Anglican Church Diocese of Bunbury

Safe Ministry

Manual

Safe Ministry Manual

Contents

Introduction

Safe Ministry refers to God-honouring, life-giving and harm-free ministry.

First and foremost **safe ministry** is about God's love for all people. It is in response to His love for us, we as His people, demonstrate His love and care for each other. This occurs as we act in safe ways towards each other, truly living out Jesus' new commandment to love one another and that by this, all people will know that we are His disciples (John 13:34-35).

Safe ministry occurs as all those who represent the church, including those who minister with children and young people, fulfil their biblical (pastoral), legal, organisational and risk management responsibilities. This often feels like wearing many 'hats' at once. Additionally these hats, when responding to complex child protection situations, can often feel in conflict e.g. pastoral -vs- risk management responses.

Safe Ministry…
as we fulfil our responsibilities

Pastoral · Organisational · Legal · Risk Management

The hats model adapted from James Cobble

The focus of **safe ministry**, is ensuring that all those who represent the church do all they can to promote the spiritual, physical and emotional well-being of people they serve, with special regard to age, ability, cultural heritage and circumstance.

It is essential that those who operate (govern) the church and those who attend church and ministry programs are involved and clear about their responsibilities for keeping themselves and others safe. Keeping people safe is everybody's business!

To ensure that a whole church commitment to safety does not just remain a good idea, but is given structure and kept on the agenda, SMR recommends that churches adopt and implement policies and process that become part of the church's operational documentation including:

- Safe Ministry Policy (including child protection)
- Participation & inclusion of children and caregivers
- Training & resourcing of workers
- Responding to child protection & safety concerns
- Record keeping
- Conflict resolution procedure
- Implementation strategy
- Recruitment procedures
- Supervision of workers (codes of conduct)
- Safe environments
- Responding to incidents
- Workplace investigation procedure

About this manual

SMR acknowledges that across the Christian church there are different theological perspectives. The Manual comes from a trinitarian, grace-based perspective, which is that of the writers. We also wish to express that the main concepts in this course, 'duty of care' , 'being respectful in our boundary- crossings', 'protection of the vulnerable' and 'safe environments' are all an expressions of love for one another, a love which comes from God.

The manual aims to assist church workers in understanding their pastoral, organisational, legal and risk management responsibilities towards reducing the instances of ministry misconduct, abuse, and duty of care and/or safety failures, and to provide churches with general good practice advice for Safe Ministry.

SMR recognises that this Manual does not ensure *Safe Ministry*, but that this will be achieved through the implementation of robust policy, procedures and through safe ministry interactions.

Due to the changing nature of government requirements and legislation, this manual is revised and updated annually.

The Manual has been updated in 2018 to take into account the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse ('**Royal Commission'**) recommendations December 2017.

Unless otherwise stated, all Bible verses quoted are from the New International Version 2011 ©.

NATIONAL COMMITMENT TO SAFETY FOR PEOPLE

Australia has a high commitment to safety for all people, expressed in legislation and government policy relating to child and vulnerable people protection. In addition to the common law concept of duty of care, Australian has specific federal and state laws to protect people such as; child protection, working with children check, sexual harassment, sexual consent, work health and safety, and company regulations.

RESPONDING TO THE ROYAL COMMISSION AND BEYOND

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission) concluded in 2017. Over 5 years, the Royal Commission conducted research, held public enquiries, listened in private session to the stories of over 8,000 victims of child sexual abuse in institutional settings, made 2,575 referrals to authorities (including police) and produced its final report in December 2017.

Volume 16 of the final report addressed religious institutions and included both recommendations to specific faith groups and twenty eight (28) recommendations to all faith groups.

By 30 June 2018 all Australian governments (state, territory and federal) published their responses to the Royal Commission's recommendations. These responses have seen changes in laws in many jurisdictions. There has also been the introduction of a National Redress Scheme and establishment of a National Office for Child Safety.

The 10 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (pictured below) have also been released at a National level. These were previously released as the Royal Commission's 10 Standards, and are good practice for organisations who provide services to children.

Whilst these principles are not binding (laws) they do provide helpful benchmarks for best practice in child safety.

Principle 1: *"leadership, governance and culture,"* is the starting place for this commitment. There needs to be an ongoing organisational commitment to a culture of safety. This commitment goes beyond policy and procedures, to safe thinking and acting, safe interactions and involvement. This includes resourcing with personnel and with necessary finances for implementation of policy and procedures. In a church context this commitment needs to extend to all people God has placed in our care, from children to the elderly, and in particular those in need of special care (the vulnerable).

The Anglican Church Commitment

The Safe Ministry Commission of the Anglican General Synod

Acknowledging the broadening scope of Professional Standards, the formerly established Professional Standards Commission of the General Synod of the Anglican Church has been renamed as the Safe Ministry Commission, which aims to:

(a) examine questions of professional standards, safe ministry practices and training, the protection of children and adults from abuse, and care and support for ordained and authorised lay ministers, referred to it by the Primate, the Standing Committee or the General Synod, and to report thereon to the referring party and the Standing Committee;

(b) make recommendations to the Standing Committee on matters relating to professional standards, safe ministry practices and training, the protection of children and adults from abuse, and care and support for ordained and authorised lay ministers.
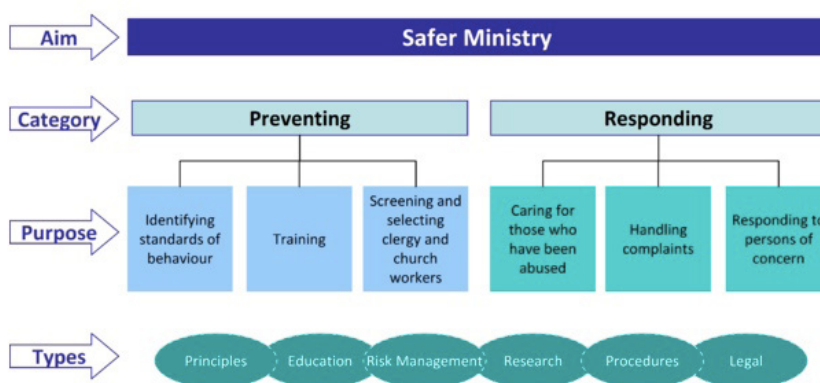
For more information on the work and resources of the General Synod's Safe Ministry Commission go to https://www.anglican.org.au/professional-standards-commission

The General Synod's commitment to safe ministry is expressed in its 'Being together' statement: Expectations of behaviour in our church community

Jesus told us to love one another as He loves us. As Christians we know our life together is strengthened when our behaviour is consistent with our faith. However, our experience of being together can be difficult, particularly when there are differences. So it is important to be clear about how we will behave towards each other.

Being a community:
- We will value the wellbeing of others.
- We will encourage each other to participate in the life of the church.
- We will consider the impact of our behaviour on others.

Relating to each other:
- We will treat each other with respect and dignity, irrespective of ability, gender, sexuality, race, age or contribution to the church.
- We will act with integrity and honesty in our interactions with each other.

Communicating with each other:
- We will communicate respectfully with others, and not in a way that threatens, belittles or humiliates.
- We will speak with integrity and honesty, and refrain from speculation and gossip.

Acknowledging difference:
- We will respect those who are different from us and not isolate or ridicule them.
- We will listen to and seek to understand the beliefs, opinions and practices of others even when we do not share their views.

Responding to conflict:
- We will accept responsibility for our part in a conflict.
- We will be willing to play our part in resolving a conflict.

(Adopted by General Synod 2014, 45/14)

At the General Synod of the Anglican Church in 2017, as part of its ongoing commitment to Safe Ministry, the following Canons were amended or introduced:

- Safe Ministry to Children
- The Episcopal Standards (Child Protection)
- The Holy Orders (Removal from Exercise of Ministry)
- Constitution (Jurisdiction of special tribunal) amendment
- Special tribunal amendment
- Concerning confessions (revision)
- Disclosure of information
- Redress for survivors of abuse
- National register amendment
- Offenses amendment
- Special tribunal (limitation period) amendment
- Concerning confessions (vulnerable persons)

Diocesan Commitment

Establishing and maintaining Safe Ministry expresses our Diocese's commitment to our pastoral, biblical, insurance, legal and common law duty of care responsibilities with the intended goal that all ministries are spiritually, emotionally and physically safe. In our Diocese we are required to abide by the laws surrounding Work Health and Safety, Child Protection, Working With Children Checks, domestic and family violence as well as common law duty of care.

Our commitment to Safe Ministry is seen in our ordinances, policies and protocols for safe ministry. This ongoing commitment towards safe ministry includes our:
- *Professional Standards Statute 2004*
- *Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017*
- *Diocesan Legislation: Parochial statute 2017-2018*
- *Faithfulness in Service 2016*
- *Safe Church policies and Procedures*
- *Licensing Statute 2017*

Safe Ministry education

SMR recommends that every volunteer (team members) working with 0 -18 year olds and vulnerable adults, along with all team leaders, ministry co-ordinators, pastors, and church governance boards, attend a Safe Ministry education workshop or online training every 3 years.

Safe Ministry Resources can provide resources for this training and also provide a facilitator for training for groups of presenters (price on application).

Anglican Safe Ministry eTraining - Induction: SMR is now offering a Safe Ministry eTraining Induction.

This Induction is provided through 'Openlearning.com' and is accessed through *www.smr.org.au.*

For more information about Safe Church in the Diocese contact the Diocesan Safe Church Co-ordinator through the Diocesan Office on (08) 9721 2100

If you have a concern or complaint in relations to Professional Standards or to report suspected abuse or serious breaches of Faithfulness in Service contact:
   Tracie Chambers-Clark - Director Professional Standards
   Tel: (08) 9425 7203 Mob: 0419 935 889 Email: tchambers-clark@perth.anglican.org

For insurance reporting or enquiries contact the Diocesan Registry. Diocesan Insurance is through the Anglican National Insurance Program.

Some important definitions:
Church member: a person who regularly attends an Anglican church.
Church worker: church worker means a lay person undertaking any ministry to children or vulnerable persons:
(a) who is licensed or authorised by the bishop of a diocese; or
(b) who is employed by a church body; or
(c) who, for payment or not, holds a position or performs a function with the actual or apparent authority of a church authority or church body;
Church entities: parishes, ministry units, camps, Anglicare and op shops and any other church organisations or activities.
Anglican ministry: programs, activities, service of worship and any other ministry associated with the Anglican church, whether or not on church property.

Chapter 1
Safe Ministry foundations

This chapter aims to develop awareness of:
• the biblical basis for safe ministry
• the foundational concepts of safe ministry

Safe Ministry refers to church events, programs, experiences and interactions conducted in a *God-honouring, life-giving and harm-free manner.*

The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of the key concepts which are foundational to ministry being safe. These are the concepts upon which Safe Ministry policy and procedures are developed and implemented. In this chapter these key concepts are called the Safe Ministry Foundations.

These Safe Ministry foundations provide both the **'why'** and **'how to'** of Safe Ministry as indicated in the diagram.

God's love for all people, God's gift of boundaries, team ministry, duty of care, and our organisational responsibilities, make up the foundational concepts of Safe Ministry. To best protect people each foundation needs to be outworked through transparent and accountable practices.

In Safe Ministry, church workers do all they can to promote the spiritual, physical and emotional well-being of all people, with special regard to age, ability, cultural heritage and circumstance. The wider congregation as well as denominational leaders also have a vital role to play in Safe Ministry.

1.1 God's love for all people

God is love! (1 John 4:16) This is the starting place for Safe Ministry for all people.

God's love is expressed in God's nature as the community God, i.e. the triune Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is into this love God invites us. He created us in His image, i.e. relational beings. We are created in love, for love.

God's love is expressed in His revelation to us throughout His word, and through His incarnation. It is because "God so loved the world", John 3:16 states, that God came into the world to save us. John 3:17 continues that Jesus came not to condemn the world, but rather, to save the world.

Jesus is the hands-on demonstration of God's love for all people, not only the religious, important or wise, but also for children, women, the lowly, the poor, the sick, sinners and tax collectors - the outcast.

In Jesus, everyone is loved! The Greek word for love in many New Testament passages is 'agape' - a love that is self-giving in its nature.

This type of love is explained in Philippians 2:1-8:

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!

In this passage we are called, in response to God's love for us, to put others first, consider others' interests, to imitate the example of Christ who emptied Himself of the glory of heaven for the sake of the world (vv.5-8).

Our primary motive for Safe Ministry is God's love for us.

As church workers we are committed to providing those who attend our services, programs and events with life-giving, harm-free, positive and nurturing experiences, as we serve out of the love God has for everyone.

1.2 Team ministry

Safe Ministry is born out of God's love for all people. We carry out ministry as the body of Christ together in respectful (appropriate boundary crossing) ways. Safe Ministry is 'ministry' in a healthy team or body of Christ context rather than 'solo' or 'my' ministry.

Serving God in the church is a privilege and responsibility. It is a position of delegated authority to influence others for God. We are not "just helpers" but rather representatives of God and His Church.

The New Testament and in particular Paul's epistles are filled with words about 'ministry' being the work of the Holy Spirit, who gifts the members of the body of Christ so that they can minister to each other.

Service in ministry roles is about playing our role in the 'body' of Christ.

In 1 Corinthians 12 we are reminded that we are all a part of the body of Christ.

Verses 4-6

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

Verses 27-31

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? Now eagerly desire the greater gifts.

We also see this idea in Romans 12:3-8:

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and

each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully (Rom 12:3-8)

In team ministry we nurture each other, enter into relationships with each other and receive ministry from each other. Teams share in ministry together. When we are part of a team by which we are supported and encouraged, and provided with an appropriate level of accountability, this protects both us, as team member and also the people we serve, from actions which may cause harm.

For example *Faithfulness in Service* reminds us in Guideline 4.12 to:
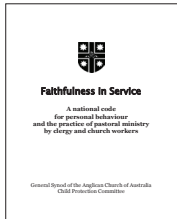
"Recognise the limits of your skills and experience. Do not undertake any ministry (such as relationship counselling, counselling for abuse or addictions, or an exorcism) that is beyond your competence or the role for which you have been employed or trained. If in doubt seek advice. A person who requires specialised help should be referred to an appropriately qualified person or agency."

Note: In relation to children Guideline 5.33 reminds us to *"Avoid working alone or in isolation with children."*

1.3 The gift of boundaries

In creation, God established boundaries. God created order from chaos, separating day from night, sea from land, each animal in its kind. In Genesis chapter 3 we read that in the garden, God gave humankind a boundary, i.e. to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. When this boundary was violated by the first humans, this brought about broken relationships.

Relationship boundaries in the Bible provide humanity with the pattern for loving relationships; from the Ten Commandments, and the covenant between Israel and God, through to relational frameworks such as Ephesians 5:15-21. We are to submit to one another out of reverence for God.

Boundaries and personal interactions

Boundaries define that I am distinct from you and that we are equal but separate beings.

"With boundaries, we develop trust in relationships and minimize the potential to cause harm" (Marie Fortune)

Boundaries are culturally and socially determined and include spiritual, financial, physical, emotional, language, sexual and other boundaries.

A helpful analogy for understanding boundaries in our life is that of 'fences'. A fence is a boundary. A fence tells us where one piece of land stops and another starts. Not all fences are the same shape or size or have the same purpose.
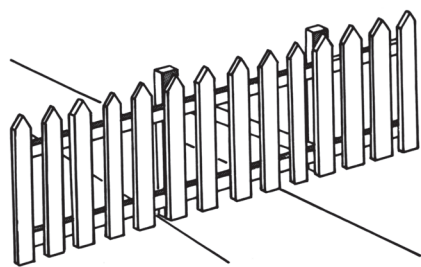
There are flexible fences. These are ones which can be moved depending upon the situation.

There are also inflexible fences, like a prison wall. This type of fence is a boundary that is not meant to be crossed.

There are also fences that need crossing, such as a paddock fence which has a wooden ladder over it to allow for a safe fence crossing.

Ministry boundaries

Ministry is first and foremost about serving people, not just running events or programs.

Our ministry role impacts the shape of our relationships and interactions. It is not just that a relationship exists, but the very nature of that relationship with others, means that there will be personal interactions between those on ministry teams as well as the people the leaders are ministering to and with. At times ministry interactions can become complicated by the nature of the dual relationship, strained and conflict may even emerge.

As church workers we need to be respectful, and carefully navigate other people's boundaries. This is not just about being respectful of the boundaries of others, but consciously engaging in respectful relationships and interactions. The burden is on us as church workers to establish and maintain healthy boundaries and to cross boundaries only when and where it is appropriate. That is, church workers must put other people's needs before their own and act in other people's best interests.

In ministry we will need to cross boundaries regularly, such as when we speak to a person, send a text message, shake someone's hand or challenge another person's point of view. These can all be part of normal and acceptable boundary-crossing within a ministry context.

We also need to be mindful of possible dual roles/relationships we have with others. Where we have two or more roles in a person's life, such as a pastor and congregation member who is also a family member, we need to ensure appropriate management of the associated implications.

In crossing a boundary, our focus is on what is good for the other person and acknowledging that they have the ability to retain or reclaim the boundary.

Four important questions we can ask ourselves before crossing a boundary are:

- Is this the right time to cross this boundary?
- Is this the right place to cross this boundary?
- Is this the right circumstance for this boundary-crossing?
- Is this boundary-crossing right for this person?

Some ministry boundaries are flexible: How we interact within the boundaries may be different depending on the time, place, circumstance and the people we are serving.

Some ministry boundaries are inflexible: They are designed to show us clearly where we must not go. Codes of conduct provide professional boundaries that should never be crossed.
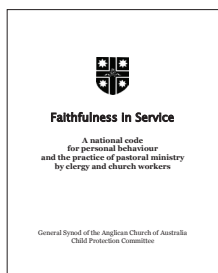
The Anglican National Code of Conduct *Faithfulness in Service* - Section 4.11-20 provides guidance for safe ministry boundary crossings. e.g. S.4.11 *Make sure you are clear about the requirements of your role, including the hours to be worked and the nature of your responsibilities as well as your leave and other entitlements. You need to be sure that your legitimate personal needs can be met.*

Section 5 Children of *Faithfulness in Service* is now the National Anglican code of conduct for ministry with children, as established by the Canon for Safe Ministry to Children 2017 and each Diocese's adopting ordinance.

1.4 Duty of care

Duty of care is a term we are more used to hearing in relation to workplace safety, and is less thought of in the church context. However, duty of care finds its origins in Jesus' directive to "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12:31) and is therefore foundational for our provision of safe ministry events and programs.

The key scripture that underpins these policy documents and guides us in all interactions within the safe ministry framework is: *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength; and the second is this: love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12:30-31).* This scripture guides us into appropriate relationships and provides the basis for the establishment and exercising of safe programs and practices, run in safe environments by safe leaders in a safe and harm-free Christian community.

Duty of care is to do everything reasonably practicable to protect others from harm.

This applies equally to buildings, kitchens, parking lots and the way we treat people. Our duty of care does not end when our program is over. Rather, it applies to all people who enter church property at all times of the day, whether we are running a program or not.

This also relates to acts of negligence, or acts of inattention or omission. The church leadership needs to be able to demonstrate that it has done all it could reasonably have done to protect others from harm. In other words, simply having policy and procedures is not enough. The question that needs to be answered is, "In that particular situation, did the church follow its policy and procedures?"

The community and congregation have expectations that those in leadership will be diligent in their duty of care. These may include ensuring that:

- workers (volunteers and paid) have been recruited, screened, appointed, inducted, and are supervised;

- a safe spiritual, emotional and physical environment is provided for all people;

- complaints or allegations of abuse and misconduct are addressed according to good practice; and

- people receive pastoral support from the church.

The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (in all states except WA & Vic) Section 19, makes it a legal requirement that: *A person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of:*

- *workers engaged, or caused to be engaged by the person; and*

- *workers whose activities in carrying out work are influenced or directed by the person;*

- *while the workers are at work in the business or undertaking.*

- *A person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of other persons is not put at risk from work carried out as part of the conduct of the business or undertaking."*

To ensure that we discharge our duty of care and in so doing meet community expectations, we need to ensure that all church-authorised programs are well-planned, having had all foreseeable risks identified, reduced or negated.

This means that we think through what is safe, then put plans in place to ensure that we act safely, including implementing policies and procedures in order to protect people in our care from potential abuse or injury, and leaders from potential allegations of abuse or injury.

1.5 Organisational responsibilities

The Church is the body of Christ and it is expressed in local settings which have organisational responsibilities.

Fulfilling organisational responsibilities can often seem like a hindrance to 'real' ministry. However, when we view these responsibilities through the lens of God's love for people, these responsibilities become an outworking of God's love. They are ways in which we express love for each other.

Administration

The Diocese is part of the Anglican Church in Australia which is governed by Canons (church rules/laws) and at a Diocesan level through Ordinances (laws) passed by the Diocesan Synod or Council. Each parish, which is the local expression of the Diocese, is administered by a Parish Council.

The Diocese has a complete set of governance documents that provide order for church administration, for example, the Parochial Administration Ordinance 2010.

The management of risks for parishes is the responsibly of the Rector and church wardens. They need to ensure they are diligent in the management of ministry programs, activities and events.

Legal

In general, the church needs to ensure that it:
- discharges its common law duty of care;
- practices due diligence in recruitment and supervision of all church workers (paid and volunteer);
- cultivates an environment that is free from violence and exploitation;
- fosters people's health as well as developmental and spiritual needs (e.g. self-respect and dignity); and
- has a process for responding to grievances and allegations of abuse and misconduct (including child protection and sexual harassment).

Specifically, the church needs to comply with all relevant State or Territory legislation such as:
- Work Health and Safety and/or other safety legislation;
- criminal codes (e.g. concealment of crime, consent, sexual harassment);
- child protection legislation;
- elder abuse legislation;
- Working With Children Checks;
- building codes;
- Australian and NZ Standards;
- ACNC governance standards (does NOT apply to basic religious charities)
- copyright and music playing licences such as APRA, CCLI, CAL licences; and
- local government food preparation and storage guidelines.

Insurance

As the church we are first and foremost a community of faith, a group of gathered believers, not a club or agency. However, as faith communities who meet in and often own buildings, appoint and license clergy, and employ workers (paid and volunteer) we are also organisations (legal entities). The Diocese, for the protection of both people and property, hold a range of insurances, from building to public liability and office holders' insurance through the Anglican National Insurance Program.

1.6 Transparency and accountability

Ministry is safest when our policy, procedures, practices and interactions are transparent and accountable. Transparency and accountability need to be practised across all of the foundational concepts of Safe Ministry.

Transparency in ministry relates to the practice of being willing and able to show others how you are caring for people. Being transparent means not only doing the right thing, but also being seen to do the right thing. As places offering ministry to vulnerable people, it is essential that churches are transparent in their motives and actions.

We need transparency in our practices such as:

- having meetings in rooms which have see-through/glass panels in the doors /walls,

- sharing sensitive pastoral information appropriately on a needs-to-know basis,

- communicating online with kids and youth program participants with parental knowledge and permission,

- ensuring that all online communications between church workers and young people are visible to other team members (not personal communications).

Accountability is about being answerable and willing to be called to account to those in authority, those we serve with and those we serve. Accountability is vital element of Safe Ministry. It implies taking responsibility for how our words or actions will impact another person, or to what degree they are consistent with the aims and objectives of the ministry and the church.

Chapter 2
Protecting people

This chapter aims to develop awareness of:

• proactive protection

• understanding of harmful behaviours

• responding to concerns about harmful behaviours

---

Church workers need to be able to respond to any duty of care and/or WHS concerns that they have for any person at church. These concerns may be for a person/s at risk of harm, or concerns about a person's harmful behaviours towards others.

The aim of this chapter is to help church workers understand the issues surrounding 'harm', and to recognise and respond to all concerns in relation to all people who may be at risk of being harmed.

This focus herein is on protecting people from harm, particularly, but not limited to, physical, sexual, emotional and/or spiritual harm in a church context. This includes our pastoral, organisational and legislative responses to concerns about those who have experienced harm and the harmful behaviours of those who attend church or represent the church.

Faithfulness in Service S.3.1 reminds us of the importance of a code of conduct for the protection of people:

> *This Code will only be effective if it is widely known and available throughout the Church, practised consistently and implemented justly. Clergy and church workers will protect the safety of others and themselves by observing its standards and following its guidelines.*
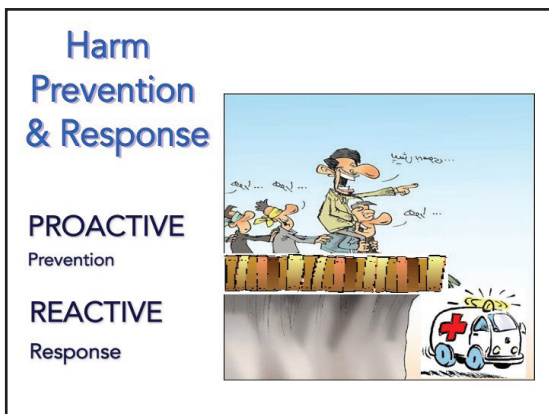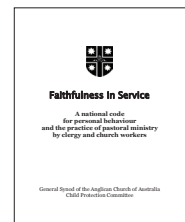
Like in the illustration (left) it is the fence at the top of the cliff that will prevent harm from occurring in the first place. Being committed to building strong and healthy people who are provided with the tools to protect themselves is also an essential part of the protection fence at the top of the cliff.

2.1 Being proactive

A proactive approach to protecting people must be our starting place for life-giving, harm-free ministry to the glory of God. A proactive approach includes the implementation of our Safe Ministry policy and procedures. This commitment to being proactive in protecting children is evidenced in the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations number 1-4.

Having a leadership culture that promotes and is active in their commitment to safety (National Principles for Child Safe Organisations 1) is the starting place. Without this, implementation of policy and procedure may not be implemented and the proactive fence (above) will have holes in it. This takes time and resources (human and financial).

Principle 2 states: Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously:

a. *Children are able to express their views and are provided opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their lives.*

b. *The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, helping children feel safe and be less isolated.*

c. *Children can access sexual abuse prevention programs and information.*

d. *Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children to communicate and raise their concerns. (Royal Commission Recommendation 6.6)*

Empowering people to protect themselves

By actively encouraging program and event participants to develop in their self-awareness and self-protection, we are protecting everyone. This is empowering, life-giving ministry! Empowering people to protect themselves is about being proactive, and helping to prevent harm before it occurs.

A good resource for this area with younger children, called the 'Safe Series' can be obtained from the NSW Children's Guardian (http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/safe-series/safe-resources - see pictures below and overleaf from the 'Safe series').

We can:

• Encourage people to trust their feelings and to speak up when they feel unsafe or at risk

It is important that people know who they can approach when they feel unsafe or at risk of harm.   We can encourage people to speak up when they feel something is happening to them or to others.   This includes empowering people to say 'no'. People, including children, must have permission and capacity (including language) to say 'no' in order to protect themselves, and to 'speak out' when they feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

• Foster opportunities for stakeholders to have a voice in the organisation (feedback and input)

People are more susceptible to harm when they feel as though they have no say in decisions made about them. We can help people feel free to express their opinions and ideas in an environment where these will be valued and, where appropriate, implemented. This includes inviting feedback and allowing input on the policy and procedures, including age-appropriate feedback from both children and their parents (care givers).

• Provide safe touch as a church worker

1.In general, respond to touch initiated, rather than initiating it.

2. Be respectful of people's personal space needs.

3. Always seek permission before initiating a touch, e.g. "would you like a hug?", and also watch for non-verbal cues such as the person pulling away when touched.

4. If initiating touch, keep it brief, i.e. touch only as long as to satisfy the immediate need.

5. Be aware of different types of touches, and focus on good touches.
   a. Good touches: where a person feels safe, comfortable and respected, include:
      i. touches that focus on neutral body zones, such as brief side hugs (non-intimate touch)
      ii. touches that involve the hands, such as high-fives or shaking hands
   b. Bad touches: where a person feels intimidated, degraded or is harmed, such as causing pain or touching in intimate areas or in an intimate manner (including sexualised touching)
   c. Confusing touches: where a person feels wary or uncertain about the intention or meaning of the touch, such as staring, prolonged or tight hugs or tickling

6. Manage the touch environment
 a. If you are aware, or suspect, that someone under your care is likely to
 initiate a touch that may become prolonged or intense, circumvent the
 situation by encouraging the person to sit down and then arrange
 yourself at an angle to avoid close body contact between the two of you.
 b. If a person is becoming distressed and the interaction prolonged, ask
 another leader to join you.
 c. Ensure all touch occurs in a public setting where you are in view of
 others at all times.

In Anglican ministry with children, Faithfulness in Service Section 5, Guidelines 5.43-44 provide a guide for safe touch:

G. 5.43 In general—excluding circumstances such as immediate physical danger or medical emergency—physical contact should be initiated by the child or occur with their permission. When you make physical contact with a child, be very careful that you respect the child's feelings and privacy.

G 5.44 Ensure that any physical contact you have with children is of a non-sexual nature and appropriate to the situation. Avoid any physical contact that is sexually stimulating, or that may be construed as sexually stimulating. Children may or may not be aware of creating such situations. It is your responsibility to be alert for such situations and to cease any inappropriate physical contact immediately.

Children and physical contact

You need to be very careful when making physical contact with children.
 Appropriate contact includes:
• bending down to the child's eye level, speaking kindly and listening attentively;
• gaining permission before hugging a child and respecting their right to refuse;
• taking a child's hand and leading them to an activity;
• comforting a child by placing an arm around their shoulder and giving a gentle squeeze from the
    side;
• praising or welcoming a child by holding the child's two hands in yours;
• patting the child on the head, hand, back or shoulder in affirmation; and
• holding a preschool child who is crying, provided that they want to be held.
 Inappropriate contact includes:
• kissing or coaxing a child to kiss you;
• extended hugging or tickling;
• touching any area of the body normally covered by a swimming costume, specifically the buttocks,
    thighs, breasts or groin areas; and
• carrying older children, sitting them on your lap or having them rub up next to you.

• **Set clear boundaries together**

Set clearly-defined and appropriate boundaries for each ministry with the participants.

Child-based programs: This is an area in which children can be given a voice, in helping decide on the 'rules'. Where boundaries are not being embraced in a children's program, it is helpful for the leader to: draw attention to the 'rules' for the child; document and communicate to the child's parent the violation of the 'rules' and use immediate measures, i.e. 'time out'. We must not use inappropriate discipline on those in our care; i.e. no physical discipline. Clearly communicate the 'rules' (boundaries) to all parties involved, including parents and carers.

Child-based programs: Agreed-upon appropriate behaviours. This is an area in which children can be given a voice, in helping decide on the 'rules'.

In Anglican Ministry to Children *Faithfulness in Service* follow Section 5 *Guideline 5.42:*
When a child's behaviour requires correction, either for the safety and welfare of themselves or the group, it is important that:
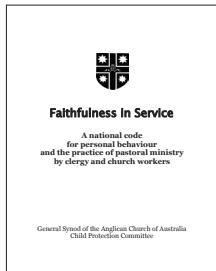
- *a warning precedes any discipline, where the situation permits;*
- *the discipline is explained to the child;*
- *the child is given an opportunity to explain;*
- *the discipline is appropriate to the occasion and age of the child;*
- *the form of discipline is not corporal punishment, does not ridicule or humiliate, or is not otherwise abusive;*
- *very young children are not isolated as a form of discipline;*
- *physical restraint is only used to protect children from harm or to avoid an accident;*
- *when physical restraint is used, a record is kept that identifies the restraint used, the member of the clergy or church worker and child involved and any witnesses, and sets out the incident's circumstances; and*
- *the child's parents or guardians are informed of the circumstances of the incident and discipline; and*
- *you make a record of the circumstances of the incident and discipline.*

Participation of caregivers and the community

National Principle for Child Safe Organisations number 4*: Families and communities are informed and involved.* A safe church is a place that invites the participation of those who are key stakeholders in children's lives, e.g. parents and the broader community who interact with the church.

Respecting Diversity and Inclusion

National Principle for Child Safe Organisations number 4 - *Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account:*
a. The institution actively anticipates children's diverse circumstances and responds effectively to those with additional vulnerabilities.
b. All children have access to information, support and complaints processes.
c. The institution pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The Royal Commission: Final report Volume 6 states:

Increased risk is related to the intersection of the institutional environment, the presence of a perpetrator and the child's personal circumstances, including societal attitudes. Taking these factors into account, we heard that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds can more often face a range of vulnerabilities. All child safe institutions need to be especially alert to children's diverse circumstances and how they may be excluded from protections or face additional risks

An institution should inform itself about known issues, for example:

- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children – understanding the historical context of colonisation, the impacts of collective trauma and contemporary effects; being aware of the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family structures; being responsive to cultural needs; and promoting anti-racist attitude*

- *Children with disability – making additional efforts to ensure inclusion and avoid segregation; challenging stereotypes and discrimination; and understanding the effect of a child's particular impairment*

- *Children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds – ensuring language and cultural interpretation; considering potential trauma backgrounds related to migration experience; and taking different family structures and norms into account. These issues are indicative only and each institution is responsible for considering and responding to the possibility of situational and vulnerability risks in their context.*

(source The Royal Commission: Final report Volume 6: Page 264)

2.2 Understanding harmful behaviours

Vulnerability

There are a number of factors that can and often do combine to make a person at greater risk of being harmed. For example, in relation to children, they are at greater risk of maltreatment within an organisation dependent upon their age, gender, previous maltreatment, disability, a lack of assertiveness strategies, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. (Australian Institute of Family Studies Issues Paper "Child maltreatment in organisations: Risk factors and strategies for prevention" Irenyi et al, 2006)
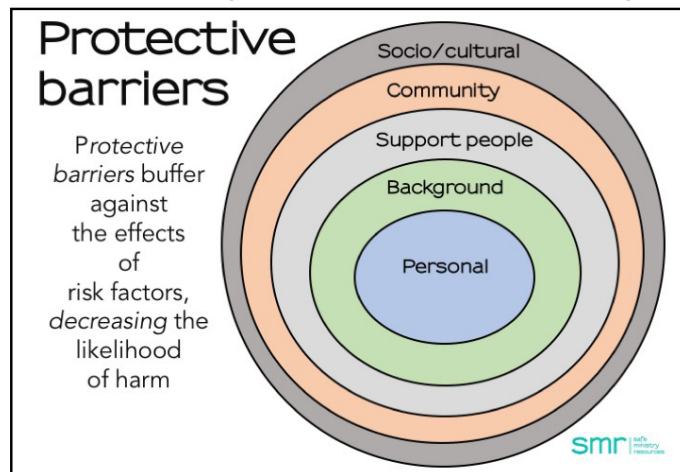
The diagram (left) shows recognised protective barriers in a person's life.

Personal protection: Includes things such as: good health, physical, mental and intellectual ability, knowledge, protective skills, resilience, competent language, literacy and numeracy and internal developmental assets.

Background: Includes stability, absence of prior trauma/dysfunction, socially and economically secure family, healthy and secure family attachments.

Support people: (Family context and other support persons) Includes someone who 'looks out' for the person, who protects the person and cares for the person, including friends and family as well as other external developmental assets. External Assets: support, empowerment, constructive use of time, boundaries and expectations. (Development Assets - Search Institute Framework 1997)

Community factors: Includes access to support services, facilities for help, doctors and other therapeutic services.

Wider socio/cultural factors: Includes legislation around protection, valuing of children, accepted well-being practices, or lack of history of oppression or discrimination.

When protective barriers are missing or damaged, a person may be more susceptible to being harmed. Some of these are more static such as a physical disability or history of family dysfunction. These may damage a person's protective barriers. Others are more dynamic in that they change over time such as, grief, loss, stress, unemployment, homelessness or social isolation.

Church workers need to the protect all people and particularly *the vulnerable. The vulnerable are defined herein as a person or group of people who are in need of special care.*

This focus on protecting special classes of vulnerable people is evidenced in the introduction of legislation in Australia both in terms of Working with Children and Working With Vulnerable People type legislation, and also as seen in Child Protection and Elder Abuse legislation.

In the Old Testament, God commanded Israel to take special care of classes of vulnerable people, i.e. the widow, the poor, the orphan and the alien (foreigners living in Israel) (e.g. Deut 10:18-19). In Luke's version of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says to His friends: "*Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God*" (Luke 6:20). Not the poor in spirit, as in Matthew, but the poor. God is for those who 'have not' in earthly terms. He says His kingdom is theirs. James 1:27 reinforces this by reminding us that the *"religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."*

Factors influencing our understanding

When it comes to understanding what is and is not harmful behaviour, it is helpful to first acknowledge that our understanding is influenced by a number of factors. Whilst there are some areas that clearly constitute harmful behaviours, there are some grey areas that will vary depending upon the factors that inform our view.

Factors that influence our understanding include:
- the amount of information we have (in general and a specific scenario);
- social discourse on the topic in our society;
- our proximity to the issue (how much time do you spend involved in responding to the issues in your work/life);
- the level moral disengagement or engagement with the topic;
- myths about abuse;
- perception of that situation (includes: parents' behaviour, experiences we have had at the hands of influential people around us, our values, our attitudes concerning what constitutes harmful and/or abusive behaviour, our views on people's rights, and our perceived responsibilities towards vulnerable people).

These can all influence whether or not we see a particular situation or behaviour as harmful towards others or not. Church workers are not asked to be experts. They are simply to report all concerns according to church procedure. In considering how we can protect people from harm, it is important to first acknowledge that some people are at more risk than others when it comes to being harmed. That is they are more vulnerable to being harmed. This is not to say that harm cannot occur at any time. It is only stating that when people are more vulnerable, their risk is of being susceptible to being harmed is heightened.

Power in relationships

In all relationships there is a balance of power between the parties. Relationships are either equal in power, i.e. relationships in which two or more parties have the same amount of power, or alternatively, they are unequal, ie. there is a power imbalance, as is the case between adults and children.

In some relationships it is appropriate that the more powerful person takes steps to redress the balance of power. In other relationships the more powerful person needs to consider how their actions will empower the less powerful person, whilst retaining the power imbalance. The balance of power can be impacted by a number of factors such as: size, experience, knowledge and position (role).
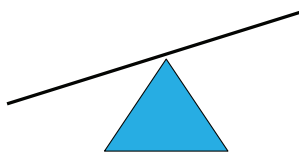
The 'International Rules of the Sea' illustrate the burden on church workers in terms of their position of power. The Rules are the international standards for navigation on any body of water. The purpose of the Rules is to clarify that the vessel with greater resources has a responsibility to a vessel with fewer resources in terms of the power to manoeuvre.

Speed Boat is the "burdened" (obligated) party; it as power and control of movement [and] Is obligated to avoid boats under sail. It has the "burden" (obligation) of responsibility Sailboat is the "privileged" party, a t the mercy of the wind; less control of movement, is vulnerable to power boats and has the "privilege" of being protected

The language used in the Rules is very interesting in this context. The vessel with greater power is the "burdened" party. The vessel with lesser power is the "privileged" party. These classifications by definition create a moral responsibility based on power and vulnerability. Although this runs counter to our standard social analysis which associates privilege with having power and resources and burden (of poverty, for example) with the absence of power and resources, it is language more fitting for our moral awareness as people of faith. (FaithTrust Institute, Boundaries 201, 2013, p.32).

In relationships where a person's position gives them power over another in order that the less powerful person might be protected or educated (e.g. teachers and pupils), it is inappropriate to change the balance of power. Within hierarchical organisational structures, or where someone is charged, for example, with upholding the law of the land, or where a person's health is being attended to, there exists an appropriate power imbalance.

In a church context, those in positions of leadership also hold varying levels of power to influence others for God. In the eyes of those under their authority, leaders may be seen as representing God's authority and, in some cases, God's will for their lives. Therefore, those in positions of power must have a sound understanding of, and must uphold, appropriate relationship boundaries so as to protect the less powerful person. Unfortunately, some abuses of positional power have been treated as 'sin issues' and/or moral failures. In many of these cases, the leader is suspended for a short period and then given another position of leadership without addressing the abuse of power that occurred.

Boundary violations

In Chapter 1, we explored the gift of boundaries. Some boundaries are flexible, and can be crossed appropriately, determined by place, relationships, roles, and circumstances. However, others should never be crossed and are deemed to be inflexible boundaries. When boundaries are not crossed appropriately it may negatively impact the person on the receiving end of the action or inaction. These may be known as *boundary violations* and can cause harm to others.

Boundary violations can occur across a variety of situations, be they spiritual, financial, physical, emotional, verbal, and/or sexual. All boundary violations are examples of people putting their own needs above those of others. It is important to acknowledge that not all boundary violations are carried out with malicious intent. Boundary violations can be thought of as a being on a continuum from unintentional 'wandering' across boundaries, to intentional actions of harm and/or carefully-planned, predatory-style boundary violations.

The following descriptions are not an attempt to define types of offenders, but rather to provide a description of the continuum from respecting boundaries, through to intentionally violating and/or predatory-type violations. Using this language can be helpful when addressing concerns with those who may be moving towards, or committing, boundary violations.

- **Boundary Respecter:** Discovers that a boundary is approaching, or that they have unintentionally overstepped a boundary, and makes a deliberate correction to cross the boundary appropriately.
- **Wanderer:** Approaches a boundary and engages in inappropriate behaviour without boundary-awareness. Wandering behaviour is not intended to harm, but because it is not considering how the other person is experiencing the interaction, it has the potential to do great harm.
- **Intentional Violator:** The offender understands that the boundary should not be crossed, but does so intentionally in order to do harm to the other person.
- **Predatory Violator:** The predator heads directly for the boundary, and aims to break down a person's boundaries.

Clearly-defined ministry boundaries are helpful to the wanderer as they clearly define behavioural expectations. They say to the intentional violator / predator, "You will not be able to act that way here."

Abuse

Abuse, using the language of boundary violations, is a **serious boundary violation/s leading to significant harm.** Abuse is the disrespecting of personhood which 'steals' or 'robs' from the other person their self -respect, self-esteem and self-confidence, and can lead to short and long-term effects. Abuse 'robs' personhood, a violation of that which defines 'them' as separate from the offender. It often results in a sense of 'powerlessness' or 'voicelessness', eroding a person's self-worth, self-esteem and self-respect, and hinders the person's ability to act in healthy, life-giving ways, both towards their own self and others.

The Adult Protection Committee of Yorkshire define it this way: *"Abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can vary from the seemingly trivial act of not treating someone with dignity and respect to extreme punishment, cruelty or torture"*

A biblical example of abuse as the misuse of power resulting in the robbing of personhood (abuse) is the recount of David, Bathsheba and Uriah found in 2 Samuel 11 and 12. In this story David sexually

abused Bathsheba, and then, to cover this up, had Uriah murdered. David then took Bathsheba as one of his wives and she gave birth to a son. Chapter 11 verse 27 says, "But the Lord was displeased with what David had done."

In Chapter 12 the Lord sent the Prophet Nathan to confront David. Nathan used a story of a shepherd and sheep. However, interestingly, Nathan's charge against David had nothing to do with the covenant violations of coveting, adultery, rape or murder, but rather stealing.

> Dr Marie Fortune comments:
>
> "*It is not the Seventh Commandment, "You shall not commit adultery," that should concern us. The problem with sexual violence is not that it represents sex outside of marriage. Rather, it is the Eighth Commandment, "You shall not steal" (Deuteronomy 5:19 and Exodus 20:15).*
>
> *It is the theft by the assailant of the security and well-being of the victim, the betrayal of trust, and the theft of her/his future. Let's be clear. It is not property theft, i.e. the taking of the property belonging to the male head of household. It is the theft of the sense of self of the person who is abused. Her/his boundaries are violated, trust is betrayed and relationships are often broken by the theft of the abuser.*" (Fortune, 2009, p.13)

Abuse can take many forms, such as actions of commission, such as physical, emotional, sexual abuse, or acts of omission, like neglect.

Government websites are a useful source of information, e.g. crimes acts and abuse-related legislation.

Identifying types of child abuse

In Australia the definition of a child varies across states and territory. In this manual we a define a child as a person under the age of 18 years

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), child abuse or maltreatment constitutes:

> "*all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.*"

As it can be very easy to respond in "extremes" in the area of child protection, it is important to work towards achieving and keeping a balance. The following pages contain types and indicators of child abuse. These are not intended to be exhaustive but rather are a tool for identifying children at risk of abuse. It is important to remember that one or two indicators in isolation do not mean that a child is being abused. They must also be considered in the context of other indicators and the child's or young person's circumstances.

Types & indicators of child abuse

a. Neglect

Continued failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child with the basic things needed for his or her proper growth and development, (Source: NSW FaCS)

Examples: failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, medical care, attention to hygiene or supervision, inability to respond emotionally to a child or young person, depriving of or withholding physical contact or stimulation for prolonged periods, absence of social support from adults.

INDICATORS/SIGNS IN CHILDREN	INDICATORS/SIGNS IN PARENTS/CAREGIVERS
• poor standards of hygiene leading to social isolation or poor health. • inappropriately dressed for weather conditions • extended stays at school, public places, others' homes • extreme longing for adult affection • self-comforting behaviour, eg. rocking, sucking • delays in developmental milestones • low weight for age and/or failure to thrive and develop • untreated physical problems e.g. serious nappy rash • extreme anxiety about being abandoned • child not adequately supervised for their age • scavenging or stealing food and focus on basic survival	• unable or unwilling to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, medical attention, safe home conditions • leaving the child without appropriate supervision • abandonment of child • withholding physical contact or stimulation for prolonged periods • unable or unwilling to provide psychological nurturing

b. Physical abuse

Non- accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child caused by a parent, caregiver or any other person (Source: NSW FaCS).

Examples: beating, shaking, lacerations, burns, fractures, poisoning, attempted suffocation, physical mutilation.

INDICATORS/SIGNS IN CHILDREN	INDICATORS/SIGNS IN PARENTS/CAREGIVERS
• unexplained bruising to face, head or neck • bruising showing the shape of the object that caused it e.g. belt buckle, lacerations and welts • explanation of injury is not consistent with the injury • abdominal pain caused by ruptured internal organs • fractures of bones • burns and scalds (including cigarette burns) • drowsiness, vomiting, fits or retinal haemorrhages • aggression or withdrawal • inappropriate clothes for weather conditions • discomfort with physical contact, and emotional problems	• explanation of injury is not consistent with the injury • a parent or caregiver says that they fear injuring their child • family history of violence or their own maltreatment as a child • frequent visits with child/ren to health or other services with unexplained or suspicious injuries

c. Emotional and psychological abuse

Behaviour by a parent or caregiver that destroys a child's confidence resulting in significant emotional disturbance or trauma (Source: NSW FaCS).

Psychological abuse damages a child's intellectual faculties and processes, including intelligence, memory, recognition, perception and moral development. The harm experienced is assessed to be detrimental in effect and significant in nature on the child's wellbeing.

INDICATORS/SIGNS IN CHILDREN	INDICATORS/SIGNS IN PARENTS/CAREGIVERS
• passive and aggressive behavioural extremes • habit disorders • feelings of worthlessness about life and themselves • inability to value others • lack of trust in people and expectations • lack of interpersonal skills necessary for adequate functioning • extreme attention-seeking behaviour • bullying • disruptiveness • persistent running away from home	• constant criticism • belittling, teasing • ignoring or withholding praise and attention • excessive or unreasonable demands • persistent hostility and verbal abuse • rejection and scape-goating • belief that a particular child is bad or evil • using inappropriate physical or social isolation as punishment • domestic violence

d. Sexual abuse

Definition: Sexual abuse is when an adult or someone who is stronger, bigger or older (includes other children) involves a child in a sexual activity by using their power over a child or taking advantage of a child's trust. Child sexual abuse involves a wide range of sexual activity. Bribes or threats are often used to make them participate in the activity (Source: NSW FaCS).

Examples: sexual touching, sexual intercourse, sexual suggestions to children, including exposure to pornographic material, use of children in the production of pornographic videos or films, exhibitionism, child prostitution.

INDICATORS/SIGNS IN CHILDREN	INDICATORS/SIGNS IN PARENTS/CAREGIVERS
• child or child's friend telling you about it, even indirectly • describing sexual acts • excessive seductiveness • going to bed fully clothed • sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate for age • regressive behaviour e.g. sudden return to bed-wetting • bruising or bleeding in the genital area • sexually transmitted diseases • bruising to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs • self-destructive behaviour • suicide attempts/self-mutilation • child being in contact with a known sex offender • anorexia or over-eating • adolescent pregnancy • unexplained accumulation of money and gifts • persistent running away from home • unusual aversion to physical contact • inappropriate expressions of friendship with an adult	• exposing a child to prostitution or pornography or using a child for pornographic purposes • intentional exposure of a child to sexual behaviour of others • previous conviction or suspicion of child sexual abuse • coercing a child to engage in sexual behaviour with other children • verbal threats of sexual abuse • denial of an adolescent's pregnancy by family • keeping tight control over a child's movements, e.g, not allowing child to develop relationships where they might disclose

e. Exposure to family violence

Exposure to family violence has been broadly defined as "a child being present (hearing or seeing) while a parent or sibling is subjected to physical abuse, sexual abuse or psychological maltreatment, or is visually exposed to the damage caused to persons or property by a family member's violent behaviour" (Higgins, 1998, p. 104). Narrower definitions refer only to children being exposed to domestic violence between intimate partners.

Some researchers classify the witnessing of family violence as a special form of emotional maltreatment. However, a growing number of professionals regard the exposure to family violence as a unique and independent subtype of abuse (as it is presented in this paper) (e.g., Bromfield, 2005; Higgins, 2004; James, 1994). Regardless of the classification used, research has shown that children who are exposed to domestic violence tend to experience significant disruptions in their psychosocial wellbeing, often exhibiting a similar pattern of symptoms to other abused or neglected children (Kitzmann, Gaylord, Holt, & Kenny, 2003; Tomison, 2000) (from Australian Institute of Family Studies https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/what-child-abuse-and-neglect).

INDICATORS/SIGNS IN CHILDREN
• displays of aggressive behaviour • development of phobias and insomnia • displays of anxiety • symptoms of depression • diminished self-esteem • poor academic performance and problem-solving skills • reduced social competence skills, including low levels of empathy • displays of emotional distress • physical complaints
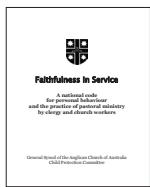
Faithfulness in Service Section 5: Guideline 16 -'*Recognising the characteristics and effects of child abuse'* provides further helpful information about the characteristics and effects of child abuse.

Other types of harmful behaviours, which may in some instances be reportable to government statutory child protection agency dependant upon laws in the jurisdiction include:

Bullying behaviours between children

In a church context bullying must not be tolerated. Instead of being laughed at, it should be reported according to church procedure.

In a children's ministry context, parents of children involved need to be informed, consulted with and included in decisions relating to their child/ren. Targets of bullying need to be loved, valued, respected and restored as appropriate to the situation. Those who demonstrate bullying behaviours must be called to account in a loving way. For more information in relation to bullying behaviours by and towards adults, see 'Identifying concerns about adults', later in this manual.

Sexualised electronic interactions and grooming on the internet

The explosion of electronic communication has seen a sharp increase in the number of internet-based and telecommunications-based allegations of abuse and bullying. This involves the perpetrator using any form of telecommunication, or electronic communication to: sexually groom, bully, suggest an inappropriate relationship be formed, or engage a child in sexual language or behaviours. In some cases these interactions have led to people being charged with online grooming, or procurement of a child for sexual purposes.

We acknowledge that the use of electronic media for communication is part of everyday life, however, we need to be mindful of the position of trust and power we have been entrusted with as leaders.

Faithfulness in Service Section 5: Guideline 5.45-46 provides standards working with children, young people, and other vulnerable persons.

Sexual grooming

Sexual grooming in many instances will be criminal. Sexual grooming is a pattern of behaviour aimed at engaging a child, as a precursor to sexual abuse. In some cases where positional power exists this can be a reportable matter. In most cases it is non-sexual and a precursor to the abuse. It can include: persuading the child that a 'special' relationship exists; spending inappropriate special time with the child; inappropriately giving gifts; showing special favours to the child, but not to other children; allowing the child to overstep the rules; testing boundaries – undressing in front of the child; allowing the child to sit on lap; talking about sex; 'accidental' touching of genitals, etc. In isolation, such behaviours may not indicate risk of abuse occurring, but if there is a pattern of behaviour occurring, it may indicate grooming.

Criminal Code Act Compilation Act 1913 [WA] contains numerous offences whereby a person may incite, procure or encourage a child to engage in sexual behaviour or offences against morality. This is in addition to offences whereby the use of electronic communication may be used to procure or expose a child under 16 to indecent matter or sexual activity.

Identifying concerns about adults

Concerns about adults at church include anyone who experiences;

- bullying behaviour (online or in person)
- sexual harassment
- sexual abuse (assault)
- physical violence
- emotionally harmful behaviours
- elder abuse
- homelessness
- any disability

- harassment
- sexual misconduct
- financial abuse
- stalking
- domestic violence
- self-harming / suicide risk
- mental illness

The following pages contain specific information in relation to four areas which have become the focus of special attention in recent years due to their prevalence.

Bullying behaviours

A person in a church may state that they have been bullied. They may have experienced some uncomfortable things in church life. However, not all unpleasant experiences within a church fall into the realm of bullying behaviours. It is important to determine if what a person is experiencing is actually bullying or not.

Factors such as conflict in a situation, personality styles, or differing expectations might be at play. In these situations it may or may not be that the person has experienced bullying behaviours.

What is bullying?

Bullying behaviours can include: minimisation of concerns expressed by the target of the behaviours, lying, denial of bullying behaviours alleged, covert or overt intimidation of a target through words or actions, guilt-tripping, playing the victim role, playing the servant role, shouting and/or swearing at target, threats to target's position or family comfort if compliance is not achieved, speaking over target when they endeavour to express a viewpoint, ignoring the target – including face-to-face encounters and electronic interactions, consistent fault-finding and withholding favour and refusal to acknowledge presence of the target of the bullying behaviours.

Bullying in the church can come from any person, but it is most often a situation involving a power

imbalance where the person exercising bullying behaviours has more power than the target of the bullying behaviour. Bullying does not have to be individual behaviour.

A group in the church can also be responsible for bullying and the target may be an individual or group – in some cases this sort of bullying is referred to as 'mobbing'.

What is NOT considered to be bullying

There are things that happen in churches that are not considered to be bullying, even when these experiences may be slightly uncomfortable for those on the receiving end of the behaviours.

The following are *not* considered to be bullying:

- Reasonable supervisor/team leader/pastoral action. This can include:
  - counselling you because of concerns about your behaviour
  - allocating reasonable tasks to you in keeping with your team or ministry area
  - requesting you to do things that are requested of everyone in a team or attending an event
  - changing your roster in a reasonable way, even if you don't like it
  - giving you critical feedback about your actions when this is done in privacy and in a respectful manner
  - asking you to move into a different ministry when this is in keeping with your skills and you are consulted first
  - being left out of meetings when they are not relevant to your role or ministry
- Good natured interactions with peers, such as:
  - joking, laughing and telling stories when it is not directed at anyone and does not contain offensive content
  - being respectfully told by another church member that you are bothering them or hampering their service
  - occasionally being left out of social gatherings, such as a group of church members going out for dinner together
  - someone disagreeing with your opinion in a respectful way
  - accidentally being overlooked in a social invitation (so long as this is not a consistent and repeated occurrence)

Perception & reality: Perception is the way we receive and interpret behaviour or information. We form our opinions from our perception. We make assumptions, develop attitudes and make judgments all based on our perception. The outcome of our perception becomes our reality with which we respond to a person or situation. As perception is unique and is a reflection of a person's reality, it is unlikely that someone will change their perception about a given person or situation simply because they are told to. Perception also impacts what someone labels as bullying behaviour.

Responding to bullying behaviours

The key principle to apply when addressing bullying is initially to address the behaviour in the least intrusive and least formal way. If the informal processes do not result in a satisfactory outcome, then more formal options can be considered.

Personal options:
- talking to someone you trust
- seeking medical attention or other help
- speaking to the perpetrator directly
- talking to your community/church leader
- talking to a senior leader in your denomination

Informal resolution process

An informal resolution process aims to ensure that the bullying incident is resolved as quickly as possible. Although a person has the right to make either a formal or an informal complaint, they should be encouraged to commence with the informal process first, as this can often achieve a more timely and satisfactory outcome for both parties.

No investigation or disciplinary action should be taken as a result of an informal complaint. Rather, a no-blame approach should be used to assist the individuals involved to reach an outcome that will ensure appropriate conduct in the future. The main focus is to return the individuals to beneficial participation in the community without interruption and with no further bullying behaviour.

Conciliation and mediation

Conciliation and mediation are confidential processes that involve only the conciliator/mediator and the individuals concerned. It is acceptable, however, for the individuals to have a support person present during a conciliation meeting.

If the informal process fails to reach a resolution then the complainant should be advised that they have the right to make a formal complaint.

Formal investigation process

It is important that a person clearly understands what to expect from making a formal complaint. For example, you may wish to inform people that:

- the investigation procedures will adhere to natural justice principles to ensure fairness for all concerned;
- an investigation will occur as soon as possible after the complaint is received; and
- an investigation will be conducted by an impartial and independent (preferably external) person who can carry out the investigation without hindrance or bias.

A formal process usually has the following steps:
1. Verbally advising the senior church/community leader
2. Lodging the complaint
3. Initial response
4. Appointment of an investigator
5. The investigation
6. Findings
7. Appeal
8. Access to counselling and/or rehabilitation
9. Review

(Adapted from "I think I am being bullied, what do I do?" and "Identifying and addressing workplace bullying", ACT WorkSafe 2012, https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/3160/kw/bullying)

Workcover Australia provides guides for employers and employees in relation to responding to bullying in the workplace.

Sexual Violence - Harassment and Assault

Sex is a gift from God. Sexual expression is an action of intimacy, i.e. two becoming one flesh (Gen 1:24). Therefore all sexual interactions should be actions of loving intimacy where each party is able to freely consent to the interaction.

There has been much learning in the understanding of what constitutes meaningful consent in recent years in relation to areas such as: the age of consent, states of consent e.g. sober and intellectual capacity, and also the area of coercion, e.g. no meaningful consent is possible where a person submits due to the other person's positional power over them.

Disciplinary procedures for leaders should address allegations or complaints of sexual harassment and assault between adults, not only complaints relating to adults against children.

When considering whether or not a person has been sexually harassed or assaulted, it is important to remember that sexual violence can be perpetrated both in word and in action (non-contact and contact).

The **sexual violence continuum** begins with non-contact sexual violence such as sexual comments, sexual jokes aimed at a person, verbal sexual harassment, obscene phone calls, peeping and exposure, through to contact sexual violence such as unwanted sexual touching, acts of indecency, sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault, rape and rape-murder.

It is important to understand your state or territory's definitions of such acts because many words and actions on the sexual violence continuum constitute crimes.

Nationally the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Australia) describes sexual harassment as an unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favours or other unwelcome sexual conduct in circumstances where the person doing the harassing knows that the conduct would offend, intimidate or humiliate another person.

In Western Australia, people under 16 years old cannot legally consent to having sex, even if they said 'yes' at the time.

The age of consent is 18 years old if there is a special relationship between them, where one person is in a position of power or authority over the other person. An example of this is the relationship between a teacher and a student, or a sports coach and a team member.

Someone who is drunk, drugged, unconscious or asleep can't freely consent. A person can't freely consent if they have been forced, tricked or threatened into having sex.

If you have sex with someone who is unable to freely consent, this is sexual assault, which is a serious crime. (Source: https://www.legalaid.wa.gov.au/find-legal-answers/young-people/sex-and-law/sex-and-consent)

In addition to the law, insurance companies who provide sexual molestation cover will have a definition of sexual abuse, for example:

> *"Sexual abuse includes any assault or abuse of a sexual nature, any type of molestation, indecent exposure, sexual harassment or intimidation, whether such act is the subject of criminal investigation or not. 'Injury' includes any physical, mental or psychological injury"* (ANIP).

Domestic and /or family violence

Domestic and family violence includes the types of abuse listed previously, but occurs within a domestic or family relationship. This is often marked by a significant imbalance of power within the household. It is common for a perpetrator to be highly controlling. One form of domestic violence has been described aptly as *intimate terrorism*. Another form that occurs far less often is common couple violence, where both adult partners hold roughly equal power within the relationship, and both, at times, instigate the violence. The term *family violence* recognises that within a household it is possible for there to be multiple perpetrators and victims, e.g. teenage child abusing parent, parent abusing grandparent.

Domestic violence causes fear, physical and/or psychological harm. It is most often (but not exclusively) violent, abusive or intimidating behaviour by a man against a woman. Living with domestic violence has a profound effect upon children and young people and may constitute a form of child abuse (The NSW Domestic and Family Violence Action Plan, June 2010).

Many forms of domestic violence are criminal offences. Physical and sexual assault is a crime whether it happens in the home or on the street.

Domestic violence can include:
- physical assault (including punching, hitting, kicking, pushing, slapping, choking, or the use of weapons)
- sexual assault (being forced to have sex or participate in sexual activities, either by watching or physically participating)
- emotional abuse (making someone feel worthless, criticising their personality, their looks, the way they dress, constantly putting someone down, threatening to hurt them, their children or pets)
- verbal abuse (including yelling, shouting, name-calling and swearing at someone)
- social abuse (being stopped from seeing friends and family, isolating someone socially or geographically)
- damaging property such as furniture, the house or pets in order to threaten or intimidate someone
- financial abuse (taking control of money, not giving someone enough money on which to survive, forcing someone to hand over their money, not letting them have a say in how it is spent).

(Adapted from "Domestic and family violence", Department of Community Services, NSW, http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/parents,-carers-and-families/domestic-and-family-violence).

Supporting a person who experiences domestic violence

When someone is ready to talk, it is important to listen to them and take the issue seriously.

When someone is ready to talk:
- believe what they tell you
- focus on how they are feeling and how they are coping with the domestic violence
- let them know domestic violence is not their fault
- focus on their safety and the safety of their children
- let them know you are there for them (if this does not put your safety at risk)
- let them know about the Domestic Violence Line 1800 Respect (1800 737 732)

Things to avoid:
- avoid blaming the person who is disclosing abuse for the domestic violence
- avoid blaming alcohol, other drugs or mental health issues for the domestic violence behaviour
- avoid telling the person what to do
- avoid talking to the abuser about their behaviour
- avoid making negative comments about the abuser
- do not expect that the person disclosing abuse will leave the relationship.

(Adapted from "Supporting someone who experiences domestic violence", Department of Community Services, NSW, March 2007, http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/319178/dv_support_english.pdf (Information is available in many different languages)

Elder abuse

Elder abuse "occurs when there is any act occurring within a relationship where there is an implication of trust, which results in harm to an older person. Abuse can include physical, sexual, financial, psychological and social abuse and/or neglect"(endorsed at the Healthy Ageing Taskforce, 2000).

Suspicions that abuse has occurred may be aroused by physical signs and symptoms or by the behaviour of the older person. It is important for leaders to be aware of any sudden or unusual changes in the behaviour patterns of their participants or congregation members. If someone shows one or more of the possible signs of abuse, it does not automatically mean she or he is being abused. Consider the context.

Concerns that require reporting may arise from a single event or a pattern or series of events. The indicators of child abuse herein may be used as a guide for concerns about the elderly.

2.3 Responding to concerns

Responding appropriately when we are concerned either about a person (child or adult) at church who is at risk of harm, or when we are concerned about a person's perceived harmful behaviours towards others, is important in terms of ensuring we have harm-free and life-giving ministry.

Reporting, dependant upon the nature of the concern, may include reporting to police, and statutory bodies and/or referral to specialists for assistance.

Responding fully may include legal, pastoral, denominational, risk management and insurance responses.

It is important that church workers report any types of behaviours that they are concerned about:

- if told about them (disclosures), and/or
- if there is a reasonable suspicion they are occurring.

If you are concerned about the harmful behaviours of a person at church or you have a concern that a child or other vulnerable person is at risk of harm, then it is important to report your concern.

This includes concerns about but not limited to:
- child abuse (or if a child is at risk of being harmed): sexual, physical, emotional, neglect, exposure to family violence
- bullying behaviour, whether this is between children, or adults, online or in person.
- harassment
- sexual harassment
- sexual misconduct
- sexual abuse (assault)
- physical violence
- stalking
- emotionally harmful behaviours
- Domestic Violence
- elder abuse
- self-harming / suicide risk

Responding to risk of harm concerns about children

Child abuse is a serious and complex problem in the lives of children and young people. Often it occurs in environments that are isolated and stressful and affects those who are most vulnerable (Reporting Child Abuse, 2003). Abuse often occurs in situations where trust is involved and often by a person known to, and trusted by the child. Addressing the area of child abuse can be both confronting and disturbing. To begin with, the actions of abuse themselves are a display of humanity at its worst. Child abuse is in direct opposition to Jesus' words about welcoming children (Matt 19:14) and loving one another (John 13:34).

Prevalence of child abuse in Australia

It is almost impossible to determine the amount of abuse that does occur since only that which is reported to government authorities becomes the official statistics. Researchers estimate that as many 1 in 4 children will be sexually abused. Given the statistics of reported cases as seen above, this crime is highly under-reported and research has indicated that on average it takes females 7-14 years to tell someone about their sexual abuse, whilst males take an average of well over 20 years to talk about their child sexual abuse, if they ever talk about it at all.

The Annual Report *Child Protection Australia 2016-17* from the Australia Institute of Health and Welfare states that *In 2016-17, 168,352 children received child protection services. Of those children: 119,173 were the subject of an investigation, 64,145 were on a care and protection order & 57,221 were in out of home care (page 8). Between 2012-13 and 2016-17, rates of children who were the subject of a substantiation rose from 7.8 to 9.0 per 1,000 children, on care and protection orders rose from 8.2 to 9.9 per 1,000 in out of home care rose from 7.7 to 8.1 per 1,000 (page vii).*

Impact of child abuse

Experiencing child abuse has been demonstrated to have wide ranging implications. Studies (such as the *Adverse Childhood Experiences Study* conducted by the Centres for Disease Control) have linked multiple experiences of child abuse and neglect with long term outcomes including lower rates of income, higher rates of chronic illness such as heart disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, higher risk for intimate partner violence, higher rates of alcoholism, higher rates of depression, lower life expectancy, increased likelihood of early uptake of cigarettes, and lower levels of assets. The total 'cost' to the individual and society is enormous.

Volume 3 of the Royal Commission's Final Report provides an in-depth examination of the impact of child sexual abuse within the context of institutions. It includes:

> *effects of trauma on children's development, mental health, impact on interpersonal relationships, physical health, sexual identity, gender identity and sexual behaviour, connection to culture, spirituality and religious involvement, interactions with society, education, employment and economic security, fear, distrust and contempt for the institution, and then there is the ripple effects on the survivors families, other affected individuals, communities and Australian society.*

Child-centred practice

When protecting children and responding to our risk of harm concerns about children, it is important that we are child-centred in our approach. The child focused approach is based on the best interests of the child. This approach is essential if we are to truly protect the vulnerable.

Child-centred approach means that the needs and welfare of children are the primary concern and focus of work practices. This is achieved through a solid understanding of child development and a concerted effort to give children a voice. 'Child-centred practice reflects a particular set of beliefs about the capacities, vulnerabilities and rights of children. Its core is a commitment to children's ways of understanding, describing and doing' (The Australian Childhood Foundation (2001 & 2003) cited in Mudaly & Goddard, The Truth is Longer than a Lie, (2006).

Jesus' view on children is best explained in his explanation of who is the greatest in the Kingdom of God in Matthew 18-1:14. If Jesus views children as being the greatest in his kingdom and that the

Father does not will for one little one to be lost, then in a Christian framework for protecting children we must ask ... *How is the child experiencing their interactions with the world, with other kids and with grown ups?* A good first question to ask when it comes to responding to our risk of harm concerns is: *Is this situation OK for the child?* Rather than,"*What will happen to... me, the alleged perpetrator, the care-giver, the leader?"*

Overcoming the barriers to reporting

Reporting our concerns is an important step in child protection. However, knowing how, what and when to report has proven to be problematic.

"What can I do about this?"

"The government will only make the situation worse?"

"Society can't even fix this problem!"

These are all examples of what is known as discounting.

(Source: Chris Storm: Bethany Community Support Melbourne, FEELING SAFE, BEING STRONG - AIFS Conference 2008)

There are also a number of community attitudes and organisational risk factors that may contribute to creating barriers to protecting children and in some cases may actually contribute to ongoing child abuse.

Community attitudes include:

- cultural acceptance of extreme physical punishment of children and the use of violence
- acceptance of parents' ownership of children and their right to treat children as they see fit
- the notion that the child deserved the treatment received as a result of behaviour
- lack of desire to 'get involved' in other people's business
- fears of retaliation should a notifier's name be made known to an abuser
- concerns about the break-up of a family unit should the abuse be exposed
- not being prepared to expose a person of high standing in the community
- concern by an abused person that by exposing an abuser, they will be publicly shamed

Organisational risk factors include: staff alone with children; abuse of positional power – people in authority taking advantage of the position of power; culture of bullying; lack of leader and staff accountability; inadequate resources; lack of experience; lack of awareness; inadequate training; internal investigations as opposed to external investigations, isolated locations (Beyer et.al, 2005).

When to report

The most common type of report received by government child protection agencies is when another person identifies the indicators of abuse, without the child having directly disclosed actual abuse.

State government child protection agencies have different requirements for reporting your concerns, as already mentioned. However, even with the child's best interests in mind, we may still be given to subjective decision-making based upon our own judgment. The indicators are objective and can help us make a decision based upon what is best for the child, rather than being based upon our own opinion.

Report when:

- a child tells you they are being harmed (disclosure)
- another person tells you a child is being harmed (second hand disclosure)
- when you have a reasonable concern that a child is at risk of harm (using the indicators)

Reporting procedure (note - follow your church procedure):

1. Report all concerns to your appointed Safe Ministry Contact person (Priest-in-Charge/Rector)
   - If a person is in imminent danger call the police or emergency services on 000.

2. The Church will take appropriate legal, pastoral, denominational & risk management actions:
   Including:
   - reporting to police, government agencies (either with you, or for you)
   - commence any denominational protocols for responding to allegations
   - support and pastorally care for all parties (including referral to experts)
   - management of duty of care risks associated with the report
   - reporting incidents to insurers

Disclosures

A disclosure is whenever a child tells you that they, or someone else is being harmed. The fact that a child or young person tells you that they have been abused means that they have a high respect for you and that they trust you greatly, therefore, it is important that you respond appropriately.

Understanding your role:
   - Your role is not to conduct an investigation.
   - Your role is to nurture and minister to the child and not engage in discussions around the abuse or investigations.
   - Please do not share what they have said to you with anyone other than those who need to know for pastoral, risk management and reporting purposes. In this situation, confidentiality is very important.
   - Even if abuse is no longer happening it is still important to report the matter, as the adult may be abusing other children. Also it may be that the child will need guidance and help in overcoming the effects of the abuse.

Do:
   - Listen … do not add anything to what the child says (you will need to write this down, exactly)
   - Reassure … the child that they have done the right thing in speaking to you
   - Inform … the child that you need to tell people who will try to help you
   - Ensure … that the child is not in immediate danger

Don't:
   - Start an investigation into the information
   - Promise the child that the abuse will stop
   - Tell anyone who does not need to know

   Note: Keep it brief - this is not the only time the child will have to share their story and you may actually hinder an investigation. DO NOT have a long conversation.

Supporting a child after a disclosure

In a ministry situation it is highly likely that you will continue to have contact with the child after a disclosure. It is important to recognise that the child has disclosed to you because they trust you and feel safe with you. As you continue to nurture and minister to the child it may be useful to be mindful of the following: create a calm environment, engage in appropriate relationships, continue to include the child, provide an ordered program, foster appropriate behaviours, focus attention on the safe space.

Supporting Survivors of Historical Child Abuse

The Diocese acknowledges that in the past allegations of child abuse brought to the church were not appropriately responded to, and for this the Diocese is unreservedly sorry.

The Diocese now has processes and human resources to support those who have been harmed by church workers including our Diocesan Care and Assistance Scheme.

Mandatory Reporting

The legal requirement to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect is known as mandatory reporting. All jurisdictions possess mandatory reporting requirements of some description:
Under the Children and Community Services Act 2004 mandatory reporters in Western Australia are:

- doctors
- teachers
- nurses and midwives
- police officers.

What to report

- Reasonable grounds for suspecting that a child has been: abused, or is at risk of being abused; ill treated, or is at risk of being ill treated; or exposed or subjected to behaviour that psychologically harms the child.
- Allegations of abuse, neglect or assault, including sexual assault, of an enrolled child during a care session.
- Belief on reasonable grounds that child sexual abuse has occurred or is occurring

Report to Department for Child Protection and Family Support
Tel. (08) 9222 2555   Country free call: 1800 622 258
a/h: (08) 9223 1111 or 1800 199 008   http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au

Reporting crimes and child protection reporting - beyond mandatory reporting

In responding the recommendations of the Royal Commission each state and territory government has now released its response. New legislation is being considered or has been enacted.

It is important to seek advice from the Director of Professional Standards (08 9425 7203), when responding and reporting suspected abuse of a child or group of children.

Other special cases

1. School ministry
Those engaging in state/church school ministry programs should make sure they are familiar with the policy of the school about reporting. Teachers forming a reasonable belief should inform the Principal, unless the Principal is the alleged abuser. Ensure that your Rector/Priest in charge is also informed of the situation. The Rector/Priest in charge will then phone the school Principal and ask for proof of action taken, e.g. report number. If the Principal advises they are not making a report, or does not provide a reference number, your Rector/Priest in charge will in turn contact the Director of Professional Standards (08 9425 7203) for assistance with the implementation of a Protocol for Workplace investigations.

2. Allegations against workers (paid or voluntary)

When an allegation of harm is made against an employee or volunteer or where a leader exhibits behaviours that might be deemed abusive or as 'ministry misconduct', the first step is to inform the Director of Professional Standards (08 9425 7203). They will assist you in following the reporting process and offer further support.

Again in any such instance the first step is to contact the Rector/Priest in charge who will in turn contact Director of Professional Standards (08 9425 7203) for assistance with the implementation of a Protocol for Workplace Investigations.

Responding to concerns about adults

It has become evident to society that children are not the only vulnerable group of people in need of protection.

When responding to your concerns of abuse and other health issues in relation to adults consider:

1. Adults are self-determining: Adults have the right to make decisions about their own lives, so long as the actions are not endangering themselves or others. This means we will need to work with the adult at risk rather than the principle of 'acting in the best interest of the child' used when considering a response in the area of child protection.

2. Legal issues: Sometimes it will be very clear what to do as in allegations of criminal activity toward an adult e.g. sexual harassment or rape.

3. Denominational and/or church procedures: For example all allegations of ministry misconduct or abuse by a church worker against vulnerable adults need to responded to with fairness and due process.

4. Pastoral responses: For concerns about the conduct of people with special needs (e.g. intellectual or physical disability or mental health concern) speak to a pastor who may seek advice from relevant health services. There are times when this will mean utilising the local health services and working with the person and their family to provide comfort, support and access to resources and services.

Report all concerns to your supervisor, or Rector/Priest in Charge/Warden.

2.4 Care for all parties

In responding to Safe Ministry Concerns, one of the important responsibilities the church board and seniors leadership have is to pastorally care for all parties impacted by the concern/s.

This will include care for: the person subject of the concern; and often the person subject of allegations; the families involved; leaders who are impacted and those managing the situation.

Each person has a unique response to receiving a disclosure or witnessing situations of harmful behaviours or being a secondary or even tertiary victims of harm. There may be some common reactions such as: shock, anger, sympathy for the victim and frustration. As a church worker it can be very distressing to find yourself in this situation.

It is important that parties are provided with appropriate support, and provided ample opportunity to debrief by verbally and emotionally 'unloading' feelings about the experience e.g. of receiving a disclosure or reporting concerns.

Remember that confidentially will mean that people may not be able to tell their own friends or family the details of the alleged abuse, but simply sharing feelings, without details, can be of help.

Some people may have severe reactions to disclosure, which may in some cases have an invasive impact on their ability to function effectively within their ministry and life roles (e.g. eating and sleeping disturbances). If this occurs, contact your supervisor or pastor. If may be necessary to ask people to seek professional help to cope if they are finding usual strategies aren't enough to manage. Investing in good counselling early can help you to maintain a long and effective ministry. Where the church has the capacity, providing appropriate (external) counselling services is recommended.

For more in relation to self care see chapter 3.5 "Self care for church workers'.

Chapter 3
Safe church workers

This chapter aims to develop awareness of:
- the rationale behind the need for safe recruiting practices
- the need for ongoing supervision and training of leaders
- a code of conduct for church workers
- who people should talk/write to if they have a problem or complaint as a leader

3.1 Representing God

All those who serve in roles at church; from pastors and staff, boards and ministry councils, team leaders, ministry coordinators, team members and rostered helpers, are all representatives of God in the church. In this manual, all those who serve the church in any role are called 'church workers'.

When a church appoints, elects or employs a person, whether this is a volunteer or paid, to a position of service, the church is asking this person to represent God. That is, the church is saying, we trust this person to represent the good news of Jesus and not to make the good news of Jesus into bad news, by harming others.

When church workers understand their role properly they will no longer see themselves as just doing a job but rather as representing God

Rather than a job to be done, ministry will be a privilege, a responsibility, a position of delegated authority to influence others for God. When a person offers to volunteer for service, even if it is a very small role, the senior church workers in the church have a duty of care for that person's safety, and also a responsibility to others, to ensure they are a safe person to represent the church.

This concept of all church workers being "representatives of God" is ultimately about the way that others perceive the role of the church worker, rather than about how the church worker perceives their own role. Consider the 'other person' as a new person coming to the church for the first time, or as a vulnerable person, such as a small child or person with an intellectual disability. If that person sees you 'doing' a task at church, how do they view you? It would be reasonable that they would think that you must be someone who 'works' here, an important person, a person with some degree of influence. In this way, no matter how large or small the role is, all church workers are representatives of God and His church. All church workers could be perceived by the most vulnerable as a trusted person, a representative of the church.

Safe church workers respect other people's boundaries, have other people's best interests at heart, are led by God, and are in accountable, transparent teams.

Jesus gave his disciples a pattern for representing God as servant church workers. Jesus said to his disciples that they were not to be like the workers of this world who lord it over others, but rather to serve, "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Matthew 20:25-28. This may be called servant leadership. It is the way in which non-abusive Christian church workers carry out their positions of trust and power. As church workers we need to be about serving others - being servants, serving like Christ served (Philippians 2:1-8).

Faithfulness in Service 4.2 state: "Church workers have authority conferred upon them by their appointment. The authority and training associated with their roles means that they have power in pastoral relationships which is always to be exercised in the service of others."
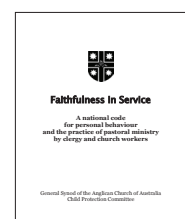
3.2 Selecting and appointing church workers

Selecting and appointing church workers includes ensuring that the practice of **due diligence** occurs. This is a legal term. In this context it refers to the care that must be taken both in appointing church workers and supervising them. As such, the formal selection and appointment procedure needs to be one which would withstand the rigours of an investigative enquiry related to your degree of due diligence when selecting and appointing church workers.

The following points on appointment are helpful in the process:

- Determine who has the authority to appoint a church worker to a ministry
- Determine how the selection steps above will be used and who will implement each step
- Determine who has the authority to ask a church worker to step down from a ministry or step aside for a period of time
- Have more than one person responsible for appointing a person
- Before a church worker is formally appointed, ask the pastor if they have any objections to that person fulfilling a specific ministry role

In 2018 the Diocese passed an ordinance adopting the National Church's Safe Ministry to Children's Canon 2017. Note the Diocese also has a Due Diligence Process for screening of all churches workers which will be reviewed to ensure compliance with Canon.

3.3 Supervising church workers

Although thorough recruitment is essential, it is equally important that church workers are supported through ministry supervision. For example: A potential church worker may have great motivation for ministry and all the right gifts for leading in a ministry at age 22. Their interview to ascertain their suitability for the role may be the best you have ever conducted and their application for ministry and referees may be glowing - a safe church worker! However, will that same church worker be appropriate for the same role in 5 years' time?

What life pressures such as children, death of loved ones, marriage, work, and housing arrangements are impacting upon the church worker? How will these impact his/her ability to lead others?

The components of healthy ministry supervision are: clear role expectations, adequate support for church workers, a commitment to leadership development, a clear set of boundaries (Code of Conduct), and well communicated processes for handling conflict and complaints against church workers.

Ministry expectations

A key aspect of effective supervision in ministry is linked to clearly understood expectations by church workers and ministry co-ordinators. Below are some guidelines related to ministry expectations.

As a church worker you could be expected to:

- commit to the aims of the ministry
- support other ministry team church workers
- fulfill your ministry role as described to you by your ministry co-ordinator
- undergo any training required for your ministry position
- attend ministry team meetings as required
- embrace the relevant code of conduct, policy and procedures

As a person in a ministry role within the church you could expect that your senior church leadership will:

- provide mechanisms to support and supervise all church workers and ministry coordinators in their roles
- ensure resources (people, financial, administrative access and equipment) are available for approved ministry programs
- provide opportunities to access approved ministry training

As a ministry co-ordinator you could be expected to:
- commit to the aims of the ministry
- support ministry team church workers and supervise them in their role
- fulfil your ministry role as described to you
- undergo any training required for your ministry position
- embrace the relevant code of conduct, policy and procedures
- ensure that all church workers are screened, appointed and inducted effectively into ministry roles.
- ensure that your ministry program has been approved by senior church leadership

Support for church workers

Another key aspect of supervision is church worker support.

Once appointed, it is important that the church governance body ensure that support is provided for all church workers. This support may take the form of formal or informal support mechanisms.

Regardless of the type of mechanism implemented, it is important that all church workers have a clear understanding of:
- to whom they can go for support
- what type of support is available to them

Ministry review

Once a church worker has commenced ministry, it is a helpful practice to spend time with them reflecting on how they are fulfilling their ministry role on a regular basis. This can be achieved through formal and/or informal channels appropriate to the nature of their role. The key purpose is to provide a forum and expectation that a ministry coordinator or supervisor will assist those in ministry leadership to reflect on how they are fulfilling their role. It is not designed to be punitive or a way of removing people from roles per se, but more an opportunity for co-ordinators to affirm their ministry church workers and ensure that healthy practices including ministry–life balance are in place, that church workers are experiencing a healthy spiritual life and support them to reflect on their call to their role on an ongoing basis.

Commit to leadership development

Developing church workers is another way to ensure healthy teams. This development can include things like regular team meetings, praying together, eating together and planning together. It is also advisable to invest in leadership development, both through in-house in-services and external training events.

Code of conduct

A code of conduct is helpful for ensuring that church workers are clear on boundaries, given that they have been given delegated authority and a position of power to spiritually influence others.

Codes of conduct are not laws to be added to grace, rather, they are expressions of our respect and commitment to each other's safety.

Consider the code as a way of saying to your team, "I will love you by looking after your best interests. I will help you avoid high risk situations." In this way team members hold each other accountable. It is about peer mentoring and accountability, not wielding a big stick!

A code of conduct relates to expected and appropriate behaviour and accountability. It defines clear behavioural and activity boundaries rather than assume that people know the boundaries. Any person who holds a ministry role is deemed to be a church worker and as such is subject to the code.

Faithfulness in Service (FiS) the National Anglican Code for Person Behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry and church workers, which is the Diocesan code for working with children, outlines appropriate boundaries, rather than assuming that people know the boundaries.

It is contains standards and guidelines for safe ministry in the following areas: Pastoral Relationships, Children, Personal Behaviour, Sexual Conduct & Financial integrity.

Faithfulness in Service v6 2016 (extracts)

 "The Church is the fellowship that nurtures and sustains Christians as they seek to follow Christ faithfully and participate in God's mission. Its leaders especially are to be examples of Christian faith and obedience as they exercise their vocation, in dependence on the Holy Spirit.

This Code is intended to identify the personal behaviour and practices of pastoral ministry that will enable clergy and church workers to serve faithfully those among whom they minister. If the behaviour and practices it outlines are followed, our communities will be safer places for everyone, where integrity is honoured, accountability is practised and forgiveness encourages healing and does not conceal misconduct." (extracts from Section 1 FiS, V6, 2011).

Section 3. Putting this Code into Practice

3.3 All clergy and church workers have a responsibility to ensure that personal behaviour and practices of pastoral ministry that are inconsistent with this Code are neither tolerated nor covered up.

3.4 Failure to meet the standards of this Code will indicate an area where clergy and church workers require guidance and specialised help. Such failures may result in formal disciplinary action if the conduct infringes an applicable disciplinary rule of the Church or is a breach of an employment contract.

3.5 Clergy and church workers are encouraged to follow the guidelines of this Code. Where this is impractical, the exercise of judgement will be required to ensure the safety of those to whom they minister and themselves. Wilful disregard of the guidelines may indicate an area where clergy and church workers require guidance and specialised help.

Standards

3.6 It is your responsibility to be aware of and meet the standards of this Code.

3.7 If you have overall authority in a church body, you are to ensure that all clergy and church workers for whom you are responsible are made aware of this Code.

3.8 You are not to penalise, discriminate or take action against other clergy or church workers because of any action taken in good faith under this Code.

Guidelines

3.9 If you know or have reason to believe that another member of the clergy or another church worker has failed to meet a standard of this Code, other than for child abuse, (the reporting of child abuse is addressed in paragraphs 5.14 and 5.15), you should: where you believe that a person has not suffered harm or is not at the risk of harm, approach the member of the clergy or church worker and identify the concern; or where you believe that a person has suffered harm or is at the risk of harm, report this to the church authority having responsibility for the member of the clergy or church worker or the Director of Professional Standards.

If in doubt seek advice from a colleague or supervisor or the Director of Professional Standards without identifying the member of the clergy or church worker.

3.10 If you know or have reason to believe that another member of the clergy or another church worker has not followed a guideline of this Code, you should approach the member of the clergy or church worker and identify the concern. If you consider that the member of the clergy or church worker is persisting in disregarding the guideline without good reason and a person has suffered harm or is at the risk of harm, you should seriously consider reporting this to the church authority with responsibility for the member of the clergy or church worker or the Director of Professional Standards. If in doubt seek advice from a colleague or supervisor or the Director of Professional Standards without identifying the member of the clergy or church worker.

Section 5 - Children

5.1 Children are entitled to be safe and protected. They have the right to be respected, listened to and their particular needs addressed in all church activities, whether mixed aged or child specific.

5.2 Ministry where children are involved requires absolute trustworthiness.

5.3 Clergy and church workers with overall authority in a church body (e.g. incumbents and school principals) have a responsibility that cannot be delegated for the implementation and maintenance of proper systems for the safety and welfare of children participating in its pastoral ministry.

5.4 When they are exercising a pastoral ministry involving children in a church body, clergy and church workers (e.g. Sunday school teachers, youth group leaders) have responsibility for the safety and welfare of children in their care.

5.5 Clergy and church workers have authority over children because of their position and power because of their greater age, maturity, physical size and life experience. Abuse arises from the misuse of authority or power. Any form of child abuse is always wrong.

5.6 Due to the inherent imbalance of power, children are incapable of giving valid consent to abuse.

5.7 Appropriate physical contact is important for children's healthy development.

Standards for clergy and church workers

These standards state the Church's expectations for personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry.

5.8 If you have overall authority in a church body, you are to ensure that:

- *proper systems for the safety and welfare of children participating in the church's pastoral ministry are implemented and maintained;*
- *all applicable requirements of the civil authorities, the church authority and the church body are complied with; and*
- *all clergy and church workers for whom you have responsibility and who work with children:*
  - o *comply with all civil and Church screening and selection requirements;*
  - o *receive regular training in child protection; and*
  - o *are aware of the provisions of this Code relating to children.*

5.9 If you are exercising a pastoral ministry involving children in a church body you are to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and welfare of the children in your care.

5.10 You are to not abuse children.

5.11 When engaged in pastoral ministry you are not to administer corporal punishment to children in your care.

5.12 You are not to make available to children any prohibited material, except wine in the context of a Holy Communion service.

5.13 Before you allow a person who is currently charged with or convicted of an offence against a child to participate in activities involving children, you are to:

- *consult the Director of Professional Standards;*
- *ensure that a risk assessment is undertaken; and*
- *be satisfied that no child will be at an increased risk of harm.*

5.14 If you know or reasonably suspect that a child is at risk of harm from child abuse, you are to report this to the appropriate civil authorities.

5.15 If you know or reasonably suspect that another member of the clergy or a church worker has abused a child, you are to report this to the appropriate civil authorities and the Director of Professional Standards.

Section 5 - Guidelines, which also make up part of the Code of Conduct include both behavioural and procedural information in relation to keeping children safe including:

- G.5.16 Recognising the characteristics and effects of child abuse
- G.5 17 Recognising the characteristics of sexual offenders
- G.5.18 Ensuring the safety of children
- G.5.19 - 20 Screening and selection of personnel
- G.5.21 - 23 Your role and capacity to perform it

FiS also contains additional safe practice and procedural information relating to activities, venue, supervision, transport, physical contact with children, communication, disciplining children, health and safety and record keeping.

3.4 Responding to grievances and allegations of misconduct

The Rector, Wardens and other senior parish leaders need to be prepared to manage conflicts, grievances and allegations of ministry misconduct and/or abuse between leaders, or between program participants and their leaders.

Pastoral, ethical, legal, denominational, risk management and insurance responsibilities must all be considered as part of the establishment of these processes.

It is important that response processes that involve a child or group of children are child centric and accessible to the children. It is recommended that you seek advice from experts when implementing processes with children. It is also recommended that your church actively and openly communicates your process for responding to grievances and allegations of misconduct to all those who are a part of your church.

Th National Principle for Child Safe Organisations 6 states:

Processes to respond to complaints of child sexual abuse are child focused

> a. *The institution has a child-focused complaint handling system that is understood by children, staff, volunteers and families.*
>
> b. *The institution has an effective complaint handling policy and procedure which clearly outline roles and responsibilities, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints and obligations to act and report.*
>
> c. *Complaints are taken seriously, responded to promptly.*

In cases where there are workplace conflicts, and/or allegations against church workers, pastoral, ethical, legal, denominational, risk management and insurance responsibilities must all be considered as part of a fair and just response.

This includes providing natural justice, to be extended to all parties. It is important that senior church leaders know, understand and follow the Standards in *Faithfulness in Service*, and know how to contact the Diocesan Director of Professional Standards.

Circumstances with legal and insurance implications

Legal:

Sexual harassment (Australia)

The Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Australia) describes sexual harassment as an unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favours or other unwelcome sexual conduct in circumstances where the person doing the harassing knows that the conduct would offend, intimidate or humiliate another person. Sexual conduct includes statements of a sexual nature to a person, or in the presence of a person, whether aurally or in writing. Reasonable steps to minimise sexual harassment include: specific instructions not to sexually harass other employees; training of employees on what behaviour amounts to sexual harassment; a policy outlining employees' responsibility not to sexually harass other employees. The National WHS Legislation makes it essential to provide a fair and just process for all workers who make sexual harassment allegations.

Any complaints of sexual harassment will be managed appropriately and sensitively. All allegations, and complaints of Sexual Harassment must be referred immediately to your Diocesan Professional Standards Director.

Safe Ministry to persons of concern (known offenders)

The restorative nature of the Gospel means that no one is outside the reaches of God's love. God's restoration and grace extend to all people, including those who may have committed past sexual offences, even against children. Such offences do have some life-long consequences. One consequence is that in some instances, there is an insurance implication (exclusion) related to known past sexual offenders (or persons of concern) attending your church. The Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 - schedule 2 part 4 provides Standards for Safe Ministry with Persons of Concern. The 'Guidelines for Parish Safety where there is a person of concern' is to be implemented in such instances. Contact the

Professional Standards Director if a person of concern attending your church.

If you have a concern in relation to a possible known sexual offender, or person who exhibits sexual boundary straying, speak to your minister or call the Director of Professional Standards on 08 9425 7203.

3.5 Self care as church workers

Self care in ministry relates to ensuring that your health and well-being is in the best place it can be to exercise your various ministry gifts. Be proactive by considering these three (3) key areas: life giving activities; monitoring well-being and taking action when at risk.

i. Life-giving activities: Life-giving activities are those that are uplifting, lightened your mood and refresh as opposed to life-draining. These often energise you, are pleasant and rewarding. They will often link into your areas of passion within your ministry role. However, it is also important to consider activities that are not linked to your ministry role such as: time with God (e.g. bible reading and prayer), hobbies; family time; connecting with others; being kind with yourself (e.g. remembering that it is ok to be upset or worried or frustrated); treating yourself in some way; seeking out calming activities; taking a break. Engaging in life-giving activities that are not related to your ministry role is important for keeping a clear perspective, particularly in times when ministry is hard, or when conflicts occur in ministry. It also helps with recovery from the 'giving out' nature of ministry. Remember, Jesus in his earthly ministry retreated often to be with His Father. In considering life-giving activities ensure you are attending to all of your senses as well as all perspectives of your life, i.e. emotional, physical, cognitive (mental) and spiritual well-being.

ii. Monitoring well-being: Well-being needs to be considered from multiple perspectives. It may be helpful to consider various perspectives using a metaphor of water tanks. Ask yourself, how full is each of my tanks? (below)

Physical

Emotional

To Ponder….

1. Consider the level of each of your tanks?

The sample shows that this person feels like they are operating at about 40% full physically and around 30% emotionally and cognitively and about 20% spiritually. They are not in good shape to be fulfilling their ministry role.

2. Ask yourself:

a. What is contributing to your level in each tank?

b. What life draining activities / circumstances are contributing to any low levels?

c. What life giving activities might enhance the levels of each tank?

d. Are you in "good enough shape" to be fulfilling your ministry role at the moment? If the answer is "no", then what actions might you need to take?

Cognitive

Spiritual

iii. Taking action when at risk: Once a person has ascertained that they are not in good shape for ministry by either using the "water tanks" metaphor or some other method, it is important that they speak to their supervisor to discuss their situation at this particular time. It may mean that they need to have a holiday, or a break from their role/s for a time; or have their role tasks adjusted to have more support in the practicalities of fulfilling their role. Whatever is considered in discussion with a supervisor, it is important to note that if a person has determined that their well-being is at risk if they continue as is, then something needs to change. This is part of a supervisor's duty of care towards the person.

Self care after trauma: There are times in ministry when a church worker can be exposed to personal trauma. This might be as a result of situations like misconduct of a church leader; death or serious injury of someone in the church or inappropriate behaviours and interactions in church life. Each person has a unique response to being involved in situations where they feel traumatised. Even though general principles of self care apply in most situations, individuals will most likely have some self care needs that are unique to them.

Some general principles in self care after trauma might include:
- If your personal functioning has been impacted, consider taking time out of role for a period
- Advise your supervisor if you have been impacted by trauma in the context of your ministry role
- Consider if you may benefit from professional debriefing and counselling
- Consider what life-giving activities may be of value in assisting you move towards healing from trauma
- Other than professional therapists, consider who may be able to assist you to process the situation that led to the trauma and assist you to move towards healing
- Consider how your physical environment may be adjusted to assist you to move towards healing from trauma
- Consider what changes need to be made in your ministry role to minimise likelihood of further trauma

Addressing personal issues raised by Safe Ministry information and workshops: If the information and/or workshop has caused you distress or you can't stop thinking about issues it raised, you may find it helpful to talk to someone about your concerns. You may be able to access a confidential employee assistance program through your employment or you may prefer to contact one of the services listed below.

Lifeline: (www.lifeline.org.au) 13 11 14 - 24/7 telephone support, referral and web-based service finder.

1800 RESPECT 1800 737 732 - 24/7 telephone support for anyone impacted by sexual assault, family or domestic violence

Mensline: (www.menslineaus.org.au) 1300 7899 78 - 24/7 telephone counselling and referrals, specifically for men.

Parentline: (www.parentline.org.au) 1300 1300 52 - Telephone counselling, information and referral service for parents and carers of children 0-18 years.

Chapter 4
Safe Environments

This chapter aims to develop awareness of:
- management of risks in ministry programs
- strategies for maintaining safe environments
- responding to incidents

4.1 Safe ministry programs

Safe programs are transparent and accountable in relation to both procedures and relationships.

A safe ministry program ensures that the spiritual, physical and emotional environments are safe, and that safe practices are in place to run the program.

Safe programs are prepared for the fact that some activities or situations present more inherent risks than others.

Consideration has given to the participants' ages and cultural backgrounds.

In relation to Children's Ministry *Faithfulness in Service* Section 5 provides Guidelines for Safe Environments. These guidelines are the expected practices in Children's Ministry in the Diocese.

Ministry program approval

The Diocesan Council is ultimately responsible for all church authorised activities. For this reason, every ministry program should be approved by the local Parish Council prior to it commencing.

There are a number of considerations to be mindful of when establishing a safe ministry event or program, these considerations might be called a Ministry Approval Process.

The key components to consider include:
- Program has been outlined and required resources identified
- Appropriate church workers and volunteers have been recruited, screened and selected
- Adequate supervision for ministry and activities has been arranged
- Appropriate activities have been selected
- Level of risks for activities have been assessed and minimised
- Programs and resources are developed
- Ministry approval has been given by the church governance body.
- Activities are monitored and reviewed
- Ministry church workers are supervised and accountability mechanisms are in place

4.2 Identifying and Managing Risks

Risk is the exposure to the possibility of such things as economic or financial loss or gain, physical damage, injury or delay, as a consequence of pursuing or not pursuing a particular course of action. The concept of risk includes the perception that something could happen, likelihood of it occurring and consequence if it does occur.

Every ministry program/ event and activity has risks. Some risks will be managed at a whole church level, like due diligence in relation to church workers, or the overall WHS risks that are similar across the church.

Risk management is the process of managing your church's exposure to potential liabilities. It does this by identifying risks in order to prevent them or reduce them, and by providing funds to meet any liability if it occurs.

It can be a useful exercise to do a risk assessment for your ministry/program at least annually. This does not replace a Hazard Identification. The Risk Assessment looks at what might happen, whereas Hazard Identification looks at what is present at the program at a specific time.

Considers five key areas:
1. How likely is this risk?
2. What is the consequence should it occur?
3. What is the overall level of risk?
4. What does this level of risk require to be managed appropriately?
5. How adequately are we managing this risk?

The Parish Council is to ensure that all risks are appropriately managed.

4.3 Health and Safety

Health and safety is a common law duty of care responsibility.

To ensure that the Parish upholds its duty of are we recommend:
1. Appointment of a Health Safety Team.
2. Implement a Health & Safety policy, including privacy policy and evacuations procedures.
3. Keep Health and Safety on the agenda at Parish Council & Diocesan Council, a report from WHS Team.
4. Address health and safety concerns within a prescribed period of the concern being communicated to the Parish Health Safety Team.
5. Use incident report documentation provided by the denomination to report serious incidents.
6. Health and Safety Team to undertake a safe environment audit of the church centre annually.

A Health and Safety team needs to be appointed by Parish Council to implement Diocesan Health and Safety policy and procedures, including the treatment of parish-wide hazards and risks.

4.4 Safe environments

Before a ministry or activity commences it is important to ensure that a suitable location has been selected for an activity. This may include on-premises and off-premises activities. It is important that the Ministry Co-ordinator or church governance body have completed the WHS Site Inspection and considered issues associated with holding activities.

Safe emotional and spiritual environments

This is fundamentally about putting other people's needs before our own agenda to ensure that a program runs successfully, respecting personhood, i.e. valuing individuals (background, personality, hopes, dreams and fears). It is about fostering a welcoming and caring ministry space, where people feel safe to share their ideas without being ridiculed.

Additionally, consider the areas below in your planning and preparation for events and programs.

Handling private information appropriately

Obtaining information about people is essential if we are to be equipped to care for them, not only physically but also emotionally. We need to respect people's information especially in critical situations or emergencies and guardianship issues. Where appropriate, dependent upon the age and vulnerabilities of program participants, obtain the person's name and a contact phone number. When it is apparent that the person is going to be attending fairly regularly, it may be necessary to formally obtain information. Please consider the principles in the National Privacy Act i.e: that private information is only collected if necessary; individuals concerned are advised of its intended use; personal information collected is

stored securely and not divulged to others without the consent of the individual involved; any personal information the church is holding which is no longer required, is out of date or incorrect, is either destroyed or amended to be accurate.

> *Use permissions form* for giving permission in situations including but not limited to:
> * collecting, retaining and distributing of personal information of church members
> * taking photos of church members in church contexts
> * displaying photos of church members in hard copy or electronic forms such as parish websites or social media sites
> * providing details of persons appearing in photos in either hard or electronic forms.

Respect diversity

People may come to church programs with a variety of cultural norms and expectations. We need to be aware of the expectations, taboos, sensitivities and/or story that may exist in the cultural settings in which we minister. Consider activities that may cause a problem culturally for those involved. If you suspect an activity could be a problem, ask the program participant or their family prior to asking them to take part. Value the different cultural traditions and heritages of Australian indigenous and other cultural groups in our churches particularly when it comes to matters of child-raising and parenting.

The power of the role model

The behaviour of church workers is observed at all times. Followers are quick to discern inconsistency between words and actions, and credibility can be lost if they perceive inconsistencies. In terms of children, they are likely to model the behaviours they see modelled by the people who are influential in their lives. If a child admires a church worker, then they are likely to imitate the behaviours of that church worker. As church workers, if we are discouraging, unreasonably punitive, disrespectful or sarcastic, this is what we are modelling. It can become a case of a church worker "reaping what they have sowed".

Since words as well as actions can be misinterpreted, it is wise for church workers to think about what impact their words have. Church workers have a responsibility to ensure that their conversations are not abusive or offensive within the normal range of these terms. People will from time to time take offence at what we say, but our responsibility is to not be offensive or derogatory in our conversation with others. A general principle to be embraced by all church workers is to consider the impact of their words and actions before they speak or act.

If it is necessary to speak to a program participant privately, it is wise to inform your team church worker or another member of your team of the intention to do so. This removes the risk of supposition by others looking on, that anything inappropriate could be happening.

When speaking with a program participant individually, do so 'privately in a public setting.' That is, move a few metres away from the rest of the group, but stay within the view of all of the group. This allows a church worker to have a private conversation without others hearing what is being discussed.

Non-verbal communication refers to all methods or channels of communication which do not use words. It includes body language, physical characteristics and appearance, the distance one person stands from another, the physical environment and the use of time. The use of all of these categories of non-verbal communication sends powerful messages to others.

A general understanding of the impact of distance and personal space is also useful for church workers. Most people need a certain degree of space between them and others. In most cases people can cope with others invading their personal space from the side. However, most do not tolerate invasion either in front or behind. It is useful for church workers to consider the distances they stand or sit from the people they are leading and determine if they may be making the person uncomfortable, because they are operating within an inappropriate space for a task.

Exercise safe practices when praying for children and young people

In general prayer as part of a ministry program ensure that parents are aware that prayer is part of a ministry program. Where a parent requests that their child or young person does not participate in individual prayer, it must be respected.

In the case of prayer for healing or specific charismatic gifts:

- permission must be sought and received from parents prior to praying for child or young person
- permission must be sought and given by the child or young person prior to praying for them
- advise parents of outcome of prayer

The use of electronic communication in ministry interactions

The use of the electronic communication mediums (such as telephone, email, social networking sites such as Facebook, and SMS) are a part of everyday life for many people in our ministry units. As church workers it is important that we consider how we can use this form of communication appropriately. We need to be mindful of the positional power dynamic that exists between those in church leadership and those under their care in pastoral relationships. This applies to all ministry relationships regardless of the age of the people involved.

We need to be mindful that electronic communication may be used to test or violate relational boundaries or even as a way to foster relationships for the purpose of preying on those who are vulnerable.

The following principles may be of value to consider when exercising safe ministry practices through the use of electronic communication in a ministry setting.

- Practice transparency and accountability in interactions
- Practise courtesy and engage in respectful interactions
- Practise privacy principles
- Practise care in social networking

Providing safe physical environments is important if attendees are to participate freely in activities.
To ensure that both church workers and ministry program participants are kept as safe as reasonably practicable, consider completing a risk assessment and action plan for your ministry program, as suggested in the Approval for Ministry Process. Completing the Approval for Ministry Process will provide transparency and accountability to the congregation and community in terms of a written risk assessment of your program or ministry event annually.

To assist with the implementation of the Approval for Ministry Process we have included discussion of several common areas of the physical environment which require special attention.

The Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017, has now the *Guidelines for Safe Environments* for Children's ministry from *Section 5 of **Faithfulness in Service**.*

The physical environment

Consider the follow areas of ministry when planning for safe environments

First aid
First aid is the emergency care of injured or sick persons. It aims to preserve life, promote recovery, and prevent the injury or illness becoming worse. All ministry units should have an accessible first aid kit. A record should be kept of any treatment given. The name of your trained first aider should be displayed on the front of the cabinet. Analgesics should not form part of your first aid kit.

Transportation (See also FIS G5.39-40)

Negligent driving can have painful emotional and legal consequences. Anyone who cannot/does not drive responsibly must not transport program attendees. Vehicles need to be registered, insured and in good working order. Vehicles need to be driven carefully, observing the legal speed limits and road laws.

Food
If your church provides food as part of the programs you provide, you will need to appoint people to be responsible for safe provision. Nearly all food naturally contains bacteria, and sometimes these bacteria can cause food poisoning. Food has to be handled correctly to make sure that it doesn't become contaminated, and that the bacterium in it doesn't have opportunity to grow.

Supervision (particularly with children and vulnerable adults) (See also FIS G5.25)

To properly exercise our duty of care it is essential that we not only have the right kind of church workers, but that we also have adequate numbers to supervise the program.

Precise numbers of church workers are hard to determine and will depend greatly on the size of the group, their age and the level of physical and or emotional risk inherent the activity.

Programs aimed at younger children, disabled and/ or vulnerable adults require more supervision due to the increased level of risk involved. No matter what size the group is, you will need enough church workers to cope with any accidents and/or critical incidents that may occur.

A good guide is a minimum of 2 adult church workers on site for all programs This will allow for safe supervision if and when accidents or critical incidents occur. Of course, you will need many more church workers if you are planning to run high-risk activities such as taking children or young people off-site, swimming, bushwalks, games nights or the like, or if your group is large.

Ministry finances

The proper management of the church's finances is an important part of stewardship. Ensuring transparency and accountability at all levels of church finances is important legally and also ethically. This relates not only to the auditing of church accounts and appropriate levels of accountability in regarding all money received, but also to money paid to any staff (including stipends, expense accounts, housing and car allowances, and any wages). An adequate understanding of the legalities governing GST, exempt benefits, workers compensation, superannuation and the responsibilities of charities is essential. If your church does not have the expertise to properly comply with all government regulations, you will need to employ or contract a suitably qualified person to do so on your behalf. Another consideration is budgeting for the ministries of the church. If the local church leadership has authorised a program or event to be run, then it is important that appropriate planning and budgeting is provided. It is not a good model to have individuals pay for resources to run a ministry, as when this person retires or steps out of that role, the new person may not be able to finance the ministry in the same way. People should be encouraged to give to a church budget through regular offerings, which is in turn used to finance church ministry.

4.5 Responding to incidents

While we all hope that they will never occur, people do have accidents and there are emergencies. At these times the health and safety of the person is of paramount concern and it may be necessary for a church worker to administer first aid to a person.
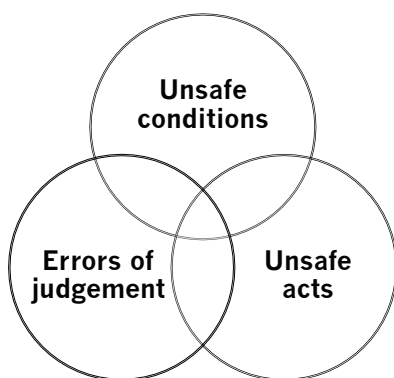
Incidents

An incident is an undesired event which resulted or could have resulted in harm, damage or loss. Whilst some incidents are unavoidable, other incidents may have resulted from unsafe conditions, unsafe acts and/ or errors of judgment. When two or more of these factors are present, the likelihood of an incident resulting is higher.

Critical incidents

A critical incident is an event or set of circumstances that have the potential to result in physical or psychological outcomes ranging from mild trauma to a fatality for one or more people.

A critical incident response plan is a systematic approach to planning and implementing an immediate and long-term response to a critical incident.

It has three main stages.

- preparedness
- response
- recovery

Recommended procedure

- Every incident will require: immediate response, in the moment. Follow up over the next 12-24 hours (or longer) including pastoral care for those involved.

- Review of the reason for the incident and changes made to minimise the risk of the same incident occurring the next time the same activity or event is run.

- Use of report forms: Injuries or accidents which require secondary medical attention e.g. visit to a doctor or medical centre, be written up using the Diocesan incident report form (available from the Diocesan Registry).

- Incidents of a serious nature will need to be reported to the church's insurer via the Registrar.

- Report all incidents to parents and/or caregivers of children and vulnerable adults, and in some instances where the impact has been felt by a wider group then reporting with the permission of those involved in the incident may be done with the wider concerned group

Reference Guide

The following reports, policy documents, handbooks and websites were used in the writing of this manual and are a good list of resources:

- ACT Government Department of Education, Youth and Family Services, Reporting Child Abuse: Keeping Children And Young People Safe (Canberra: ACT Government Publishing Services, 2003)
- ACT Government Justice and Community Safety website: http://www.justice.act.gov.au
- ACT Ombudsman website: ombudsman.act.gov.au
- Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australia Now: Australian Social Trends, 2003, ABS website www.abs.gov.au
- Australian Government - Australian Institute of Family Studies website: https://aifs.gov.au
- Australian Government - Office of the Australian Information Commissioner - Privacy Act 2001 - website www.oaic.gov.au
- Australian Government Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse 2013 website www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au
- Anglican Church of Australia - General Synod website - http://anglican.org.au
- Child Protection ~ Watton on the Web ~ part of River Ministries, Norfolk, UK, http://www.watton.org/abuse/policy/
- Child Protection System, Reporting Child Abuse, 1999, Victorian Government Department of Human Services
- Child Protection, by UNICEF, http://www.unicef.org/protection/index.html
- Child Protection: NSW Ombudsman, https://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au/what-we-do/our-work/employment-related-child-protection
- Child Protection: Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse Against Employees (March 2001 edition) , NSW Ombudsman, www.ombo.nsw.gov.au
- Children and Young People Act 1999, http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2008-19/default.asp
- Children's Charter, General Synod Children's Network from the Children's Charter from the Office of Children's Guardian
- Chris Storm: Bethany Community Support Melbourne, Presentation Paper Feeling Safe, Being Strong - at the AIFS Conference 2008
- Code of Good Practice, Anglican Diocese of Canberra & Goulburn
- Community Issues, NSW Police Force, https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/safety_and_prevention/your_community
- Domestic and Family Violence, Family and Community Services, NSW, http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/parents,-carers-and-families/domestic-and-family-violence
- Dyer, T, 2009, 4 sources of relational power in Christian ministry
- Elder Abuse Prevention and Assistance, ACT Government, Department of Disability, Housing and Community
- Elder Abuse Prevention, Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development
- Exploring Cultural Awareness, National CASA 2001, https://www.rccasa.org/filelibrary/03_CASA_ISE_Vol_1008.pdf
- Fact Sheet: Child Protection, by UNICEF, 2002, http://www.unicef.org/protection/cpgeneral.pdf
- Fortune, Rev Dr M, 2009 Responding to Clergy Misconduct: A handbook, Faithtrust Institute.
- Gestures: Body Language and Non-Verbal Communication
- History of Child Protection in Australia, by Adam M. Thomison 2001 https://aifs.gov.au/publications/family-matters/issue-60/history-child-protection
- https://safeministry.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/FaithfulnessInService2014.pdf
- http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/child-and-youth-protection-services
- https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/ageing-and-aged-care/wellbeing-and-participation/preventing-elder-abuse
- I Think I am being bullied, what do I do? and Identifying and addressing workplace bullying , ACT WorkSafe 2012, https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/3160/kw/bullying)
- Implementing a Children's Charter for the church, A study guide for congregations, The Episcopal Church, New York, http://www.episcopalpgh.org/docs/implementing-a-childrens-charter-1.pdf
- McClelland Heather, The Almond Tree: Child Sexual Abuse and the Church (stories from country Victoria):Unpublished, printed Fyshwick ACT.
- Ministries for the Episcopal Church, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/cecanf_final_report.pdf
- Model System for Lay Parish Church Workers, Anglican Church of Australia, https://www.anglican.org.au/data/Model_System_for_Selection_and_Accreditation_of_Lay_Parish_Workers.pdf
- NAPCAN What is child abuse? http://napcan.org.au/about/
- NSW Child Protection (Working with Children) Act, 2012
- NSW Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation, 2013
- NSW Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act, 1998
- NSW Commission for Children and Young People, Office of the Children's Guardian website, https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au
- NSW Department of Family and Community Services website, www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au
- NSW Interagency Guidelines for Child Protection Intervention (2000 edition), Commission for Children and Young People, http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/kts
- NSW Ombudsman https://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au
- Office for Children, Youth & Family Support, Care & Protection Services, www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs
- Ormerod, Neil and Thea 1995, When Ministers Sin: Sexual abuse and the churches, Millenium Press: Alexandria: Sydney Australia
- Parkinson, Patrick 2003 ed 2, Child Sexual Abuse and the Churches: Understanding the Issues, Aquila Press. Sydney Australia
- Risk Managament for Churches, http://baptistinsurance.com.au/Risk-Management-For-Churches
- Robinson, Geoffrey 2007, Confronting power and sex in the Catholic church: reclaiming the spirit of Jesus, John Garret Press, Victoria Australia.
- Safeguarding adults and children with disabilities against abuse, Council of Europe, 2003
- St Mark's National Theological Centre RTO, Principles of Protective Care & Child Protection, 2006.
- Time: the History of Child Protection, https://www.theguardian.com/society/2004/apr/23/childrensservices.childprotection
- Supporting someone who experiences domestic violence, Department of Community Services, NSW, March 2007, http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/319178/dv_support_english.pdf
- Who's Looking after the Kids? An Overview of Child Abuse and Child Protection in Australia, Greg McIntosh, Analysis and Policy and Janet Phillips, Information/E-links Social Policy Group, 2002, http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/Publications_Archive/archive/ChildAbuse
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011, http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/2011/10
- Working With Children Check Guidelines, https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check
- World Health Organization http://www.myagedcare.gov.au/financial-and-legal/elder-abuse-concerns