



ANDREWS FARM
COMMUNITY CHURCH
A RIVER OF LIFE & HOPE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

Manual for Children's and Youth Leaders

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Manual Statement

Leadership in any ministry at Andrews Farm Community Church carries with it, privileges and responsibilities. The purpose of this manual is to present the requirements for anyone working with individuals or directly related to providing programmes to children and youth under the age of 18. It is an abridged version of the BCSA documents but fully adheres to all guidelines and requirements set by BCSA.

All workers who undertake appointed roles with children must recognise that they are placed in a position of privilege, trust and responsibility. To the extent that it is reasonably possible, a child has the right to expect to be safe and feel safe at all times. Workers are required to act reasonably and to actively determine to minimise the likelihood of physical injury, emotional harm, damage or loss in their interactions with young people. In addition, a worker should make every reasonable effort to avoid acting, or failing to act, in any way that unreasonably frightens or intimidates a young person or jeopardises a young person's physical or emotional safety and well-being. With this in mind, workers are exhorted to be guided by, and to implement the guidelines presented in this document. Such guidelines will help to ensure the safety of the children who are placed into the church's care and also assist workers in providing a high standard of care.

It is also expected that as leaders/volunteers representing God, the church and a ministry, you will understand the responsibility that comes with it to act at all times in appropriate ways both when you are 'on duty' and in your personal time. Children and their families will identify you as a leader first and so a high standard of conduct is appropriate no matter where you are.

The Baptist Churches of South Australia is serious about doing all within it's power to create a child-safe environment in order for children and young people to grow in the safe knowledge of God's love and grace. The BCSA understands its responsibility and requires that all matters be responded to in line with procedures set down in this document. Under no circumstances will BCSA tolerate the abuse of children in any form, the protection of offenders, or any cover up of suspected or known cases of abuse. Andrews Farm Community Church is fully supportive of this standard and endeavours to adhere to all practices set by the Baptist Churches of SA

Child Protection Policy and Procedures

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1. Introduction

Andrew's Farm Community Church takes seriously its commitment to the safety and well-being of all those who participate in its ministries. We will, to the best of our ability, provide an environment which is respectful and safe for all those in our care. This will happen through the education of all leaders responsible for and/or working with children or youth and through the physical environment. We recognize and realise our obligation as mandated notifiers and will respond accordingly to any concerns relating to the care and protection of children and youth in line with legislated requirements.

This policy particularly relates to those under the age of 18. **Please note that wherever the terms "children" and "youth" are used in this policy and the accompanying documents, they refer to anyone under the age of 18 years.**

It is expected that all staff and volunteers who work with this age group will adhere to this policy and follow its procedures.

This policy will provide

- a framework through which the church can minimize the risk of child abuse within its ministries
- steps through which any suspected or reported cases of child abuse can be handled thoroughly with care and integrity.

2. Policy Statement

As a church we will consistently undertake to:

- provide an environment where every reasonable step is taken to ensure the safety of children and youth
- screen thoroughly and train all staff and volunteers who work with children and youth (see Section 6, Screening of Staff and Volunteers and Section 7, Staff and Volunteer Training)
- check that our policies and procedures related to children and youth are appropriate, practiced and reviewed at least annually
- respond promptly to any suspected or reported child abuse

3. What is Child Abuse?

In general, child abuse is categorized in four ways according to the Children's Protection Act 1993.

Physical abuse

This is commonly characterized by physical injury.

Sexual Abuse

This occurs when someone in a position of power to the child uses his/her power to involve the child in sexual activity.

Emotional Abuse

This tends to be a chronic behavioural pattern directed at a child whereby a child's self-esteem and social competence are undermined or eroded over time.

Neglect

This is a failure to provide for the child's basic needs.

There are detailed descriptions of these in the attached booklet Child-Safe Environments Guidelines for Mandated Notifiers on pages 7-8.

4. Responding to Suspected Child Abuse

Amendments to section 11(1) and (2) of the Children's Protection Act 1993 state any paid staff or volunteers working with children or youth under the age of 18 are required by law to report any suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child/young person is being abused or neglected. Proof of abuse is not required before the notification takes place. Only reasonable suspicion is required. This does not only relate to suspected abuse or neglect within the church but any suspected abuse or neglect relating to any child that has contact with the church.

In responding to suspected abuse, the primary concern will always be the ongoing safety of the child. All other concerns will be secondary. So appropriate steps will be taken to ensure the child is considered first.

Thus anyone who suspects on reasonable grounds that there is abuse occurring must respond accordingly:

- the suspected or alleged abuse is reported to Department of Child Protection via C.A.R.L. (Child Abuse Report Line) as soon as possible
- the suspected or alleged abuse is reported to the staff or volunteer's senior pastor and department head as soon as possible
- a written report will be made by the person who reports and given to the department head
- a report will also be made to the Office of Professional Standards at Baptist Churches SA

The Senior Pastor, Department Leader and/or Administrator of the church will process the information in consultation with the Office of Professional Standards and take any further steps necessary including any appropriate pastoral care for those involved.

All reports and information will be kept confidential.

5. Procedures where the suspected abuser is a staff member or volunteer

In the case of the reported suspected or alleged abuse involving a staff member or volunteer, the following will take place:

- the suspected or alleged abuse is reported to C.A.R.L. as soon as possible
- the suspected or alleged abuse is reported to the staff or volunteer's Senior Pastor and Department Head as soon as possible
- a report will also be made to the Office of Professional Standards of Baptist Churches SA
- the Church Eldership will be notified
- the *suspected* abuser will be informed of the report by the Church Eldership or Pastor as advised by the Office of Professional Standards and immediately stepped down from any ministry or leadership role pending an investigation
- if the report is found to be true the perpetrator would adhere to strict guidelines regarding their involvement in the church (see Section 9 Dealing with known child abusers) as well as facing the full legal implications of their actions
- if the report is found to be false the accused would be offered reinstatement at the leadership's discretion
- appropriate pastoral care would be offered in line with the circumstances.

6. Screening of staff and volunteers

The screening and training of staff and volunteers is crucial to the prevention of child abuse within the church's ministries. Every worker must be screened and approved by the leadership of the department and /or the Senior Pastor.

The following are steps that should be taken by staff and volunteers who wish to work within ministries. In consultation with their department leader,

- Step 1. An application form will be completed by the volunteer.
- Step 2. Complete a National Police Check or equivalent. (A police check for a volunteer is free but staff positions incur a fee to be met by the applicant)
- Step 3. Complete a Ministry Agreement Form.
- Step 4. Participate in appropriate training for the level of work to be undertaken. (7 hour module, 3 hour update/refresher or 1 hour module)

Steps 1-4 must be completed before any part of the work is undertaken.

All forms of documentation (excluding the application form) will need to be updated every 3 years.

Underage workers (under 18 years of age) are permitted to participate in ministry without police checks but must be supervised at all times by an accredited worker who has completed all the above steps. Underage workers must have completed an appropriate level of training. (See Section 7 Staff and Volunteer Training)

Occasional workers may work in ministry without the documentation but must have been known to leadership in the church for at least 6 months and be supervised by an accredited worker.

7. Staff and Volunteer Training

Anyone in leadership who is responsible for programmes and/or working with children or youth will have to complete appropriate training as follows:

- All members of the staff and key leadership teams will complete the Child Protection Training - 7 hour module or equivalent or a 3 hour update/refresher as required.
- All other volunteers or staff will complete a 1 hour training session which covers basic understanding of child abuse, mandatory notification, church child protection policy and a duty of care component specific to the ministry in which they will be working (including volunteers aged between 16-18 years).
- These levels of training will need to be updated every 3 years

8. Database/Clearance Information

A central database will record

- all staff and volunteers responsible for programmes and/or working with children or youth.
- when each level of training and documentation has been completed and presented by each staff member or volunteer
- when each staff member and volunteer needs to update their training and documentation

This database will be maintained by the Administrator. It is the church's intention to keep records up to date and give reminders when training needs updating but it is the responsibility of individuals to keep their training current.

9. Dealing with known child abusers

Anyone who attends the church and has a history of abusing children must adhere to the following requirements:

- a. The person will enter into an agreement with the church leadership that will restrict the person's involvement in church ministry to whatever level the leadership deems appropriate to continue to provide a child-safe environment.
- b. The person will have regular meetings with senior leadership for accountability as deemed necessary.
- c. The person will be willing to have their name and appropriate details given to any pastors and leaders who are involved in ministry to youth and children or any other ministries that the senior leadership deems necessary.
- d. The person's details will be given to the Office of Professionals Standards of BCSCA
- e. The senior leadership will use their discretion in consultation with the Office of Professional Standards of BCSCA when considering any further requirements.

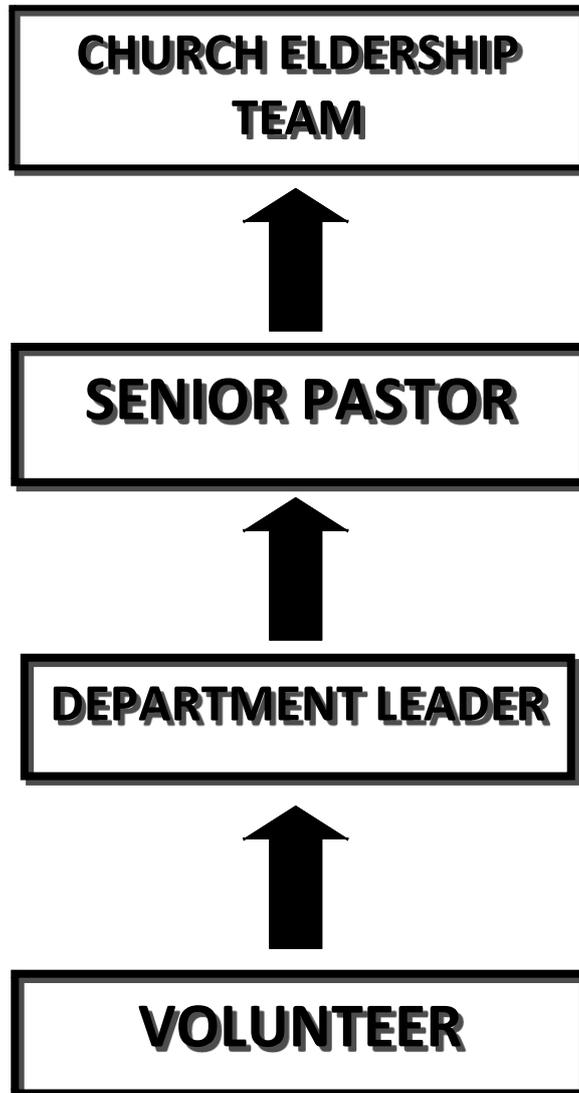
10. Dismissal of leadership

You will be dismissed from leadership if:

- You are found guilty of committing a crime
- You influence a young person to commit a crime
- You fail to adhere to the personal guidelines for leaders
- You are knowingly in breach of duty of care
- You engage in any of the following
 1. Substance abuse
 2. Sexual misconduct
 3. Serious unbiblical lifestyle

ACTION to be taken if anyone who suspects on reasonable grounds that there is abuse occurring must respond accordingly:

- The suspected or alleged abuse is reported to DCP as soon as possible.
- The suspected or alleged abuse is reported to the staff or volunteer's Senior Pastor and/or department leader as soon as possible.
- Record details of the suspicion or disclosure on an Incident Report Form (or on paper) as soon as possible
 - Forms are located in the Kids Church programme folder (copies are included in this manual)
- Do not speak to anyone else – confidentiality is important
- Professional Standards Department of Baptist Union may be involved in an advisory role



Duty of Care Guidelines for Children's Ministry

- Always provide an environment that is as physically safe as is possible
 - Report faulty or broken equipment to your department leader
 - Clean up any spills
 - Use gloves when preparing food
 - Chairs will be stacked not higher than 6 chairs unless they are immediately ready to be put on a trolley and put away
 - Stacks of chairs should not be left unattended unless they are stacked against a wall and facing into the wall
- Leaders should be vigilant in the area of medical conditions or allergies
 - Details should be noted on the back of name tags with a red dot on the front
 - Emergency numbers should also be recorded on the back of the name tag
- Any transporting in vehicles should only be done by fully licensed drivers and all road rules adhered to at all times
- Any TV material, DVDs, videos, books, magazines music, Youtube clips must be age-appropriate and suitable in content.
- Foul, demeaning, bullying, racist or sexist language will not be tolerated.
- One on one interactions between leaders and children or between leaders should never be conducted in an area that is isolated or 'blind' - these should always happen in view of others.
- Physical touch should be restricted to the following as much as possible:
 - Hi-5s, light touch on arms or shoulders
 - Side-on hugs if initiated by the child – leaders do not initiate hugs
 - Piggybacks, shoulder rides and tickling are inappropriate
 - Carrying children is inappropriate
 - Children should not sit on leader's laps. They should always be encouraged to sit beside or in front of a leader
 - Physical contact is sometimes unavoidable in games but it should always be respectful, safe and age-appropriate (ie leaders should be aware of the inequality in strength and size)
- Toileting practices are as follows:
 - For Kids Church and KNO
 - All children must notify a leader that they are needing the toilet
 - Children will use the disabled toilet in the passageway near the main toilets.
 - Leaders will not step into the toilet with children
 - If possible, have parents or older siblings attend to the toileting needs of younger children
- It is everyone's responsibility to be attentive to entry and exit points when programmes are running so children cannot leave the premises without an appropriate adult.
- Leaders must always wear
 - the appropriate ministry t-shirt or name tag that identifies them as an approved leader
 - appropriate clothing in general
 - high-necked shirts
 - no skirts above the knee unless leggings are worn
 - leggings are not to be worn on their own – always to be worn with a skirt or shorts
 - no short shorts
- Outside play/activities must always have at least 2 leaders present.
- Report any incidents with children (behavioural issues, physical harm, concerns about welfare, tricky conversations etc) or parents to the ministry leader

Children's Ministry Leader Expectations

PURPOSE STATEMENT

In Children's Ministry at AFCC, our purpose is to:

- Provide a fun, safe environment where children can hear the Word of God presented creatively
- Facilitate a relationship between the children and Jesus Christ
- Encourage personal growth in their relationship with Him
- Encourage their inclusion into the body of Christ through the fostering of relationship with leaders and peers
- Foster relationships with families in ways that would provide for and encourage steps towards faith

LEADER EXPECTATIONS

As leaders in Children's Ministry, we commit ourselves to:

- A growing relationship with Jesus Christ and His church
- Giving our best to God's calling as our response to His grace
- The purposes of the individual departments
- Sharing with children as a team and through our individual giftedness
- Participating fully in the ministry of Kids Church

This means we will:

- Make our relationship with God a priority.
- Attend a service each Sunday unless unavoidably detained.
- Be supportive of each other and our gifts.
- Show respect to all children in every way (Duty of Care)
- Endeavour to manage children and their behavior in a positive way
- Attend Kids Church - each Sunday as rostered, allowing for time to assist with setup and pack-up
- Commit ourselves to the fulfilling of specific tasks assigned to us such as small group leadership, teaching, setting up and packing up.
- At all times behave in appropriate ways with the children and in our witness as leaders and Christians.

Children's Leaders Induction Process

Name of Applicant _____

For each individual seeking to serve on a children's or youth ministry team the following will be required before they commence in ministry.

Date	Action	Notes	Date Completed
	Application formed completed and submitted		
	Trial period/Programme visits completed		
	Interview with applicant		
	Police clearance forms submitted		
	Police Clearance Certificate submitted		
	First referee contacted		
	Second referee contacted		
	Appropriate training completed <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7 hour Child Safe	*Certificate to be sighted and copied if training already completed	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 hour VST		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 hour update		
	Ministry Covenant completed		
	Children/Youth Leader's Manual given		



APPLICATION FOR CHILDREN'S/YOUTH MINISTRY

This application must be completed by **ALL** applicants for any position in programs involving activities with children or youth.

Please tick which area of ministry you are applying for: Children Youth

PERSONAL

Christian Name(s) _____ Family Name _____

Address _____

Phone H _____ M _____ Birth Year _____

Email _____

School/Occupation _____

What area of ministry are you interested in? _____

Why do you want to be involved in this ministry? _____

Please give the names of 2 personal referees:

1) _____ Phone _____

2) _____ Phone _____

CHURCH BACKGROUND

How long have you attended this church? _____

List any other churches you have attended during the past five years _____

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

List previous experience with children's or youth programmes _____

List personal strengths and qualifications you believe you have for ministry in this area _____

APPLICANT'S STATEMENT

Have you at any time been accused or convicted of any offence involving children or youth?

Yes / No

Do you have any criminal record? Yes / No.

If so, please supply details _____

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant's signature _____ Date _____



Ministry Covenant

I of.....

(name of worker)

(address)

1. Understand that I have a duty to disclose fully anything that might affect my ability to fulfill my responsibility and duty of care in my capacity as a volunteer.

2. Declare that except as is stated below I have never

(1) been guilty of any sexual misconduct against any person;

(2) have never committed any criminal offence involving fraud, violence or drugs;

(3) have never committed any offence against road traffic laws (except parking offences);

(4) am of good character and suitable for ministry within a Baptist Church.

(If exceptions to the above give details and if insufficient room place them in an attachment).

3. Acknowledge I have read and agreed to the Child Protection Policies of BCSA and the Child Protection Manual of Procedures.

4. Agree I will cooperate with the DPS in any investigation undertaken by the DPS in relation to a Member Church.

5. Agree I will attend and take part in education courses to fit me for ministry with children.

6. Acknowledge that by signing this covenant no legal contract is created between myself and my Member Church or BCSA, but accept that it acts as a consent for the operation of the Child Protection Policy and the Child Protection Procedure Manual and that legal consequences may follow if I have knowingly given false answers to any of the questions above.

7. Understand that should I breach any of the above agreements my services as a volunteer may be terminated.

Signature: Witness:

Full name: Name:

Address: Date:

