Youth Edition (additional to ACC and Encompass Child Protection Policy)

- Children and leaders must wear a dressing gown when outside – or wear appropriate pajamas.
- Daytime and night time – no walking off alone with a child. The group must stay in contact with all leaders visible.
- Leaders are not to assist children in dressing.
- Nude swimming is not allowed.
- Camp Leader Tag must be worn to identify yourself as part of the team.
- Protect younger children, who may possibly be abused by older children, by never allowing children to be alone and unsupervised. Whilst on camp, children are to have constant leadership protection, always to be achieved in two's.
- Designate a confidential counsellor, someone who the children can go to with a complaint or concern.
- If we take a group of children on an excursion, make sure there are more than one of you and that you are in public view. Make sure there is a reasonable ratio in a group setting of 1 leader to 8 children.
- Signed consent from parents must be given before youth can attend these out of church events.
- Risk assessment will need to be completed.

HOUSE MEETINGS

- In the event where a small group or a creative meeting is run in a home with youth present, there always needs to be more than one leader present. Leaders are not to be alone in a child's bedroom, bathroom, toilet, or any other room in the house.
- Parents must be directly informed of these meetings and a permission form must be handed in to the Fusion leaders before they can attend.

FOYER POLICY

- During our youth program on Friday nights, we have two adult leaders rostered on each week who are "on venue", that means it is their role to guard the exits and ensure that no one enters the building who is not High School age and that all the youth are kept inside the facility.
- It is the role of "on venue" leaders to make sure the building is free of people walking in off the street and parents and that our building and toilet facilities are clear of potential harm.

Encompass Church – Fusion Youth Edition (additional to ACC and Encompass Child Protection Policy)

TOILETS POLICY

- Toilet monitors must work in two's. Ensure you are never alone with a child in a bathroom.
- When the youth ministry solely occupies the building, youth are permitted to go to the toilet with the "on venue" leaders keeping an eye out for them outside the toilet area.
- Where the youth ministry are sharing a facility or are at an external event, leaders take the youth to the toilets in groups. The leaders will wait just inside the bathroom door to wait for the whole group to finish so that we can return to the whole group. Leaders are not to use the bathroom during this time while they are supervising.

VISITORS

- We do not permit visitors to come into our youth program as a habit.
- Parents are not permitted to stay, but only to drop off and pick up their child. We ask that parents wait in the car park and not enter the building when they pick up or drop off their child.
- If an adult helper is required at one of our events – they will be personally recruited and approved of by the Youth Pastor e.g. a photographer, parent helpers with food etc. These visitors are required to wear a Visitor Tag and must never be left alone with children. They are to stay focused on the task they are given and kept away from the task of caring and supervising children.
- If someone walks into our church premises while the youth program is running, an adult leader will inform them that it is an event for high school students only and that they cannot stay and be part of the activities. The leader will stay with them and ensure they stay away from the youth until they leave the church property.
- If a new person walks into the building the welcome team, have to ascertain how old the person is to make sure they are able to stay.

COMPLAINTS AND DISCLOSING ABUSE

As a church 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 reduce the risk of abuse and that suspected or known instances of abuse are dealt with consistently and appropriately.

We have both a duty of care and moral/ethical obligations that compels us to ensure that those in our care are protected from harm. We strongly advocate that if anyone believes or suspects a child is in an unsafe situation, you should report your concerns to either your nominated supervisors or relevant State Authorities.

Abuse: is "all forms of physical and/or emotional ill treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm

Encompass Church – Fusion Youth Edition (additional to ACC and Encompass Child Protection Policy)

to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.”

There are legal consequences if specific instances of child harm are not reported to designated persons or agencies. Examples of instances you need to report (but not limited to these):

- An incident that happened during the church program, (child/leader/parent) related.
- Complaint given by parents/leader.
- Suspicious behaviour or suspected child abuse as detailed in section **B3** of VIC ACC Child Protection Policy 2005.

Every incident reported will be evaluated and assessed for a response and action. This process does not intend to reduce or replace an individual's obligation to report certain concerns which arise at law. Whilst the leadership of Encompass Church will provide assistance to individuals in these circumstances an individual should be aware of his or her personal rights and obligations.

Your supervisor will advise you how it meets our reporting obligations to comply with our church policy.