

Code of Conduct

Doncaster Church of Christ

for those working with children, young people, those with disabilities and the vulnerable

We adopt the *ChildSafe SP3 Code of Practice* which includes the following guidelines:

BEHAVIOUR

Treat all participants with respect
Do not be alone with a child
Avoid favouritism or 'special' relationships with individual participants

LANGUAGE

Do not use derogatory or sarcastic language – even if meant as a joke
Speak to children and young people as people of value, with respect

PHYSICAL CONTACT

Physical contact is only initiated by the participant and should not be in response to the leader's needs
The child determines the degree of physical contact they have with another
Physical restraint is only appropriate to protect someone from harm
Contact is avoided between the neck and knees, though shoulders and elbows are generally acceptable
Physical contact is always open and not secretive

PROGRAM STYLE

Be willing to drop an activity if you sense it is not working safely or is isolating some participants
We never make a participant feel stupid or angry

CULTURAL AWARENESS

No pressure should be applied to participants from other cultures and traditions to force participation
Do not make statements which reflect ignorance, bias or ridicule about other religions and cultures

SPECIAL NEEDS

Some children and vulnerable people will require one-on-one assistance
When working with people with special needs, activities should be structured, yet flexible
Where appropriate, we will ask the participant what they think or want. Their caregiver will also be a good source of information on how to include them

CHILDSAFE RATIOS

Every program must have a safe number of adult leaders in relation to the number of participants
The safe ratio will differ according to the activity, age and capacity of the participants, but should never be greater than 1:8
Two leaders will always be present when children, young or vulnerable people are participating

PRIVACY

Leaders are obliged to protect the privacy of participants and their families
Communicate with participants in an open manner, keeping a record of ongoing contact with them
Photographs taken during programs must not be kept for personal use or publically shown without permission arranged via the program coordinator

Adapted from SP3 © ChildSafe Ltd 2013
<http://www.childsafe.org.au/team-members-guide/>

We also follow the following policies and procedures specific to *Doncaster Church of Christ*:

SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Leaders will place a priority on communicating through a platform that is open, transparent and non-deletable (that is, where a permanent record of the communication is kept).

Where appropriate, move conversation to a place where more than one leader is present.

Social media connection is only with over 13s (in accordance with terms of service for the platform).

A leader will not initiate a friend request, but can accept one from a participant if they wish to.

Be very careful and aware of the ever-changing social media environment and different platforms (e.g. SnapChat is very risky in this area).

PASTORAL CARE

Leaders will refer to a minister or a professional if they are ever beyond their capacity or training (e.g. to a counsellor).

Refer to ChildSafe SP3 for dealing with suspicion of neglect or abuse.

PRIVACY

Leaders will not take unauthorised copies of participant details (e.g. photographing an information form) and will discuss with their program coordinator the need to destroy/delete any details when they finish their time as a leader.

Leaders will not attempt to access details that they have not been given permission to access.

If an under 18 gives a leader their phone number or address this is ok, so long as they are aware of the potential power misuse of asking for it.

PHOTOS

If anyone refuses to be photographed, no photos will be taken of them, nor will they be published.

Photos will only be published within the context of the church.

Photos of under 18s will never be published with full names.

Photos of under 18s will only be published if we have a signed permission form allowing it (general permission, not one tied to a specific photo or event).

Photos won't be used if they do not build the community and the values we want to build. (e.g. people in bathers, anything that promotes exclusivity, etc)

RATIOS AND SUPERVISION

A leader will never be alone, in any context, with an under 18 of the opposite gender, except in very specific circumstances where the parents are aware and have given permission AND the program coordinator has had a conversation with the leader about this.

OFFSITE ACTIVITIES

Parents will be notified ahead of time if participants will be traveling offsite during a program.

If traveling in cars, written permission will have been obtained.

A first aid kit and first aid trained adult will be present and available.

CARS AND DRIVING

If leaders are driving under 18s, parental permission must have been obtained, either on a program permission form or through a specific conversation about this trip.

A leader will not be alone with an under 18 of the opposite gender, and where possible passengers will either be a mixed gender group, or the same gender as the driver.

As a last resort, if a leader needs to transport an under 18 of the opposite gender, specific verbal permission must be obtained by a parent of the under 18 and the program coordinator must be notified before the trip begins.

Drivers will be on Green Ps or a full license

TOILETS

When appropriate, a set of toilets will be designated as being for participants, with the other set of toilets for leaders.

We will take reasonable steps to ensure that the toilets are secure from strangers (from outside, or other building users).

For younger children, toilet trips need to be taken with two leaders (2 females, or 1 male 1 female) whenever possible. The leaders accompany the child to the public area outside the male/female toilets, then wait there while the child enters

Children younger than 4 years need to be taken to their parents for toileting – it's not our place or our expertise to be helping them with the process. If the parents aren't available, use your best judgement, but never alone – always have another leader with you.