



inspiring people to say 'yes' to Jesus

SAFE CHURCH HANDBOOK

111 Robert St, Como 6052
www.comobaptist.org.au
08 9450 5328

SAFE CHURCH LEADERS

3 Person Leadership Structure

Safe Church Committee Structure – 3 positions

The make-up of your Safe Church Team may vary from other Churches. You know what is best for your situation. The following positions are mentioned in the Safe Church Training Workbook along with the Job Description forms already developed and ready to go for you.



- Safe Church Response Officer (SCRO).
- Safe Church Administrative Officer (SCAO)
- Church Safety Officer (CSO)

Together, these three positions form the Safety Team.



- Ministry Coordinators
- Program/Event Leaders
- Ministry Teams
- Ad-hoc Helpers

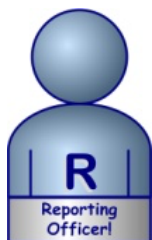
All of these people are important contributors to Safe Church. You will already have your Ministry Coordinators, Program/Event Leaders, Ministry Teams and Ad-hoc Helpers. It is possible that you already have a Responsible Care Coordinator – a person who currently takes care of screening. You may also have someone responsible for reporting (or several people), and general church safety. If so we suggest that you review their current positions against the responsibilities described in the following sections.

Roles and Responsibilities, or Job Descriptions, for each position should be defined and agreed. Once you have agreed your Safe Church Structure, you need to make the necessary arrangements to appoint these positions, or to make changes to existing positions within your church. You may be required to take recommendations for some of these positions to your church membership, via your leadership team, for approval.

We suggest that you review your current appointment process to see how these positions are approved, appointed and maintained. This may require consulting your constitution, or governing body, for guidance. e.g. will your board appoint; your leadership team; or will these be deaconate positions; or positions that require a nomination and voting process?

Safe Church Response Officer (SCRO) – Phil Smoker

There are two aspects to the position of the Safe Church Response Officer (SCRO):



1. Reporting; and
2. Pastoral Care.

The position of Safe Church Response Officer is, by its nature, a pastoral role to the person who is reporting. The SCRO must ensure that sufficient care and debriefing occurs for the person making the report.

Due to the combination of the sensitivity of reporting, and the need for Pastoral Care, we strongly recommend that the SCRO be your Senior Pastor, or a senior leader. We recommend that the

Implementation Team discuss this with the Senior Pastor and determine if any adjustments need to be made, and what additional support the SCRO will need.

Safe Church Administrative Officer (SCAO) – Ben O’Reilly

Reporting is one aspect of Safe Church. There is also an administrative load, one which should be administered by someone other than the Senior Pastor or the SCRO. This position would replace that of the Responsible Care Coordinator.

The primary responsibility of the SCAO is to keep adequate records. This includes Anecdotal Records’ Incident Reports; recruitment and screening records. We also suggest that the SCAO hold and maintain master copies of all policies, procedures, forms and templates associated with Safe Church. This may be the position that oversees Safe Church once the implementation is complete.



Church Safety Officer (CSO) - Vacant

A Church Safety Officer (CSO), or team, is primarily responsible for risk management including:

- Liaising with Team Leaders to ensure that all aspects of risk identification, assessment and management are implemented in a church or organisation
- Providing information on safe work practices
- Keeping records of all documentation pertaining to incidents related to risk or hazards associated with church or organisation premises and activities
- Keeping senior church or organisation leadership informed of risk management status.

Below are the three Committee Job Descriptions

INDICATORS OF ABUSE

Signs that may indicate abuse

1. Neglect

Failure to provide the child with the basic necessities of life to the extent that the child's health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed. e.g.: failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, medical care, attention to hygiene or supervision, inability to respond emotionally to child's needs, 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> poor standards of hygiene leading to social isolation or poor health e.g. unwashed, poor hair texture inappropriately dressed for weather conditions extended stays at school, public places, others' homes extreme longing for adult affection self comforting behaviour, eg. rocking, sucking delay in developmental milestones low weight for age and/or failure to thrive and develop untreated physical problems eg. serious nappy rash extreme anxiety about being abandoned child not adequately supervised for their age scavenging or stealing food and focus on basic survival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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

2. Physical Abuse

Significant harm from an injury. The injury may be inflicted intentionally or may be the inadvertent consequence of physical punishment or aggressive treatment. e.g.: beating, shaking, bruising, lacerations, burns, fractures, poisoning, attempted suffocation, physical mutilation

INDICATORS/SIGNS IN CHILDREN	INDICATORS/SIGNS IN PARENTS/CAREGIVERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 & emotional problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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

3. Emotional & Psychological Abuse

Sustained, repetitive, inappropriate, ill treatment of a child or young person through behaviours including threatening, isolating, neglecting, discrediting, misleading, disregarding, ignoring and inappropriate encouragement.

Psychological abuse damages a child's intellectual faculties and processes, including intelligence, memory, recognition, perception and moral development.

The harm experienced needs to be assessed to be or likely to be detrimental in effect and significant in nature on the child's wellbeing.

INDICATORS/SIGNS IN CHILDREN	INDICATORS/SIGNS IN PARENTS/CAREGIVERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> constant criticism belittling, teasing ignoring or withholding praise and attention excessive or unreasonable demands persistent hostility and severe verbal abuse rejection and scapegoating belief that a particular child is bad or evil using inappropriate physical or social isolation as punishment domestic violence

4. Sexual Abuse

When one person (child or adult) uses power/authority over a child to involve the child in sexual activity. Child sexual abuse involves a wide range of sexual activity. Bribes or threats are often used to make them participate in the activity.

e.g.: 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 eg. 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 adolescent's pregnancy by family

5. Witnessing Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence is any abusive behaviour used by one partner or family member in a relationship to gain and maintain control over another's life. It can occur in any type of domestic relationship, including spousal relationships, intimate personal relationships, family relationships and informal care relationships. It is possible for there to be multiple perpetrators and victims within the household.

Indicators that a child is observing or experiencing domestic violence may include:

- shows aggressive behaviour
- develops phobias and insomnia
- experiences anxiety
- shows symptoms of depression
- has diminished self-esteem
- demonstrates poor academic performance and problem-solving skills
- has reduced social competence skills, including low levels of empathy
- shows emotional distress
- has physical complaints

MINISTRY EXPECTATIONS

Expectations for volunteers and leaders

MINISTRY VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS

Helpers	Ministry Assistants	Ministry Leaders	Ministry Cluster Leaders	Eldership (incl Pastors)
NO RESPONSIBILITIES	NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR OTHERS ROSTERED	RESPONSIBLE TO PROVIDE INSTRUCTION TO OTHERS	RESPONSIBLE FOR PLANNING, OVERSIGHT AND SUPERVISION	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No attendance requirement - Need clear instruction - Need supervision - WWC required if helping where there will be children and young people < 18 yrs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attends most Sundays - Need clear instruction - Need supervision - WWC required if helping where there will be children and young people < 18 yrs - Receptivity to Jesus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance for at least 6 months at Como - Committed to Christ - Evidence of ongoing spiritual growth - Attends most Sundays - Required to report any allegations - Appointed by Cluster Leader - Environment check - Code of Conduct - There is an expectation that within the first 12 months of ministry leaders will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Safe Church Training o Be baptised o Become member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimum 12 months attendance - Member - Evidence of ongoing spiritual growth - Attends most Sundays - Must meet biblical requirements for Deacons - Appointed by Eldership - Safe Church Training - Safe Church Management - Respond to reports - Environment Checks - Code of Conduct - Provide supervision, support and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimum 12 months attendance - Member - Evidence of ongoing spiritual growth - Attends most Sunday - Must meet biblical requirements for Bishops/Elders - Elected by Membership - Safe Church Training - Safe Church Management - Respond to reports - Report to BU - Environment Checks - Code of Conduct - Provide supervision, support and training - Responsible for Safe Church - Accountable for Safe Church - Provide direction and oversight
	Sunday School Assistant Crèche Assistant [not Parents]	Sunday School Teacher/Coordinator Crèche Leader/Coordinator	Next Gen Cluster Leader	
	Youth Assistants	Youth Leaders Trilogy Mentors	Next Gen Cluster Leader	
Guest Musician/Vocalist	Musician/Vocalist Media/Sound	Worship Leader	Worship Cluster Leader	
Meals	Meet/ Greet (FIT Team) Flowers /Morning Tea BBQ Sunday / Cleaners Care Ministry Helpers (with an approved Carer)	First Impressions Team Leader Care Ministry Visitors/Carer	Care Cluster Leader	
Event Helpers	Inspiring Women Team Men's Network Team Members Small Group Host	Inspiring Women Leader Men's Network Leader Small Group Leader	Groups Cluster Leader	
	Missions Team Members	Faith Promise Leader Chaplaincy Representative Shoobox Coordinator ACTS of Service Coordinator	Missions Cluster Leader	
Gardeners/Busy Bee Helpers	Property Team Members	Property Team Leader	Property Cluster Leader	
Pamphlet delivery/Event Helps			Communities Cluster Leader Bridge Inc. Board Pastoral Prayer Team	

APPLICATION FOR SAFE CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Form all potential leaders should complete



APPLICATION FOR SAFE CHURCHES LEADERSHIP

This application form shall be completed by all applicants for any leadership position (voluntary or paid), to be appointed by or on behalf of the Church (The Church includes any congregation or organisation associated with the Baptist Churches of Western Australia).

Surname		Other Names		Previous names		Male/Female	
Mobile Phone			Home Phone		Email		
Address							
Date of Birth			Normal Occupation			Marital Status	
Working With Children Card/ Receipt No.		Note: Please attach a photocopy of Working with Children Check card. (This applies to all applicants working directly with children or who make decisions affecting anyone under the age of 18)					
Name of Church or Organisation				Are you applying for a voluntary position?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
What is the area of ministry or activity for which this application is made?							
Describe your personal, ministry & work experiences, including age groups and any work with children.							

Character Referees:							
Please provide details of at least three adults who can give a first-hand character reference concerning you, preferably within a recent area of ministry. Include at least one person from your current Church, one from your family and one from a different area of ministry. If this is not possible, other referees may be used.							
Name of Referee 1 - Local Church							
Phone contacts				Home		Mobile	
Church or Ministry Organisation							
Please indicate the name of Church or Organisation within which the Referee has known you							
Applicant's Ministry Involvement							
Details of the role fulfilled by you, and your ministry relationship with the Referee							
Approximate Dates of Involvement				Start Date		End Date	
Name of Referee 2 - Family Member							
Phone contacts				Home		Mobile	
Relationship							
Your family relationship with the Referee							
Name of Referee 3							
Phone contacts				Home		Mobile	
Church or Ministry Organisation							
Please indicate the name of Church or Organisation within which the Referee has known you							
Applicant's Ministry Involvement							
Details of the role fulfilled by you, and your ministry relationship with the Referee							
Approximate Dates of Involvement				Start Date		End Date	

Please tick "yes" or "no" for each question below.		
NOTE: If the answer to any of the following is "yes", please give further details on a separate page. A "yes" answer will not automatically rule an applicant out of selection.		
	Yes	No
1. Do you have any health problem(s) which may affect you volunteering for the church?		
2. Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence?		
3. Have you ever been charged with a criminal offence?		
4. Have you ever had permission to undertake paid or voluntary work with children or other vulnerable people refused, suspended or withdrawn in Australia or any other country?		
5. Have you ever engaged in any of the following conduct, even though never having been charged? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual contact with someone under your care other than your spouse (such as a parishioner, client, patient, student, employee or subordinate) • Sexual contact with a person under the age of consent • Illegal use, production, sale or distribution of pornographic materials • Conduct likely to cause harm to people, or to put them at risk of harm. 		
6. Has your driver's licence ever been revoked or suspended?		
7. Have you ever had an apprehended violence order, order for protection or the like issued against you as a result of allegations of violence, abuse, likely harm, harassment, stalking etc?		
8. Has a child or dependent young person in your care (as a parent or in any other capacity) ever been removed from your care, or been the subject of a risk assessment by the authorities?		
9. Have you done anything in the past or present that may result in allegations being made against you of child abuse? Abuse means: bullying; emotional abuse; harassment; neglect; physical abuse; or sexual abuse.		
10. Have you ever done anything in the past or present that may result in allegations being made against you of bullying or any form of harassment of adults?		
11. To your knowledge, have you ever been the subject of an allegation of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct?		
12. Do you have a history of alcohol or substance abuse or have you experienced difficulties with addiction? (including prescription, over-the-counter, recreational or illegal drugs, pornography)		
13. Is there any other relevant information or matter you think we should know about?		

Applicant's Statement

The information contained in this application is true to the best of my knowledge. I authorize the referees listed in this application, and any other relevant persons, to give the Church any information they may have regarding my character and fitness for ministry. I agree that the Church may contact people other than my referees, who know me, to assist in forming an opinion regarding my suitability.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to perform my services on behalf of the Church in a manner consistent with Biblical teaching, and I undertake to immediately advise the Church of any change in the information provided by me in this Application, or of any other information reasonably expected to impact my suitability when working with children and youth or any other area.

I agree to embrace and follow the BCWA Safe Churches Policy, Code of Good Leadership Practices and Risk Management & Safe Environment Guidelines.

Applicant's signature		Date	
Witness' signature		Date	

Please note: The witness is to warrant the accuracy of the above Personal Details and is **NOT** to be a member of your family.

Privacy Statement: The personal information you provide in this application is collected, stored and used by the Church in accordance with the Privacy Act, only for the purpose of the BCWA Safe Churches Policy. Your information will be securely stored and access to it carefully controlled. By making this application you agree to the Church disclosing this information to BCWA, and such Churches and other organisations as needed to fulfill this purpose. If some or all of this information is not provided we may not be able to progress your application for Safe Churches Leadership.

Please return the completed form (marked CONFIDENTIAL) to your church or organisation.



PLEASE ENTER NAME OF CHURCH OR ORGANISATION

Referee Check

To check the suitability of a volunteer or paid person for ministry it is a requirement by BUWA to apply referee checks on their relationships with minors and/or other vulnerable people.

Name of applicant	
Name of referee	
Name of person completing form	
How long have you known the applicant and through what circumstances? (eg. church, play group, bible college, etc)	<hr/> <hr/>
Have you seen the applicant interacting with children or youth under the age of 18 years? (eg. through a church fellowship or ministry, friendships, school, sporting clubs, own children, etc)	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
What period (or how many times)?	<hr/> <hr/>
What circumstances?	
What is the applicant's rapport with children and/or youth?	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
How does the applicant interact?	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
How do the young people respond?	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Have you seen the applicant interacting vulnerable adults?	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
What circumstances?	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

BCWA SAFE CHURCH PAMPHLETS

Pamphlets outlining Code of Good Practice, Risk Management, and Safe Church Policy

- Applying appropriate standards of dress as a model to others
- Exercising integrity and accountability in financial matters on behalf of BCWA and in personal dealings
- Exercising integrity in the use of media, printbased materials and intellectual property
- Treating all personal information with sensitivity and confidentiality, in accordance with the Church Privacy Policy and the National Privacy Principles

When the Code is damaged

Occasional/minor violations

Everyone sins and can be forgiven (1 John 1:8-9). When this happens in an area that is not a breach of civil or criminal law, simply cease the conduct. If this is difficult, the person should see their team leader about receiving help. In some cases it may be necessary to step the person aside from their duties whilst this takes place. Deal with such matters confidentially.

Unknown violations

Not all leaders will understand “unacceptable” behaviours. Even after explaining the code some may be unaware they are exhibiting unacceptable behaviours. Leaders need to be open to correction and humble enough to modify behaviours so as not to discredit the gospel. As above, stepping a person aside from their duties may be necessary.

Constant violations

There are breaches that are not a breach of civil or criminal law. When a leader is made aware of their behaviour and yet refuses to change:

- The ministry coordinator meets with the person for a series of behaviour review meetings and communicates behavioural changes that are required.

- If the behaviour continues, a small group of church leaders are to arrange a meeting to address the behaviour. Stepping aside is appropriate at this point.
- If the behaviour continues beyond this meeting, then respectfully and upholding confidentiality, the person will be stood down for a set period. They will be offered help in changing their behaviour via counseling if they are willing.
NB: Written notes of all meetings to be carefully taken and a copy given to all attendees.

Breaches of the law or allegations of abuse

Allegations of abuse or serious misconduct are to be referred to BCWA. If a leader or minister commits a crime, please contact the Baptist Ministry Centre on 6313 6300.

Contact Information:

BCWA

08 6313 6300 | www.baptistwa.asn.au
safechurch@baptistwa.asn.au

Baptist Churches Western Australia © 2016

These guidelines have been endorsed by the Baptist Churches Western Australia, for use in churches and associated organisations.



Baptist Churches Western Australia has adopted the Safe Church Training Agreement through the National Council of Churches in Australia. Due to the autonomy of the local church we cannot demand that our churches implement the Safe Church policy. This policy is endorsed by Baptist Churches Western Australia and in any legal proceedings you may be asked if any such recommendations exist and if so, whether or not they were followed. As such, we strongly urge you to implement this policy.



Baptist Churches
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Code of Good Leadership Practices

July 2016

An initiative of
Baptist Churches Western Australia

Code of Good Leadership Practices

Through His word God directs us to live out our ministry roles with integrity, enthusiasm, compassion and patience.

(2 Cor 6:3, 2 Tim 4:2, 2 Tim 4:5, Eph 2:10).

A Code of Good Leadership Practices

provides guidelines on appropriate boundaries rather than assuming that people know what the appropriate boundaries are.

The five key sections following provide an overview of what Baptist Churches Western Australia (BCWA) expects of those in leadership, as they exercise their ministry and in their personal lives. It also provides a step by step procedure for loving leaders through a healing process when they break or damage the code. This code is not a set of laws to be added to grace, but rather, expressions of our love towards each other and the people to whom and with whom we minister.

Maintain a healthy relationship with God

We minister to others out of our relationship with God. We can promote our relationship with God by:

- Joining regularly in the life and ministry of the church
- Studying the Scriptures in private and in groups
- Praying regularly in private and in fellowship with and for the people and ministry of the church
- Giving of our time and finances to the work of the church, as an expression of our gratitude to God

Be diligent in exercising ministry

If you are exercising a pastoral ministry in a church body you are encouraged to:

- Take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and welfare of those in your care

- Respect, listen to and attempt to meet individual needs
- Give careful consideration to the choice of activities, ensuring adequate supervision and age, gender, ability and cultural appropriateness
- Ensure that in the case of ministry programs to those under 18 years, there are sufficient adults (18 years and over) present for the adequate supervision of ministry activities, i.e. minimum of one adult leader to ten children and minimum of two adults and one of each gender for mixed groups.
- Ensure that Junior Team members, who are under 18 years will not be given sole responsibility to supervise other minors and are to be under the supervision of adults in the same general proximity
- Be welcoming and affirming of others as individuals who are precious in God's sight, avoiding any appearance of favouritism, or 'special' relationships with those under your care
- Provide clear behavioural expectations for those under your care and refrain from any form of corporal punishment
- Ensure that the content of any printed, media, music or digital material to be used is suitable and appropriate to the age and maturity of the group being taught or entertained

Be accountable and transparent in interactions

As leaders of integrity we hold ourselves accountable to each other and recognise that we are responsible for our words and actions and how they might impact others. Part of our desire to be accountable relates to utilising transparent practices in our ministry to others. We are to be seen to be doing the right thing and are responsible for our actions. In our interactions with children it is recommended that:

- You avoid working alone or in isolation
- Individual or small group ministry occurs in the presence of adults, a public place or a location with visibility
- Counseling to children or young people should be performed in the presence of two responsible adults or leaders
- To the extent practicable, avoid being alone with a child in a motor vehicle

Exercise appropriate physical contact

Appropriate physical contact is important for the healthy development of children. In general:

- Excluding circumstances such as immediate physical danger or medical emergency, physical contact should be initiated by the child
- Ensure that physical contact is of a nonsexual nature
- Great care should be exercised when comforting a distressed person of any age

Minister with integrity

The personal behaviour and relationships of all in leadership has a significant impact on the church and the community because they are a model to others. As you consider your impact on others, be mindful of:

- Loving and caring for your family and paying particular attention to the effect of your ministry on your family relationships
- Displaying behaviours and attitudes that are above reproach when interacting with others
- Being sensitive and respectful towards family and cultural traditions different from your own
- Avoiding language that may be misunderstood or that bullies, threatens, belittles, humiliates or causes unnecessary offence or embarrassment
- Exercising discretion and appropriateness when considering, viewing or using restricted material

What is risk management?

Risk management is the process of managing your organisation's exposure to potential risks and actual hazards.

Where risk assessment considers things that might be a risk or could go wrong, hazard identification and control measures relate to actual hazards that are present. In risk management, risks are identified and assessed (Risk Register) in order to prevent them or reduce them, and by providing funds to meet any liability if it occurs.

What is a risk register?

A risk register is one way of documenting risks that have been identified, control measures that are in place to address risks and level of risk assessed.

What is a risk action plan?

A risk action plan is used to describe what additional measures you will use to reduce, eradicate or manage potential risks identified in your risk register for your organisation. It also includes information on resources required (people, equipment, financial), lines of responsibility and timeline for implementation.

What is a church safety officer?

A church safety officer/team is responsible for:

- Liaising with Team Leaders to ensure that all aspects of risk identification, assessment and management are implemented in a church or organisation
- Providing information on safe work practices
- Keeping records of all documentation pertaining to incidents related to risk or hazards associated with church or organisation premises and activities
- Keeping senior church or organisation leadership informed of risk management status

What is a safety team?

This team, also known as risk management team, is responsible for the oversight of the implementation of the Safe Church Policy and supporting documentation and processes in local churches/organisations.

These Risk Management & Safe Environment Guidelines apply to all pastors, elders, staff members and volunteer workers associated with ministry in our family of churches (BCWA).

More Information - The *Risk Management & Safe Environment Guidelines* are supported by:

- *Safe Church National Training System*
- *Safe Church Training Workbook for BCWA*
- *Safe Church Implementation Guide*
- *Australian Baptist Ministries Response to Persons of Concern*
- *Baptist Insurance Services Risk Management Guide for Churches*

Contact Information

BCWA

08 6313 6300 | www.baptistwa.asn.au
safechurch@baptistwa.asn.au

Baptist Churches Western Australia © 2016

These guidelines have been endorsed by the Baptist Churches Western Australia, for use in churches and associated organisations.



Baptist Churches Western Australia has adopted the Safe Church Training Agreement through the National Council of Churches in Australia. Due to the autonomy of the local church we cannot demand that our churches implement the Safe Church policy. This policy is endorsed by Baptist Churches Western Australia and in any legal proceedings you may be asked if any such recommendations exist and if so, whether or not they were followed. As such, we strongly urge you to implement this policy.



Risk Management & Safe Environment Guidelines

July 2016

An initiative of
Baptist Churches Western Australia

Risk Management and Safe Environment Guidelines

BCWA have a responsibility to provide a safe environment for their workers and to protect other people's property from damage.

BCWA also recognises the obligation it has to those who enter BCWA premises and participate in the activities provided, and those who come under its care in an external environment.

This document is underpinned by the following policy statements from the BCWA Safe Church Policy:

- We will give opportunity to all people, including children, to provide input into the programs and the activities in which they are to participate, by fostering and valuing their ideas, and encouraging participation in all areas of the life of the church, as far as is sensible and practical.
- We will obtain information relating to the program participants, including children's health and family situation, to ensure that we are able to care for their physical and emotional needs.
- We require all leaders to establish safe physical environments as outlined in the *Safe Church Training Workbook* for BCWA.
- We require Team Leaders to exercise a duty of care through the use of forms, checklists and templates made available through the *Safe Church Implementation Guide* for establishment and maintenance of safe ministry environments.
- We require a Safety Team to be appointed in each congregation or organisation to ensure that the following areas are incorporated into establishing and maintaining a safe physical environment: fire safety; venue safety; first aid; food safety practices; risk assessment for activities; adequate ministry supervision for

activities; transport protocols; critical incident and emergency protocols and ministry review.

- We require Team leaders to complete a Permission to Proceed process annually.

In order to fulfill our responsibilities BCWA expects all churches draw upon the resources located in:

Safe Church Training Workbook for BCWA, Safe Church Implementation Guide, Safe Church National Training System and Baptist Insurance Services Risk Management Guide for Churches to:

1. Provide a safe and secure environment
2. Conduct risk assessment
3. Manage risk

1. Provide a safe and secure environment

In providing a safe and secure environment ensure that:

- Appropriate first aid equipment and personnel are in place for activities
- Safe food handling and hygiene practices are employed
- Safe manual handling, lifting and moving techniques are encouraged
- Information on safe handling of hazardous substances is provided
- Safe visual and auditory care is provided for workers and those attending programs as part of the church
- On-site and off-site venue hazards are identified and effective control measures are implemented
- Those undertaking off-site activities (eg. home groups, etc) are encouraged to consider aspects of establishing a safe environment
- Applying emergency procedures including emergency evacuations, use of fire extinguishers and Critical Incident Response Plan

- Buildings are maintained in a state of good repair
- Security measures are employed to ensure people and property security

2. Conduct risk assessment

In conducting risk assessments of the environment where work and activities are conducted and will, as far as is reasonably practicable, eliminate or work to manage the identified risks using the following strategies:

- Risks in premises and ministry program activities are identified
- Risk registers to assess risks are completed
- Risk action plans are developed and implemented
- Risk action plans are monitored

3. Manage risk

In developing and implementing risk management/maintenance plans, ensure that:

- A Church Safety Officer is appointed
- Areas of risk are identified and managed
- All incidents, areas of potential risk and actual hazards are reported to the Church Safety Officer, using appropriate documentation

HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

What is risk?

Risk is the exposure to the possibility of such things as physical damage, injury or delay, economic or financial loss or gain, as a consequence of pursuing or not pursuing a particular course of action. The concept of risk includes:

- The perception that something could happen
- The likelihood of it occurring
- The consequences if it does occur

What is a hazard?

A hazard is an actual source of danger that could result in an accident if undue care is not exercised.

Helpful Definitions

Safe Environment: where duty of care is discharged by taking steps to keep all those in our care safe e.g. from spiritual, physical, sexual, emotional abuse (including bullying) or neglect.

The Safety Team: also known as risk management team, is responsible for the oversight of the implementation of the Safe Church Policy and supporting documentation and processes in local churches/organisations.

Permission to Proceed: written process of accountability, whereby a Ministry Co-ordinator reviews safety plans for a program and grants permission for that program to proceed under the church/organisation's name.

Safe Leader: has been through a recruitment process, understands responsibilities, is supervised and is an accountable team player.

Safe Program: all risks have been assessed and events thought through and planned. These programs have had permission to proceed from ministry co-ordinator (a role that may be undertaken by pastors, elders, deacons or other senior leaders).

Team Leaders: responsible for individual teams and programs. They jointly recruit team members and complete safety management plans for their individual programs.

Team Members: responsible for working within their team to minister in the context of programs.

SCTA: Safe Church Training Agreement under the National Council of Churches in Australia.

The Safe Church Policy applies to all pastors, elders, staff members and volunteer workers associated with the ministry in our family of churches (BCWA).

The Safe Church Policy takes into account The Child and Community Services Act 2004.

More Information

The Safe Church Policy is supported by:

- *Safe Church National Training System*
- *Safe Church Training Workbook for BCWA*
- *Code of Good Leadership Practices*
- *Risk Management & Safe Environment Guidelines*
- *Safe Church Implementation Guide*
- *Protecting People, Protecting Property: Risk Management Manual for Churches*

Contact Information:

BCWA

08 6313 6300 | www.baptistwa.asn.au
safechurch@baptistwa.asn.au

Department for Child Protection

08 9222 2555 | www.dcp.wa.gov.au

Department of Local Government & Communities

08 6551 8700 | www.dlgc.wa.gov.au

National Kids Help Line

1800 55 1800 | www.kidshelp.com.au

Life Line

131 114 | www.lifelinewa.org.au

Baptist Churches Western Australia © 2016

These guidelines have been endorsed by the Baptist Churches Western Australia, for use in churches and associated organisations.



Baptist Churches Western Australia has adopted the Safe Church Training Agreement through the National Council of Churches in Australia. Due to the autonomy of the local church we cannot demand that our churches implement the Safe Church policy. This policy is endorsed by Baptist Churches Western Australia and in any legal proceedings you may be asked if any such recommendations exist and if so, whether or not they were followed. As such, we strongly urge you to implement this policy.



Baptist Churches
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Safe Church Policy

July 2016

An initiative of
Baptist Churches Western Australia

Why a policy?

The Bible consistently expresses God's concern for the well-being of the weak and powerless members of society, children in particular. Christ's words and example provide a strong rationale for churches being responsible for all those in their care. Baptist Churches Western Australia (BCWA) takes this responsibility very seriously.

As those charged with leading and caring for others in ministry, we have a responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all under our care. All people have the right to be emotionally and physically safe, respected, and have their views and opinions valued at all times.

We also live in a country that legislates for people's safety, particularly in the area of child protection. This *Safe Church Policy* has been developed to help us live out our biblical mandate and our responsibilities under WA legislation.

Our *Safe Church Policy* has the following goals:

- To minimise the risk of abuse, ministry misconduct and the misuse of positional power within the church.
- To ensure that all cases of suspected abuse and ministry misconduct are handled in a consistent, unbiased and thorough manner.
- To ensure that leaders and programs are safe.
- To ensure that all people are respected and valued irrespective of their gender, age, country of origin, cultural heritage, socio-economic background or ability.

Safe Leaders

We commit to:

a) Safe recruitment of leaders

We will recruit using the *BCWA Application for Safe Churches Leadership*

We will screen all prospective leaders before they are appointed.

We will require all leaders in child-related ministry to also obtain a WA Working with Children Check.

We recommend a minimum 6 months church attendance policy for all prospective volunteer leaders.

b) Adequate training of leaders

We require that all leaders attend a Safe Church (or SCTA endorsed) workshop within their first year of ministry and to attend a refresher workshop every three years.

We require all leaders to attend additional ministry-specific departmental training as required by individual churches.

c) Continued supervision of leaders

We commit to ongoing leadership training, supervision and support for leaders. We require all leaders to agree to follow the *Code of Good Leadership Practices*.

d) Responding to allegations of suspected abuse

We require all leaders to report disclosure or suspicions of child abuse, using the procedure in the *Safe Church Training Workbook for BCWA*.

Where a leader has an allegation of misconduct made against them, the *BCWA Response to Complaint protocols* will be followed.

Safe Programs

We commit to:

a) Safe emotional environments

We will give opportunity to all people, including children, to provide input into the programs and the activities in which they are to participate, by fostering and valuing their ideas, and encouraging participation in all areas of the life of the church, as far as is sensible and practical.

We will endeavour to obtain information relating to the program participants, including children's information to help meet their physical and emotional needs.

We will require those in ministry leadership to be nurturing and affirming in their ministry interactions.

b) Safe physical environments

We require all leaders to establish safe physical environments as outlined in the *Safe Church Training Workbook for BCWA*.

We require Team Leaders to exercise a duty of care through the use of forms, checklists and templates made available through the *Safe Church Implementation Guide* for establishment and maintenance of safe ministry environments.

We require a Safety Team to be appointed in each congregation or organisation to ensure that the following areas are incorporated into establishing and maintaining a safe physical environment: fire safety; venue safety; first aid; food safety practices; risk assessment for activities; adequate ministry supervision for activities; transport protocols; critical incident and emergency protocols and ministry review.

We require Team leaders to complete a Permission to Proceed process annually.

ACCIDENTS OR COMPLAINT

Forms and flow charts if an accident occurs, or a complaint needs to be made



PLEASE ENTER NAME OF CHURCH OR ORGANISATION

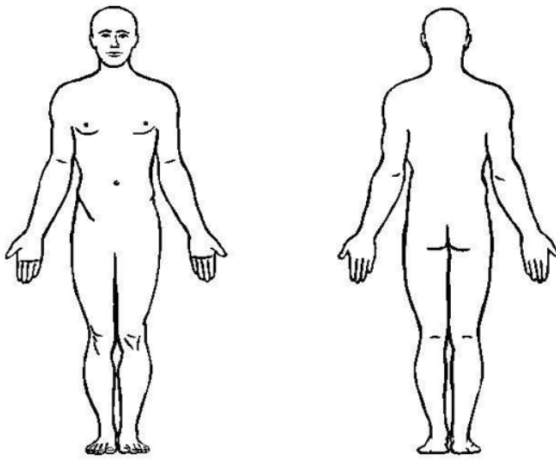
COMO BAPTIST CHURCH

Accident / First Aid / Complaint Report

To be completed where there has been an accident or incident involving physical injury, property damage, complaints or a breach of the Code of Good Leadership Practices.

Name of Person filling in this report:			
Ministry Coordinator:			
Reporter Contact Details:			
Nature of Report:	<input type="checkbox"/> Accident causing personal injury	<input type="checkbox"/> Property damage	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Breach of Code of Good Leadership Practices	<input type="checkbox"/> Complaint	
	<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid (complete page 2)		
Location of Incident:		Date/Time of Incident:	
<p>Describe the Incident. Include the specific location at the venue and circumstances of the incident.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>			
<p>Details of Persons Involved</p>			
Name:		Telephone:	
Address:			
<p>Details of Witnesses (If applicable)</p>			
Name:		Telephone:	
Address:			

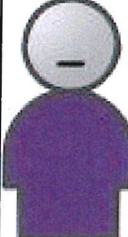
Risk/ Hazard			
Did the incident occur as a result of a risk or hazard?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, had the risk or hazard been identified prior to the activity commencing?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, what was done to eliminate or control the risk or hazard?			
What could be done in the future to avoid a repeat of the incident?			
Report submitted by:		Position in church:	
Reporter Signature:		Date:	


First Aid Details					
First Aid person in attendance:				Time First Aid person in attendance:	
Observations:					
Indicate area(s) affected by injury (if applicable) by marking with X					
Actions taken / treatment provided:					
Outcome:					
Medication provided?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Parent's consent if under 18?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Follow up required?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No


Ministry Co-Ordinator to retain original copy and give completed form to the Church Safety Officer




Accidents/Complaints/Breaches of Code of Conduct


 Noticed concerning behaviour by a leader; a breach of the code of good leadership practices; or have received a complaint.

 **Complete an Accident / Complaint Report.**
It is important to provide as much information as possible, basing your information on facts and observations, without making assumptions; jumping to conclusions, or making 'value' judgments.

Put the record in an envelope, marked 'Confidential' and give to your ministry team leader, or Supervisor. Should the concern be regarding the team leader or supervisor, than pass directly to the Safe Church Response Officer. 

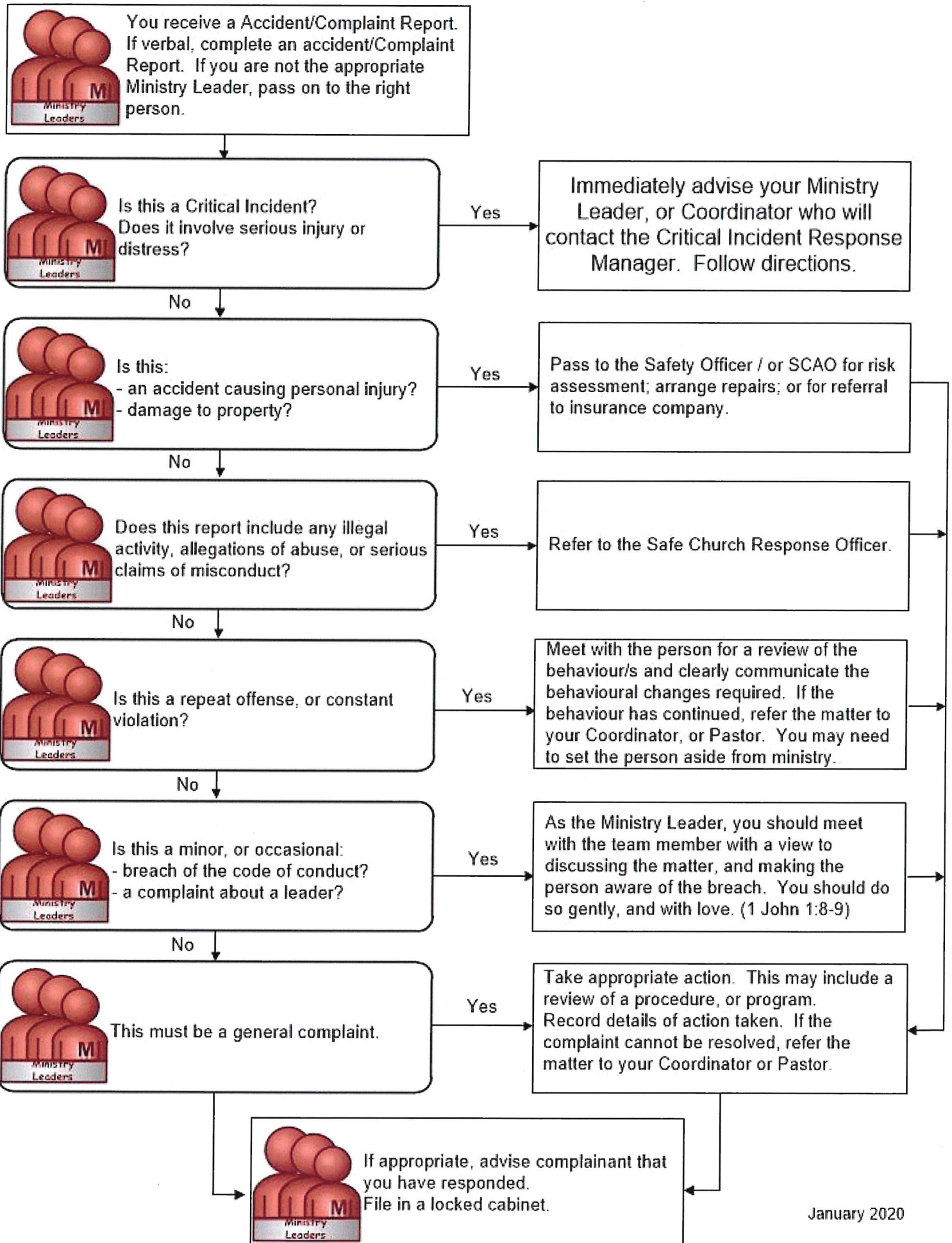


 Pray that God will guide the situation, for wisdom, and for peace. Be assured that if further information is required, you will be contacted.

Submit to SCRO only if concern raised involves the ministry team leader. 



Responding to Accident / Complaints / Accidents / Allegations of Misconduct



ANECDOTAL RECORD

Forms and flow chart for reporting a concern, a red flag, or an anecdote that doesn't require a full incident report



PLEASE ENTER NAME OF CHURCH OR ORGANISATION

COMO BAPTIST CHURCH

Anecdotal Record

To be completed by a leader who wishes to report concerns about another person, either relating to the code of conduct; or concerning behavior either in a leader or program participant. This includes raising concerns of abuse. The completed form should be given to the team leader, who will pass the information onto the Safe Church Reporting Officer, and then kept in a locked filing cabinet.

Name of person filling in this report	
Name of Team Leader	
Name of child/young person	
Age of child/young person	
Relationship to the child	
Date and time of incident or observation	
Describe your concerns, what was observed or what was said.	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

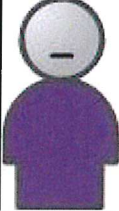
Note: It is important to provide as much information as possible, basing your information on facts and observations, without making assumptions; jumping to conclusions, or making 'value' judgments.


Signature		Date/Time	
-----------	--	-----------	--

Please return the completed form (marked CONFIDENTIAL) to your Team Leader.





Raising Concerns Anecdotal Records / Red Flags

 Noticed concerning behaviour, or believe that someone is at risk of abuse

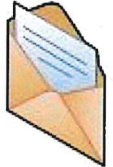
Yes  Check the Indicators of Abuse. These are in the Safe Church Training Workbook. Your Ministry Leader may also have a copy. Is there a still a concern?

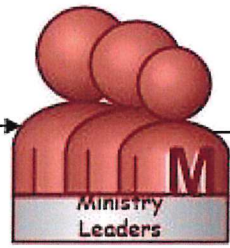
No


 **Complete an Anecdotal Record.**
It is important to provide as much information as possible, basing your information on facts and observations, without making assumptions; jumping to conclusions, or making 'value' judgments.

 Praise God and continue to pray for the situation, for wisdom and for discernment.


Put the record in an envelope, marked 'Confidential' and give to your ministry team leader, or Supervisor. Should the concern be regarding the team leader or supervisor, than pass directly to the Safe Church Reporting Officer.





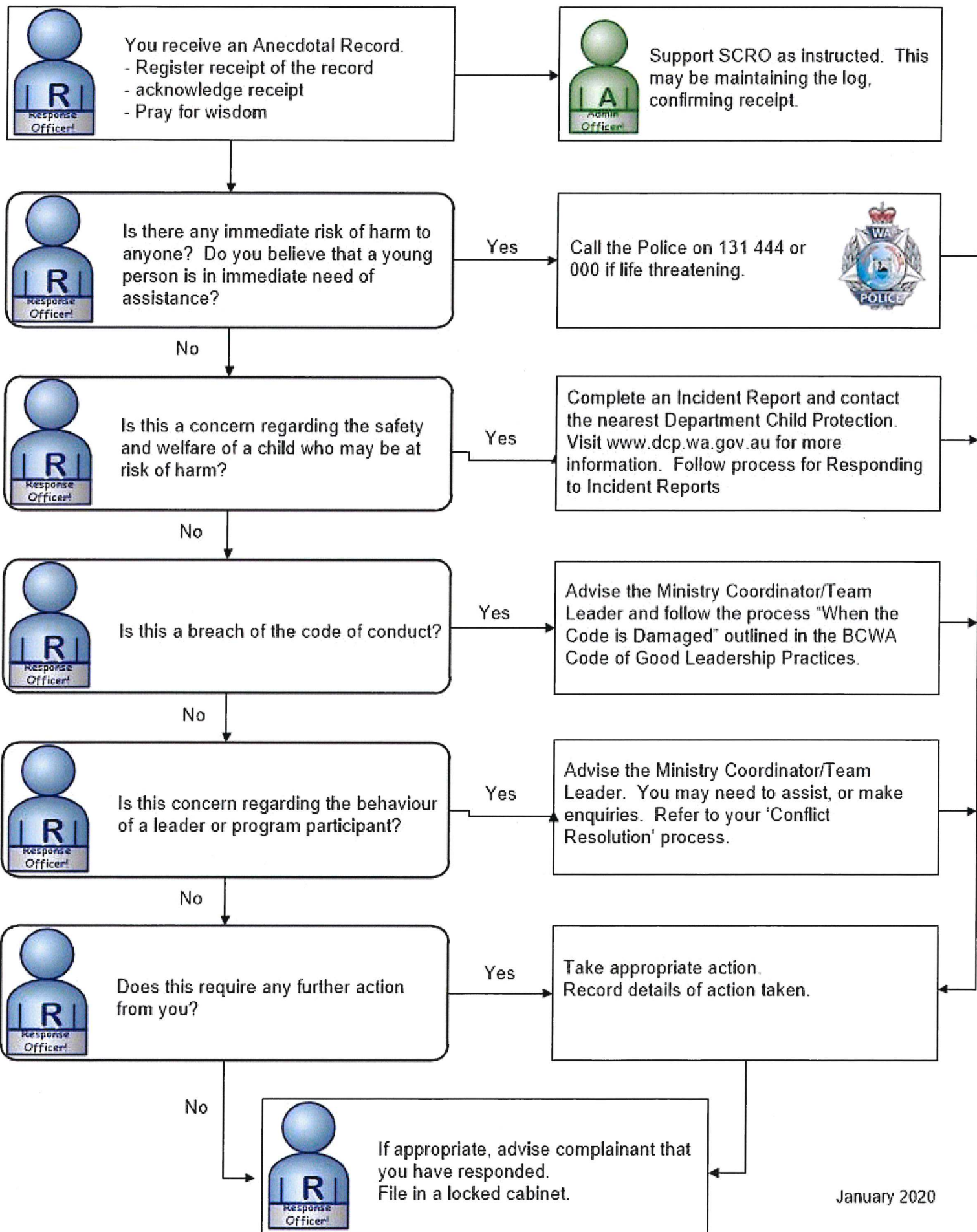
 Pray that God will guide the situation, for wisdom, and for peace. Be assured that if further information is required, you will be contacted. Provide Care in consultation with SCRO

Submit to SCRO only if concern raised involves the ministry team leader.

 Response Officer!



Responding to Concerns Anecdotal Records / Red Flags



INCIDENT REPORT OR RISK OF HARM

Forms and flow chart for reporting an incident or a risk of harm



PLEASE ENTER NAME OF CHURCH OR ORGANISATION

COMO BAPTIST CHURCH

Incident Report: Risk of Harm

To be completed by the person who hears a disclosure or wishes to report a child or young person at risk of harm. The completed form should be given only to the Safe Church Response Officer, and then kept in a locked filing cabinet. The information will be used for reporting to the appropriate authorities, including the Department Child Protection.

PART A

Name of person filling in this report (Reporter)	Phil Smoker		
Name of Safe Church Response Officer:	Phil Smoker		
Relationship to the alleged victim:	None		
Nature of alleged abuse:	<input type="checkbox"/> physical	<input type="checkbox"/> emotional	<input type="checkbox"/> sexual
	<input type="checkbox"/> neglect	<input type="checkbox"/> witness to domestic violence	
This report is due to:	<input type="checkbox"/> reasonable grounds	<input type="checkbox"/> disclosure made on:	
		Date / time:	
Describe why you have reasonable grounds for this report (add pages if needed). Include when and how you became aware of the information; names of other witnesses; description of any injuries; description of the behavior of the child or young person; the carer's attitude regarding the incident (if known).			
Where disclosure has occurred provide a first person verbatim in this space. Record the child or young person's actual words as best as you can.			
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>			
Signature		Date/Time	

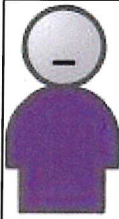
Continued over...

PART B

Details of alleged abuse victim			
Name:		Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Address:			
Parent/Guardian		Phone	
Names of siblings:			
Have the parents/guardians of the alleged victim been notified? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
If yes, person(s) spoken to:		Date/Time	
What were they told:			
Details of alleged perpetrator of the abuse (if known)			
Name:		Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Address:			
Phone:			
Does the alleged perpetrator know about the report? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
If yes, who spoke to him/her:		Date/Time	
What was he/she told:			
Church's response to alleged abuse/risk of harm			
Safe Church Responding Officer (SCRO) advised? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Reported to SCRO by:		Date/Time	
Statutory Body/Department Child Protection? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Name of call centre worker:		Ref #	
Have the police been notified? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Reported to police by:		Date/Time	
Name of Officer and Station			
Advice given by police officer			
Report submitted by:		Position in Church:	
Signature		Date	



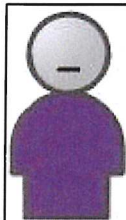
Incident Reporting – Risk of Harm Disclosures/Reasonable Grounds



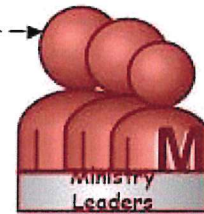
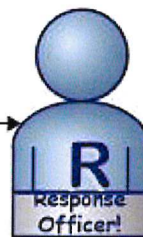
- A child tells someone that they have been or are at risk of being abused,
- Someone else reveals that they know of a child who has been or is at risk of being abused
- Someone has concerns that the child may have been or is at risk of being abused based on their physical appearance or behaviour

DO LISTEN, KEEP IT BRIEF, REASSURE, INFORM

DON'T DO NOT INVESTIGATE THE DISCLOSURE, DO NOT DISMISS THIS, DO NOT MAKE PROMISES, DO NOT SHARE



Report to the Safe Church Reporting Officer. If they are not onsite – report immediately to your Team Leader.

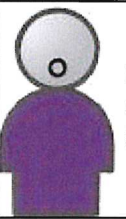


Complete an Incident Report. You may need help from the SCRO.

Describe why you have reasonable grounds for the report; how you became aware of the information; names of other witnesses; description of any injuries; description of the child's behaviour; the carer response attitude regarding the incident (if known). Where disclosure has occurred, provide a first person verbatim. Record the child's actual words as best you can.



As you continue to *nurture* and *minister* to the child: Create a calm environment, engage in appropriate relationships, continue to include the child, provide an ordered program, assist appropriate behaviours, focus attention on the safe space




Debrief by verbally and emotionally, "unloading" your feelings about receiving a disclosure or witnessing abuse with your Safe Church Reporting Officer





Pray that God will guide the situation, for wisdom, and for peace. Be assured that if further information is required, you will be contacted.





**Responding to Incident Reports
Risk of Harm / Disclosures**

 Someone advises you of a disclosure, or raises concerns regarding the immediate welfare of a child.


 Help the person who has received the disclosure, or is raising the concern to complete an Incident Report – Risk of Harm. Reassure, and provide appropriate care for the person receiving the disclosure.

 Is there any immediate risk of harm to anyone? Do you believe that a young person is in immediate need of assistance?


Yes →  Call the Police on 131 444 or 000 if life threatening.

 Is the Report on behalf of a child or young person who has been abused, or is at risk of being abused, neglected, ill treated, or exposed to behaviour that psychologically harms the child?


Yes → Contact the nearest Department Child Protection. Visit www.dcp.wa.gov.au for more information. The DCP will advise you about the initial action to take.

 Is the Report regarding a persons mental health that may be placing self or others at risk of harm? Or a suicide attempt or threat?


Yes → Contact either an ambulance; police; a local mental health team or the Mental Health Emergency Response Line
Metro: 1300 555 788 Peel: 1800 676 822
www.mhc.wa.gov.au

 Is the Report concerning criminal offences by others?

Yes → Contact your local Police. Seek advice from BCWA.
Tel Office Hours: 6313 6300
Emergency After Hours: 0400 581 310
www.baptistwa.asn.au

 Is this Report raising allegations of ministry misconduct or abuse by church leaders?

Yes → Seek advise from the BCWA Church Health Pastor

 Do you need help responding to this Report?

Yes → Seek advise from the BCWA Church Health Pastor

Remember: When Receiving a Disclosure

DO

1. DO LISTEN do not add anything to what the child says. You will need to write this down, exactly.
2. DO REASSURE the child that they have done the right thing in speaking to you.
3. DO INFORM the child that you need to tell people who can help.
4. DO ENSURE that the child is not in immediate danger.

DON'T

1. DO NOT INVESTIGATE THE DISCLOSURE. You don't need to prove this. Don't ask leading questions.
2. DO NOT DISMISS THIS - Children rarely lie about such matters.
3. DO NOT MAKE PROMISES - You may not be able to stop the abuse.
4. DO NOT SHARE - You cannot tell anyone who does not need to know, tell only your supervisor and/or the Safe Church Reporting Officer.

NOTE: KEEP IT BRIEF. This is not the only time the child will have to share their story and you may actually jeopardise an investigation, so you should not have a long conversation about this.