

# Risk Management including Child Safety

## RISK MANAGEMENT FOR CHILD SAFE STANDARD

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

### Definitions

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

### Principles and guidelines

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

#### Identify Risks

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

#### Analyse Risks

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

#### Evaluate Risks

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

#### Control Risks

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

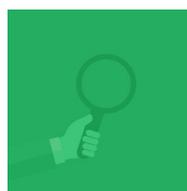
#### Monitor and Review Risks

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

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

**ALL RISK ASSESSMENTS SHOULD BE UPDATED ON A REGULAR BASIS.**

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



## Risk Management - Child Safety Risks

### Types of Child Safety Risks

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

#### Accidental Harm

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

#### Physical Abuse

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

#### Psychological / emotional Abuse

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

#### Neglect

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

#### Sexual Abuse

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

#### Cultural/Spiritual Abuse

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

#### Online Abuse

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

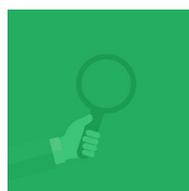


## Risk Management – Safety Risks

### Areas of risk

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

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



## Risk Assessment Tool for Child Safety

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

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

Table 1 Category of risk description examples

| Likelihood         | Risk level    |        |          |         |              |
|--------------------|---------------|--------|----------|---------|--------------|
|                    | Medium        | High   | High     | Extreme | Extreme      |
| Almost certain     | Medium        | High   | High     | Extreme | Extreme      |
| Likely             | Medium        | Medium | High     | Extreme | Extreme      |
| Possible           | Low           | Medium | High     | High    | Extreme      |
| Unlikely           | Low           | Low    | Medium   | Medium  | High         |
| Rare               | Low           | Low    | Medium   | Medium  | High         |
| <b>Consequence</b> | Insignificant | Minor  | Moderate | Major   | Catastrophic |

Table 2 Risk Assessment Matrix



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

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

