

Victorian Child Safe Standards Faith Communities Toolkit



Disclaimer: This Toolkit provides general information and sample documents only. It is intended to help a broad range of faith communities become child safe. Each Faith Community will need to edit the various samples to meet their individual needs.

This Toolkit has been produced with all care to assist organisations meet their obligations. It is not intended to be legal advice. It is recommended that each organisation confirm their legal requirements that apply to them and seek legal advice.

Acknowledgements: Many of the resources, samples and forms have been adapted from previous publications to meet the needs of Faith Communities from the following organisations and publications:

Commission for Children and Young People (2015), A guide for creating a child safe organisation 2.0 (www.cryp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/)

National Council of Churches in Australia - Safe Church Program (2016), Safe Church Training Agreement Resource Guide (www.safechurches.org.au)

Preface

The Victorian Child Safe Standards Faith Communities Toolkit and Training Portal have been created to assist all Faith Communities in Victoria meet the legislative requirements for organisations that provide services to children.

On 1 January 2017, all organisations that provide services are required to meet the seven Standards, incorporating three overarching principles:

- the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
- the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- the safety of children with a disability

The seven standards are:

Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements

Standard 2: A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety

Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel

Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

The Victorian Council of Churches in partnership with the National Council of Churches in Australia - Safe Church Program have collaborated together to provide this toolkit and the Training Portal to ensure that all Faith Communities in Victoria have the opportunity to ensure that they are prepared to implement the Child Safe Standards in their Faith Community.

We are pleased to partner with the Commission for Children and Young People in assisting faith based organisations to meet the Child Safe Standards by providing a range of faith-generic resources, tools and supports.

For more information about this Toolkit and the Training Portal, please don't hesitate to get in contact with us, 03 9650 4511 or email vcc@vcc.org.au.

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Introduction

The Victorian Child Safe Standards are to be implemented by Faith Communities by 1 January 2017 to ensure the safety of children. All organisations in Victoria that provide services to children are required to implement the compulsory Child Safe Standards to protect children.

Over the past several years there have been numerous reports, inquiries and research, as well as the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Victorian government initiated the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry in 2012, with the final report recommending various actions for the government to take to ensure the safety of children.

New criminal laws arising from the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry

- **Grooming offence** which targets communication, including online communication, with a child or their parents with the intent of committing child sexual abuse
- **Failure to protect offence** that applies to **people within organisations who knew of a risk** of child sexual abuse by someone in the organisation and **had the authority** to reduce or remove the risk, but **negligently failed to do so**
- **Failure to disclose offence** that **requires adults** to report to police a **reasonable belief** that a sexual offence has been committed against a child (unless they have a reasonable excuse for not doing so)

For further information, go to the Department of Justice and Regulation's website:

<http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/betrayal+of+trust+implementation>

What do I need to know?

- The Child Safe Standards ensure that there is a **minimum standard** for safety in all organisations providing services to children.
- The Standards aim to drive cultural change in organisations, so that protecting children from abuse is embedded in everyday thinking and practice.

The Standards apply to all personnel in an organisation, including:

- CEO and executive
- Employees
- Contractors
- Volunteers
- Students on placement
- Board of management

For the purpose of these Standards child abuse is defined as:

- sexual abuse (including grooming with the intent to sexually abuse a child)
- physical abuse or violence
- serious psychological or emotional abuse
- serious neglect



The Child Safe Standards

There are seven Standards. An organisation must include the following **principles** as part of their response to each Standard:

- **the cultural safety of Aboriginal children**
- **the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds**
- **the safety of children with a disability**

The Standards are **flexible** and **principle based** to enable organisations to **tailor** their approach based on their type of organisation, level of responsibility for children and activities involving children.

The seven standards

Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements

Standard 2: A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety

Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel

Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

A Child Safety Review is a good place to start

- Look at what your organisation already has in place, identifying **strengths** and **areas for improvement**.
- Understand the **level of risk associated** with your organisation and the services and activities it provides.
- **Identify** what further information, advice and support you need.
- **Identify** where to access support.
- **Make and implement a plan** to address any gaps.
- Work to clear **timeframes**.



Child Safe Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements

“Creating a culture of child safety within your organisation is vital to lowering the risk of harm to children. Child abuse must be acknowledged, expectations of behaviour must be clearly explained and accepted, and strategies such as robust recruitment practices must be in place. By building a strong culture of child safety, you will reduce the ability for potential abusers to be opportunistic. There should be a high expectation that everyone in your organisation is committed to child safety. This needs to be led and facilitated by your leadership and should be consistent with your organisation’s aims and values.” (*Commission for Children and Young People (2015), A guide for creating a child safe organisation 2.0, pg 16*)

Develop a child safe committee and work through the ‘Child Safe Start-up Guide’ on page 11 with them. This committee should include representatives from your child and youth populations as well as key leaders, staff, volunteers and perhaps even some parents.

Look at the policies and procedures your organisation already has in place and identify strengths and areas for improvement. As you are working through the ‘Child Safe Self-Review’ starting on page 14, let your conversation focus on the diverse needs of children, the child safe principles.

When you have completed the ‘Child Safe Self-Review’, you will have identified the areas in which you need to improve. Decide what tasks need to be done, who is going to do it and by when. Then set another date for the next review where discussion will take place around these tasks. You need to also set a date for an annual review where you reflect on how effective the new procedures and policies are.

Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements

- Lead from the top down and embedding a culture that makes child safety of extreme importance
- Apply strong governance arrangements, documenting how duty of care responsibilities to children will be met
- Make child safety a top priority in your organisation’s operations
- Take a zero tolerance approach to child abuse
- Respect, embrace and support the diversity of children

This is not a once off exercise – you need to continually improve your communities response to creating a Child Safe environment.



Next Steps for Standard 1

- Review your organisation's existing policies and practices
- Think about your organisation's risk management plans
- Think about the diverse needs of children
- Invite children to contribute to the safety process
- Invite staff and volunteers to contribute and be proactive in reducing risk
- Set dates for future reviews

How can your community meet the standards?

- ☐ Child safety is promoted throughout the Faith Community and modelled by leadership
- ☐ A culture of inclusivity exists highlighting any specific needs for:
 - People of Cultural and/or Linguistic Diverse background
 - People of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background
 - People with a disability
 - Any other specific group
- ☐ Clear knowledge of steps to be taken with any areas of concern regarding child safety and awareness of child abuse
- ☐ Practices are in place to continue to build a safe and supportive environment to raise child safety concerns
- ☐ Appropriate Faith Communities governance arrangements are in place
- ☐ Undertake awareness training for all board, staff and volunteers
- ☐ Have Child Safe Standards Representatives who are trained and supported





Where do I begin?

Having looked at the Victoria Child Safe Standards Online Training Portal for Faith Communities, you may be wondering how to achieve the goal of being a Child Safe Organisation from January 1, 2017.

Here is a check list to get you started.	√
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the "All Resources" page of the Child Safe Standards website, print out the Toolkit and the Self Review Tool. Read through the Toolkit to page 12. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have your leadership along with yourself, click the "Get started" button on the Training Portal and complete the first and second lessons – Introduction and Standard one. Watch the videos and read the information underneath. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule a meeting of your leadership team. At this meeting complete the Self Review Tool. Set a date for the next meeting – this is the deadline for tasks to be completed. 	
<p>At the next meeting –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise any tasks from the self review tool. Address Standard One. Read through the document "How to create a child safe culture" and discuss Discuss the Next steps for Standard 1 and How can your Community meet this Standard on page 10 of the Toolkit Look over the pages relating to Standard 1 in the Self Review Tool and discuss Discuss and complete your Faith Community's Statement of Commitment Set a date for the next meeting. <p>Home work for the leadership team is to complete the third lesson – Standard Two (video and reading), and also read pages 27-32 of the Toolkit.</p>	
<p>At the next meeting –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ratify the Statement of Commitment. Address Standard Two. Read through the sample document "Child Safe Faith Community Policy" and discuss Discuss the Next steps for Standard 2 on page 27 and How can your Community meet this Standard on page 28 of the Toolkit Look over the pages relating to Standard 2 in the Self Review Tool and discuss Discuss and complete your Faith Community's Child Safe Policy. Set a date for the next meeting. Note: please invite a child, a young person, a parent and the lead children's worker to attend all future meetings. <p>Home work for the leadership team is to complete the fourth lesson – Standard Three (video and reading), and also read pages 33-40 of the Toolkit.</p>	



<p>At the next meeting –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratify the Child Safe Policy. • Address Standard Three. Read through the sample document "Child Safe Faith Community Code of Conduct" and discuss • Discuss the Next steps for Standard 3 and How can your Community meet this Standard on page 34 of the Toolkit • Look over the pages relating to Standard 3 in the Self Review Tool and discuss • Discuss and complete your Faith Community's Child Safe Code of Conduct • Set a date for the next meeting. <p>Home work for the Child Safe Committee is to complete the fifth lesson – Standard Four (video and reading), and also read pages 41-48 of the Toolkit.</p>	
<p>At the next meeting –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratify the Code of Conduct. • Address Standard Four. Read through the sample document "HR Policies and Procedures" and " Leader Application form" and discuss • Discuss the Next steps for Standard 4 and How can your Community meet this Standard on page 42 of the Toolkit • Look over the pages relating to Standard 4 in the Self Review Tool and discuss • Discuss and complete your Faith Community's Child Safe HR Policies and Procedures • Set a date for the next meeting. <p>Home work for the Child Safe Committee is to complete the sixth lesson – Standard Five (video and reading), and also read pages 49-60 of the Toolkit.</p>	
<p>At the next meeting –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratify the HR Policies and Procedures and Leader Application form . • Address Standard Five. Read through the sample documents "Reporting Guidelines", "Incident/accident report form" , "Reporting Concerns Form", "Risk of significant harm Form" and the "The Child Safety reporting Process" and discuss • Discuss the Next steps for Standard 5 and How can your Community meet this Standard on page 50 of the Toolkit • Look over the pages relating to Standard 5 in the Self Review Tool and discuss • Set a date for the next meeting. <p>Home work for the Child Safe Committee is to complete the seventh lesson – Standard Six (video and reading), and also read pages 61-68 of the Toolkit.</p>	
<p>At the next meeting –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratify all the draft documents. • Address Standard Six. Read through the sample document "Risk Management" and " Photo and Video Policy" and discuss • Discuss the Next steps for Standard 6 on page 61 and How can your Community meet this Standard on page 62 of the Toolkit • Look over the pages relating to Standard 6 in the Self Review Tool and discuss • Discuss and complete your Faith Community's Child Safe Risk Management document 	



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a date for the next meeting. <p>Home work for the Child Safe Committee is to complete the eighth lesson – Standard Seven (video and reading), and also read pages 49-60 of the Toolkit.</p>	
<p>At the next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratify all the draft documents from the previous meeting. • Address Standard Seven. Read through the Fact Sheet for Involving Children and Young People document and discuss • Discuss the Next steps for Standard 7 on page 69 and How can your Community meet this Standard on page 70 of the Toolkit • Look over the pages relating to Standard 7 in the Self Review Tool and discuss • Set a date for the next meeting. <p>Home work for the Child Safe Committee is to complete the ninth lesson – Where to from here? (video and reading), and also read pages 73-78 of the Toolkit.</p>	
<p>At this last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratify any draft documents from the previous meetings. • Discuss any remaining issues • Set a date for the next meeting – it will be in 6 or 12 months time 	

Remember you can email the Project Worker for editable versions of these documents or to gain clarification around any issues.

This is not a once off exercise – you need to continually improve your communities response to creating a Child Safe environment.



Child Safe Start-up Guide

In order to maintain best practices for your faith community and to ensure that you are providing appropriate safeguarding measures, we have put together a checklist for a self-assessment

Guideline	Yes	No	Action
Do you have Child Protection Policies and Procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you have Recruitment processes: screening, reference checks and inductions (paid and volunteer workers)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you verify and validate State based Working with Children Check legislation regulations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you provide adequate (and ongoing) training and supervision of child safe practices?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you have Work Health and Safety policies in place for a safe environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you perform an on-going Risk Assessment and have documented Risk Management processes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you ensure best practices for record keeping, storage and privacy?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you have policies around responding to misconduct and allegations of abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you have adequate grievance and complaints procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you have a Code of Conduct that is provided to every worker (paid and volunteers)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you know your state legislative requirements for mandatory reporting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you understand your faith communities organisational standards in safeguarding children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do all workers (paid and volunteer) understand the role they play in keeping children safe in your faith community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do workers (paid and volunteer) know what to do if faced with an allegation or disclosure of child abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do children and/or parents involved in your faith community know how to report or raise a concern?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do you have set review dates for all programs and their attached policies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



How to help create a Child Safe culture in a Faith Community

The care and protection of children and young people should never just be a compliance matter. We must uphold the Best Practice imperative placed on all Faith Communities (Churches, Mosques, Synagogues, Agencies, Temples and other Communities).

Below are guidelines to be implemented in order to enable a Child Safe Culture.

- **Child Safe commitment statement**

This statement can be used on role descriptions, program reports, displayed in newsletters and bulletins, on notice boards and websites. It outlines that your organisation is committed to the safety and protection of children and young people.

- **Child Safe Signage**

Along with the Child Safe Policy or Statement of Commitment, it is good practice to visually display that you are committed to safeguarding children and young people. The signage should include who the Child Safe representative is for your community and be child friendly in its language so it is accessible to everyone.

- **Child Protection/Child Safety Policies**

This policy needs to follow the national and state legislation. It should provide guidance and structure on acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. It should show appropriate measures for responding to disclosures of abuse or any areas of misconduct.

- **Council/Board Meeting quarterly agenda item**

At council/board meetings, discuss how Child Safe practices are being achieved, reviewed and accepted. This is advised to be done on a regular basis throughout the year.

- **Child Safe recruiting practices**

Good practices in recruiting include: appropriate advertising; role descriptions; screening of applicants; reference checking; interviews; proper induction; probation periods for workers, both paid and volunteer. These practises will deter unsuitable applicants and reduce risk to children and young people.

- **Regular training**

Without suitable training and resources, all of the above points become ineffective. Those who are involved in children's and youth programs or have any responsibility over children and young people need regular training aimed at equipping and empowering them to serve with confidence and know where to get support.

- **Pastoral and Professional Supervision**

Supervision is part of duty of care to those who are in leadership. Here they are able to share concerns and be held accountable to their roles and responsibilities. It is a professional standard across many forms of work including doctors, social workers and youth workers, and therefore should be a standard held by those in leadership in faith communities.



Statement of Commitment

A Statement of Commitment should explicitly state your Faith Community's ongoing responsibility to safeguarding children and young people.

This Statement should be included in Child Safe/Child Protection policies. It can also be added to position descriptions, display posters, job advertisements, codes of conducts and any contracts.

Sample of Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

<Faith Community Organisation> is committed to ministering to children, young people and vulnerable adults by providing an environment that is physically, emotionally and spiritually safe.

<Faith Community Organisation> is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people and will endeavour to provide a safe and supportive environment for children and young people by the following safeguarding measures: *Recruitment processes (screening, selection, interviews etc.), Working With Children Check, Training, Induction, Supervision and Reviews.*

The following values reflect the culture that we are committed to promoting within **<Faith Community Organisation>**; *Due diligence, Integrity, Duty of Care, Transparency, Inclusivity, Teamwork (add as appropriate).*





FAITH COMMUNITIES SELF-REVIEW TOOL VICTORIAN CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

From 1 January 2017, all organisations, including churches are required to implement the Victorian Government Mandatory Child Safe Standards. The standards are:

1. Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements
2. A Child Safe Policy or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
3. A Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
4. Screening, supervision, training and other human resource practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
5. Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
6. Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
7. Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

For assistance and more information about how the Victorian Child Safe Standards affect your faith community and help to meet your legal obligations, contact the Victorian Child Safe Standards Faith Communities Project via **03 9650 4511** or vcc@vcc.org.au.



How to use this tool:

This self-review tool focuses on the culture and behaviours that are required to establish and sustain a child safe faith community.

In using this tool it is recommended that you:

Step 1: Decide who will complete the review (may be more than one person), who will be involved in providing information on the 'activities' and which leaders will consider the findings and approve the actions and timeframes.

Step 2: Rate how the church meets the 'activities' using a 1 to 5 scale:

1. Just beginning, currently not being met
2. Some progress, some aspects being met
3. Most, but not all aspects being met
4. All aspects are evident
5. All aspects are evident and regularly reviewed

In rating each 'activity' consider:

- To what extent is the activity implemented and active?
- What can be seen?
- What would people say about the activity (children, parents, leaders, volunteers)?
- What evidence in documents is there?

Step 3: Recognise what is being done and create next steps

- Identify examples that support your ratings
- Create next steps to improve your response to the activity
- Decide who will implement the next steps
- Decide on timeframes for implementation
- Have the review, next steps and timeframes approved by faith community leadership

Step 4: Regularly review progress being made to create a child safe faith community

- Use the review dates
- Review previous assessments to check on improvements and actions completed
- Highlight positive changes
- Learn from feedback received, complaints, errors
- Regularly review all aspects of child safety

Contact Us:

Victorian Child Safe Standards Faith Communities Project
vcc@vcc.org.au
03 9650 4511

www.childsafestandards.org.au

Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of Child Safety through leadership arrangements					Date of Review:	
Activity	Rating 1 to 5	Examples of activity in action	What needs to be done better? Next steps	Who will do it?	When will it be done	
Child Safety is promoted throughout the Faith Community and modelled by leadership						
A culture of inclusivity exists highlighting any specific needs for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People of Cultural and/or Linguistic Diverse background 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People with a disability 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any other specific group 						





Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of Child Safety through leadership arrangements					Date of Review:	
Activity	Rating 1 to 5	Examples of activity in action	What needs to be done better? Next steps	Who will do it?	Date of next Review:	
					When will it be done	
Clear knowledge of steps to be taken with any areas of concern regarding Child Safety and awareness of child abuse						
Practices are in place to continue to build a safe and supportive environment to raise Child Safety concerns						
Appropriate Faith Community governance and/or oversight arrangements are in place						

Standard 2: A Child Safe Standard Policy or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety				Date of Review: Date of next Review:	
Activity	Rating 1 to 5	Examples of activity in action	What needs to be done better? Next steps	Who will do it?	When will it be done
The Faith Community adequately displays a clear Child Safe Standards Commitment Statement or Policy and that all Faith Community leaders & volunteers know about and are required to uphold					
Child Safe Standard Policy includes requirements regarding Failure to Disclose and Failure to Protect legislation					
All levels of Faith Community leadership, congregation and participants of all programs are aware of the Faith Community's commitment to Child Safety					
The Faith Community undertakes Child Safety reviews at least annually					



Standard 2: A Child Safe Standard Policy or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety					Date of Review:	
Activity	Rating 1 to 5	Examples of activity in action	What needs to be done better? Next steps	Who will do it?	Date of next Review:	
The Child Safe Standard Policy is inclusive of:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People of Cultural and/or Linguistic Diverse background 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People with a disability 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any other specific group 						

Standard 3: A Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children					Date of Review:	
Activity	Rating 1 to 5	Examples of activity in action	What needs to be done better? Next steps	Who will do it?	Date of next Review:	
The Faith Community has a Code of Conduct that explains appropriate behaviour of Faith Community leaders, volunteers and children					When will it be done	
Additional Codes of Conduct are implemented if required for Senior Faith Leaders						
The Code of Conduct is well known by Faith Community leaders, volunteers, children and families and how the code is applicable to them						
Procedures are in place for any breaches to the Code of Conduct						
Procedures are understood for any breaches to the Code of Conduct						





Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resource practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel					Date of Review:	
Activity	Rating 1 to 5	Examples of activity in action	What needs to be done better? Next steps	Who will do it?	When will it be done	
Faith Community upholds safe recruiting practices for all Faith Community leaders and volunteers including:						
· Interviews						
· Reference Checking						
· Working with Children Checks						
· Police Checks (if applicable)						
Faith Community complies with Working with Children Check requirements						
Recruiting practices operate as a screening process for inappropriate applicants (staff and volunteers)						

Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resource practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel					
Activity		Rating 1 to 5	Examples of activity in action	What needs to be done better? Next steps	Who will do it? When will it be done
Child Safe Standard awareness training is provided on a regular basis for:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All program leaders (paid/volunteers) 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Senior Faith Leaders 					
Appropriate Position Descriptions are in place for staff and volunteers with clear expectations and requirements outlined					
Faith Community leaders and volunteers are supervised in their roles and feedback is provided					





Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse					Date of Review:	
Activity	Rating 1 to 5	Examples of activity in action	What needs to be done better? Next steps	Who will do it?	Date of next Review:	
					When will it be done	
Reporting procedures following a disclosure of abuse or incident, including legislative reporting requirements are in place for:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All leaders and volunteers 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Leaders and Boards or Councils 						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General congregation 						
All Faith Community leaders and volunteers are aware of their reporting responsibilities						

Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse					
Date of Review:			Date of next Review:		
Activity	Rating 1 to 5	Examples of activity in action	What needs to be done better? Next steps	Who will do it?	When will it be done
Policies and procedures are in place concerning record keeping requirements, confidentiality and privacy and kept securely					
Procedures are in place to handle allegations of misconduct					
Organisations have been identified to help and support children and families to talk to if they have concern for their safety: feel unsafe or become concerned					



Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse					Date of Review: Date of next Review:	
Activity	Rating 1 to 5	Examples of activity in action	What needs to be done better? Next steps	Who will do it?	When will it be done	
Risk Assessments are undertaken regularly for all Faith Community activities, programs or events						
Risk Assessments are undertaken regularly for opportunities of abuse to children for all Faith Community activities, programs or events						
Risk Management processes are updated and reviewed on a regular basis						
Work Health and Safety policies and procedures are observed and updated on a regular basis						



Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse					Date of Review: Date of next Review:	
Activity	Rating 1 to 5	Examples of activity in action	What needs to be done better? Next steps	Who will do it?	When will it be done	
Considers the cultural safety of:						
· People of Cultural and/or Linguistic Diverse background						
· People of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background						
· People with a disability						
· Any other specific group						





Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children					Date of Review: Date of next Review:	
Activity	Rating 1 to 5	Examples of activity in action	What needs to be done better? Next steps	Who will do it?	When will it be done	
The Faith Community consults with children and young people about the decisions that affect them						
Children and young people are aware of their rights to be safe, how to raise concerns and are taken seriously if they raise concerns						
The Faith Community regularly create opportunities for children and young people to provide insights in to planning, preparation, action and feedback for activities that involve them						



Child Safe Standard 2: A Child Safe Policy or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

“A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety articulates an organisation’s approach and culture to provide the highest level of protection for children in its care and provides information and guidance on child safety within the organisation.” (*Commission for Children and Young People (2015), A guide for creating a child safe organisation 2.0, pg 22*)

There are sample documents attached to help you with this. Be sure to consult widely and discuss the draft with your committee and adjust to ensure it reflects your organisation’s values and beliefs before approving the policy.

“Then communicate your policy to everyone in the organisation. This policy or statement to child safety affirms your commitment to child safety and clearly states that your organisation has zero tolerance for child abuse, and is committed to the best interest of children and to keeping them safe. That your organisation actively works to listen to and empower children and your people. When new members, or new staff or volunteers join ensure their induction includes information about the policy, particularly the code of conduct. Perhaps print the policy or statement and display it where everyone can see.” (*Adapted from Commission for Children and Young People (2015), A guide for creating a child safe organisation 2.0, pg 22*)

Creating a foundation for a child safe environment

- Affirm your organisation’s commitment to child safety in a child safe policy or commitment to child safety
- Make your commitment to child safety clear and well communicated to staff, volunteers, children and families and the community
- Require all staff and volunteers to uphold this approach

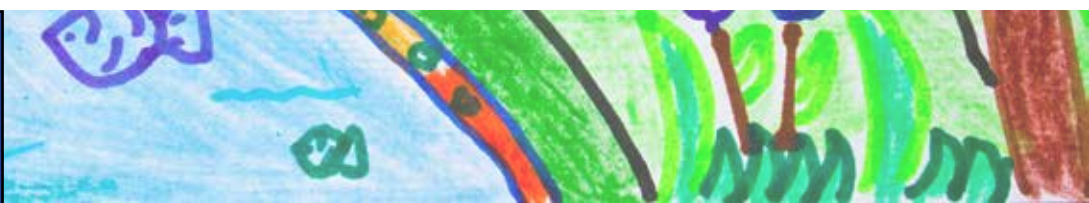
Next Steps for Standard 2

- A child safe policy and a statement of commitment to child safety
- Consultation with a wide scope
- Write and finalise the policy and statement
- Have the policy and statement approved (by board/committee/management etc.)
- Communicate the policy and statement publically (make accessible)
- Review and update the policy and statement regularly



How can your community meet the standards?

- ☐ The faith community adequately displays a clear safe Faith Community Child Safe Policy or Commitment Statement or policy and that all faith leaders and volunteers know about and are required to uphold
- ☐ Child Safe policy includes requirements regarding Failure to Disclose and Failure to Protect legislation
- ☐ All levels of the Faith Community's leadership and participants of all programs are aware of the Faith Community's commitment to child safety
- ☐ The Faith Community undertakes Child Safety reviews at least annually
- ☐ The Child Safe policy is inclusive of:
 - People of Cultural and/or Linguistic Diverse background
 - People of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background
 - People with a disability
 - Any other specific group



CHILD SAFE FAITH COMMUNITY POLICY – sample

<Name of Faith Community Organisation>

<**Faith Community Organisation**> is committed to protecting the safety of all people within its programs, ministries and events.

All people, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, disability and family or social background have equal rights to this protection.

All people (including children) have the right to be respected and valued as well as feel emotionally, physically and spiritually safe at all times.

Our policy has been developed to uphold this commitment to safeguarding and to adhere to National and State legislation.

Our Child Safe Policy

This Policy applies to all staff, including senior leadership, manager, coordinators, paid staff, volunteers, students or anyone working on behalf of <**Faith Community Organisation**>.

The purpose of this Policy:

To protect children and young people and vulnerable adults who receive <**Faith Community Organisation**> services.

To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guides our approach to child protection;

<**Faith Community Organisation**> believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

Our Policy aims to:

- Minimise the risk of abuse, misconduct and the misuse of positional power.
- Ensure that all cases of suspected abuse and misconduct are handled thoroughly.
- Ensure that leaders and programs are safe.
- Ensure that all people are respected and valued.

Statement of Commitment to child safety

<**Faith Community Organisation**> is committed to children, young people and vulnerable adults by providing an environment that is physically, emotionally and spiritually safe.

<**Faith Community Organisation**> is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people and will endeavour to provide a safe and supportive environment for children and young people by the following safeguarding measures: *Recruitment processes (screening, selection, interviews etc.), WWCC, Training, Induction, Supervision and Reviews.*



The following values reflect the culture that we are committed to promoting within <**Faith Community Organisation**>; *Due diligence, Integrity, Duty of Care, Transparency, Inclusivity, Teamwork.*

Legal framework

This Policy reflects legislation and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

National Legislation

- National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children "Protecting Children is Everyone's Business" 2009 – 2020 (Commonwealth of Australia)

State Legislation

- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic.)

Working With Children Checks

- *Working With Children Act 2005* (Vic.)

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount, and is everyone's responsibility as outlined in the *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children*
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other organisations/agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

WE COMMIT TO

a. Safe recruitment of leaders.

We will screen all prospective leaders in our programs, before they are appointed. (i.e. relevant Working with Children's Check/police check).

b. Adequate training of leaders.

We require that all leaders attend a Child Safe training workshop before commencing in their role and attend a refresher workshop every 3 years.

We require all leaders to attend additional specific training as required.

c. Have a clear Code of Conduct.

We will adopt and implement a Code of Conduct for all leaders and volunteers, including boundaries of behaviour and expectations of interactions with children.

All leaders will agree to follow our Code of Conduct.

d. Continued supervision of leaders.

We commit to ongoing training, supervision and support for leaders.



e. Responding to allegations of risk of harm (abuse) and serious misconduct.

All leaders will report disclosures or suspicions of child abuse, according to our procedure. We will listen to and believe children who raise concerns.

We will ensure that procedures are clear and appropriate in responding to allegations of abuse.

Where an allegation of misconduct is made against a person in the organisation in relation to a child, we will prioritise support to the child. We will seek appropriate support for the person implicated to protect the safety of the child as the paramount consideration.

f. Responding to other disclosures of abuse.

We will understand the processes of responding to disclosures of abuse and harm including self-harm and suicide ideation.

We will ensure that appropriate training takes place to recognise and respond to indicators of abuse and neglect and receive support for all involved in the disclosure (including the leaders/volunteers).

We understand that responding to abuse is not limited to children, but also includes adults within our programs who may be vulnerable at any given time where abuse could be present and that everyone understands the most appropriate steps to take in supporting our vulnerable people within our community.

NB: Victoria has guiding legislation around responding to allegations of abuse. Please be familiar with legislative requirements e.g. in VICTORIA there is a "Failure to Disclose" offense which was introduced in October 2014.

g. Provide an open safe environment.

We will afford participants a say in the programs and the activities in which they participate by fostering and valuing their ideas and encouraging participation. We will be accountable and transparent.

We will create a child-friendly environment, allowing people to raise their concerns in an appropriate manner. We will obtain appropriate information relating to the program participants, including children's health and family situation, to ensure that we are able to care for their physical and emotional needs.

h. Understand and value diversity.

We will be mindful in our approach for all programs to be inclusive for all people. This includes adapting programs for anyone with a disability to receive access to various programs, as well as provide adequate training for leaders.

We will be sensitive to those from 'Culturally and Linguistic Diverse' (CALD) backgrounds and those within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with our programs, information, support and services. As well as upholding respect to all cultures and encourage the participation of all people and recognise their unique contribution to our community.



DEFINITIONS

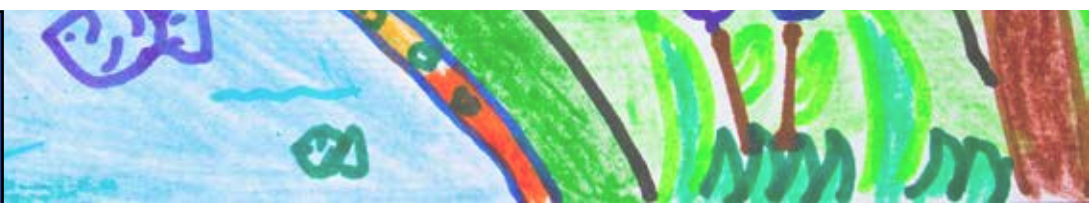
Abuse:	Abuse and neglect includes but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Physical Abuse</i>- <i>Emotional Abuse</i>- <i>Family Violence</i>- <i>Sexual Abuse</i>- <i>Grooming</i>- <i>Neglect</i>
Child:	a person who is under the age of 18 years (eg: The Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012, Victoria).
Disclosure:	a disclosure occurs when someone informs a person in authority/leadership (or a trusted adult) within the Faith Community that they have been subject to abuse or knows of abuse. A disclosure may or may not be an allegation or a notifiable circumstance, but it is the responsibility of the person in authority to investigate and take any appropriate action.
Child Safe Environment:	discharges duty of care by taking steps to keep all those in our care safe, including e.g. spiritual, physical, sexual, emotional abuse (including bullying) or neglect.
Child Safe Leader:	has been through a recruitment process, understands responsibilities, is supervised and is an accountable team player.
Child Safe Program:	all risks have been assessed and events thought through and planned.
Vulnerable Person:	a person who may be considered to be susceptible to abuse or exploitation based on factors such as their health status (physical or mental), age, grief, previous experience of abuse, social isolation or financial hardship. In this sense vulnerability can be temporary or permanent.

We are committed to reviewing our Policy and good practice annually.

This Policy was last reviewed on: <date>

Signed:

<this should be signed by the most senior person in your Faith Community organisation>



Child Safe Standard 3: A Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

“A Code of Conduct lists behaviours that are acceptable and those that are unacceptable. It states professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and acceptable and unacceptable relationships. When staff, volunteers, parent and children are clear about expectations, they are more likely to act appropriately with each other.”
(Commission for Children and Young People (2015), *A guide for creating a child safe organisation 2.0*, pg 26)

Your Code of Conduct enables you to take action if someone is behaving in an unacceptable manner. Without one it can be very difficult to raise issues with staff and volunteers.

Again, there is a sample Code of Conduct attached to start you off. It is important that your Code of Conduct reflects your organisation. It needs to be in plain language. Please consult widely before approving the code. Also review the Code of Conduct annually to check it remains relevant.

You may need to conduct training on the Code for existing staff and volunteers which instructs them on not only what the acceptable behaviour is, but also on what to do when unacceptable behaviour is observed and how to raise a complaint.

A Code of Conduct

Establishing clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

- Provide clear written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children
- Detail acceptable and unacceptable behaviours relating to the specific context of your organisation – for example physical contact, personal care, online communication or complying with organisational policy and procedures
- Educate staff, volunteers, parents and children about the expected standards of behaviour and what will happen if a person does not comply
- Act on concerns or allegations of non-adherence to your Code of Conduct.



Next Steps for Standard 3

Develop and implement a code of conduct

- Consult widely
- Decide on the number of codes needed (i.e. Code for children, Code for volunteers and staff, Code for events/excursions, Code for transportation, Code for communication etc.)
- Write and approve the code
- Establish complaints and grievance procedures
- Communicate the code (make publically accessible)
- Review and update regularly

How can your community meet the standards?

- ☐ The faith community has a Code of Conduct that explains appropriate behaviour of faith community leaders, volunteers and children
- ☐ Additional Codes of Conduct are implemented if required for faith leaders
- ☐ The Code of Conduct is well known by faith leaders, volunteers, children and families and how the code is applicable to them
- ☐ Procedures are in place for any breaches to the Code of Conduct
- ☐ Procedures are understood for any breaches to the Code of Conduct
- ☐ Provide opportunities for staff, volunteers, children to contribute to the Code of Conduct to assist in building ownership



CODE OF CONDUCT – sample

<Name of Faith Community Organisation>

Staff and volunteers are responsible for keeping a professional role with children. This means establishing and maintaining clear boundaries which serve to protect everyone from misunderstandings.

This Code of Conduct sets out the behaviour which **<Faith Community Organisation>** expects from all people associated with or representing it.

Purpose

Following this code will help to protect children and young people from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from adults. It will also help staff and volunteers to maintain the standard of behaviour expected of them. Having a Code of Conduct that everyone adheres to also protects the organisation because opportunities for harm are actively reduced.

Upholding this Code of Conduct

All staff and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to **<name of person or name of role>** under the Child Safe policies and procedures put in place by **<Faith Community Organisation>**.

Staff and volunteers who breach this Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures, including any breaches involving external workers or volunteers.

All allegations of child abuse will be reported to statutory authorities, such as police or child protection. A report may/will also be made to the faith communities professional standards unit - but this will not replace or negate the report to obligation to report to statutory authorities.

<Faith Community Organisation> condemns all forms of child abuse, discrimination and sexual exploitation. We are committed to creating and maintaining an environment which promotes safety for people involved in our programs including all children, people with a disability, people from a CALD background and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I, _____ acknowledge that I have read and understand the **<Faith Community Organisation>** Child Safe Policy, and agree with that in the course of my association with **<Faith Community Organisation>**.



I WILL:

- ☐ Conduct myself in a manner that is consistent with the values of the **<Faith Community Organisation>**
- ☐ Treat all children and young people with respect, regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status
- ☐ Provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers
- ☐ Follow and report any concerns of child abuse in accordance with the **<Faith Community Organisation>**'s child protection policy and procedures
- ☐ Keep all information regarding child protection concerns confidential, only discussing information with relevant and appropriate people according to the reporting procedures
- ☐ Respect cultural differences
- ☐ Encourage open communication between all children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers, and allow children and young people to participate in the decisions that affect them
- ☐ Be transparent in my actions and whereabouts
- ☐ Take responsibility for being accountable and not placing myself in positions where there is a risk of allegations being made. Wherever possible, I will ensure that another adult is present when I am working with or near children
- ☐ Self-assess my behaviour, actions, language and relationships with children.
- ☐ Report any concerns or suspicions regarding abuse by a fellow worker, volunteer, contractor or visitor, via **<Faith Community Organisation>** child protection reporting procedures
- ☐ Comply with all relevant Australian and local legislation
- ☐ Immediately disclose any information of charges, convictions of abuse and policy non-compliance in accordance with appropriate procedures. This includes disclosing any charges or convictions made against oneself or others
- ☐ Avoid favouritism
- ☐ Ensure any contact with children and young people is appropriate and in the parameters of the program or event
- ☐ Always ensure language is appropriate and not offensive or discriminatory
- ☐ Provide examples of good conduct in daily activities
- ☐ Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations or suspicions of abuse
- ☐ Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- ☐ Recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people



I WILL NOT:

- ☐ Engage in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children or young people, in person or on social media
- ☐ Use inappropriate, offensive, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or discriminatory language when speaking with a child or young person
- ☐ Allow allegations, suspected abuse, risk of harm or disclosures go unreported
- ☐ Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for him/herself, such as assistance with toileting or changing clothes. If this is necessary, for example for a child with a disability, I will inform my supervisor first and be as open as possible in my behaviour
- ☐ Hit or physically assault children. This includes refraining from physical punishment or discipline of children
- ☐ Develop inappropriate relationships with children or young people
- ☐ Conduct a sexual relationship with a child or young person or indulge in any form of sexual contact with a child or young person
- ☐ Seek to make contact and/or spend time with any child that I come into contact with in my role as a representative of the **<Faith Community Organisation>** outside of the designated times and activities set for performing my role as a representative of the **<Faith Community Organisation>**
- ☐ Condone or participate in behaviour of children that is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- ☐ Act in a way that shows unfair and differential treatment of children and young people
- ☐ Release or discuss any personal confidential information about suspected or proven child abuse or protection cases other than with the Child Safe Concerns Person and other parties as designated by them and according to reporting procedures
- ☐ Use any computer, mobile phone, or video and digital camera to exploit or harass children
- ☐ Let children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number or address)
- ☐ Make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people
- ☐ Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- ☐ Make inappropriate promises to children and young people, particularly in relation to confidentiality
- ☐ Jump to conclusions about others
- ☐ Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- ☐ Rely on your reputation or that of the organisation to protect you



I am responsible for my own actions and utilise Child Safe standards and best practices to avoid actions and behaviours that could be in breach of this Code of Conduct and the Child Safe policies of **<Faith Community Organisation>**.

I have read the **<Faith Community Organisation>** Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct and discussed its contents with my **<faith leader>**. I am aware that **<Faith Community Organisation>** expects me to uphold at all times the standards of behaviour described in the Code of Conduct above.

I also understand that disciplinary measures and legal steps will be taken if I am found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct. I understand that in making that report, **<Faith Community Organisation>** may have to inform other authorities, in a confidential manner to meet obligations under Australian law.

Name:

Witness Name:

Signature:

Witness Signature:

Date / /

Witness Date / /



Children's Code of Conduct - Sample

We all have the right to feel safe
and be safe at all times.

We know that you will understand the need for this Code of Conduct which serves to protect everyone. Please speak with the Team Leader if you have any concerns about this program.

This Code of Conduct applies to all children who attend.

1. We will play SAFELY, be GENTLE and RESPECT others
2. We will SHARE and PLAY together
3. We will not FIGHT with others
4. We will be POLITE at all times
5. We will be FRIENDLY to all participants
6. We will not use NAUGHTY language
7. We will RESPECT all people
8. We will always ASK a leader if we need help
9. We will have FUN





Child Safe Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resource practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel

Selecting suitable people to work with children is vital. If you take good care during the recruitment phase; you are more likely to screen out people who are unsuitable to work with children.

Examine and update your job descriptions and duty statements for all paid and volunteer roles to reflect your policy statement. Mention your commitment to child safety in any job advertisements for paid positions. Be mindful of child safety when interviewing for a paid position. Reference checks are crucial. Remember to follow fair employment process and follow requirements of privacy legislation and laws relating to unlawful discrimination. Only employ people with a Working with Children Check. You must ensure that all 'Ministers of Religion' pass the Working with Children Check. Visit www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/ for more information relating to the Working with Children Check.

This level of scrutiny is also required for volunteers within your organisation. A volunteer approval process, with reference checks and confirmation of the volunteer having a current Working with Children Check registered with your organisation, is essential to ensure due diligence is undertaken in regards to the suitability of volunteers who will be working with children in your organisation.

On-going training and performance monitoring is beneficial not only for the worker but also for the organisation. Staff should continually be trained in understanding the nature and signs of child abuse. They should have a good understanding of the reporting procedure. Those responsible for the supervision of staff and volunteers need to provide them with adequate support as well as monitoring their performance. They need to give honest feedback if people aren't working to the Code of Conduct. Remember that volunteer workers also must undergo the same child safety training and have the same support to report concerns as those who are in paid employee positions.

Recruitment, induction, supervision and management

Screening, supervision, training and other human resource practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel

- Communicate your commitment to child safety
- Have clear duty statements
- Engage only the most suitable people to work with children (whether in a paid or voluntary capacity) and so deterring unsuitable people from applying or being appointed



- Have robust pre-employment background screening including WWCC (where required) and thorough referee checks
- Provide high quality supervision and professional development. Topics to discuss include “understanding the nature and signs of abuse”, “cultural competency” and the “vulnerability of particular children”.

Next Steps for Standard 4

- Assess potential staff or volunteers
- Check references
- Follow fair employment processes
 - Privacy
 - Discrimination (Equal Employment Opportunity)
- Working with children checks
 - Know what is checked
 - Know who needs a WWCC
- Police checks
- Staff and volunteer development, supervision and monitoring
 - Adequate supervision
 - Ongoing training and development
 - Understanding the nature and signs of abuse
 - Cultural consideration
 - Inclusive communities

How can your community meet the standards?

- ☐ Faith Community upholds safe recruiting practices for all faith leaders and volunteers including:
 - Interviews
 - Reference Checking
 - Working with Children Checks
 - Police Checks (if applicable)
- ☐ Faith Community complies with Working with Children Check requirements
- ☐ Recruiting practices operate as a screening process for inappropriate applicants (staff and volunteers)
- ☐ Training is provided around child safety on a regular basis for:
 - All program leaders (paid/volunteers)
 - All Senior Faith Community Leaders



HR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES - Sample

RECRUITMENT, SCREENING, SUPERVISION, TRAINING

Recruitment

Safe recruitment minimises risk to your Faith Community, agency or organisation. It adheres to legislation, duty of care and best practices. It enables stronger safeguarding measures for children, young people, workers and the Faith Community, agency or organisation.

Before You Start

Be aware of legislation impacting the role:

- Federal Fair Work Act
- Anti-discrimination

Minimum conditions applying to any role are mandated by Fair Work Australia. If the role is covered by an award, understand the implications for employment conditions. Refer Fair Work Australia website: <http://www.fwc.gov.au/index.cfm?pagename=awardsfind>

Safe Recruitment Checklist¹

- There is a written job description or role profile and person specification for the position
- The position is advertised
- References have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- Short-listed candidates have been interviewed
- Child Safe Standards and safeguarding measures have been discussed at interview
- Qualifications have been verified, and experience discussed and acknowledged
- Working with Children Check information has been collected
- A suitable induction training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has a copy of the Child Safe Policy and knows how to report concerns
- The applicant has completed a probationary period

Screening

Working with Children Checks

Working with Children Checks draw together information from various sources, but may include a primary focus on certain types of offences (e.g., sexual offences, offences related to the harm or mistreatment of a child). In Victoria, a Working With Children Card is valid for five years. It is free for volunteers; however a payment is required for employees. For current fees, please see <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>



In general, Working With Children Checks give consideration to:

- convictions - whether or not they are considered spent or were committed by a juvenile;
- apprehended violence orders and other orders, prohibitions or reporting obligations;
- charges (i.e., where a conviction has not been recorded because, for example, a proceeding has not been heard or finalised by a court, or where charges have been dismissed or withdrawn);
- any relevant allegations or police investigations involving the individual; and
- relevant employment proceedings and disciplinary information from professional organisations.

Other Screening measures

Screening checklist for all (employed and volunteer) child related work

Screening	Requirements	
Working with Children Check	State based screening checks	
National Police Checks	For all Faith Community workers (employed and volunteer) if required by State/Territory	
Reference Checks	Past employment and character references	
Endorsement	An endorsement from a senior faith leader	
Interview	To discuss the role and explore suitability	
Induction	Appropriate and relevant processes for policies and procedures	
Probation/Trial Periods	Process to enable a review of suitability and expectations to the role	
Program Review and appraisal	Review the program, how it works, the team, availabilities etc.	

Supervision and Training

Supervision

Leaders should be provided with adequate supervision to make sure that certain situations do not arise. This can be done by ensuring that two leaders are present at all activities. This would mean that the possibility of inappropriate behaviour, or allegation of such behaviour, is minimised. Plans should be in place to ensure appropriate resources and support is available during all activities.



Healthy ministry supervision for leaders includes clear expectations and adequate ministry support. It also includes a commitment to develop leaders, a clear set of boundaries (Code of Conduct) for leaders and a well communicated process for resolving conflict and complaints.

Professional Supervision (Support and debriefing)

Professional supervision should be offered to those leaders who have a significant leadership role within the Faith Community.

This practice maintains: a community focus, ethical and moral standards, professional standards and personal concerns of those in leadership.

Ministry review

A ministry review can be done on an annual basis with the leadership team. It should assess the commitment, availabilities and suitability to the roles for current leaders. It also provides a space for leadership development and training opportunities, as well as accountability for training new leaders.

Training

Leaders (employed and volunteer) within the Faith Community should have training opportunities provided to them to enable and equip them to do their role well. Training should include aspects of child safety and how to respond to concerns. It is recommended that all leaders working with 0-18 year olds attend child safety training within their first year of the role, and a refresher every 3 years. All those in senior roles in the Faith Community should also attend.

Commitments

<Name of Faith Community Organisation>

Record Keeping of Screening Documents Commitment

<Faith Community Organisation> commits to keeping our own records of all screening checks, references, codes of conduct and contracts in personnel files. In the matter of child related work, these files are recommended to be kept indefinitely.

Supervision and Training Commitments

- We recommend a 6 month minimum attendance before being appointed into a leadership role.
- All leaders, staff and volunteers commit to regular Professional Supervision or other formal support and debriefing with **<Faith Community Organisation>**
- All leaders, staff and volunteers understand the adult-to-child ratios that must be applied to all programs, events or ministries.
- All leaders, staff and volunteers undertake Child Safe training within the first year of ministry, with a refresher workshop every 3 years while they remain a part of the programs with **<Faith Community Organisation>**.
- All leaders, staff and volunteers understand and accept that program reviews will be a regular practice with **<Faith Community Organisation>**.

Signed

Date



Leader Application Form – Sample

Applicant's Details

Name _____
Surname _____
Address _____
Postcode _____ Phone Contact _____
Email _____
Date of Birth _____

Do you have a current Working with Children Check? Yes ☐ No ☐
If no, are you willing to obtain one? Yes ☐ No ☐

Faith Community Program Experience

How long have you been attending this Faith Community?

How are you currently involved in this Faith Community's life?

Please describe any Faith Community groups you have previously been involved in
(within this community/other communities/schools ministries etc.)

Please indicate any previous training, formation and/or qualifications you have that
are relevant

Are you willing to undertake specific training for this role? Yes ☐ No ☐
Do you have a current First Aid certificate? Yes ☐ No ☐



Critical Overview

- A. Have you ever had any child related work (paid or voluntary) refused or suspended?
Yes ☐ No ☐
- B. Have you ever had any allegations of misconduct from the following?
- Bullying / harassment
- Child abuse
- Sexual assault
- Violence / aggression
Yes ☐ No ☐
- C. Have you ever been convicted or charged with a criminal offence?
Yes ☐ No ☐
- D. Have you ever had a child or young person removed from your care for any reason?
Yes ☐ No ☐
- E. Have you ever experienced substance abuse/misuse of alcohol, recreational/illegal drugs or prescription/over-the-counter medication? (or any other kind of substance)
Yes ☐ No ☐
- F. Have you ever had your driver's license suspended or disqualified?
Yes ☐ No ☐

Expectations and Commitment

How could being a Leader benefit you in your faith journey?

What qualities and leadership characteristics do you believe are required for this role?

I agree and commit to the following:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adhere to the Code of Conduct | <input type="checkbox"/> Attend all required training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attend all required meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Operate within best practices for the ministry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Provide all relevant background checks | <input type="checkbox"/> Be unified within the leadership team |



Endorsement Reference

Name _____

Surname _____

Phone Contact _____

Role _____

Email _____

How long have you known the applicant? _____

What is the relationship to the applicant? _____

Any Comments _____

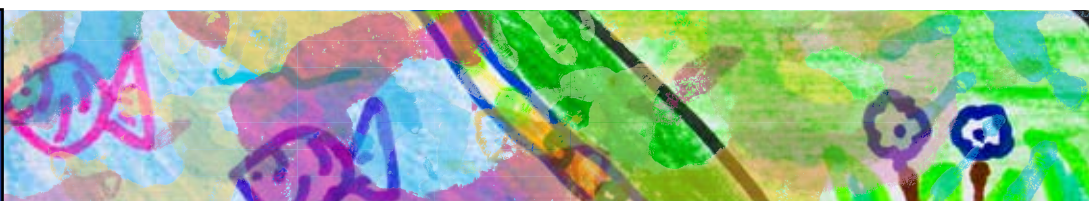
Declaration

I acknowledge that this information is correct, true and complete and I have provided it to the best of my knowledge. I understand omitting information and/or providing false information is sufficient cause for my application to cease.

Signed: Date: _____
(Applicant's signature)

Witnessed by: _____ Role: _____

Signed: Date: _____
(witness signature)



Child Safe Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

A well publicised reporting procedure must be in place with all staff and volunteers clear on how to use it. Attached are samples of forms you may like to adapt to suit your organisation. Staff and volunteers should know where to find these forms and who to ask for assistance to complete them and hand them in. The reporting process should be easily accessible to children and young people, however it is not reliant on children and young people completing the form.

Responding to and reporting abuse

Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

- Recognise the safety of children is everyone's responsibility
- Have a clear and understood procedure for reporting concerns and allegations, children and families are encouraged to report if they feel unsafe or concerned
- People within the organisation are aware of their duty of care and legal responsibilities, and know what to do to respond appropriately
- Concerns and complaints are acted upon appropriately
- Accurate records are kept securely

Call the Police on 000 if you have immediate concerns for a child's safety or if you reasonably believe child abuse may have occurred.

Investigation of any matter by Police must always take priority over internal investigations.



Next Steps for Standard 5

- Support the child and their family
 - Report abuse promptly
 - Report to appropriate authorities
- The child's safety and risk of harm is the primary concern
- Clear and public policy on reporting is available
- Know the concerns that should be reported
 - Concerns about the physical safety
 - Inappropriate or special relationships between staff or volunteers and children
 - Inadequate adult-child ratios
 - Breaches of code of conduct
 - Suspicions or beliefs that a child is at risk of harm
 - Observing changes in behaviour
 - Children's disclosure of abuse or harm (must be reported)
- If a child is in imminent or immediate danger CALL 000 immediately
- Mandatory reporting and criminal offences
 - Grooming for sexual conduct with a child under 16
 - Failure to disclose
 - Failure to protect
- Accurate and secure records are kept of concerns and disclosures

How can your community meet the standards?

- ☐ Reporting procedures following a disclosure of abuse or incident, including legislative reporting requirements are in place for:
 - All leaders, staff and volunteers
 - Senior Faith Leaders and Boards/Councils
 - General community members
- ☐ All faith leaders and volunteers are aware of their reporting responsibilities and are trained to respond appropriately
- ☐ Policies and procedures are in place concerning record keeping requirements, confidentiality and privacy and kept securely
- ☐ Procedures are in place to handle allegations of misconduct
- ☐ People are in place for children and families to talk to if they have concern for their safety; feel unsafe or become concerned
- ☐ Ensure children and families are aware of how to report



REPORTING GUIDELINES - Sample

Who reports?

- Leaders, Staff, Volunteers, Imams, Church Ministers, Pastoral carers, Rabbis, Chaplains, Special Religious Education (SRE)/Catechist teachers, Parents, Guardians, Adults, Children, Everyone!

What can be reported?

- Disclosure of abuse or harm
- Allegation, suspicion or observation
- Misconduct behaviour and reportable conduct
- Knowledge of relevant criminal offences
- Breach of the Code of Conduct

Who to inform?

All allegations of child abuse will be reported to statutory authorities, such as police or child protection. A report may/will also be made to the Faith Communities professional standards unit - but this will not replace or negate the report to obligation to report to statutory authorities.

General Concerns

- Program Coordinator
- Senior* Faith Community Leader
- Head Teacher and/or School Principal
- Child Safe Standards Representative

Child at Imminent Risk of Harm

- Child Protection Authorities
- The Police
- Child Safe Standards Representative

Allegation against Faith Community Personnel

- Professional Standards Office/Unit
- Senior* Faith Community Leader
- Child Safe Standards Representative



Criminal Act

- Police
- Senior* Faith Community Leader
- Child Safe Standards Representative

What else do I need to do?

- Make immediate environment safe for children
- Complete an incident report and other relevant paper work required
- Seek support or debriefing for all involved
- Follow up on any actions required from reports
- Observe privacy and confidentiality legislation and only inform relevant or appropriate people. Information should not be shared otherwise.

***Special Information**

In the case that the allegation involves a Senior Faith Community Leader, this matter must be referred directly to the 'Faith Communities Professional Standards Office.'

IN THE CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

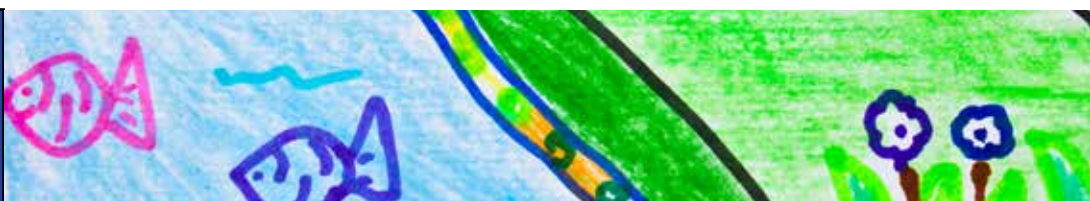
Contact 000 – if a child is in immediate danger.

Child Protection Authorities

Victoria Department of Health and Human Services

Tel. 131 278 (after hours emergency)

www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/crisis-and-emergency/reporting-child-abuse



INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORT FORM – sample

<Name of Faith Community Organisation>

SECTION A – The Details

DATE (of report)	WRITTEN BY
Date of incident:	
PERSON(S) INVOLVED	
Personnel informed: <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Ministry Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Ministry Coordinator <input type="checkbox"/> Pastoral Care Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Safe Child Safe Standards Representative <input type="checkbox"/> Safeguarding Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	

Type of Incident	
<input type="checkbox"/> injury	<input type="checkbox"/> behaviour
<input type="checkbox"/> disclosure*	<input type="checkbox"/> property damage
<input type="checkbox"/> environment/safety	<input type="checkbox"/> other ____ (specify)

*NB: If disclosure of abuse – please also complete the Risk of Significant Harm and Reporting Concerns Forms

SECTION B – The Incident

DETAILS OF INCIDENT	

ACTION TAKEN
OUTCOMES (if known)

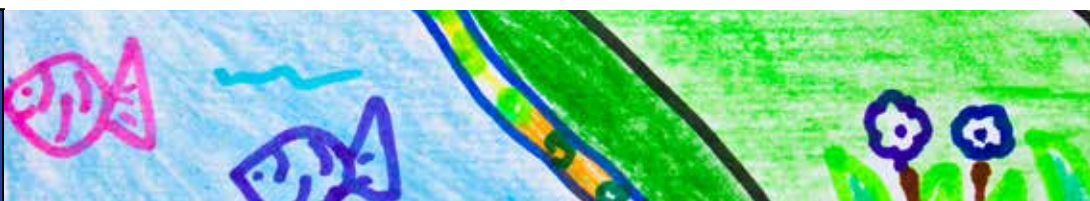
SECTION C – Follow up/Analysis

Follow up comments:	The type of incident is:
	<input type="checkbox"/> first report <input type="checkbox"/> subsequent report
	Have appropriate steps been taken? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If No (to either of the above), what needs to be done?	

Print Name: _____ Signed: _____

Reported to (Personnel informed)

Print Name: _____ Signed: _____



Reporting Concerns Form – Sample

Once the form is completed, please hand to Team Leader or Child Safe Standards Representative.

Details of Child or Young Person of Concern

Name of person:		
Age:		Date of birth: (if known)
Name(s) of parents/guardian(s): (if applicable)		
Child's address:		

Your details

Your Name:	Team Leader Name:	Date and time of report/ incident:
Your Role:	Contact information:	
Relationship to person of concern:		

Describe concerns and disclosures:

Provide as much information as possible, based on facts and observations.

If there is not enough space, please turn over.



Risk of Significant Harm Form (ROSH) – Sample

This information is to be kept strictly confidential and not to be used for any other reason except for the purpose of reporting the Risk of Significant Harm.

Appropriate record keeping procedures are to be observed when filing this report.

The provision of information to the Statutory Authorities for the protection of a child or young person is not a breach of confidentiality.

Date of Disclosure: _____ Time of Disclosure: _____

Your Details

Full Name: _____

Contact Number(s): _____

Email Address: _____

Role/title: _____

Child or Young Person Details

Full Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: (if known) _____

Contact Number: _____

Parent/Carer/Guardian Details

Full Name: _____

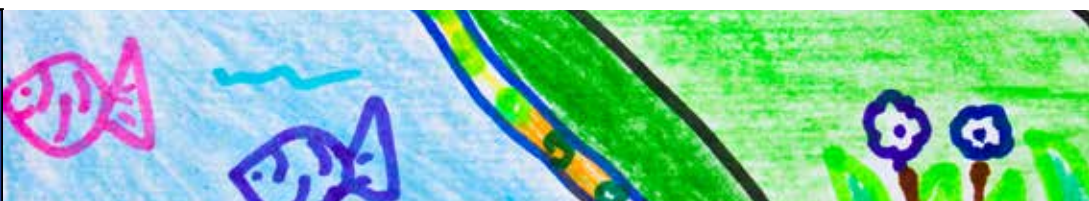
Address: (if known) _____

Contact Number: _____

Is he/she aware of the disclosure? Yes ☐ No ☐

Does this disclosure involve a family member? Yes ☐ No ☐

Comments: _____



Alleged Perpetrator Details (if Known)

Complete as much information that you know

Full Name: _____

Address: (if known) _____

Contact Number: _____

Does the child know this person? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, provide the details of the relationship

Is this person involved in the Faith Community? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, in what capacity? _____

Disclosure Details

Please provide details of the concern, allegation or complaint.

Include dates and times and location of incident(s) as disclosed (if known).

Does the child or young person know this disclosure is being documented?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Child Safe Action Taken

Does this disclosure refer to Faith Community worker misconduct?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Has this been referred to the designated Child Safe Standards Representative?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, explain why _____

If yes please provide details of the referral

Date of referral: _____ Time of referral: _____



Referred to: _____
Position/Title/Role: _____
Contact Number: _____
Email address: _____

Child Protection Action Taken

Does this disclosure require a report to Statutory Authorities? Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, explain why _____

If yes please provide details of the report

Date of report: _____ Time of report: _____

Please include advice or guidance given by the State Child Protection Authorities and attach any correspondence to this report

Follow up action required

Please provide details of follow up action to take place

Form Completed

Full name: _____ Role: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

(Also to be signed by the Child Safe Standards Representative / Coordinator of program)

Full name: _____ Role: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

This form should be handed to the Child Safe Standards Representative, or equivalent and be kept securely for record keeping and follow-up purposes.



The Child Safety Reporting Process



Who can report?

Parent

Child

Staff member or volunteer

What to report?

Any child safety concerns, including:

- Disclosure of abuse or harm
- Allegation, suspicion or observation
- Breach of Code of Conduct
- Environmental safety issues

Call 000 if a child is in immediate danger

How?

Face-to-face verbal report, letter, email, telephone call, meeting

Who to?

Child Safe Standards Representative, Faith Community Leader, Children's Ministry Leader

What happens next?

The Child Safe Standards Representative, Faith Community Leader or Children's Ministry Leader will:

- Offer support to the child, the parents, the person who reports and the accused staff member or volunteer
- Initiate internal processes to ensure the safety of the child, clarify the nature of the complaint and commence disciplinary process (if required)
- decide, in accordance with legal requirements and duty of care, whether the matter should be reported to the police or Child Protection and make report as soon as possible if required

Outcome

Investigation: outcome decided; relevant staff, volunteers, parents and child notified of outcome of investigation; policies, procedures updated where necessary



Child Safe Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

By identifying potential risks before they occur ensures your organisation is taking a preventative approach. Examine your Risk Management Plan. Understand the level of risk associated with your organisation and the services and activities it provides. Discuss the risks of each activity or event. Seek to identify what are the risks and what can you do to reduce these risk. It helps to include children and young people in this discussion as they may have some specific experiences that further your understanding of the risks.. Have your committee approve these documents and procedures and commit to reviewing them annually. And encourage the leaders to use them!

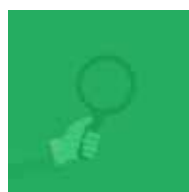
Strategies to identify and reduce or remove the risk of child abuse

Planning to reduce risk

- Think about your organisation, its activities and the children it provides services to, and planning how to make your activities as safe as possible this is often called a risk management approach
- Be proactive to reduce the likelihood of risks emerging or escalating, rather than responding when harm has occurred

Next Steps for Standard 6

- Adopt a risk management approach
- Develop a risk management plan
 - Establish the context
 - Consult and communicate
 - Identify and analyse the risks
 - Monitor and review
- Electronic communication safety
 - Cyberbullying
 - Online grooming
 - Trolling
 - Profile privacy settings



How can your community meet the standards?

- ☐ Risk Assessments are undertaken regularly for all faith community activities, programs or events
- ☐ Risk Assessments are undertaken regularly for opportunities of abuse to children for all faith community activities, programs or events
- ☐ Risk Management processes are updated and reviewed on a regular basis
- ☐ Work Health & Safety policies and procedures are observed and updated on a regular basis
- ☐ Considers the cultural safety of:
 - People of Cultural and/or Linguistic Diverse backgrounds
 - People of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background
 - People with a disability
 - Any other specific group



Risk Management including Child Safety

RISK MANAGEMENT FOR CHILD SAFE STANDARD

In Faith Communities, there are many activities which involve people from both the body and from the wider community. The risk management of these activities to children and young people need to be a priority - from corporate worship, to outreach, to ministry activities.

Definitions

Risk	A situation involving exposure to danger
Risk Assessment	A systematic process of evaluating the possible risks that may be linked to an activity or task.
Risk Management	The risk assessment along with the documentation of procedures to avoid or minimise the impact of the risk.

Principles and guidelines

The following principles outline the elements of risk management according to the "Australian Standard of Risk Management" (Australian Government 2010).

Identify Risks

Identify where, when, why and how events could prevent, delay or degrade the main outcome of the event, activity or meeting.

Analyse Risks

Determine the likelihood of the risks to occur and the potential consequences related to the risks and how these could occur.

Evaluate Risks

Compare the level of risk against the potential adverse outcomes so that decisions can be made on how to manage the priorities.

Control Risks

Develop and implement strategies and action plans which are cost effective and beneficial to all involved.

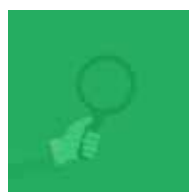
Monitor and Review Risks

Monitor the effectiveness of the processes put in place. Provide feedback for improvement, considering on any follow up required from incidences.

**ALL NEW ACTIVITIES WITHIN FAITH COMMUNITIES SHOULD BE
SUBJECT TO A FORMAL RISK ASSESSMENT PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT.**

ALL RISK ASSESSMENTS SHOULD BE UPDATED ON A REGULAR BASIS.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT IT BE TO UPDATED ANNUALLY AND WHENEVER
THERE IS A CHANGE OF PROGRAM AND LEADERSHIP**



Risk Management - Child Safety Risks

Types of Child Safety Risks

Potential child safety risks could occur within your programs, events and services.

Accidental Harm

- Poor physical environment leading to injury
- Poor supervision
- High-risk activity

Physical Abuse

- Physical punishment
- Pushing, shoving
- Punching, slapping, biting, kicking

Psychological / emotional Abuse

- Bullying
- Threatening language
- Shaming
- Intentional ignoring and isolating
- Spiritual abuse (see below)

Neglect

- Lack of supervision
- Not providing adequate nourishment
- Not providing adequate clothing or shelter
- Not meeting the specific physical or cognitive needs of children

Sexual Abuse

- Sexual abuse, assault and exploitation
- Grooming
- Inappropriate touching
- Inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature
- Crossing professional boundaries

Cultural/Spiritual Abuse

- Lack of cultural respect, racial or cultural vilification or discrimination
- Lack of support to enable a child to be aware of and express their cultural identity
- Use of positional power and control and using prayer/scripture as a means of manipulation

Online Abuse

- Abusive texts and emails
- Hurtful messages, images or videos
- Intimidated others online
- Grooming - Sending a child offensive, confronting or obscene content (or asking for inappropriate photos)
- Singling a child out for a 'special' relationship.

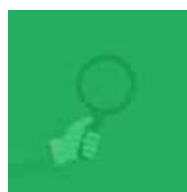


Risk Management – Safety Risks

Areas of risk

Considerations of safety risks within various procedural processes and physical safety and what should be in place to control/minimise these risks.

Safe Recruitment and management of leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reference checks• WWCC• Interview/Inductions• Probation period• Leadership Application• Adequate ratios• Child safety Training• Refresher Training• Child Protection/Child Safe Policy• Code of Conduct signed	Consent / Permission <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relevant consent forms completed by a parent/guardian• Video/photography consent form been given• Emergency contacts made available to core leaders• Dietary requirements and allergies noted	Safe environment <ul style="list-style-type: none">• First Aid kit• Appointed first aid officers• Risk Assessment completed• Identified Risks managed• Record keeping/privacy policies
Transportation of Children and Young people <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Permission given or private arrangements made with parent/guardian• Ensure no leader is left alone with a child or young person• Road safety rules and provisional license holders restrictions	Electronic communications to children and young people <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electronic Communications / Social Media policies• Social Media guidelines• Privacy Confidentiality policies• Code of Conduct	Responding to abuse disclosures / allegations of misconduct <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child safety Training• Refresher Training• Child Protection/Child Safe Policy• Responding to disclosures guidelines• Identified Risks managed• Record keeping/privacy policies• Risk Assessment completed• Code of Conduct• Misconduct policies• Complaints and grievance procedures



Risk Assessment Tool for Child Safety

Using the risk assessment matrix and the category of risk descriptions below there are a number of potential risk factors presented in a Faith Community context.

Category of Risk	Description
Grooming	Physical or psychological actions which involve manipulative cultivation of relationships with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Also referred to as "coercion". Grooming is a form of sexual misconduct.
Safety	Physical, emotional, spiritual safety; being protected from danger, risk, or injury.
Touch	Any form of physical contact
Privacy	Referring to privacy and confidentiality legislation, people's right to privacy is to be protected, and information to be kept confidential.
Disclosure	When someone informs another about an experience of abuse or risk of harm. This could be a direct or indirect disclosure.

Table 1 Category of risk description examples

Likelihood	Risk level				
	Medium	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
Almost certain	Medium	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
Likely	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
Possible	Low	Medium	High	High	Extreme
Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Rare	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Consequence	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic

Table 2 Risk Assessment Matrix



The example is given to assist faith communities to develop their risk management plan to uphold child safety risk management strategies

Identifying Risk		Risk Assessment			
<i>Category</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Likelihood</i>	<i>Consequence</i>	<i>Risk Level</i>	<i>Management (for LOW RISK)</i>
Leadership	Lack of or minimal awareness and commitment for a Child Safe organisation	Possible	Catastrophic	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Code of Conduct - Child Protection Policies - Strategies to address organisational culture of child safety - Commitment Statement to child safety - Ongoing agenda item within leadership
Reportable conduct	Misconduct unreported and failure to address behaviour surrounding misconduct	Unlikely	Catastrophic	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training for all staff, volunteers, leaders etc. - Grievance procedures in place - Code of Conduct and Child Protection policies - Procedures and protocols responding to misconduct
Recruitment	Selection of inappropriate personnel Lack of proper screening processes and reference checking	Possible	Major	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reference Checking - Pre-screening interviews - Criminal History checks - Working with children checks - Probation period
Grooming	Engagement with children online Breaching appropriate conduct in person with a child/children	Possible	Moderate	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Code of Conduct - Training for all staff, volunteers, leaders etc. - Security and privacy settings on social media and devices used by organisation - Regular monitoring of any Social Media sites used for ministry to children by an appointed person
Privacy	Use of images or video of children and young people without parental consent	Possible	Minor	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Code of Conduct - Training for all staff, volunteers, leaders etc. - Photo release forms (permission) - Photo and video policies

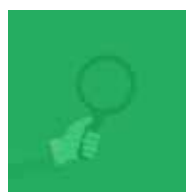


PHOTO and VIDEO POLICY – sample

The following is provided as guidelines from Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) “Images of children and young people online” CFCA Resource fact Sheet -April 2015

<Faith Community Organisation> will follow the following guidelines

- Obtain permission from the parent or guardian and clearly outline the purpose of using the image, how it is going to be used and for how long. If the image is going to be taken in a venue away from **<Faith Community Organisation>**.
- Inform parents if **<Faith Community Organisation>** wants to film children or the group for analytical purposes.
- Make sure professional photographers are aware that any images taken will remain the property of **<Faith Community Organisation>** and cannot be used or sold for other purposes. Any negatives and memory card/USB must also be handed over to **<Faith Community Organisation>**.
- Do not allow photographers to be unsupervised or with individual access to children.
- Be mindful of identifying personal information accompanying photographs, such as the child’s name, address or telephone number. Group photographs reduce the risk of identifying individual children.
- Only use images of children that are relevant to **<Faith Community Organisation>** activities. Particular care needs to be taken when using images of children for **<Faith Community Organisation>** activities that involve minimal clothing (e.g. swimming and camp activities).
- Be mindful of listing children’s hobbies, likes or dislikes, school, etc. when using the images because these can be used as grooming tools.
- Be mindful of privacy settings on websites when producing images online. Most websites are public places that any person can access; however, some websites can be made accessible only to registered personnel.
- Provide details for parents or other persons on who to contact if they have concerns or complaints around the use of inappropriate images or inappropriate behaviour in obtaining images.
- Obtain “Non-Exclusive Use” Permission from those involved in livestreaming events.

We are committed to reviewing our Policy and good practice annually.

This Policy was last reviewed on: (date)

Signed:

<this should be signed by the most senior person in your faith community organisation>



Child Safe Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

There are many benefits to your organisation in enabling children and young people to participate and be empowered. They are more likely to speak up if they feel valued and respected. Often they don't know what to do if they feel unsafe. Knowing that your organisation is a safe place for them will increase their self-esteem and confidence. They will feel safe and be strong enough to speak up when they don't feel safe.

Empowerment and participation

Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

- Support children and young people to understand their rights, contribute to child safety planning and to raise concerns
- Actively promote the participation of children
- Value and respect children's opinions
- Seek their views about what makes them feel safe and unsafe, including cultural safety
- Encourage children's participation in decision making
- Establish an environment of trust and inclusion that enables children to ask questions and speak up if they are worried or feeling unsafe

Next Steps for Standard 7

- Promote the participation of children
- Talk to children about safety
- Consulting children
 - Establish what safety means
 - Educate children about their right to safety
 - Include children in policy development
 - Encourage children to develop their code of conduct



How can your community meet the standards?

- ☐ The Faith Community consults children and young people about the decisions that affect them
- ☐ Children and young people are aware of their rights to be safe, how to raise concerns and are taken seriously if they raise concerns
- ☐ The Faith Community regularly creates opportunities for children and young people to provide insights in to planning, preparation, action and feedback for activities that involve them
- ☐ Appropriate information is provided to children and young people regarding their rights, what abuse is and how to respond or report it.



Fact Sheet - Involving children and young people in creating and maintaining a safe faith community

When everyone is involved in decision-making, everyone benefits.

Benefits to children and young people:

- Participation allows them to have their say about the issues that affect them
- Participation helps to make them feel empowered and involved in the issues facing them
- It can make them aware of potential risks, their own safety and what to do if they have any concerns
- Having children and young people involved means that they will know in advance what to expect if changes are made, and will be prepared to assist in making those changes happen
- The experience of being involved in the decision-making process will benefit the Faith Community in the long-term, by obtaining knowledge, skills and experience for future use

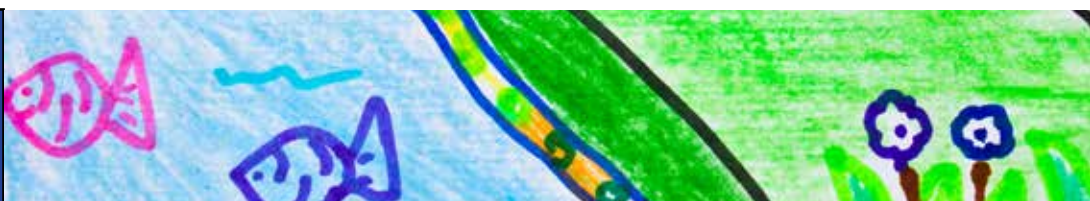
Benefits to the Faith Community:

- Relationships between those in leadership with children and young people will improve. Higher levels of respect and trust will form, leading to a safe environment
- Input from children and young people will improve the quality of policies and procedures, and will ensure that these documents and processes are informed by their perspectives
- It will become easier to implement and reinforce policies and procedures, because they will already have knowledge of the policies and procedures through assisting in the development of them
- Involving children and young people provides insight that assists in making the Faith Community and the people safer
- It enriches the Faith Community as all people will be more confident and able to contribute new ideas

To involve children and young people effectively, Faith Communities need to remember:

- Children and young people should be involved in decision-making in all areas that affect them, but need resources and empowerment to make it happen
- They need to be supported with their decision-making processes
- It is ok to introduce children and young people's participation gradually, as it requires support and resources to be effective. Start small, and gradually increase participation.





Where to from here?

“A child safe organisation takes deliberate steps to protect children and young people from physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and cultural abuse, and neglect. This commitment to protecting children must be embedded in your organisation’s culture and policies. Responsibility for taking action must be understood and accepted by everyone.” (*Commission for Children and Young People (2015), A guide for creating a child safe organisation 2.0, pg 9*)

Change the culture of your organisation

“Creating a culture of child safety within your organisation is vital to lowering the risk of harm to children. Child abuse must be acknowledged, expectations of behaviour must be clearly explained and accepted, and strategies such as robust recruitment practices must be in place. By building a strong culture of child safety, you will reduce the ability for potential abusers to be opportunistic. There should be a high expectation that everyone in your organisation is committed to child safety. This needs to be led and facilitated by your leadership and should be consistent with your organisation’s aims and values.” (*Commission for Children and Young People (2015), A guide for creating a child safe organisation 2.0, pg 16*)

Organise and perform a child safe review of your organisation

Develop a child safe committee and work through the checklist attached with them. This committee should include representatives from your child and youth populations as well as key leaders, staff, volunteers and perhaps even some parents.

Look at the policies and procedures your organisation already has in place and identify strengths and areas for improvement. As you are working through the child safe review checklist, let your conversation focus on the diverse needs of children, particularly referencing the child safe principles.

When you have completed the child safe review, you will have identified the areas in which you need to improve. Decide what tasks need to be done, who is going to do it and by when. Then set another date for the next review where discussion will take place around these tasks. You need to also set a date for an annual review where you reflect on how effective the new procedures and policies are.

Develop a Child Safe Policy or Statement of Commitment to child safety

“A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety articulates an organisation’s approach and culture to provide the highest level of protection for children in its care and provides information and guidance on child safety within the organisation.” (*Commission for Children and Young People (2015), A guide for creating a child safe organisation 2.0, pg 22*) There are sample documents attached to help you with this. Be sure to consult widely and discuss the draft with your committee and adjust to ensure it reflects your organisation’s values and beliefs before approving the policy. Then communicate your policy to everyone in the organisation.

“This policy or statement to child safety affirms your commitment to child safety and clearly states that your organisation has a zero tolerance for child abuse, and is committed to the best interest of children and to keeping them safe. That your organisation actively works to listen to and empower children and your people. When new members, or new staff or volunteers join ensure their induction includes information about the policy, particularly the code of conduct. Perhaps print the policy or statement and display it where everyone can see.” (*Adapted from Commission for Children and Young People (2015), A guide for creating a child safe organisation 2.0, pg 22*)

Create a Code of Conduct

“A Code of Conduct lists behaviours that are acceptable and those that are unacceptable. It states professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and acceptable and unacceptable relationships. When staff, volunteers, parent and children are clear about expectations, they are more likely to act appropriately with each other.” (*Commission for Children and Young People (2015), A guide for creating a child safe organisation 2.0, pg 26*)

Your Code of Conduct enables you to take action if someone is behaving in an unacceptable manner. Without one it can be very difficult to raise issues with staff and volunteers.

Again, there is a sample Code of Conduct attached to start you off. It is important that your Code of Conduct reflects your organisation. It needs to be in plain language. Please consult widely before approving the code. Also review the Code of Conduct annually to check it remains relevant.

You may need to conduct training on the Code for existing staff and volunteers which instructs them on not only what the acceptable behaviour is, but also on what to do when unacceptable behaviour is observed and how to raise a complaint.



Recruiting

Selecting suitable people to work with children is vital. If you take good care during the recruitment phase; you are more likely to screen out people who are unsuitable to work with children.

Examine and update your job descriptions and duty statements to reflect your policy statement. Mention your commitment to child safety in any job advertisements. Be mindful of child safety when interviewing for a position. Reference checks are crucial. Remember to follow fair employment process and follow requirements of privacy legislation and laws relating to unlawful discrimination. Only employ people with a Working with Children Check. You must ensure that all ministers of religion pass the Working with Children Check.

On-going training and performance monitoring is beneficial not only for the worker but also for the organisation. Staff should continually be trained in understanding the nature and signs of child abuse. They should have a good understanding of the reporting procedure. Those responsible for the supervision of staff and volunteers need to provide them with adequate support as well as monitoring their performance. They need to give honest feedback if people aren't working to the Code of Conduct.

Responding and reporting

A well publicised reporting procedure must be in place with all staff and volunteers clear on how to use it. Attached are samples of forms you may like to adapt to suit your organisation. Staff and volunteers and even children and young people should know where to find these forms and who to ask for assistance to complete them and hand them in.

Risk assessment

By identifying potential risks before they occur ensures your organisation is taking a preventative approach. Examine your Risk Management Plan. Understand the level of risk associated with your organisation and the services and activities it provides. Discuss the risks of each activity or event. What are the risks and what can you do to reduce the risk. Include children and young people in this discussion. Have your committee approve these documents and procedures and commit to reviewing them annually. And encourage the leaders to use them!

Promote empowerment of children and young people

There are many benefits to your organisation in enabling children and young people to participate and be empowered. They are more likely to speak up if they feel valued and respected. Often they don't know what to do if they feel unsafe. Knowing that your organisation is a safe place for them will increase their self-esteem and confidence. They will feel safe and be strong enough to speak up when they don't feel safe.

Next steps

Having worked through the seven standards, identify what further information, advice and support you need. Find out where to get support. And work within clear timeframes remembering the 1 January 2017 implementation date, and the need to review and improve your response to child safety continually into the future.



Appendices

For further information regarding:

- Counselling and support services
- Definitions of abuse and neglect
- Staged implementation of reportable conduct scheme
- CCYP Further assistance

Counselling and support services

- The Centre Against Sexual Assault
<http://www.casa.org.au> 1800 806 292
- 1800RESPECT National Sexual Assault, Domestic Family Violence Counselling Service
<https://www.1800respect.org.au> 1800 737 732
- Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre
<http://www.safesteps.org.au> 1800 015 188
- Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service
<http://www.fvpls.org> 1800 105 303
- inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence
<http://intouch.asn.au> 1800 755 988

Definitions of Abuse and Neglect

- ***Physical abuse***

Physical abuse occurs when a child suffers or is likely to suffer significant harm from a non-accidental injury or injuries inflicted by another person. Physical violence can be inflicted in many ways, including beating, shaking, burning or use of weapons (such as, belts).

- ***Sexual abuse***

Sexual abuse occur when a person involves a child in sexual activity, or deliberately puts the child in the presence of sexual behaviours that are exploitative or inappropriate to his/her age and development.

Child sexual abuse can involve a range of sexual activity. It can also include exposure to or exploitation through pornography or prostitution, as well as grooming behaviour.

- ***Serious emotional or psychological abuse***

serious emotional or psychological abuse occurs when harm is inflicted on a child through repeated rejection, isolation, or by threats or violence.

It can include derogatory name-calling and put-downs, or persistent and deliberate coldness from a person, to the extent where the behaviour of the child is disturbed or their emotional development is at serious risk of being impaired.

Serious emotional or psychological abuse could also result from conduct that exploits a child without necessarily being criminal, such as encouraging a child to engage in inappropriate or risky behaviours.

- ***Serious neglect***

Serious neglect is the continued failure to provide a child with the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, shelter, hygiene, medical attention or adequate supervision, to the extent that the child's health, safety and/or development is, or is likely to be, jeopardised.

Serious neglect can also occur if an adult fails to adequately ensure the safety of a child where the child is exposed to extremely dangerous or life threatening situations.



Commission for Children and Young People Further assistance

Resources and tools are available at:

<http://www.ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/index.htm>

These include:

- A Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation
- Child safe organisations, tip sheets
- Child safety tip sheets for parents

Information line (CCYP)

(03) 8601 5281 or email childsafestandards@ccyp.vic.gov.au

Betrayal of Trust report

Inquiry Report implementation can be found at: <http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/betrayal+of+trust+implementation>



*For more information regarding this toolkit
visit www.childsafestandards.org.au*