



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



AUSTRAL-ASIAN COMMUNITY CHURCH

SECTION 1: CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

SECTION 2: CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES MANUAL

Child Protection Policy

All workers (Pastors, employees and volunteers) of Austral-Asian Community Church who are involved in the ministry of the church to children and/or youth are expected to comply with this policy and associated procedures.

These policies primarily relate to “Professional Standards” procedures and processes.

For Work Health & Safety Policies and Code of Conduct, refer to the relevant Church Policy documents.

This Policy and the attached Procedures Manual is subject to review by 30 June 2027 or earlier if required by law



Austral-Asian Community Church

SECTION 1:

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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1. **Definitions:**

“At Risk” is defined by the CYP SA: A child or young person will be taken to be at risk if:

- They have suffered harm (of a kind against which they should have ordinarily been protected)
- There is a likelihood they will suffer harm
- There is a likelihood they will be removed from the state for the purpose:
 - Of a medical procedure that would be unlawful in South Australia (including female genital mutilation)
 - Taking part in a marriage that would be void or invalid under the Marriage Act 1972
 - Taking part in an activity that would be illegal in South Australia
- Their parent or guardians are unable or unwilling to care for them, have abandoned them, cannot be found or are dead
- They are of compulsory school age and are persistently absent from school without explanation
- They are homeless or of no fixed address

“AACC” is Austral-Asian Community Church

“Child” or “children” are persons under the age of 18 years at the time of the alleged abuse.

“CYP SA” is the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017

“Employer church” is AACC which employs or engages the worker.

“Harm” is defined by the CYP SA as physical or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission), including harm caused by sexual, physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect.

“Mandatory reporting” is reporting as required by s30 & 31 CYPSPA.

“Victim” is a child who is reasonably suspected of being subject to harm.

“Worker” is a pastor, Board member, employee of or volunteer of AACC who is involved in the oversight and/or direct ministry of the church to children.

2. **Preamble**

The objects of this policy are to protect as far as possible children from being harmed or being at risk of harm and to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

3. **Protection for children**

3.1 The safety and wellbeing of children is to be the paramount consideration insofar as it is within the power of AACC to promote it.

3.2 Children are to be protected from any form of harm.

3.3 In dealing with harm to children AACC is to put the interests of victims and children generally above those of the church.

4. **Mandatory reporting**

All Workers including those persons who comprise the Governance oversight of AACC are mandated notifiers and are therefore required to comply fully with their obligations of mandatory reporting under the CYPSPA.

5. **Involvement of perpetrators of harm in church activities**

Where AACC knows, believes or reasonably suspects that any person associated with the church is or has been a perpetrator of harm towards children it will act to reasonably protect children from any risk that person might pose.

6. **Co-operation with authorities**

AACC and workers will responsibly and reasonably co-operate with government law enforcement and child protection agencies.

7. **Interim measures pending determination of allegations of harm.**

Where a worker is reasonably suspected of perpetrating harm against a child, his or her continued role with AACC during the period taken to make a final determination of whether that worker is guilty of any offence, is to be determined by the Leadership Team under paragraphs 5.3 and 5.4 of the Child Protection Procedures manual.

8. **Training**

AACC will ensure the provision of training for workers in child protection issues.

9. **Ministry covenants**

All workers are to enter into a ministry covenant dealing with their suitability to be workers and agreeing to these child protection policies and procedures.

10. **Manual of procedures**

AACC will publish a manual (contained herein) concerning procedures for implementing this child protection policy.

11. **Code of Conduct**

AACC will publish a Code of Conduct for Workers who are involved in a children or youth ministry of the church and all workers must abide and comply with the Code of Conduct.

12. **Review of policies**

This policy will be subject to ongoing review no less than every five years.



Austral-Asian Community Church

SECTION 2:

**CHILD PROTECTION
PROCEDURES MANUAL**

Part A Further definition of “harm”

Part B Child safety responsibilities

Part C Miscellaneous

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1. Preamble

This manual sets out procedures to give effect to the Child Protection Policies of the Austral-Asian Community Church.

2. Definitions

Unless the context otherwise requires:

“**At Risk**” is defined by the CYP SA: A child or young person will be taken to be at risk if:

- They have suffered harm (of a kind against which they should have ordinarily been protected)
- There is a likelihood they will suffer harm
- There is a likelihood they will be removed from the state for the purpose:
 - Of a medical procedure that would be unlawful in South Australia (including female genital mutilation)
 - Taking part in a marriage that would be void or invalid under the Marriage Act 1972
 - Taking part in an activity that would be illegal in South Australia
- Their parent or guardians are unable or unwilling to care for them, have abandoned them, cannot be found or are dead
- They are of compulsory school age and are persistently absent from school without explanation
- They are homeless or of no fixed address

“**C.A.R.L.**” is the Child Abuse Report Line.

“**Child**” - “**Children**” are persons under the age of 18 years

“**CPS**” is *Child Protection Solutions* – an agency providing high level training & advice.

“**Employer church**” is AACC which employs or engages the worker.

“Harm” – see paragraph 3.

“Leadership Team” means the Leadership Team of AACC as established by its Constitution

“Pastor” means a person who has been formally appointed or endorsed by the church to exercise ministry oversight of the church and appointed ministry teams.

“SP” means the designated Senior Pastor/Leader of the AACC Ministries. Where a suspected perpetrator of harm is or someone closely associated with the senior pastor, or where the senior pastor is not readily available, it means the next Senior Spiritual Leader or Board Chair.

“WHS” is Work Health & Safety.

“Worker” is a Pastor, Board member, employee of or volunteer of AACC who is involved in the oversight and/or direct ministry of the church to children.

“WWCC” Current “Working With Children Check” that has been undertaken within the previous five (5) years.

PART A: FURTHER DEFINITION OF HARM

3. What is harm?

"Harm" is defined by the CYP SA as physical or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission), including harm caused by the following:

3.1 Emotional harm, meaning: A chronic attitude or behaviour directed at a child whereby a child's self-esteem and social competence is undermined or eroded over time or the creation of an emotional environment which is detrimental to or impairs the child's psychological and/or physical development. Behaviours may include devaluing, ignoring, rejecting, corrupting, isolating, terrorising or family violence.

Physical harm, meaning: Any non-accidental act inflicted upon a child which results in physical injury to the child. Physical harm results from practices such as but not limited to:

- 3.1.1 Hitting, punching, kicking (indicators: marks from belt buckles, irons, fingers, cigarettes, etc)
- 3.1.2 Shaking (particularly young babies)
- 3.1.3 Burning, biting, pulling out hair
- 3.1.4 Alcohol or other drug administration

Note: The application of reasonable and moderate force for the purpose of discipline by a parent or guardian is lawful. However, any worker who is in doubt and suspects, on reasonable grounds, that a child or young person is, or may be at risk, and this suspicion is formed in the course of their work, must report this suspicion to the C.A.R.L. as soon as practicable as required by s.31 of the CYP SA – see paragraph 4 below.

Sexual abuse, meaning: any sexual behaviour imposed on a child. The child concerned is considered to be unable to alter and/or understand the perpetrator's behaviour due to their early stage of development and/or powerlessness in the situation. Sexual abuse occurs when someone in a position of power to the child uses their power to involve the child in sexual activity.

Behaviour can include sexual suggestion; exhibitionism, mutual masturbation, oral sex; showing pornographic material e.g., DVDs, internet; using children in the production of pornographic material; penile or other penetration of the genital or anal region and child prostitution.

3.2 Grooming, meaning: the deliberate actions of a perpetrator to befriend and influence a child, and possibly also that child's family or community, with the intention of engaging in sexual activity of any kind with that child

3.3 Neglect, meaning: the failure of a carer for a child to provide a child with the basic necessities of life, and which can occur by deliberate action or inaction, and can stem from an inability to understand and provide basic necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, hygiene, medical treatment and supervision.

4. **Reporting a suspicion that a child or young person may be at risk**

4.1 This obligation is placed on all workers by s30 & 31 CYPsA. It is a criminal offence not to comply with this obligation without a lawful excuse. No church can negate or modify this obligation (refer Appendix A).

4.2 Any worker who suspects, on reasonable grounds, that a child or young person is, or may be at risk, and this suspicion is formed in the course of their work, they must report this suspicion to the C.A.R.L. as soon as practicable.

- 4.3 Reporting to C.A.R.L. is done by telephoning the 24-hour Child Abuse Report Line on 131478.
- 4.4 Reasonable grounds to form a suspicion that a child or young person may be at risk may include but is not limited to:
- 4.4.1 When a child tells you they are at risk or have been harmed
 - 4.4.2 When your own observations of a particular child's behaviour and/or injuries lead you to suspect they are at risk or harm is occurring
 - 4.4.3 When a child tells you that they know of someone who is at risk or has been harmed (they may possibly be referring to themselves)
 - 4.4.4 When you hear about a child at risk from someone who is in a position to provide reliable information, such as a relative, friend, neighbour or sibling of the child
- It does not require proof that any child has or may suffer harm.
- 4.5 Where a report is made to the C.A.R.L., but only if the child and/or the suspected perpetrator of harm is associated with the Church, the worker must immediately inform the SP (as defined in paragraph 2) of the incident. A written report in the form of **Appendix B** is also to be given by the worker to the SP as soon as practicable.
- 4.6 A worker does not require approval to make a report to C.A.R.L. and must adhere to the reasonable instructions of C.A.R.L. in order to ensure that all proper processes are followed.

5. General provisions in all cases of suspicion of risk of harm

- 5.1 All matters in relation to risk of harm to children, suspected or otherwise, should be kept as confidential as possible and disclosures should be made only if required by law or on a need-to-know basis. The SP can provide guidance and advice as required. The SP may also seek advice and guidance from the Chair or any Pastor or other member of the Leadership Team
- 5.2 Where a worker reasonably suspects a child is at risk of harm, and is not confident making the notification themselves, they are to be instructed to report such matters immediately to an adult supervisor in their ministry area who will then assist the worker to comply with the necessary procedures.
- 5.3 Where there has been a complaint against a worker of perpetrated harm, AACC may for the period until the final determination of the allegation, take such action as it considers appropriate, having due regard to relevant employee rights / employment contracts, including:
- 5.3.1 suspend the worker.
 - 5.3.2 modify the duties of the worker.
 - 5.3.3 impose conditions on any continued employment of the worker or on their involvement in the activities of the Church.
 - 5.3.4 require that the worker not communicate with specified persons.
 - 5.3.5 temporarily suspend the employment of the worker.
 - 5.3.6 revoke or modify any decision it has made; and/or
 - 5.3.7 make any other decision and take any other action it may lawfully make or take as an employer.

- 5.4 In considering what actions to take under 5.3, the Leadership Team:
- 5.4.1 is not bound by the rules of evidence and may inform itself of relevant facts by proper means as it sees fit.
 - 5.4.2 should abide by the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice.
 - 5.4.3 Is to act with all reasonable expedition.
 - 5.4.4 Is not to make conclusions about disputed facts relating to the alleged harm.
 - 5.4.5 should consider seeking such independent advice as it considers prudent or necessary.
 - 5.4.6 should consider all relevant factors including the seriousness of the allegations or suspected behaviour, the health, welfare and reputation of the accused and the impact on the Church and the rest of the congregation, but having regard to the overriding obligation to protect children from harm.
- 5.5 AACC and workers will responsibly and reasonably cooperate with law enforcement and child protection authorities in their investigation and any prosecution of harm.
- 5.6 No workers are to make any statement to the media about any risk of harm (either suspected or formally prosecuted) encountered in the course of their employment by AACC and all inquiries about these matters from the media are to be referred to the SP or the Chair (see paragraph 36).

- 5.7 Workers are not to make any statements about any risk of harm (either suspected or formally prosecuted) encountered in the course of their employment by AACC to any alleged perpetrator or anyone associated with or representing that alleged perpetrator.
- 5.8 Upon receiving any report about risk of harm a SP should consult with the Leadership Team as soon as practicable about what steps should be taken in respect of it by the Church. The SP may take all necessary action in the meantime as the circumstances require to protect children and young people from further harm.
- 5.9 The SP is to ensure that all appropriate pastoral care/professional support is made available to all persons associated with the Church who are impacted by an allegation.
- 5.10 Workers are to be alert to any indicators of harm-related trauma including:
- 5.10.1 When a child says that they have been harmed.
 - 5.10.2 When a child or adult says that he/she knows of a child subject to harm; or
 - 5.10.3 Observations of a child's behaviour change in behaviour, emotional state and or injuries.

Indicators in many cases overlap and can interrelate to all forms of harm and neglect.

An indicator in isolation does not automatically mean that a child is being harmed. Workers should:

- Listen to the child/young person.

- Not ask leading questions.
- Reassure the child that you believe them.
- Reassure the child that what has happened is not his/her fault.
- Reassure the child that telling you was the right thing to do.
- Document the child's disclosure as soon as possible.
- When documenting the disclosure use the same terminology as the child.
- Not make promises which cannot be kept, such as confidentiality.
- Reassure the child that there are people who can help to protect them.

5.11 A worker is not an investigator and must not do any detective work.

Even if the harm which is disclosed has ceased, reporting it is still necessary to protect other children from the perpetrator.

Where a person 18 years or over discloses that they were subject to harm while they were a child these procedures do not apply, but the person should be encouraged to take appropriate steps about the matter.

6 **Managing potential perpetrators in churches**

6.1 Where a person who

6.1.1 is the subject of an unresolved complaint of alleged harm to a child; or

6.1.2 is reasonably suspected by the Church of having at any time engaged in harming a child,

attends at any function controlled by the Church, AACC must ensure that that person does not have contact with, or communicate with, any child at that function without adequate supervision.

- 6.2 A known perpetrator is not to be permitted to be present at any premises controlled by the Church or to take part in any activity controlled by it except in accordance with the terms of a formal agreement entered into between the church and that person, which ensures the safety and wellbeing of children.
- 6.3 If a known perpetrator does not comply with the terms of an agreement referred to in 6.2 the church may exclude that person from all premises controlled by the church and/or activities controlled by it.
-

PART B: WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES AND CHILD SAFETY

7. Role of Workers

Any member in AACC working with children must

- Have a Not Prohibited Working With Children Check
- Be emotionally and spiritually suited to the role to be undertaken.
- Be properly and trained in mandatory reporting / awareness. (Refer Appendix C).
- Have been selected for their role in work with children after a proper investigation and screening of their suitability for such work (see paras 8-10).
- Have their performance in such work periodically reviewed.

8. Staff/Volunteer screening and selection processes

A major form of prevention relates to appropriate and stringent screening processes.

Every worker engaged in child related ministries must be interviewed, screened and recommended by the leader who has ultimate oversight or management responsibility for that area of ministry as outlined below:

- An interview process.
- Agreement to undergo a WWCC.
- The completion of a ministry application form.
- Agreement by the applicant to meet with senior pastor/elders if required.

A written recommendation must then be prepared by the person who has management/oversight responsibility and be submitted to the Senior Pastor for endorsement/approval.

Under normal circumstances no individual should be permitted to work in the areas of children's ministries until attending the church for a period of not less than one (1) year.

Special circumstances may apply and include intimate knowledge of an applicant by people within the leadership/church, or impeccable references from other churches.

It is acknowledged that from time-to-time additional helpers are engaged to provide support in relation to special events/activities. This may include parents or other people within the church who generously volunteer their services in terms of additional transport, or supervision during special events. It is unrealistic to expect those who serve on an occasional or random basis to undergo additional training, however where possible a WWCC should be obtained unless the volunteer falls into the category where they are excluded from the requirement for a WWCC (see Appendix I)

9. **Ministry Screening/Working With Children Checks**

Current Working With Children Checks (WWCC) are essential for all pastors, staff, elders, board members, governance team members as well as **ALL** (workers) who serve in the area of children's ministry.

No person will be permitted to work at any level within the guidelines of this document without a current WWCC and acceptable training unless they fall in the category where they are excluded from the requirement for a WWCC (see Appendix I). It is the responsibility of the church to identify and ensure that the above people obtain a WWCC every 5 years and undertake appropriate training every three years and maintain appropriate records/registers.

If offences are identified and depending on the nature of the offence/s, it will remain the discretion of AACC to permit individuals to serve within the life and ministry of the church. Depending on the nature of other offences, strict conditions may be applied to an individual attending church and or associated church programs.

Sexual abuse related offences will preclude that person from having any contact with, or responsibilities involving children/youth. In some cases, an offender may not be permitted to attend the church, or any associated program under any circumstances.

If any worker or pending staff member refuses to undergo a WWCC check, they must not be appointed to the position that requires them to undergo such a check.

Staff members and workers, who for whatever reason have not undergone a WWCC, are required to immediately cease working with children and apply for a WWCC.

Any person undertaking a ministry role either full/part time, paid/voluntary, must complete a ministry covenant form (Appendix G).

10. Character Reference Requests

Only the SP or Chair may provide a character reference on behalf of AACC. Extreme care should be taken before providing a reference for anyone charged with a criminal offence including first consulting with the Leadership Team.

11. Worker identification

All workers whilst actively carrying out their appointed responsibilities should at all times be issued with and wear photo identification tags. This not only identifies accredited workers but communicates a clear message of professionalism and accountability. Photo identification tags must be worn at all times when rostered.

12. Moral wellbeing

Workers must ensure that any television programmes, videos, music, magazines and/or displays shown or used as part of the group's activities are suitable in content and appropriate to the age group represented, with due regard to Christian values.

Every worker is expected to maintain a high moral code. Foul, demeaning, bullying, racist or sexist language is not acceptable, and will not to be tolerated by anyone working in ministry.

13. **Inappropriate behaviour of a worker**

Any person who is concerned about the behaviour of any worker must refer the matter to the SP and/or Leadership Team of the church for consideration and intervention which is deemed appropriate.

14. **Bullying**

Bullying is a form of persistent harassment which demeans, threatens, intimidates or humiliates a person. Such behaviour by any person in AACC is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

15. **Child Safety Responsibilities**

15.1 AACC and its workers are to do everything reasonably available to them to promote the physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing and safety of the children who are involved in the life of the church (“the duty of care”). What is reasonable in a particular situation depends on its particular circumstances including the nature of the risk of harm to children and the practicability of the steps needed to eliminate it.

15.2 No set of detailed rules can be devised which when applied to a particular situation will clearly show what is the applicable duty of care. These procedures should always be observed unless there is good reason not to do so. They should only be departed from where a conscious and responsible decision has been made by the worker involved that what is to be done satisfies the duty of care.

16. **Participation of Children**

16.1 In order to instil a culture of safety and awareness, children who attend regular and ongoing children's ministry programs will be made aware of the following at least annually by the workers who oversee these activities:

16.1.1 expectations concerning appropriate behaviour

16.1.2 when, how, and who to speak to if they feel uncomfortable

16.1.3 protective behaviour strategies

16.1.4 other responsibilities and expectations in line with the Code of Conduct, these procedures and the Child Protection Policy

16.1.5 WHS information and procedures applicable to child related ministries/programs

Parents will be notified of when and with whom this will take place ahead of time and will also be made aware that the AACC Child Protection Policy, these Procedures and the Code of Conduct can be obtained on the AACC website.

16.2 Adults and children can discuss or disclose abuse or seek support and advice by contacting the SP.

16.3 Children and their parents will be given the opportunity to provide feedback on and make suggestions re children's ministry programs regularly (e.g., via discussion, survey, suggestion box, etc) as determined by the church.

17. **Care and supervision ratios of workers to children**

17.1 Duty of care of children is paramount. However, there is no fixed ratio which will necessarily satisfy the duty of care in all situations. It will depend on all of the circumstances which will include:

- The age needs and behavioural history of the children present.

- The skills and experience of the workers.
- The environment in which the children are placed.
- The nature of any risks to which the children may be exposed.

The ready availability of backup if there are difficulties. A minimum of two (2) adult workers should be present at all times.

18. **Managing inappropriate behaviours in children**

If a young child misbehaves within a church program or activity, firm but gentle verbal correction which is respectful and age-appropriate should be the first response.

For a younger child a short period of “time out” may also be appropriate. A useful guide for determining the amount of time out is one minute for each year of the child’s age.

However, it is not appropriate to use a time out strategy for children under three years of age. Parents should be made aware of these practices and procedures when enrolling children into activities/programs.

When a child is unresponsive or responds unsatisfactorily to reasonable requests to comply with a reasonable and respectful standard of behaviour, the matter must then be immediately reported to the parent/guardian.

In extreme cases, children may be precluded from activities for a period of time, until an undertaking is given, appropriate to age, to behave within acceptable limits. If this decision is made, the parent is to be informed and where possible included in the negotiations regarding management strategies and restoration to that activity.

At no time is physical punishment or verbal intimidation by any worker permissible, even with parental approval.

19. **Toileting small children**

When a small child needs assistance in toileting, the following procedures should be observed:

Where practicable the parent should be responsible for attending to the child.

- If this is not practicable the child should be encouraged to manage themselves to the fullest possible extent, according to ability.
- When crèche workers or designated helpers must assist a child, two adult workers must accompany the child and both must maintain visibility of each other at all times.
- If it is not possible for two adults to accompany the child, then another child of the same sex should be asked to accompany the child and single adult. The adult should seek to maintain visibility of each other at all times.
- At no time should a child be allowed to enter a public toilet alone whilst placed in a 'kids' church/ crèche related activity/program.

20. **Home Groups**

Where young children accompany their parents to Home Groups and other similar functions in private homes, arrangements which are made for the children's care and well-being and the nature of the activities in which they engage are the responsibility of the parents concerned. It is the responsibility of the leader of the Home Group to ensure that the arrangements are agreed upon and accepted by all the parents concerned.

21. **Crèche and Junior Church/programs check in/out procedures**

Churches should develop check in and out processes in relation to programs where children are placed into the supervision and care of those running a program, such as crèches, Sunday kids church or similar programs, including midweek activities.

For example: Children in junior programs (under 12 years of age) once checked into an activity must not be permitted to leave that activity or program unless collected by a parent or authorised person.

General medical/information forms (Appendix D) should be completed and filed in relation to all children attending the above programs.

22. **Physical health and safety**

The physical environment should always be such that the safety of children is paramount, e.g., any electrical equipment used is in safe working order, floors are kept free of slippery surfaces, food is handled with the utmost care to as far as possible avoid contamination. It is the role and responsibility of the Churches to appoint a Work Health and Safety Officer (WHSO) to be responsible for and oversee all established WHS standards. Relevant accredited training must be undertaken in order for the appointed officer to carry out their duties.

Any faulty equipment/plant which constitutes a hazard to the safety of a child should be immediately removed, where possible, and its condition should be reported to the WHS Officer/Church Office, in writing, without delay. For specific WHS information refer to the AACC WHS document.

23. **Transportation**

When a young person is travelling in a vehicle driven by a worker, or designated person, the vehicle will be driven carefully, adhering to the legal speed limits and road laws at all times. At no time should there be more passengers in a car than the number of seat belts which are in working order and available for use. Cars must be registered and driven by licensed drivers, holding current licences relevant to the type and class of vehicle driven. In addition, motorcycles may be used by the registered owner, but the carrying of children and youth during official church activities as a pillion passenger without parental consent is prohibited. Hitch hiking is prohibited at all times.

In the event of an accident in which any person is injured, the senior pastor, staff and parents must be informed as soon as possible. All state legislation regarding the reporting of an accident must be followed.

Negligent driving can have painful emotional and legal consequences. Anyone who cannot/does not drive responsibly must not transport children. In addition, drivers must take children directly to and from arranged venues and not spontaneously detour or make additional arrangements without parental/leadership consent.

If a child is travelling in a vehicle driven by a worker who possesses a learner permit, prior written consent must be obtained from a parent/guardian except in the case of a genuine emergency.

Alcohol must not be consumed eight hours prior to or during church children's or youth activities. The use of illegal substances is not permitted at any time.

In addition, no driver may provide transport if there is any possibility that they may be driving under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol, or under any condition that would inhibit their ability to safely control a motor vehicle. It is the responsibility of the driver to inform senior or key leaders of any situation that may inhibit their ability to safely be in charge of a motor vehicle.

24. **Risk Management**

For all programs, activities, excursions, camps, etc., appropriate risk assessment, management and reporting should be undertaken (refer to Insurer's website for risk management resources).

25. **Camping/Excursions/Activities**

The Church Leadership must approve of and endorse all camps and excursions as an official church activity, and parental consent must be obtained at all times for activities that are conducted off site. All standards previously identified in this document in terms of transportation, child/youth management and ethical standards apply. In the case of camps and off-site special events, parents/guardians must be supplied (in writing) specific information about the activity, including venue, contact details, all proposed activities as well as transport and sleeping arrangements, emergency/first aid arrangements and the names of designated leader/s.

Special event medical/information forms (**Appendix E**) and permission to attend special event form (**Appendix F**) must be supplied to, completed by parents and maintained by the responsible program/ministry leader and workers.

Leaders who have the ultimate oversight and responsibility must be appointed and have undergone all relevant training and preparation for such events. All leaders and workers must have completed an approved mandatory reporting/child protection awareness training programme as well as undergone a WWCC.

For camps/overnight activities each person must have separate bedding and provision must be made for private changing and showering facilities.

Leaders and workers are not permitted share accommodation with one child/young person, unless they are a parent or guardian.

Other than married couples, leaders and workers are not permitted to share a bed together at any time.

Children should not (where possible) be permitted to sleep in close proximity to leaders or workers. If unavoidable, or for younger children requiring closer supervision, increased levels of supervision and monitoring procedures must be implemented. No less than two approved leaders should be present at all times. This also applies to children (boys and girls) sleeping in close proximity to each other.

No persons are permitted to shower together at any time.

At no time are leaders or workers permitted to provide, allow or consume alcohol or illegal drugs.

If leaders are taking prescribed medication that would impair their ability to perform their role effectively, it is their responsibility to advise their designated leader.

In the case of campfires, the leaders and workers in charge must follow all local statutory rules and regulations including total fire bans at all times and ensure that appropriate fire safety precautions are in place.

Activities where a degree of risk is involved, for example pioneering, boating, air activities, abseiling, bushwalking, rock climbing, water activities, including sailing, scuba diving, canoeing etc, such activities must only be undertaken under the direction and supervision of fully qualified persons. All laws, rules and regulations pertaining to these activities must be followed at all times.

Precautions must be taken by leaders and workers in relation to swimming/water activities. The safety of the swimming area must be thoroughly examined in relation to depth, currents and obstacles. A leader / worker must be appointed to oversee and supervise the activity at all times.

It is desirable to pair swimmers off (“Buddy System”) with each swimmer taking responsibility for keeping the other in view and immediately reporting any mishap or disappearance. At least one person with suitable lifesaving and first aid qualifications must be on standby at all times.

Appropriate swimming attire must be worn by all persons at all times.

It is the responsibility of individual Church Leaderships to familiarise themselves with all legislative standards and safety procedures in relation to activities undertaken.

26. **Internet Access**

Internet access, email, social media and 'smart-phone' facilities are in most cases available for the purpose of communication, research and business purposes.

Workers hold positions of trust and leadership and are at all times prohibited from: sending, receiving, downloading, displaying, printing or otherwise disseminating material that is sexually explicit, obscene, profane, discriminating, fraudulent, offensive, defamatory or otherwise in any way unlawful.

27. **Initiation/secret ceremonies**

Initiations and or secret ceremonies are prohibited.

28. **Meetings/Locations**

To ensure that safety and integrity is maintained for all concerned, workers should always conduct one on one meetings in an area that is private but not isolated. It is not considered wise to meet with an individual child in a secluded/blind area. Where possible it is desirable that the room used for such meetings have glass inserts in doors which will maintain confidentiality, whilst eliminating a secluded or blind area. Where there is a perceived risk that a child might falsely allege inappropriate behaviour by a worker, a third person should be present.

29. **Hiring out of Church facilities to outside groups**

Groups privately hiring or using church facilities where children will be a part of that program must provide proof that persons responsible for any program relating to the care and supervision of children, have completed a South Australian Government Child Safe Environment Compliance process and current WWCCs.

30. **Pastoral Care/Support/Counselling**

Workers must at all times keep their senior pastor/supervisor informed of their ministry case load, who they are meeting with, and who they are providing direction or support to via an ongoing process of supervision and support.

Any form of touching in a secluded or blind area must be avoided at all times. Workers must not visit children at home without obtaining parental/guardian permission.

Workers must not visit young people in the home or at isolated locations if no other person is present.

PART C: MISCELLANEOUS

31. Privacy

All information concerning children must be kept confidential and only disclosed to authorized persons.

32. Communication

The AACC Child Protection Contact Officer (CPCO) will at least annually at the Church's annual general meeting:

- Communicate the availability of these policies to attendees of the church
- Encourage and facilitate feedback on all church ministries/activities relating to children (ref paragraph 8.3)

33. Workers' awareness

(The following is only a brief outline. If you wish to know more on these topics, you should seek further advice on them.)

Workers should be aware:

- 33.1 Section 166 (4) of the CYPISA protects workers against civil and criminal liability for having reported suspected risk of harm to C.A.R.L. under s30 & 31 of the CYPISA. S163 (1) of the CYPISA provides that the identity of a notifier to C.A.R.L. is not to be disclosed, but by the Ministry Covenant this does not prevent some officers of the church being told of it.
- 33.2 By s165 of the CYPISA it is an offence to cause detriment to a person who makes a report to C.A.R.L.
- 33.3 Apart from a report to C.A.R.L. a worker who informs another of suspected risk of harm which cannot ultimately be proved can be liable for civil damages in defamation. Extreme care needs to be taken in making such an allegation to anyone other than C.A.R.L. and the senior pastor of the church.

34. **Media Management**

As a part of the AACC commitment to open, accountable and professional responses, the persons authorised to make media comment concerning matters pertaining to alleged breaches of the Child Protection Policy are limited to:

- Senior pastor
- Church Chair

Appendix A

EXCERPTS - SOUTH AUSTRALIAN LEGISLATION

The main statutory provisions which create and describe the obligation to report a reasonable suspicion that a child is, or may be, at risk are set out below and taken from the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017.

16—Interpretation

(1) In this Act, unless the contrary intention appears — **child or young person** means a person who is under 18 years of age;

17—Meaning of *harm*

(1) For the purposes of this Act, a reference to **harm** will be taken to be a reference to physical harm or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission) and, without limiting the generality of this subsection, includes such harm caused by sexual, physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect.

(2) In this section— **psychological harm** does not include emotional reactions such as distress, grief, fear or anger that are a response to the ordinary vicissitudes of life.

18—Meaning of *at risk*

(1) For the purposes of this Act, a child or young person will be taken to be **at risk** if—

(a) the child or young person has suffered harm (being harm of a kind against which a child or young person is ordinarily protected); or

(b) there is a likelihood that the child or young person will suffer harm (being harm of a kind against which a child or young person is ordinarily protected); or

(c) there is a likelihood that the child or young person will be removed from the State (whether by their parent or guardian or by some other person) for the purpose of—

(i) being subjected to a medical or other procedure that would be unlawful if performed in this State (including, to avoid doubt, female genital mutilation); or

(ii) taking part in a marriage ceremony (however described) that would be a void marriage, or would otherwise be an invalid marriage, under the *Marriage Act 1972* of the Commonwealth;

or

(iii) enabling the child or young person to take part in an activity, or an action to be taken in respect of the child or young person, that would, if it occurred in this State, constitute an offence against the *Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935* or the *Criminal Code* of the Commonwealth; or

(d) the parents or guardians of the child or young person—

(i) are unable or unwilling to care for the child or young person; or

(ii) have abandoned the child or young person, or cannot, after reasonable inquiry, be found; or

(iii) are dead; or

(e) the child or young person is of compulsory school age but has been persistently absent from school without satisfactory explanation of the absence; or

(f) the child or young person is of no fixed address; or

- (g) any other circumstances of a kind prescribed by the regulations exist in relation to the child or young person.
- (2) It is immaterial for the purposes of this Act that any conduct referred to in subsection (1) took place wholly or partly outside this State.
- (3) In assessing whether there is a likelihood that a child or young person will suffer harm, regard must be had to not only the current circumstances of their care but also the history of their care and the likely cumulative effect on the child or young person of that history.
- (4) In this section— *female genital mutilation* means—
 - (a) clitoridectomy; or
 - (b) excision of any other part of the female genital organs; or
 - (c) a procedure to narrow or close the vaginal opening; or
 - (d) any other mutilation of the female genital organs, but does not include a sexual reassignment procedure or a medical procedure that has a genuine therapeutic purpose; ***sexual reassignment procedure*** means a surgical procedure to give a female, or a person whose sex is ambivalent, genital characteristics, or ostensible genital characteristics, of a male.
- (5) A medical procedure has a genuine therapeutic purpose only if directed at curing or alleviating a physiological disability or physical abnormality.

Part 1—Reporting of suspicion that child or young person may be at risk

30—Application of Part

- (3) This Part applies to the following persons:
 - (a) prescribed health practitioners;
 - (b) police officers;
 - (c) community corrections officers under the *Correctional Services Act 1982*;
 - (d) social leaders;
 - (e) ministers of religion;
 - (f) employees of, or volunteers in, an organisation formed for religious or spiritual purposes;
 - (g) teachers employed as such in a school (within the meaning of the *Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011*) or a pre-school or kindergarten;
 - (h) employees of, or volunteers in, an organisation that provides health, welfare, education, sporting or recreational, childcare or residential services wholly or partly for children and young people, being a person who—
 - (i) provides such services directly to children and young people; or
 - (ii) (ii) holds a management position in the organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children and young people;
 - (i) any other person of a class prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this subsection.

31—Reporting of suspicion that child or young person may be at risk

(1) A person to whom this Part applies must, if—

- (a) the person suspects on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is, or may be at risk; and
- (b) that suspicion was formed in the course of the person's employment, report that suspicion, in accordance with subsection (4), as soon as is reasonably practicable after forming the suspicion.

Maximum penalty: \$10 000.

(2) However, a person need not report a suspicion under subsection (1)—

- (a) if the person believes on reasonable grounds that another person has reported the matter in accordance with that subsection; or
- (b) if the person's suspicion was due solely to having been informed of the circumstances that gave rise to the suspicion by a police officer or child protection officer acting in the course of their official duties; or
- (c) in any other circumstances prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this subsection.

(3) A person to whom this Part applies may (but need not), if—

- (a) the person suspects on reasonable grounds that the physical or psychological development of an unborn child is at risk (whether due to an act or omission of the mother or otherwise); and
- (b) that suspicion was formed in the course of the person's employment,
- (c) report that suspicion in accordance with subsection (4).

(4) A person reports a suspicion under this section by doing 1 or more of the following:

- (a) making a telephone notification to a telephone number determined by the Minister for the purposes of this subsection;

Note—

This telephone line is currently known as the *Child Abuse Report Line* or *CARL*.

- (b) making an electronic notification on an electronic reporting system determined by the Minister for the purposes of this subsection;
- (c) by reporting their suspicion to a person of a class, or occupying a position of a class, specified by the Minister by notice in the Gazette;
- (d) reporting their suspicion in any other manner set out in the regulations for the purposes of this paragraph,

and, in each case, providing—

(e) —

- (i) in the case of an unborn child—the name and address (if known) of the mother of the unborn child; or
- (ii) in any other case—the name and address (if known) of the child or young person; and

(f) information setting out the grounds for the person's suspicion; and

(g) such other information as the person may wish to provide in relation to their suspicion.

163—Protection of identity of persons who report to or notify Department

(1) A person who, in the course of the administration, operation or enforcement of this Act, receives a report or notification that a child or young person may be at risk, or who otherwise becomes aware of the identity of a person who has made such a report or notification, must not disclose the identity of the person who made the report or notification to any other person unless the disclosure—

- (a) is made with the consent of the person who gave the notification; or
- (b) is made by way of evidence adduced in accordance with subsections (2) and (3); or
- (c) is otherwise authorised by the regulations.

Maximum penalty: \$10 000

Source:

National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD)

Mandatory Reporting Guide, South Australia

24 HOUR CHILD ABUSE REPORT LINE (CARL) 13 14 78

Appendix B

“CONFIDENTIAL”
Austral-Asian Community Church (AACC)
RISK OF HARM PRELIMINARY REPORT FORM (EXAMPLE)

Date:..... Time:

Church:

Child’s name: DOB/Age:

Address:

Has the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) been notified? YES/NO (circle)

CARL officer’s name (if known)

Time/Date:

If not, reason?

Name of person reporting:

Any specific allegations made by the child/young persons? (dot point)

-
-
-
-

Name of person suspected.

Age or DOB if known: Church position: (if any)

Address: (if known)
.....
.....

Please provide brief details on the behaviour observed or how the suspicions came to light. Record all details such as when, where, who, how and any other possible witnesses or persons involved or who could be affected. (Attach sheet if necessary)

.....
.....
.....
.....

How did the person making the report become aware of the situation?

.....
.....

Any further details: (attach additional sheets if necessary)

.....

Appendix C

AUSTRAL-ASIAN COMMUNITY CHURCH (AACC) CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING STRATEGY

Austral-Asian Community Church requires that all “workers” as defined in this policy, undergo the established training program:

The AACC Child Protection Training Strategy utilises the Child Protection Solutions (CPS) or equivalent training modules which consists of a 5.5 Hour Customised UNDERSTANDING AND RESPONDING TO CHILD ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION intensive seminars.

CPS seminars also include additional specialist Child Sex Offender Awareness modules with an emphasis on *“MAKING CHILDREN & THE AGENCY SAFE”*

Once those identified within the AACC Child Protection Policy have undertaken the initial 5.5-hour intensive they are required at a minimum to attend and complete 3-hour update/refresher every three years.

While CPS is an experienced independent agency which delivers this training, other qualified providers may be engaged through SA providers such as Safe Environments: Through Their Eyes (TTE) or Responding to Risk of Harm, Abuse and Neglect (RRHAN).

However, the AACC training strategy has the following advantages:

- Training is presented via the highly experienced (former) child protection investigators and prosecutors, coupled with church ministry experience.
- The CPS model also offers ongoing “on tap” support and consultancy to individuals and agencies in relation to all matters relating to professional standards and child protection.
- A range of additional customised seminars are offered which are designed to add to and enhance the strategy, as well as provide greater support to those who oversee or have direct involvement in child/youth related programs.

Appendix D

MEDICAL & HEALTH INFORMATION – GENERAL (EXAMPLE)

Austral-Asian Community Church (AACC)

Name:

.....

.....

(Surname)

(Christian names)

Home Address:

.....

Next of kin for notification of any information:

Name

.....

.....

Relationship.....

Telephone (Home)..... (Work)

Do you give permission for medical intervention (including ambulance services) in the case of an emergency and you are not able to be contacted immediately? YES / NO

Is your child covered by a private medical benefits fund? YES / NO

If yes, the name of the fund

.....

.....

Medicare number.....

Are there any other conditions which the (Church Inc. should be aware of regarding the health and well-being for your child? e.g., Asthma, allergies, convulsive seizures, diabetic YES / NO

If so, please indicate (or use a separate sheet, if appropriate)

.....

Regular doctor's name and phone number

Has your child had a tetanus immunisation? YES / NO

If so, when?

Is your child allergic to any drug/medicine? YES / NO

If so, please give details.....

.....

Are there major food allergies which we need to know about? YES/ NO

If so, please give details.....

.....

Any other comments?

.....

.....

Appendix E

MEDICAL & HEALTH INFORMATION – SPECIAL EVENT (EXAMPLE)

Austral-Asian Community Church (AACC)

Name:

.....
.....

(Surname)

(Christian names)

Is your child taking any regular or currently prescribed medication?

YES / NO

If so, please name the medication and provide details of dosage and administration.

.....
.....

Your child’s leader will administer medication to your child as directed by written instructions from you. Please clearly mark your child’s name on all medication along with the dosage and administration procedures.

Is there anything about your child’s health which means that s/he should engage in only limited physical activity?

YES / NO

If so, please give details

Does your child require a special diet because of health problems?

YES / NO

If so, please give details

Is there any other information which may help us care for your child?

YES / NO

If so, please give details

For emergency use only

In case of emergency, contact

Phone Number

Name of family doctor

Address of doctor phone.....

Name and contact details of any other medical specialist treating your child

Doctor..... phone.....

Do you give permission for an ambulance to be called if deemed necessary (any costs being the parent’s responsibility)?

YES / NO

Signed:..... date

(parent/caregiver)

Witnessed

Appendix F

PERMISSION TO ATTEND EVENT/CAMP FORM (EXAMPLE)

Austral-Asian Community Church (AACC)

As a parent/caregiver of:.....
I,..... give my consent for him/her to take
Part in the (special activity or camp) to be held at the..... (event site)
from..... to..... (or on.....)
(date) *(date)* *(date)*

I have seen the attached copy of the programme for the..... (event)
and acknowledge that risk of injuries is inherent in physical activities. While I am aware that
staff will take all due care, I recognize that accidents may occur.

The staff and supervisors have my authority to take whatever action they think necessary to
ensure the safety, wellbeing and successful conduct of the participants as a group or
individually in the above-mentioned activity.

If my child becomes ill or is accidentally injured, I agree that Austral-Asian Community Church
may obtain on my behalf whatever medical treatment my child requires. I will agree to pay
all such medical expenses.

I have attached information as asked concerning my child's health including any relevant
details of their limitations for the planned activity. My child's own local doctor or medical
specialist may be contacted in an emergency.

I also acknowledge that the Austral-Asian Christian Church and all its representative leaders or
other helpers at..... (event)
can accept no liability for any personal injury or property loss suffered by my child during the
period of the..... Event.

Signed:date:

Witnessed:.....date:.....

Appendix G

MINISTRY COVENANT

Austral-Asian Community Church (AACC)

I of
(name of worker) (address)

1. 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) am of good character and suitable for ministry within the AACC Church.(If exceptions to the above, give details and if insufficient room place them in an attachment).
2. Acknowledge I have read and agreed to the Child Protection Policy of AACC and the Child Protection Manual of Procedures.
3. Agree I will cooperate with and facilitate the implementation of the Child Protection Policy of AACC and the Child Protection Manual of Procedures by the Church.
4. Agree I will attend and take part in education courses to equip me for ministry with children.
5. Acknowledge that by signing this covenant a legal contract is created between myself and AACC that 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 1 – 4 above.

Signature: Witness:

Full name: Full name:

Witness Address: Date:

APPENDIX H

CODE OF CONDUCT

The following is the Code of Conduct which all workers involved in a children’s or youth ministry of Austral-Asian Community Church (AACC) must abide and comply with.

<p>I WILL:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comply with AACC’s Child Protection Policy and Child Protection Manual of Procedures at all times and taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people • treat everyone (this includes staff, volunteers, students, children, young people and parents) including those of different race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes and religious beliefs with respect and honesty and ensure equity is upheld • be a positive role model to children and young people in all my conduct with them • set clear boundaries about appropriate behaviour between myself and the children and young people in our organisation – boundaries help everyone to understand their roles • listen and respond appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people • ensure another adult is always present or in sight when conducting one to one coaching, instruction or other activity • be alert to children and young people who are, or may be at risk of harm, and report this quickly to the Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78) • respond quickly, fairly and transparently to any serious complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian • encourage children and young people to ‘have a say’ on issues that are important to them.
<p>I WILL NOT:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engage in rough physical games • develop any ‘special’ relationships with children and young people that could be seen as favouritism such as the offering of gifts or special treatment • do things of a personal nature that a child or young person can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes • discriminate against any child or young person because of age, gender, cultural background, religion, vulnerability or sexuality.

IF ANYONE IS BEHAVING IN A MANNER WHICH CAUSES ME CONCERNS I WILL:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speak to a leader/worker/pastor or my parents/caregivers about my concerns
---	--

Breach of the Code of Conduct

The failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in AACC taking any of the actions against the worker as set out in section 5.3 of the Child Protection Procedures Manual.

APPENDIX I

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS (WWCC) – EXCLUSIONS

If the following conditions are met by a volunteer, they are eligible for an exclusion and in some circumstances, may not be required by the member church to obtain a WWCC:

- Children volunteers under the age of 14 years
- A sworn South Australian Police Officer or a sworn Australian Federal Police Officer
- A parent/guardian of a child involved in a Children’s services activity
 - Any child related work **must not** involve any accommodation/residential services for a child other than that person’s own child, or close personal contact with a child other than that person’s own child
- A visiting worker from another state/territory who holds an equivalent clearance from that State/Territory
 - Any child related work **must not** involve any child related work that occurs outside of an organised church event, or any work that exceeds 7 days (whether consecutive or not)

PLEASE NOTE: it is considered best practice for all volunteers who meet exclusion criteria to obtain a WWCC.

THE ABOVE EXCLUSIONS CANNOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES APPLY IF a person has ever been prohibited from working with children in any State or Territory in Australia