



ANGLICAN
DIOCESE OF
MELBOURNE

Safe Ministry Training



Modules 1 & 2

August 2024 edition

PRODUCED BY

creating

safer communities



Safe Ministry Training (Modules 1 & 2 combined)

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The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne ('ADOM') Safe Ministry with Children (Module 1 & 2 Training Course) Booklet aims to assist Diocesan church workers in their understanding of Child Safety and Safe Ministry to all people.

It is produced by Creating Safer Communities (CSC) and used by permission for the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, for the purpose of Safe Ministry Training, face-to-face and online.

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

The authors, Peter Barnett and Celia Irving, wish to acknowledge the input of Josie Barnett, Belinda Townsend, Chris Smith, Patrick Smith, Linda Vinall, Colleen Morton, and Sr Angela Ryan, as well as the comments and feedback from ministers, church leaders and volunteers who have attended Safe Ministry training in Australia since 2004.

Currently (March 2024) Creating Safer Communities provides Safe Ministry training materials to: Australian Christian Churches, C3 Church Australia, Anglican Dioceses: Melbourne, Northern Territory, North West Australia, Gippsland, Bendigo, Rockhampton, Bunbury, Ballarat, Bathurst, Perth, Wangaratta and Canberra & Goulburn, as well as a number of individual churches not captured by the denominational groups above.

For more information visit www.safercommunities.net.au.

Disclaimer: This publication is not legal advice. The ideas and procedures herein are based on nationally recognised good practice advice for Safe Ministry and have been written with due regard to Australian legislation in 2024.

Updated - August 2024

Self-care during and after this course: We acknowledge that discussing Safe Ministry and Professional Standards matters can be confronting and may trigger memories of harm or abuse for participants. If participating in this course impacts you negatively in any way or if it raises concerns or issues from your past or present, please take the time to debrief with someone you trust and, if necessary, seek help from a counsellor.

1. Culture and Commitment

1.a. Safe Ministry

Safe Ministry ...

God-honouring, life-giving, harm-free



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

This is outworked as we fulfil our pastoral and diocesan responsibilities as well as our legal obligations in relation to keeping ourselves and each other safe at church.

This often feels like wearing many 'hats' at once (as pictured left). These hats can often feel as though they are in conflict e.g. pastoral -vs- legal -vs- Diocesan responses to misconduct. Our ongoing task is ensure all

our responsibilities and obligations are fulfilled.

1.b. Diocesan responsibilities and resourcing

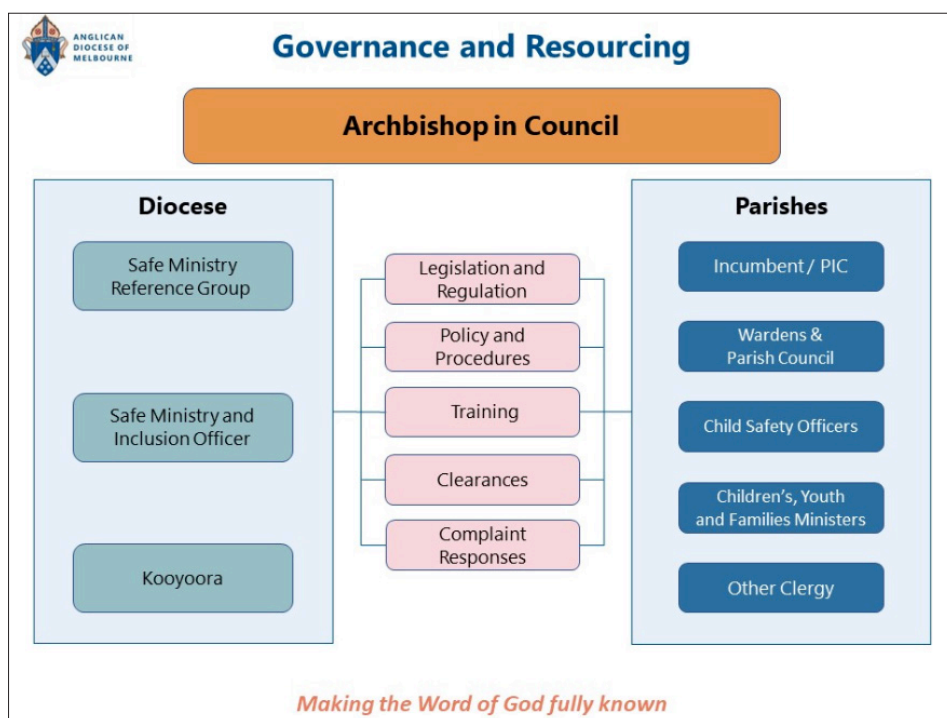
The Anglican Church of Australia within the Diocese of Melbourne is committed to the safety and the wellbeing of children and vulnerable people and these are embedded in policies and practices which reflect a commitment to **zero tolerance of abuse**.

That is to say we are committed to '**Safe Ministry**'.

This commitment includes implementation of the Anglican General Synod Canons in relation to Safe Ministry and our Diocesan Acts, regulations, ordinances, policies, protocols, and human resourcing for Safe Ministry and Professional Standards.

Keeping people safe is everybody's business!

This diagram provides an overview of the governance and resourcing for Safe Ministry in the Diocese.



This commitment is outworked through our:

- Compliance with the Reportable Conduct Scheme
- Canon for Safe Ministry to Children
- Episcopal Standards Act and Protocol
- Professional Standards Uniform Act and Regulations
- Kooyoora - Office of Professional Standards (<https://kooyoora.org.au>)
- Safe Ministry Reference Group
- Safe Ministry and Inclusion Officer
- Safe Ministry Policy April 2023
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy 2023
- Child Safety Policy for Children 2023
- Clearances for Ministry Protocol
- Clearances for Service Protocol
- Code of Conduct for Child Safety 2023
- ADOM Action Plan for Meeting the New Victorian Child Safe Standards 2023
- Child Abuse Risk Management Tool 2024
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Reporting Procedure 2023
- Safe Ministry Training
- Implementation resources on Diocesan website <https://www.melbourneanglican.org.au>

Diocesan Contacts

Kooyoora - Office of Professional Standards

P: +61 3 9416 1008 or 1800 135 246 E: contact@kooyoora.org.au

Safe Ministry and Inclusion Officer

P: +61 3 9653 4220

E: safeministry@melbourneanglican.org.au

The ***Making Your Parish Safe*** section of the Diocesan website provides our documentation and implementation assistance - <https://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/safe-ministry/>

Safe Ministry training: The Diocese has role-specific Safe Ministry training aimed at building awareness in the concepts of Child Safety and Safe Ministry.

Diocesan insurance: All insurance questions are to be referred to the Diocesan Insurance Department.

1.c. Legal obligations



Australia has a high commitment to safety for all people as expressed in legislation and government policy relating to child and vulnerable people protection.

Legal obligations extend to, but are not limited to:

- Reporting crimes to the police (including 'failure to disclose' child sexual abuse and/or 'failure to protect a child from sexual abuse'.)
- Child Protection (mandatory reporting)
- The 11 Child Safe Standards
- Working with Children Checks
- Common law 'duty of care' (e.g. in regards to negligence - Wrongs Act 1958)
- Ensuring that people act safely and are kept safe at work (including eliminating as far as practical sexual harassment and sex-based harassment in the workplace)
- Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act

Child Safe Standard 2: *“Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture, requires organisations at minimum, to ensure:*

- *The organisation makes a public commitment to child safety.*
- *A child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the organisation from the top down and bottom up.*
- *Governance arrangements facilitate implementation of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at all levels.*
- *A Code of Conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.*
- *Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children and young people.*
- *Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and record keeping.”*
(Source: <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/the-11-child-safe-standards/standard-2/>)

The **Child Safe Standards** further require all staff & volunteers (not just those working with children) to receive, as a minimum, training & information in:

- effective implementation of the organisation’s Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- recognising the indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and young people
- responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm
- building culturally safe environments for children and young people.
(Source: <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/the-11-child-safe-standards/>)

1.d. Pastoral mandate and motive

Mandate

Safe Ministry is more than a risk management exercise and legal responsibility, rather it is an outworking of what James 1:27 calls “true religion” i.e. caring for the vulnerable (widows and orphans); and an expression of Micah 6:8 “to seek justice, love mercy and walk humbly before our God”. We are more than a club or a social gathering. We are the body of Christ, called to be ‘salt’ and ‘light’ in the world. We live out Jesus’ new commandment that we love one another, so that by this, all people will know that we are His disciples (John 13:34-35). It is this pastoral or biblical mandate that set us apart from all other organisations who provide services, events and programs.



Motive

Our primary motive for Safe Ministry is God’s love for us. God is love! (1 John 4:16) God’s love is expressed in God’s nature as the community God, i.e. the triune Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is into this love God invites us. He created us in His image, i.e. relational beings. We are created in love, for love. Jesus is the hands-on demonstration of God’s love for all people, not only the religious, important or wise, but also for children, women, the lowly, the poor, the sick, sinners and tax collectors - the outcast. In Jesus, everyone is loved! God’s love for us motivates us to put others first, consider others’ interests, and to imitate the example of Christ who emptied Himself of the glory of heaven for the sake of the world.

Task notes:

2. Child Safety and Wellbeing

2.a. Child-centred practice

In Australia in the 1990s a major focus in child protection was on responding to suspected child abuse. During this same period churches began responding to revelations of historical child sexual abuse. This was a reactive or 'response' focused approach, responding once harm had already occurred. This may be likened to picking people up at the bottom of a cliff once they have fallen off, and taking them to hospital for care (left).

More recently, there has been a shift toward a more proactive-preventative focus, creating safe environments where the opportunities for abuse and harm to occur are actively reduced.



This is evidenced by the introduction of the Child Safe Standards. This focus on prevention of harm is represented in the illustration (above) by the fence at the top of the cliff. This is a commitment to child safety and wellbeing that proactively establishes safe environments and **child-centred** responses to complaints.

Child safety and wellbeing has **child-centred** practice at its core. The child-centred approach is based on the best interests of the child (the paramountcy principle).

"Child-centred practice reflects a particular set of beliefs about the capacities, vulnerabilities and rights of children. Its core is a commitment to children's ways of understanding, describing and doing." (The Australian Childhood Foundation (2001 & 2003) cited in Mudaly & Goddard, *The Truth is Longer Than a Lie*, (2006).

Our commitment to child safety and wellbeing starts by us being **child-centred** in our approach - by putting the best interests of the child at the centre of our practice.

Reflection: Jesus and Children

¹⁸ About that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?" ² Jesus called a little child to him and put the child among them. ³ Then he said, "I tell you the truth, unless you turn from your sins and become like little children, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven. ⁴ So anyone who becomes as humble as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. ⁵ "And anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf is welcoming me. ⁶ But if you cause one of these little ones who trusts in me to fall into sin, it would be better for you to have a large millstone tied around your neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea. ...

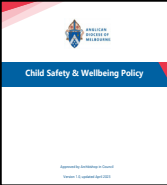
¹⁰ "Beware that you don't look down on any of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels are always in the presence of my heavenly Father. ...

¹⁴ In the same way, it is not my heavenly Father's will that even one of these little ones should perish." (Matthew 18-1:14 NLT)

Task notes:**Our Safe Ministry Policy states:**

As a Diocese, we are committed to the spiritual, emotional and physical safety and well-being of all people participating in the life and ministries of our Church:

- 1. We acknowledge that all people in our Church have the right to feel and be safe in their interactions and experiences in all our ministry, programs and activities.*
- 2. We acknowledge the need for sensitivity to, and consideration of all people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background,*
- 3. We acknowledge the need for sensitivity to, and consideration of, all people of culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and any person with a disability.*
- 4. We commit ourselves to the wellbeing of all people through our acts, regulations, codes of conduct, policies, guidelines, procedures and related safe ministry documentation, which includes:*
 - i) Guidance for how to develop and maintain safe and supportive physical and online environments where people are listened to and feel safe as they develop faith and a connection with God and others.*
 - ii) Safe and effective recruitment, training, supervision, support and resourcing.*
 - iii) Appropriate and timely responses to all complaints of alleged misconduct and all other grievances.*
 - iv) Pastoral care in responding to those who have been abused or harmed.*
 - v) Safe and appropriate ministry to persons of concern.*
- 5. We acknowledge the role of children, parents, guardians and the community in creating a culture of child safety and will actively engage with children and their parents, guardians and the wider community, inviting open communication and feedback.*
- 6. We acknowledge the shared responsibility of the whole community for child safety and wellbeing, including parents, guardians and people in roles, offices and positions within the Church. As such, we will actively promote the role of parents, guardians and the wider community in the shared responsibility for child safety.*
- 7. We are committed to thorough and effective governance for safe ministry to children and all vulnerable people at the Diocesan and parish level.*
- 8. We will engage in continuous improvement of our acts, regulations, codes of conduct, policies, guidelines, procedures and related safe ministry documentation.*
- 9. We will comply with all relevant secular legislation.*



Our **Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy** has the following stated purposes:

2.1 The purpose of this Policy is to:

- (a) set out controls and procedures for identifying and preventing child abuse or harm, and detecting it when it occurs in the ADOM environment, at Diocese and Parish levels;
- (b) promote a culture of child empowerment, safety and wellbeing including by ensuring that physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed;
- (c) ensure everyone is aware of their responsibilities in relation to preventing, identifying, responding to and reporting child abuse and harm, and the risk of child abuse and harm;
- (d) ensure all complaints, concerns and safety incidents are reported and documented as required by the Parish Records Guidelines so that they can be analysed to identify causes and systemic failures and inform continuous improvement;
- (e) provide a culturally safe and inclusive environment for the diverse needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, children who are unable to live at home, and children who are vulnerable; and
- (f) provide a clear statement of “no tolerance” for child abuse and assure that complaints of child abuse and harm will be taken seriously, reported, properly investigated, and responded to with the child’s best interests.

2.b. The Child Safe Standards

In 2022 the 11 Child Safe Standards were introduced in Victoria. These “set out minimum requirements and outline the actions organisations must take to keep children and young people safe. The Standards provide more clarity for organisations and are more consistent with Standards in the rest of Australia.” (CCYP)

This is the Commission for Children and Young People’s plain language version:

1

Your organisation welcomes Aboriginal children. You support them to express their culture and to enjoy their rights. You don’t allow racism.



2

Child safety is important to everyone at all levels in your organisation. You document how you find, avoid, and stop risks of child abuse or harm.




3

Your organisation supports children to know their rights to be safe from abuse, informed, and involved. You help them to talk openly and take part in decisions that affect them.




4

Your organisation tells families and the community about what you do, and how you keep children safe from harm and abuse. You help families to have a say and to take part in decisions that affect their child.




5

Your organisation understands that every child is different and has different needs. You make sure that they can get the information and help that they need.



6

Staff know what they must do to keep children safe from abuse and harm. They record, report, and share information about child safety when they should. Staff who work with children have had the background checks they need.



7 Children and their families know how to make a complaint and what happens when a complaint is made. Your staff know how to respond properly to complaints.

8 Your organisation trains and supports staff to keep children safe from abuse and harm. Your staff know the signs of child abuse and harm and what to do if there are issues of abuse and harm.

9 Your organisation makes sure children are safe when they use your services, settings, and activities. This includes when children are online.

10 Your organisation checks and improves the ways you keep children safe from abuse and harm.

11 Your organisation has written policies about how you keep children safe from abuse and harm. They are easy to understand, and all staff follow them.

(source: <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/resources/child-safe-standards/#TOC-6>)

Anglican Diocese of Melbourne
Action Plan for meeting the new Victorian Child Safe Standards

"The Diocese has an Action Plan for Meeting the New Victorian Child Safe Standards. This Action Plan has specific actions for both the diocese as well as for parishes and congregations to meet each Child Safe Standard and its compliance indicators. Each parish and congregation is expected to engage in these parish actions." (source: <https://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/governance/child-safety/>)

The Action Plan includes:

- Diocesan and parish actions and strategies currently in place and in progress
- minimum requirements and best practice and
- ongoing actions for leaders

ADOM Action Plan April 2023

USING THE ACTION PLAN
 How each Standard in the Action Plan is structured in this document

STANDARD 2
 Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture

Why this is important
 The ADOM community looks to leaders to embody the values of the organisation. This means that leaders' behaviour is key to a child safe culture. Leaders must champion child safe practices and lead by example, modelling the behaviour expected of employees and volunteers and not tolerating behaviours harmful to children

CCYP minimum requirements of a child safe organisation for Standard 2

<p>21 The organisation makes a public commitment to child safety.</p> <p>22 A child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the organisation from the top down and bottom up.</p> <p>23 Governance arrangements facilitate implementation of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at all levels.</p>	<p>24 A Code of Conduct provides guidelines and volunteers on expected behaviour standards and responsibilities.</p> <p>25 Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying, and mitigating children and young people.</p> <p>26 Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and record keeping.</p>
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23 Governance arrangements facilitate implementation of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at all levels.

25 Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and record keeping.

Currently in place at ADOM

- A public commitment to Child Safety on the ADOM website and displayed in parishes
- Each parish has a Child Safety Officer who actively champions a child safe culture as per the role description
- Safe Ministry Policy, Code of Conduct for Child Safety & Wellbeing, Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy and Child Safety & Wellbeing Reporting Procedure are included in training, agreeing to abide by the behaviour statement is included in the Safe Ministry level 1 training
- Child Safety is a standing item for Archbishop in Council meetings, Parish Council meetings and Chapter meetings
- Safe Ministry Referent Diocese with Safe Ministry Inclusion Officer to support parishes and advise Archbishop in Council
- Child Safe Posters available on website and displayed in parishes
- Screening and training processes are in place in parishes for all staff and volunteers and recorded on the Volunteer and Lay Employee Register
- Regular audits and risk assessments are expected for all parish activities

Currently in progress at ADOM

- Risk management work is in process at Diocese level
- Safe Ministry/Child Safety documents being reviewed

(source: <https://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/governance/child-safety/>)

2.c. Being proactive

The Child Safe Standards reflect a proactive approach to child safety and wellbeing, that is, preventing harm and fostering wellbeing.

For example:

Child Safe Standard 1

Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued

In complying with Child Safe Standard 1, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 1.1 *A child's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported.*
- 1.2 *Strategies are embedded within the organisation which equip all members to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and young people.*
- 1.3 *Measures are adopted by the organisation to ensure racism within the organisation is identified, confronted and not tolerated. Any instances of racism are addressed with appropriate consequences.*
- 1.4 *The organisation actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion within it by Aboriginal children, young people and their families.*
- 1.5 *All of the organisation's policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, young people and their families.*

(source: <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/the-11-child-safe-standards/standard-1/>)

The Diocese Action Plan for Meeting the Victorian Child Safe Standards, in relation to Standard 1 requires the following Parish Actions:

Parish Actions	Requirement	Due Date	Responsible
<p>Minimum: Diocesan policies are adhered to and made available throughout the parish Display Acknowledgement of Country in parish</p> <p>Best Practice: discover information about the traditional owners of the parish and reach out to their cultural centres for resources</p>	1.1	Year 1 Year 2	Vicar Churchwardens and Parish Council Child safe officer
<p>Minimum: Display and promote diocesan developed resources</p> <p>Best Practice: Build a working group of Aboriginal children, youth and adults to develop resources for use in the parish and feed this back to diocese</p>	1.2	Year 2 Year 3	Vicar Churchwardens and Parish Council Child safe officer
<p>Minimum: ensure clergy, staff and volunteers are aware of inclusive practices in diocesan policies, code and procedures Display anti-racism posters and resources</p> <p>Best Practice: develop parish-based strategies for identifying and confronting racism</p>	1.3	Year 2 Year 3	Vicar Churchwardens and Parish Council Child safe officer
<p>Minimum: investigate and participate in indigenous cultural training</p> <p>Best Practice: engage with local indigenous leaders to learn and develop understanding of the history and story of the people and land</p>	1.4	Year 2 Year 2	Vicar, Churchwardens and Parish Council
<p>Minimum: participate where possible in the development of Diocesan RAP</p> <p>Best Practice: develop parish RAP</p>	1.5	Year 1 Year 3	Vicar Churchwardens and Parish Council Child safe officer
Further steps			
Further steps to be informed and shaped by the Diocesan Reconciliation Action Plan process.			

The Diocesan Code of Conduct for Child Safety and Wellbeing sets out required and unacceptable behaviours in relation to ministry with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children including:

6. Required Behaviours

6.1 To help ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, all people covered by this Code must:

- (j) promote cultural safety, and actively encourage and support the participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island child's identity);
- (k) support and encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights;

Unacceptable Behaviours

6.2 All people covered by this Code must not:

- (f) interact with a child in a way that could be perceived as threatening, intimidating, derogatory, demeaning, culturally insensitive or humiliating;

Task notes

Child Safe Standard 3

Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

In complying with Child Safe Standard 3, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 3.1 Children and young people are informed about all of their rights, including to safety, information and participation.
- 3.2 The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children and young people feel safe and be less isolated.
- 3.3 Where relevant to the setting or context, children and young people are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant related information in an age appropriate way.
- 3.4 Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children and young people to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.
- 3.5 Organisations have strategies in place to develop a culture that facilitates participation and is responsive to the input of children and young people.
- 3.6 Organisations provide opportunities for children and young people to participate and are responsive to their contributions, thereby strengthening confidence and engagement.

(source:<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au>)

As an outworking of supporting children to know their rights, seeking their views and establishing environments of trust as church workers, we can:

- Use our Child Safety Policy for Children (right) and signage about child rights.
- Encourage feedback and 'speaking up'

We can provide opportunities for children and young people to be free to express their opinions and ideas in an environment where these will be valued and, where appropriate, implemented. This will include inviting feedback from, and allowing input into policy and procedures by children and young people in age-appropriate ways.



As leaders you can create a safer culture through encouraging people to speak up when they feel unsure or unsafe about something is happening to themselves or to others.

It is important that children and young people know who they can approach when they feel unsafe or at risk of harm.

- Model safe touch with children and young people

The Diocesan Code of Conduct for Child Safety sets the boundaries for physical contact with children including:

6. Required Behaviours

6.1 To help ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, all people covered by this Code must:

(w) exercise good judgment and sensitivity in terms of appropriate physical contact with children, and only engage in physical contact with children where it may be necessary, professional and beneficial and/or supportive;

Unacceptable Behaviours

6.2 All people covered by this Code must not:

(c) interact with a child in a way that could be seen as grooming or favouritism (such as offering gifts or special treatment of a child) unless they are a parent, guardian or relative of the child;

(e) engage in, or encourage unnecessarily physical conduct towards or in the presence of, a child (including sitting on laps, cuddling, hugging, rough physical games, holding, massaging, kissing, cuddling, touching children in an inappropriate, unnecessary or culturally insensitive way, touching any area of the body normally covered by a swimming costume, specifically the buttocks, thighs, chest, breasts or groin areas, and doing things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes);

(f) interact with a child in a way that could be perceived as threatening, intimidating, derogatory, demeaning, culturally insensitive or humiliating;

Task notes

Child Safe Standard 4

Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing

In complying with Child Safe Standard 4, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 4.1 Families participate in decisions affecting their child.*
- 4.2 The organisation engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible.*
- 4.3 Families and communities have a say in the development and review of the organisation's policies and practices.*
- 4.4 Families, carers and the community are informed about the organisation's operations and governance.*

(source: <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/the-11-child-safe-standards/standard-4/>)

The Diocesan Safe Ministry Policy Statements 5 and 6 outline our commitment to involving parents and the wider community in our practices:

5. We acknowledge the role of children, parents, guardians and the community in creating a culture of child safety and will actively engage with children and their parents, guardians and the wider community, inviting open communication and feedback.

6. We acknowledge the shared responsibility of the whole community for child safety and wellbeing, including parents, guardians and people in roles, offices and positions within the Church. As such, we will actively promote the role of parents, guardians and the wider community in the shared responsibility for child safety.

Task notes

Child Safe Standard 5

Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

In complying with Child Safe Standard 5, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 5.1 The organisation, including staff and volunteers, understands children and young people's diverse circumstances, and provides support and responds to those who are vulnerable.*
- 5.2 Children and young people have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand.*
- 5.3 The organisation pays particular attention to the needs of children and young people with disability, children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people.*
- 5.4 The organisation pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal children and young people and provides/promotes a culturally safe environment for them.*

(source: <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/the-11-child-safe-standards/standard-5/>)

The Diocesan Code of Conduct for Child Safety and Wellbeing sets out required and unacceptable behaviours in relation to ministry with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children including:

6. Required Behaviours

6.1 To help ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, all people covered by this Code must:

- (l) respect the language, customs, religions, political differences, identities, abilities and cultures of children, including by:*
- (i) making a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all children;*
- (ii) treating all children with equity and respect, regardless of race, cultural, linguistic or social origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, or other status;*
- (m) promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children with disabilities, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) children (for example, by having zero tolerance for discrimination, racist, bullying and phobic behaviour towards children);*
- (n) ensuring games and activities for and with children include all children and do not inappropriately emphasise gender, physical, intellectual, linguistic or cultural differences;*

3. Safe Workers

3.a. Safe teams



All those who serve in roles at church are representatives of God and the church, be they Bishops, clergy, staff, Parish Council members, ministry coordinators, team leaders, team members or rostered helpers.

Serving God and the church is a privilege and responsibility. It is a position of delegated authority or perceived authority to influence others for God.

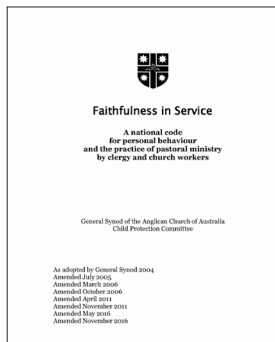
This concept of all church workers being 'representatives of God' is ultimately about the way that others perceive the role of the church worker, rather than about how the church worker perceives their own role.

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

In this way, ministry is safest when it is conducted in healthy teams (accountable and transparent), rather than when conducted with the mindset of 'solo' or 'my' ministry. Healthy teams keep safe one another, and those whom we serve.

The New Testament, and in particular Paul's epistles, are filled with words about 'ministry' being the work of the Holy Spirit, who gifts the members of the body of Christ so that they can minister to one another. In 1 Corinthians 12 we are reminded that we are all a part of the body of Christ. Body ministry is about 'us' working together in healthy teams.

Jesus gave his disciples a pattern for representing God as servant church workers. Jesus said to his disciples that they were not to be like the workers of this world who lord it over others, but rather to serve, "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Matthew 20:25-28. This may be called servant leadership.



Faithfulness in Service, states: *"When Peter wrote to the Christians scattered throughout Asia Minor, he reminded them of their identity in Christ as God's chosen people, sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ. The call to be holy is reflected in both the Old and New Testaments as the appropriate response to God's grace. Christians live according to the knowledge that they have been created by God and redeemed by Christ.*

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

3.b. Recruitment, screening, induction and supervision of workers

There are a range of state laws and Diocesan policies and procedures that mandate rigour in the recruitment, screening, induction and supervision of church workers.

Theses include the:

- Victorian Child Safe Standards
- Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme
- Victorian Working with Children Check
- Anglican Canon for Safe Ministry to Children
- Diocesan Professional Standards Uniform Act
- Diocesan Safe Ministry Policy

*The Diocesan **Safe Ministry Policy** states our commitment to safe workers.*

Statement 3

We commit ourselves to the welfare of all people through our acts, regulations, codes of conduct, policies, guidelines, procedures and related safe ministry documentation, which includes: - safe and effective recruitment, training, supervision, support and resourcing.

Child Safe Standard 6 requires: at a minimum:

- 6.1 *Recruitment, including advertising, referee checks and staff and volunteer pre-employment screening, emphasise child safety and wellbeing.*
- 6.2 *Relevant staff and volunteers have current working with children checks or equivalent background checks.*
- 6.3 *All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their responsibilities to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.*
- 6.4 *Ongoing supervision and people management is focused on child safety and wellbeing.*

(Source: <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/the-11-child-safe-standards/standard-6/>)

Supporting and supervising church workers

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

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

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

Task notes

3.c. Ministry boundaries



Boundaries are culturally-constructed 'safe zones' between people, as well as being personally constructed and influenced by our upbringing, experiences and also our the roles we fulfill.

"Boundaries give shape to our relationship" and help keep us safe (M Fortune).

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

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

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

As church workers we need to be respectful, and carefully navigate other people's boundaries. This is not just about being respectful of the boundaries of others, but about consciously engaging in respectful relationships and interactions.

Clergy and church workers also need to be mindful of and manage the *dual roles/relationships* we have with those to whom we minister. A *dual relationship* is where we have two or more roles in a person’s life, eg. a pastor with a congregation member who also happens to be a family member.

The burden is on us as church workers to establish and maintain healthy boundaries. That is, church workers must put other people’s needs before their own and act in other people’s best interests, only crossing flexible boundaries when and where it is appropriate.

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

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



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

Some ministry boundaries are *inflexible*. They are designed to show us clearly where we must not go such as codes of conduct that outline professional boundaries. Further, inflexible boundaries are also established by law.

Professional boundaries are those which an organisation, in our case the Diocese, provides to workers to help maintain safe interactions between workers, and also with those to whom workers minister. These are often referred to as a code of conduct.

Codes of conduct are helpful for ensuring that church workers are clear on expected behaviours.

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

Promotion of, and adherence to, the code of conduct, by all church workers, assists the church in being accountable to those in its care.



The Anglican National Code of Conduct, Faithfulness in Service, Section 4.11-20, provides guidance for Safe Ministry boundary crossings.

S.4.11 *“Make sure you are clear about the requirements of your role, including the hours to be worked and the nature of your responsibilities as well as your leave and other entitlements. You need to be sure that your legitimate personal needs can be met.”*

Child Safe Standard 2 requires: *“Child safety and wellbeing [to be] embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture”* [including] *organisations to implement a Code of Conduct which provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.* As such, in accordance with with Child Safe Standards 2 & 9 workers must also abide by our **Diocesan Code of Conduct for Child Safety and Wellbeing**.

Further, the **Reportable Conduct Scheme** (which applies to all clergy and church workers, paid or unpaid, for the organisation) requires workers to maintain professional boundaries with children.

Task notes

4. Identifying and Responding to Concerns

This section aims to help church workers understand the issues surrounding 'harm', and assist in recognising and responding to all concerns in relation to all people who may be at risk of being harmed.

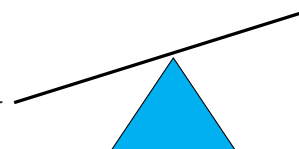
4.a. Understanding harmful behaviours

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

In some relationships it is appropriate that the more powerful person takes steps to address the balance of power. In other relationships the more powerful person needs to consider how their actions will impact upon the less powerful person, whilst retaining the power imbalance.

The balance of power can be impacted by a number of factors such as: size, experience, knowledge and position (role).

In relationships where a person's position gives them power over another in order that the less powerful person might be protected or educated (e.g. teachers and pupils), it is inappropriate to change the balance of power.



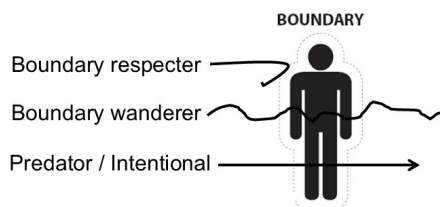
Within hierarchical organisational structures, or where someone is charged with upholding the law, for example, or where a person's health is being attended to, there exists an appropriate power imbalance. Therefore, those who hold 'positions of power' must have a sound understanding of, and must uphold, appropriate boundaries.

Boundary violations

We have explored the gift of boundaries. When boundaries are not crossed appropriately, i.e. when they are violated, it can have a negative impact on the person on the receiving end of the inappropriate crossing. That is, boundary violations can and do cause harm.

Using the language of boundary violations can be helpful when addressing concerns with those who may be moving towards, or committing, boundary violations.

The following descriptions are not an attempt to define types of boundary violators, but rather to provide a description of intention behind boundary violations.



- **Non-offender:** (i.e. boundary respecter) Discovers that they have unintentionally overstepped a boundary, and makes a deliberate correction.
- **Wanderer:** Approaches a boundary and engages in a violation without intent, but because it is not considering how the other person is experiencing the

interaction, it has the potential to do great harm.

- **Intentional:** The offender understands boundaries and intentionally violated them in order to do harm.
- **Predator:** The predator heads directly for the boundary, and aims to break down a person's boundaries.

Defining abuse

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

Using the language of boundary violations, **abuse is serious boundary violation leading to significant harm to a person.**

Abuse is a disrespecting of personhood, which 'steals' or 'robs' from the other person. Abuse negatively impacts self-respect, self-esteem and self-confidence, and can lead to short and long-term effects.

A biblical example of abuse as the misuse of power resulting in the robbing of personhood is the recount of David, Bathsheba and Uriah found in 2 Samuel 11 & 12.

In this story David sexually abused Bathsheba, and then, to cover this up, had her husband Uriah murdered. David then took Bathsheba as one of his wives. Chapter 11 verse 27 says, "*But the Lord was displeased with what David had done.*" In chapter 12 the Lord sent the prophet Nathan to confront David. Interestingly, Nathan's charge against David had nothing to do with the covenant violations of coveting, adultery, rape or murder (which he had committed), rather Nathan charged David with covenant violation of 'stealing'.

Factors influencing our understanding about harm and 'risk' of harm

When it comes to understanding what is, and what is not, harmful behaviour, it is helpful to first acknowledge that our understanding is influenced by a number of factors.

Whilst there are some areas that clearly constitute harmful behaviours, there are some grey areas that will vary depending upon the factors that inform our view.

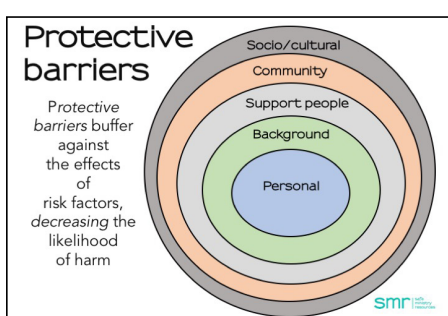
Factors that influence our understanding include:

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

These can all influence whether or not we see a particular situation or behaviour as harmful towards others or not.

Vulnerability

There are a number of risk factors that can, and often do, combine to cause a person to be at greater risk of being harmed.



For example, in relation to children, they are at greater risk of maltreatment within an organisation dependent upon their age, gender, previous maltreatment, disability, and/or due to a lack of assertiveness strategies, and/or being Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander. (Australian Institute of Family Studies Issues Paper "*Child maltreatment in organisations: Risk factors and strategies for prevention*" Irenyi et al, 2006)

The protective barriers (left) buffer against risk factors and can decrease the likelihood of a person being harmed.

4.b. Types of harmful behaviours

Types of harmful behaviours about which church workers need to be aware, and which they need to report according to procedure, include anyone's experience of:

- child abuse and maltreatment
- bullying behaviour (online or in person)
- sexual harassment
- sexual abuse (assault)
- physical violence
- emotionally harmful behaviours
- elder abuse
- harassment
- sexual misconduct
- financial abuse
- domestic violence
- stalking
- self-harm / suicide risk
- grooming behaviours (e.g. financial, sexual, emotional)

Child abuse and maltreatment

Children at risk of harm ... spotting the signs

As a person working with children (0-17yrs), it is essential you take the time to learn the indicators that a child may be experiencing harm or is at risk of harm, so that you can respond to your concerns.

Definition of child abuse

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), child abuse or maltreatment constitutes: *"all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power."*

Impact of child abuse

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

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

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

Types & indicators of child abuse

Knowing the indicators and reporting reasonable concerns is both a Victorian legal requirement as part of the Child Safe Standards, and a Diocesan expectation

The types of child abuse and indicators are listed in Section 5 of the Diocesan *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy 2023 (below)*:

5. Recognising Child Abuse

5.1 Some examples of child abuse are set out below.

Type of child abuse	More details and examples
Sexual offence or grooming	Harassment. Encouraging a child to engage in, or be involved in, sexual activity. Encouraging sexual touching.
Physical abuse or family violence	See indicators of harm at 5.2 below.
Emotional or psychological harm	When a child has suffered or is likely to suffer emotional or psychological harm that causes the child's emotional or intellectual development to be or likely to be, significantly damaged and the child's parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm.
Neglect	Neglect is an omission of proper care. Harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care.
Spiritual abuse	Using faith, religion or spiritual beliefs to control, coerce or abuse a child. This may include public shaming or humiliation, or threats of spiritual consequences for certain behaviours. This may present as intense guilt, anxiety, or fear of Church authority figures.
Bullying or harassment	Behaviour or language that demeans, humiliates, offends or embarrasses a child. Bullying involves repeated behaviour that causes fear, distress, harm or undue pressure.

5.2 Indicators of harm can be behavioural or physical. Indicators of harm vary for different types of child abuse and can co-occur with multiple types of child abuse. Examples of indicators of harm include but are not limited to:

Physical or family violence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unexplained bruises, burns, welts, cuts grazes or scratches (or vague or unlikely explanations); • avoiding physical contact, or disproportionate reactions or limited emotion displayed; • unexplained absences; • wearing clothing that is unsuitable for the weather conditions (to hide injuries); • abuse of drugs or alcohol, self-harm or suicide attempts; • showing high anxiety or stress; • poor self-image or low self-esteem; • being aggressive, demanding or attention-seeking.
Sexual offences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • signs of pain, itching or discomfort in the genital or rectal area; • sexualised behaviours; • withdrawal, low self-esteem, suicidal ideation, self-harm; • visible signs of psychological diagnoses including anxiety and depression; • presence of sexually transmitted diseases; • frequent urinary tract infections; • pregnancy (actual or suspected); • self-harm; • showing age-inappropriate sexual behaviour or knowledge; • inappropriate displays of affection; • sudden fears of specific places or particular adults; • obsessive and compulsive washing; • complaining of headaches, stomach pains or nausea; • sleeping difficulties; • poor self-care or personal hygiene; • regressive behaviours such as bedwetting and speech loss; • abuse of drugs or alcohol, self-harm or suicide attempts.
Emotional or psychological harm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delays in emotional, mental or physical development; • speech impairments such as stuttering or being selectively mute; • rocking, thumb-sucking or other infant-like behaviours; • eating disorders; • showing high anxiety or stress; • poor self-image or low self-esteem; • being aggressive, demanding or attention-seeking; • compulsive lying or stealing; • unexplained mood swings or depression; • poor social and interpersonal skills; • abuse of drugs or alcohol, self-harm or suicide attempt.

Emotional or psychological harm

- delays in emotional, mental or physical development;
 - speech impairments such as stuttering or being selectively mute;
 - rocking, thumb-sucking or other infant-like behaviours;
 - eating disorders;
 - showing high anxiety or stress;
 - poor self-image or low self-esteem;
 - being aggressive, demanding or attention-seeking;
 - compulsive lying or stealing;
 - unexplained mood swings or depression;
 - poor social and interpersonal skills;
 - abuse of drugs or alcohol, self-harm or suicide attempt.
- unattended health problems;
 - looking pale and weak;
 - aggressive or self-destructive behaviour;
 - involvement in criminal activity;
 - limited positive interaction with parents, carers or guardians;
 - abuse of drugs or alcohol.

We also need to be aware of:

Sexualised electronic interactions and grooming on the internet

The explosion of electronic communication has seen a sharp increase in the number of internet-based and telecommunications-based allegations of abuse and bullying. This involves the perpetrator using any form of telecommunication, or electronic communication to: sexually groom, bully, suggest an inappropriate relationship be formed and or engage a child in sexual language or behaviours

In some cases these interactions have led to people being charged with use of a carriage service to transmit indecent communication with a child, or procurement of a child for sexual purposes.

Self-harm

Self-harm means any behaviour which involves the deliberate causing of pain or injury to oneself, usually as an extreme way of trying to cope with distressing or painful feelings.

Self-harm includes cutting, burning or hitting oneself, binge-eating or starvation, or repeatedly putting oneself in dangerous situations. It can also involve abuse of drugs or alcohol, including overdosing on prescription medications. (source: <https://www.sane.org/information-stories/facts-and-guides/self-harm>, accessed 12 March 2021)

NOTE: These indicators are not intended to be exhaustive, but rather are a tool for identifying children at risk of abuse. It is important to remember that one or two indicators in isolation don't mean that a child is being abused. They must also be considered in the context of other indicators and the child's or young person's circumstances.

The important message is **REPORT YOUR CONCERNS** (see topic 4.c. below).

Remember: If completing this module in relation to children at risk of harm is impacting upon you negatively, do not keep it to yourself! Please speak to your Vicar, a team leader or a counsellor. You can also talk to Kooyoora, or if you are in need of immediate care, call Lifeline 13 11 14.

Concerns about adults

The following pages contain information in relation to some specific concerns in relation to adults and abuse.

Bullying behaviours

A person in a church may state that they have been bullied. They may have experienced some uncomfortable situations in church life, however, not all unpleasant experiences within a church fall into the realm of bullying behaviours.

It is important to determine whether what a person is experiencing is actually bullying, or not.

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

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

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

The following are *not* considered to be bullying:

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

Family, and domestic violence (also referred to as interpersonal violence)

Defined as when one person uses power and control over another person in the family or a current or former intimate relationship. The Victorian Family Violence Protection Act 2008 defines family violence as: *"a) behaviour by a person towards a family member of that person if that behaviour—*

- i. is physically or sexually abusive; or*
- ii. is emotionally or psychologically abusive; or*
- iii. is economically abusive; or*

iv. is threatening; or

v. is coercive; or

vi. in any other way controls or dominates the family member and causes that family member to feel fear for the safety or wellbeing of that family member or another person; or

b) behaviour by a person that causes a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of, behaviour referred to in paragraph (a)."

Family violence is a serious and widespread issue in Australia with long-term impacts for victims/survivors. It affects people of all ages and backgrounds, including people in churches. Although both men and women can perpetrate or experience family violence, it is overwhelmingly perpetrated by men against women and children.

Supporting a person who experiences family violence

Key principles to follow when supporting someone are:

- Prioritise their safety.
- Support their choices.
- Seek advice from family violence professionals.
- Be sensitive to the unique challenges and barriers for people facing additional structural oppression, discrimination and marginalisation based on their Aboriginality, ethnicity, cultural and/or linguistic background, faith, migration and visa status, sexual orientation, age, or disability that may exacerbate risk or prevent safety.

Responding to a disclosure of family / domestic violence

It takes great courage to disclose. When someone is ready to talk:

- Actively listen, without interruption, giving the victim/survivor time to share their experience.
- Show that you believe them.
- Take their fears or concerns seriously.
- Emphasise that they are not to blame for their experience.
- Provide them with the 1800 RESPECT helpline (1800 737 732) or a local specialist organisation. Refer to the Family Violence guidelines for key contact information.
- Maintain confidentiality and be honest about its limits in certain circumstances.
- Refer to the Family Violence Procedures for further guidance.
- Keep in contact with them afterwards.

What not to do:

- Talk about your own experiences of violence.
- Try and find out details.
- Blame them or judge or criticise their choices.
- Make excuses for or minimise the controlling behaviour.
- Try to 'fix' the problem for them or tell them what to do.
- Provide counselling or advise marriage counselling.
- Expect them to end the relationship with the perpetrator or to remain in the relationship with the perpetrator, even if they are married.
- Talk to the perpetrator about their behaviour.
- Talk negatively about the perpetrator.

Reporting requirements

- If someone is seriously injured, in need of urgent medical help, at immediate risk of harm, their life is in danger, or you have just witnessed a serious crime, call 000.
- If children are involved, follow the Diocesan Child Safety reporting procedures and contact the police (000), Child Protection, and Kooyoora.

- If the person using violence is a church worker, contact Kooyoora.
- It is important to let the victim/survivor know about the reporting and leave them to make decisions about pursuing any additional reporting.

Family violence policy, procedures and guidelines for church workers

The Diocese of Melbourne has developed Family Violence policy, procedures and guidelines for church workers in line with the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM). The purpose is to affirm that family violence in all its forms is a violation of human dignity and wrong, and to provide a framework for church workers on how to support and respond to people experiencing family violence and meet reporting requirements. Church workers are to refer to this forthcoming policy package for further guidance on their role and responsibilities in relation to family violence.

How can we prevent family violence?

To prevent male violence against women, we need to address the culture driving it. To do this, we know from international evidence that the social enablers we need to change are attitudes and behaviours that justify violence against women, show disrespect towards women, support male-dominated control of decision-making and resources across society, and/or reinforce gender stereotypes. Churches shape people's attitudes and behaviours and can play a critical role as agents of change in creating the deep cultural shift needed. To start, we must first examine our own attitudes and behaviours, and then call others to do likewise.

The Diocese of Melbourne's Preventing Violence Against Women Program

The Diocese has a Preventing Violence Against Women Program that aims to equip church leaders and parishes to prevent violence against women. It provides training and resources on responding to and preventing violence against women. For more information and to get involved see: <https://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/pvaw/>.

If you have concerns about, or receive a disclosure of, domestic or family violence please report this to your Vicar or Kooyoora.

Elder abuse

Elder abuse *"occurs when there is any act occurring within a relationship where there is an implication of trust, which results in harm to an older person. Abuse can include physical, sexual, financial, psychological and social abuse and/or neglect"*(endorsed at the Healthy Ageing Taskforce, 2000). It is important for leaders to be aware of any sudden or unusual changes in the behaviour patterns of their participants or congregation members. Remember that if someone shows one or more of the possible signs of abuse, it does not automatically mean she or he is being abused.

Task notes

4.c. Responding to concerns

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

Responding, dependant upon the nature of the concern, may include reporting to police, and statutory bodies and/or referral to specialists for assistance. Responding fully may include legal, pastoral, diocesan, risk management and insurance responses.

Overcoming the barriers to reporting

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



"What can I do about this?"

"The government will only make the situation worse!"

"Society can't even fix this problem!"

These are all examples of what is known as "discounting".

West's Discount Hierarchy relates to four levels of resistance that a person must overcome in order to actually respond to a possible abuse situation.

- i. Existence - acknowledgement of the actual existing of the problem.
- ii. Significance - accept that there is a problem, but don't accept that it is significant.
- iii. Solvability - acceptance of the existence and significance of the problem, but also a belief that it cannot be solved.
- iv. Self - acceptance of the existence and significance of the problem, and belief that there are solutions, but also a belief that they personally cannot initiate solutions.

(Source: Chris Storm: Bethany Community Support Melbourne, *Feeling Safe, Being Strong* - AIFS Conference 2008)

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

Community attitudes include:

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

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

Task Notes

Reporting concerns

Church workers should, and need, to feel safe to raise concerns about behaviours and also about incidents and accidents at church.

The Parish needs to be able to appropriately respond to any concerns that they have for any person at church. These concerns may be for a person/s at risk of harm, or concerns about a person's harmful behaviours towards others, an OH&S or injury concern, and also any hazard.



The Diocese does not expect any person to respond alone. Getting the right advice and help when you have concerns or feel uncomfortable about a situation is essential for responding appropriately to the situation you have experienced, or are experiencing.

Types of reporting



There are four types of 'reporting' that may need to occur, dependent upon the age of the person the concerns are about (child/adult), the type of concern, the role of the alleged perpetrator and where the alleged harm occurred/is occurring.

Dependent upon the type of concern you have, you will need to tell the appropriate person either at your Parish and/or Kooyoora.

The simple message is - report all your concerns!

i. Child Protection reporting to the Department of Families Fairness and Housing (DFFH)

This is mandatory and/or voluntary reporting about children who are Risk of Harm. The focus of this type of reporting is the child and their safety.

The DFFH website states:



"Child protection receive reports about children when there are concerns the child is in need of protection. A child in need of protection is a child who has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect, and their parent has not protected or is unlikely to protect the child from harm of that type.

To make a report to child protection a person needs to have formed a reasonable belief that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect, and that their parent has not protected or is unlikely to protect the child from harm of that type.

Where concerns relate to an alleged perpetrator of abuse, who may pose a risk more generally to all children, the concerns should be reported to Police." (Source: <https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse>, accessed 16 August 2024)

ii. Police reporting



It is a criminal offence to engage in a 'failure to disclose' child sexual abuse and / or 'failure to protect a child from sexual abuse'.

The focus of police reporting is criminal justice (crime and punishment).

*The **failure to disclose** offence applies to you if you are an adult, and have information that leads you to form a 'reasonable belief' that another adult has sexually offended against a child under 16 in Victoria.*

If this applies to you, you must report the information to police as soon as possible, unless: you have a 'reasonable excuse' for not reporting the information, or are exempt from the offence. If you fail to report the information, you may be charged with a criminal offence. The maximum penalty is three years imprisonment. (source: <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/protecting-children-and-families/failure-to-disclose-offence> - accessed 7 June 2021)

*The **failure to protect** offence applies where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 under the care, supervision or authority of a relevant organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with that organisation. A person in a position of authority in the organisation will commit the offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so. (source: <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/protecting-children-and-families/failure-to-protect-a-new-criminal-offence-to> - accessed 7 June 2021)*

iii. Reportable Conduct Scheme



The Reportable Conduct Scheme ("the scheme") seeks to improve organisations' responses to allegations of child abuse and neglect by their workers and volunteers. The scheme is established by the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 ("the Act").

The scheme's focus is different to child protection 'risk of harm' reporting (mandatory reporting) and police reporting (e.g. failure to report). The scheme's aim is to ensure that allegations of Reportable Conduct are well-handled, and that the paramount consideration in all decision-making is the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children.

All allegations of Reportable Conduct against current workers (volunteer and paid) who are over 18 years (including historical) must be reported, by the Diocese (Kooyoora), to the scheme operator within 3 working days. The local church's head of organisation (via Kooyoora) must also provide updates and a final report to the scheme operator in relation to the investigation.

The Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) is responsible for administering the scheme.

The CCYP role includes:

- *supporting and guiding organisations that receive allegations in order to promote fair, effective, timely and appropriate responses*
- *independently overseeing, monitoring and, where appropriate, making recommendations to improve the responses of those organisations.*

There are five types of 'reportable conduct':

- *sexual offences committed against, with or in the presence of a child*
- *sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child*
- *physical violence against, with or in the presence of a child*
- *any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child*
- *significant neglect of a child. (source: <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/resources/reportable-conduct-scheme-information-sheets/#TOC-1> accessed 7 June 2021).*

iv. Diocesan procedures

- Diocesan Professional Standards Act (which defines misconduct)
- Diocesan Tribunal Protocol
- Diocesan Child Safety and Wellbeing Reporting Procedure 2023

In the implementation of our responses to allegations of misconduct we are committed to our pastoral, ethical, legal, diocesan, risk management and insurance obligations and responsibilities.

Professional Standards Uniform Act - allegations of misconduct

The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne takes all complaints of misconduct very seriously.

When you have a concern that a church worker has engaged in misconduct, please contact Kooyoora - 1800 135 246.

The definition of misconduct in the Diocesan Professional Standards Uniform Act 2016 (s.5) includes:

bullying; emotional abuse; harassment; physical abuse; neglect of a child; sexual abuse; spiritual abuse; breaches of the Constitution or of a canon of the General Synod or of an ordinance of provincial synod or of the Diocesan Synod; offences under the Offences Canon 1962; any offence under a law of the State or Territory or the Commonwealth for which the maximum penalty prescribed is imprisonment for at least 6 months.

For the full list of what is included in the definition of ‘misconduct by a church worker’ please refer to the Diocesan Professional Standards Uniform Act 2016 on the Diocesan website: <https://www.melbourneanglican.org.au/governance-synod/synod-legislation/>

Please report all concerns in accordance with our Child Safety and Wellbeing Reporting Procedure 2023 as found on our Diocesan website - Making Your Parish Safe tab.



**ANGLICAN
DIOCESE OF
MELBOURNE**

Reporting Child Abuse in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

1 If a child is in **immediate danger** at any point **CALL 000**

2 All suspicions or reports of child abuse must be reported to:

Police Child Protection Kooyoora Professional Standards	What is Child Abuse? Abuse and neglect includes but is not limited to: Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Family Violence, Sexual Abuse, Grooming and Neglect.	Who can report neglect and abuse of a child under the age of 18? Children, Parents, Staff, Volunteers, Anyone.	What sorts of things must be reported? All child safety concerns must be reported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disclosure of past and present abuse and harm Allegations, suspicions or observations Breaches of the Code of Conduct
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CONTACT NUMBERS:

**POLICE
000**

**CHILD PROTECTION
SEE BELOW**

**KOYOORA
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS
1800 135 246**

Child Safety and Wellbeing Reporting Procedure (extract)

What must be reported?

Any reasonable concerns and allegations of;

- Misconduct behaviour, mandatory reporting and reportable conduct

(including but not limited to)

- o Child abuse and neglect
- o Financial misconduct
- o Bullying
- o Harassment
- o Spiritual abuse
- Breach of the Code of Conduct / Faithfulness in Service
- o Any criminal or suspected criminal behaviour
- o Sexual misconduct
- o Emotional abuse
- o Physical abuse
- o Grooming

Who reports?

Any person who has a reasonable concerns and allegations detailed above has a responsibility to report, Clergy and Lay Leaders, Staff, Volunteers, Pastoral carers, Chaplains, Parents, Guardians, Adults, Children- Everyone!

Who to inform?

All reasonable concerns and allegations of child abuse must be reported to Police or child protection.

All concerns and allegations of abuse and misconduct against clergy or Church workers are to also be reported to Kooyoora Professional Standards Unit.

The first step in making a complaint against a clergy person or church worker or seeking advice is to call Kooyoora on: 1800 135 246 (this is a 24/7 message taking service however you will not receive a call back until the next business day if outside of hours). All information provided to this service is strictly confidential. The person taking a message on this number will ask you to give a name and your phone number or address so that Kooyoora can contact you as soon as possible.

Kooyoora Ltd has been appointed by the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne to respond to all reasonable concerns and allegations of misconduct including sexual, physical, spiritual, emotional or psychological abuse by clergy or Church workers. Kooyoora Ltd is an independent Professional Standards company which undertakes Professional Standards work for not for profit charitable entities.

All concerns and allegations of abuse and misconduct against the archbishop are to also be reported to the Director of Episcopal Standards.

The first step in making a complaint against the archbishop is to call the Director of Episcopal Standards through the recorded information line at any time on 1800 997 747.

Reporting concerns of child abuse will not replace or negate obligations to report to Police or child protection. The Director can support you through the reporting process.

What else do I need to do?

- Make immediate environment safe for children
 - Complete an incident report and other relevant paper work required
 - Seek support or debriefing for all involved
 - Follow up on any actions required from reports
 - Observe privacy and confidentiality legislation and only inform relevant or appropriate people.
- Information should not be shared further than the required reports.

Disclosures

A disclosure occurs when a child tells you that they, or someone else, is/are being harmed. It is important that you respond appropriately.

Do:

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

Don't:

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

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

Understanding your role

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

Considerations for responding to concerns about adults

When responding to your concerns about adults consider:



- 1. Adults are not children:** Adults have the right to make decisions about their own lives, so long as the actions are not endangering themselves or others. This means we will need to work with the adult at risk rather than the principle of 'acting in the best interest of the child' used when considering a response in the area of child protection.
- 2. Legal issues:** Victorian legislation must be adhered to in responding to concerns, including sexual allegations of assault, harassment and other criminal conduct.
- 3. Diocesan procedures:** For concerns about those who are in a parish there are a number of Diocesan procedures that may need to be activated.
- 4. Pastoral responses:** No matter the type of concern, the church has a pastoral responsibility to care for all persons involved in the situation. Pastoral care needs to be carefully planned and take into account the 'best interests' of the person or persons who are at risk in the situation. For concerns about the conduct of people with special needs (e.g. intellectual disability, physical disability or mental health concerns) speak to your Vicar who may seek advice from relevant health services.

To ensure that pastoral responses occur in a timely manner, it is important that in responding to your concerns about adults do not act alone. Please report your concerns about adults to your Vicar or a Church Warden.

Care and Redress for survivors of abuse perpetrated by church workers



The Diocese is also committed to responding in a survivor-focused manner to all those who have experienced harm perpetrated by church workers. This includes our ongoing commitment to providing redress through the National Redress Scheme, and or other models.

For more information go to: <https://www.kooyoora.org.au/client-institutions/anglican-diocese-of-melbourne/redress/>

Safe Ministry to Persons of Concern

The restorative nature of the Gospel means that no one is outside the reaches of God's love. God's restoration and grace extend to all people, including those who may have committed past sexual offences, even against children. However, such offences do have life-long consequences.

A person of concern is a person whose presence may constitute an unacceptable risk of harm to any person engaged in the activities of the parish, as a result of sexual abuse or physical abuse. This includes a person falling within any of the classes of persons defined in the Professional Standards Uniform Act, including convicted sex offenders.

It is essential the the presence of a person of concern is reported to the Professional Standards Office (Kooyoora). For more information go to: <https://www.kooyoora.org.au/client-institutions/anglican-diocese-of-melbourne/clearances/persons-of-concern/>

Misunderstandings and conflict

Misunderstandings and conflicts can, and do, occur in the ministry context, just as they may occur in any group working for a common purpose.

As part of a healthy approach to parish management, it is helpful to anticipate that conflict will occur to some degree. It can be unhelpful to expect that conflict should not occur in a Christian context. Conflict can become problematic where it is not appropriately addressed.

There are a number of factors which can contribute significantly to the ongoing nature of misunderstanding and conflict. Whilst not an extensive list, ongoing conflict in ministry can be impacted by organisational culture and structures, clash of personalities, the quest for personal power, hidden agendas, defensive language and always having to be right.

Misunderstandings and conflict can often be resolved through a personal approach, through open and honest communication and through the proper restoration of relationships. However, when this is not possible, or does not occur, it may be necessary to implement a more formal conflict resolution process. When necessary, parishes should seek advice from their Archdeacon and or Area Bishop.

The Diocese also has trained Support Teams for Parishes Experiencing Conflict, which are activated by the Area Bishop. These small support teams are now available to come alongside parishes, staff teams or congregations in times of conflict.

Task notes

5. Safe Environments



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

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

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

The **Diocesan Safe Ministry Policy** the Diocese's commitments to safe physical & online environments.

Safe Ministry Policy Statement 4

4. We commit ourselves to the wellbeing of all people through our acts, regulations, codes of conduct, policies, guidelines, procedures and related safe ministry documentation, which includes: i) Guidance for how to develop and maintain safe and supportive physical and online environments where people are listened to and feel safe as they develop faith and a connection with God and others.

5.a. Duty of care

Duty of care is a term we are more used to hearing in relation to workplace safety, and is less thought of in the church context.

However, duty of care finds its origins in Jesus' directive to "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12:31) and is therefore foundational for our provision of safe ministry events and programs.



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

This relates to both acts commission and also to acts of inattention or omission (negligence) and applies equally to buildings, kitchens, parking lots and the way we treat people.

Our duty of care does not end when our program is over. Rather, it applies to all people who enter church property at all times of the day, whether we are running a program or not. The Parish needs to be able to demonstrate that it has done all it could reasonably have done to protect others from harm.

Simply having policy and procedures is not enough. The question that needs to be answered is, "In that particular situation, did the church follow its policy and procedures?"

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

Duty of care in relation to the "Safe at Work" laws includes our "positive duty" to eliminate, as far as possible, the following unlawful behaviour from occurring, which includes:

- *discrimination on the grounds of sex in a work context*
- *sexual harassment in connection with work*
- *sex-based harassment in connection with work*
- *conduct creating a workplace environment that is hostile on the grounds of sex*
- *related acts of victimisation.*

The Commission refers to this conduct as 'relevant unlawful conduct'. to prevent sexual harassment, sex based harassment and discrimination (source: <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/projects/positive-duty-under-sex-discrimination-act>)

In relation to our duty to care for children (0-17yrs) Child Safe Standards 1, 3 and 9 are relevant.

Our *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* provides guidance for:

- *Standard 1 - Culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.*
- *Standard 3 - Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.*
- *Standard 9 - Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.*

5.b. Managing Risks

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

The concept of risk includes the perception that something could happen, the likelihood of it occurring and consequence/s should it occur.

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



Risk management is the process of managing your church's exposure to potential liabilities. It does this by identifying risks in order to prevent them or reduce them, and by providing funds to meet any liability which may eventuate. It is recommended that you complete a risk assessment for your ministry/program at least annually.

Consider five key areas

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

Descriptions and Ratings

Likelihood i.e. What are the chances the risk situation will occur during your ministry/program?

VERY LIKELY- Occurs routinely and can be expected to occur

LIKELY - Occurs often and is a good chance to happen

MODERATE - Should occur at sometime

UNLIKELY - Could possibly occur at some time

VERY UNLIKELY - Could possibly occur but would be in exceptional circumstances

Consequence i.e. What harm could result if the situation occurred?

INSIGNIFICANT - No likely injuries to person, no property damage, no financial loss, no effect on reputation, no disruption to the ministry/program, aims/goals still achieved

MINOR - First Aid treatment for person, minor property damage, small financial loss, little impact on reputation, little disruption, most aims/goals achieved

MODERATE - Medical treatment for self or others, significant property damage, intervention by outside agency needed, significant financial loss, some damage to reputation, moderate disruption to ministry/program, some of the aims/goals achieved

MAJOR - Extensive injuries or permanent impairment likely, major property damage, significant outside intervention needed, major financial loss, significant damage to reputation, major disruption to ministry/program, most of the aims/goals not achieved

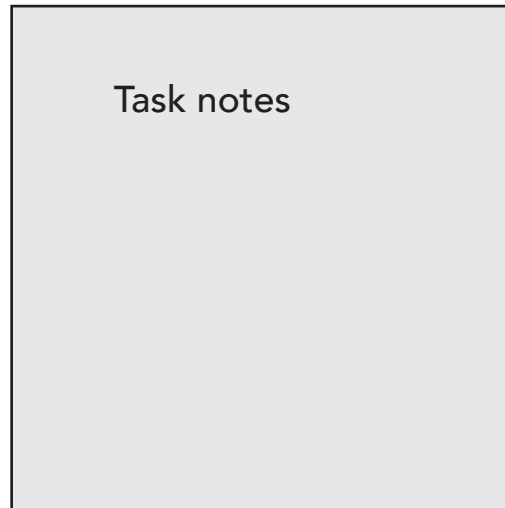
INTOLERABLE - Permanent impairment or death, property damage irretrievable, permanent intervention required(organisational), financial cost leading to closure, irretrievable damage to reputation, ministry/program unable to be continued, none of the aims/goals achieved

Risk Matrix

Consequence	INTOLERABLE	Significant	High	High	High	High
	MAJOR	Significant	Significant	High	High	High
	MODERATE	Medium	Medium	Significant	Significant	High
	MINOR	Low	Low	Medium	Significant	Significant
	INSIGNIFICANT	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Significant
		VERY UNLIKELY	UNLIKELY	MODERATE	LIKELY	VERY LIKELY
	Likelihood					

Responses to the level of Risk Key

Risk rating - Description of how to respond (manage the risk)	
LOW RISK	Monitoring risk management strategies (Hierarchy of Control Measures) used likely to be sufficient to manage the risk
MEDIUM RISK	Adapt usual risk management strategies, and monitor progress
SIGNIFICANT RISK	Identify management plan for specific risks, continuous monitoring by leadership
HIGH RISK	Considerable attention will be needed to manage unique needs of the risk situation.



Reducing the risk of child abuse in programs, events and activities

Child Safe Standard 9

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

In complying with Child Safe Standard 9, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 9.1 Staff and volunteers identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.*
- 9.2 The online environment is used in accordance with the organisation's Code of Conduct and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and practices.*
- 9.3 Risk management plans consider risks posed by organisational setting, activities and the physical environment.*
- 9.4 Organisations that contract facilities and services from third parties have procurement policies that ensure the safety of children and young people.*

"Risks always exist for children and there may be some risks that are beyond your organisation's control. But you must do what is in your power to reduce the risk of children being harmed. Creating a child safe organisation begins with a clear understanding of the potential risks to children in an organisation's setting – what could go wrong and what you can do to reduce or remove these risks." (Source: Commission for Children and Young People website)

NOTE: In relation to the risk of Child Abuse and Neglect, as the consequences are always intolerable (in terms of the risk matrix), the use of the risk matrix is not recommended.

Child safety risk management in the Diocese is outworked through:

- good governance for Safe Ministry, i.e. Archbishop in Council
- human resourcing for Safe Ministry, i.e. Safe Ministry Reference Group, Safe Ministry and Inclusion Officer and Kooyoora
- Diocesan acts, regulations, policy, protocols, and the 'tool kit' i.e. 'Making your parish safe' Tab of the Diocesan Website
- parish implementation of Diocesan procedures and practices - this includes the expected behaviours in our Code of Conduct for Child Safety and Wellbeing, Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Faithfulness in service.
- parish councils, who are responsible to manage risks associated with the local site and specific programs /ministries, including annual child safety risk assessment for the site and ministry/programs.
- The ADOM Action Plan for Meeting the New Victorian Child Safe Standards April 2023.
- The Child Abuse Risk assessment Tool 2024.

Child Abuse Risk Management Tool

Using the Child Abuse Risk Assessment and Management Tool
How each area of risk is structured in the tool

Child Abuse Risk Assessment and Management Tool - [Parish/AAC Name] Key Risk areas are to be identified.

Key Risk area	Risk Level
All age regular events – church services, choirs and music bands, after service morning teas/suppers or similar – NB All parishes have church services and so need to mitigate against this risk	Likelihood - possible Consequence - severe
Sources of risk and possible harm	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Churches with no children in regular attendance thinking they don't need to mitigate • Exposed to Grooming through 'special relationships' • Contact with adults in unsupervised or semi-supervised areas (often unintentional) • Children or families feel they can't speak up due to power imbalance • Spiritual and emotional abuse can occur in power imbalance • Physical environments (visibility and accessibility into and out of rooms eg heavy wooden doors, doors without windows / lots of corridors / alcoves) • Unknown and potentially unsafe people having access to children • Unclear who has responsibility of care at any given time 	
Current ADOM mitigation strategies in place in [parish name]	
<input type="checkbox"/> All clergy, staff and volunteers must have appropriate clearances and training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Clearances are required for all choir and music leaders o Safe Ministry levels 1 & 2 training are required for all choir and music leaders <input type="checkbox"/> Clergy, staff and volunteers complete required clearances, references and training <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting all requirements of venues and organisations <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate clearances and checks for relevant people on-site <input type="checkbox"/> Assess property annually and modify as possible (e.g. windows in solid doors) <input type="checkbox"/> Evacuation areas and plans are displayed and practiced <input type="checkbox"/> Child safe posters displayed in areas <input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint slide with commitment to child safety in each service Children invited to the front in services for song/talk then prayed for before kids church <input type="checkbox"/> Slides with 'Everyone has a role in child safety' <input type="checkbox"/> Communicate parent's responsibility of their children, including when 'duty of care' is returned <input type="checkbox"/> Children to go to toilets in pairs	
Current gaps at [parish name]	
Determine additional parish specific risks by considering these areas: Situational risk, Vulnerability risk, Propensity risk, Institutional risks.	
Mitigation strategies for current gaps at [parish name]	
Develop additional mitigation strategies for identified parish specific risks and date for implementation.	

Making the Word of God fully known 3

The Diocese has identified eight (8) programs and activities where risks to children exist, and provided strategies for mitigating the risk. The areas are

1. All age regular events
2. Whole church activities with local communities
3. Clergy visitations and classes
4. Home based groups,
5. Child specific programs
6. Youth specific programs
7. Working with other churches and third-party organisations
8. Overnight activities

This tool is available on the **Making your parish Safe** tab of the Diocesan website.

5.c. Physical environments



Providing safe physical environments is important if attendees are to participate freely in activities.

To ensure that both church workers and ministry program participants are kept as safe as reasonably practicable, completing a risk assessment for your ministry program is recommended.

Our Diocesan Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy states:

7.1 To reduce and prevent risks in the ADOM environment, ADOM:

(a) conducts Child Safety Risk Assessments to consider risks of specific activities by ADOM, and the characteristics of children and young people expected to be present in that environment.

The Policy sets out the responsibilities for Child Safe environments on the Parish leadership (Clergy and Parish Council):

6.12 Parish leaders are responsible for:

(a) taking all practical measures to ensure this Policy and the Code of Conduct for Child Safety and Wellbeing are implemented effectively and that a child safe culture is maintained in all ADOM environments;

(b) appointing Parish Child Safety Officers and ensuring that ADOM is made aware of the appointment;

(c) considering child safety at all Parish Council meetings;

(d) ensuring that the ADOM child safety policies and procedures, including this policy, are clearly linked on the Parish website;

(e) ensuring Church Workers and Contractors engaged in child-connected work receive training and information on child safety consistent with this Policy;

(f) consulting with Parish communities, including children and young people, about child safety;

(g) ensuring all adults in Parish community are aware of their obligation to report suspected child abuse and harm, or risk of child abuse and harm;

(h) assuring ADOM that key identified risks have been appropriately assessed, managed and reported (including risk treatments).

(Child Safety and Well-being Policy 2023)

Record Keeping

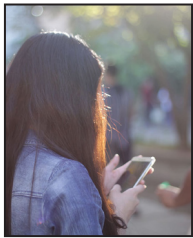
Further, in relation to keeping children and young people safe on site we need to keep good records of attendance, whilst upholding people's privacy.

For example when it a child attends a program it is important to obtain information, dependant upon the age and vulnerabilities of program participants, including the person's name, contact phone number, and for children, medical information and any guardianship details.



Please consider the principles in the National Privacy Act i.e.: private information is only collected if necessary; individuals concerned are advised of its intended use personal information collected is stored securely and not divulged to others without the consent of the individual involved any personal information the church is holding which is no longer required, is out of date or incorrect should be amended to be accurate

5.d. Online safety



The use of electronic communication media (eg. telephone, email, social networking sites such as Facebook, and SMS) are a part of everyday life.

As leaders it is important that we consider how we can use this form of communication appropriately. We need to be mindful of the positional power dynamic that exists between those in church leadership and those under their care in pastoral relationships. This applies to all ministry relationships regardless of the age of the people involved.

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

Consider the following principles when using electronic communication in a ministry setting:

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

The Code of Conduct for Child Safety and Wellbeing contains the expected behaviours of staff (clergy and lay) and volunteers in relation to safe environments including clear expectation for **online interaction**, for example:

Required Behaviours 6.1 To help ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, all people covered by this Code must: (y) interact with children online only for the purposes of pastoral ministry, or to organise events. There must be prior consent from each child's parent or guardian. The details of the online communication must be recorded (including times, dates, participants, topics and any proposed actions) as required by the Parish Records Guidelines;

Unacceptable Behaviours 6.2 All people covered by this Code must not:

(s) have any online or electronic contact with a child (including by social media, email, instant messaging, etc.), unless:

(i) that contact is only to provide information about ADOM or is otherwise for the purposes of pastoral ministry; and

(ii) there is another relevant adult included in any online communication; and

(iii) prior written consent is obtained from the child's parent, carer or guardian; or
(iv) they are a parent, carer, guardian or relative of that child.

(t) use any personal communication channels or software (such as a personal email account, social media or instant messenger account) to contact children;

(u) exchange personal contact details with children such as phone numbers, social networking sites or personal email addresses (unless they are a relative of the child);

(v) post images of children on Parish or AAC communication channels with personal information (i.e. personal addresses, phone numbers, email address and instant messaging names);

(w) become 'friends' with, follow or add a child on any social media platform (unless they are a parent, carer, guardian or relative of that child);

(x) share, request or use any photographs, videos, recordings or personal information about children without the consent of the parent or guardian, including on any social media platforms;

Engage children & parents/guardians in the process

The CCYP suggest that *"your organisation involves children and young people in the process of identifying and managing risks. Communicate with them about the measures you are putting in place to keep them safe."*



In relation to online safety, the Royal Commission's Final Report includes consultation with children and parents:

"Risks in the online environment are identified and mitigated without compromising a child's right to privacy and healthy child development; [including] consultation with children about online environments and what makes them feel safe ... [and] a strong prevention and awareness focus, by educating children, parents, staff, volunteers and the institution's stakeholder community about online safety and security." (Royal Commission's Final Report: Volume 6, Making institutions child safe)

The eSafety Commissioner's website <https://www.esafety.gov.au> is an excellent resource hub for information on safe online interactions.

If your parish is considering doing online church or has online services and resources, consider the *Safety by Design (SbD)*, *"an eSafety initiative that encourages organisations to put user safety and rights at the centre of the design, development and release of online products and services"* (<https://www.esafety.gov.au/about-us/safety-by-design>).

5.e. Emotional environments



Ensuring safe emotional (including spiritual) environments is fundamentally about putting other people's needs above our own agenda to ensure that a program runs successfully, respecting personhood, (i.e. valuing individuals, their backgrounds, their personality, their hopes, dreams and fears).

It is about staying true to the good news message that Jesus came to bring life, not, as he warned about, to put heavy burdens on people. It is fostering a welcoming and caring ministry space, where people feel safe to share their ideas without being ridiculed.

In relation to ministry to children **Child Safe Standards** require us to ensure the :

Child Safe Standard 1 – Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued

Child Safe Standard 5 – Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice (CCYP: Child Safe Standards)

The Diocesan Safe Ministry Policy, Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Code of Conduct for Child Safety and Wellbeing and our Action Plan for Meeting the New Victorian Child Safe Standards set our commitment to these standards, required actions and expected behaviours.

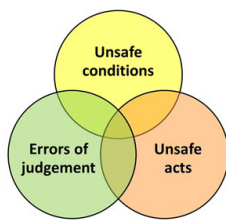
Consider the areas below for ensuring safe emotional environments:

- Responding to the needs of an individual Our starting point should be, "How can I serve you?" It is important not to predetermine how much physical contact, or how many words, Bible verses, or 'your solutions' with which you need to provide a person. Minister to the person. This is not based on the need of the leader to provide comfort. Ask a person what they need from you (e.g. "Would you like me to pray for you?") Touch, counsel, and emotional support is provided for the other person's well-being, not for your own ego or to meet your emotional needs.

- **Respect diversity** People may come to church programs with a variety of cultural norms and expectations. We need to be aware of the expectations and taboos that may exist in the cultural settings in which we minister. Value and protect the cultural safety of the different cultural traditions and heritages of Australian indigenous and other cultural groups in our churches.
- **The power of the role model** The behaviour of church workers is observed at all times by the people who follow. As leaders if we are discouraging, unreasonably punitive, disrespectful or sarcastic, this is what we are modelling. It can become a case of a leader “reaping what they have sowed”. This includes being respectful with your words and in non-verbal communication. Leaders have a responsibility to ensure that their conversations are not abusive or offensive within the normal range of these terms. A general principle to be embraced by all leaders is to consider the impact of their words and actions before they speak or act. If it is necessary to speak to a program participant privately, it is wise to inform your team leader or another member of your team of your intention to do so. This removes the risk of supposition, by others looking on, that anything inappropriate could be happening.

5.f. Responding to incidents

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



Incidents

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

Critical Incidents

A critical incident is an event or set of circumstances that have the potential to result in physical or psychological outcomes ranging from mild trauma to a fatality for one or more people. A critical incident response plan is a systematic approach to planning and implementing an immediate and long-term response to a critical incident.

There are three main stages to an incident response plan.

They are:

- preparedness
- response
- recovery

Every incident will require:

- immediate response, in the moment
- follow up over the next 12-24 hours (or longer) including pastoral care for those involved
- review of the reason for the incident and changes made so as to minimise the risk of the same incident occurring the next time the same activity or event is run

5.g. Care and support



It is essential that you, as a church worker, engage in self-care.

This relates to ensuring that your health and wellbeing is in the best place it can be in exercising your various ministry gifts. Maintaining good self-care boundaries in ministry is an expression of loving yourself as Jesus loves you.

Self-care

This can include; rewarding and/or distracting activities such as hobbies or family time; connecting with others; being honest with yourself (e.g. remembering that it is ok to be upset or worried or frustrated); treating yourself in some life-giving way; seeking out calming activities; taking a break. Attend to all your senses when thinking about self-care.

Be proactive by considering:

i. Life-giving activities: Life-giving activities are those that lift you up, that lighten your mood and refresh as opposed to those which are life-draining. They will often link into your areas of passion within your ministry role. However, it is also important to consider activities that are not linked to your ministry role such as: time with God (e.g. Bible reading and prayer), hobbies; family time; connecting with others; being kind with yourself (e.g. remembering that it is ok to be upset or worried or frustrated); treating yourself in some way; seeking out calming activities; and/or taking a break. When considering life-giving activities ensure you are attending to all of your senses as well as all perspectives of your life, i.e. emotional, physical, cognitive (mental) and spiritual wellbeing.

ii. Monitoring well-being: Wellbeing needs to be considered from multiple perspectives. It may be helpful to consider various perspectives using a metaphor of water tanks.

Ask yourself, how full are each of my tanks?



To Ponder...

1. Consider the level of each of your tanks?

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

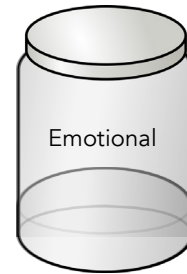
2. Ask yourself:

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

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

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

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



iii. Self-care after trauma: Each person has a unique response to being involved in situations where they feel traumatised. Even though general principles of self-care apply in most situations, individuals will most likely have some self-care needs that are unique to them. It is important to debrief by verbally and emotionally 'unloading' when you have been involved in a traumatic ministry situation, e.g. of receiving a disclosure or witnessing abuse. You may need to seek professional help to cope if you are finding your usual strategies aren't enough to manage.

Supporting all parties when responding to Safe Ministry and Child Protection Concerns

In responding to Child Safety concerns, it is important that pastoral care is offered to all parties impacted by the concern/s. This will include care for: the person (child or young person) who may have been harmed; the person subject of the allegations; the families involved; leaders who are impacted and those managing the situation.

Support for a child after a disclosure

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

Supporting Victims of Historical Child Abuse

The Diocese acknowledges that, in the past, allegations of child abuse brought to the church were not appropriately responded to, and for this the Diocese is unreservedly sorry. The Diocese now has processes for redress for those who have been harmed by church workers.

Supporting workers



Each person has a unique response to receiving a disclosure or witnessing situations of harmful behaviours or being a secondary, or even tertiary, victim of harm. There may be some common reactions such as: shock, anger, sympathy for the victim and frustration. As a church worker it can be very distressing to find yourself in this situation. It is important that parties are provided with appropriate support, and provided ample opportunity to debrief by verbally and emotionally

'unloading' your feelings about the experience e.g. of receiving a disclosure or reporting your concerns. Some people may have severe reactions to disclosure which may in some cases have an invasive impact on their ability to function effectively within their ministry and life roles (e.g. eating and sleeping disturbances). If this occurs, contact your supervisor or pastor. It may be necessary to ask people to seek professional help to cope if they are finding their usual strategies aren't enough to manage.

Some general principles in self-care after trauma might include:

- If your personal functioning has been impacted, consider taking time out of role for a period.
- Advise your supervisor if you have been impacted by trauma in the context of your ministry role.
- Consider if you may benefit from professional debriefing and counselling.
- Consider what life-giving activities may be of value in assisting you move towards healing from trauma.
- Other than professional therapists, consider who may be able to assist you to process the situation that led to the trauma and assist you to move towards healing.

Addressing personal issues raised by Safe Ministry information and training:

If the information and/or training has caused you distress or you can't stop thinking about issues it raised, you may find it helpful to talk to someone about your concerns.

- Lifeline: (www.lifeline.org.au) 13 11 14 - 24/7 telephone support, referral and web-based service finder.
- 1800 RESPECT 1800 737 732 - 24/7 telephone support for anyone impacted by sexual assault, family or domestic violence
- Mensline: (www.menslineaus.org.au) 1300 7899 78 - 24/7 telephone counselling and referrals, specifically for men.
- Parentline: (www.parentline.org.au) 1300 1300 52 - Telephone counselling, information and referral service for parents and carers of children 0-18 years.

Websites and Reference Guide

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

- Anglican Diocese of Melbourne website <https://www.melbourneanglican.org.au>
- Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australia Now: Australian Social Trends, 2003, ABS website <https://www.abs.gov.au/>
- Australian Government - Australian Institute of Family Studies website <https://aifs.gov.au>
- Australian Government - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare <https://aihw.gov.au>
- Australian Government eSafety Commissioner <https://www.esafety.gov.au/>
- Australian Government Human Rights Commission <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/commission-general/what-bullying-violence-harassment-and-bullying-fact-sheet>
- Australian Government - Office of the Australian Information Commissioner - Privacy Act 2001 website <https://www.oaic.gov.au>
- Australian Government Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse 2013 website <https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au>
- Anglican Church of Australia - General Synod website <http://www.anglican.org.au>
- Department of Communities and Justice Victoria <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/protecting-children-and-families/family-violence>
- Domestic Violence Victoria <https://dvvic.org.au/understand/about-family-violence/>
- Domestic and Family Violence, Family and Community Services, NSW <http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/parents,-carers-and-families/domestic-and-family-violence>
- Dyer, T, 2009, 4 sources of relational power in Christian ministry
- Esafety Commission <https://www.esafety.gov.au/>
- Exploring Cultural Awareness, National CASA 2001, https://www.rccasa.org/filelibrary/03_CASA_ISE_Vol_1008.pdf
- Fortune, Rev Dr M, 2009 Responding to Clergy Misconduct: A handbook, Faithtrust Institute
- Human Rights Commission <https://humanrights.gov.au/>
- <https://www.healthplace.com/abuse/emotional-psychological-abuse/emotional-abuse-definitions-signs-symptoms-examples>
- I Think I am being bullied, what do I do? and Identifying and addressing workplace bullying , ACT WorkSafe 2012, https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/3160/kw/bullying
- Kooyoora <https://www.kooyoora.org.au/>
- McClelland Heather, The Almond Tree: Child Sexual Abuse and the Church (stories from country Victoria):Unpublished, printed Fyshwick ACT
- National Office for Child Safety <https://www.childsafety.gov.au/>
- Ormerod, Neil and Thea 1995, When Ministers Sin: Sexual abuse and the churches, Millenium Press: Alexandria: Sydney Australia
- Reachout.com <https://au.reachout.com/articles/domestic-violence-and-what-you-can-do-about-it>
- Robinson, Geoffrey 2007, Confronting power and sex in the Catholic church: reclaiming the spirit of Jesus, John Garret Press, Victoria Australia
- Supporting someone who experiences domestic violence, Department of Community Services, NSW, March 2007, http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/319178/dv_support_english.pdf
- Victorian Commission for Children and Young People - <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/being-a-child-safe-organisation/the-child-safe-standards/>
- Victorian Family Violence Protection Act 2008
- Victorian Government website <https://www.vic.gov.au/about-family-violence-victoria>
- World Health Organization <http://www.myagedcare.gov.au/financial-and-legal/elder-abuse-concerns>
- 1800respect <https://www.1800respect.org.au/violence-and-abuse/sexual-assault-and-violence>

creating
safercommunities

info@safercommunities.net.au

safercommunities.net.au

prevent respond recover