

## OUR *CHILD-SAFE ENVIRONMENTS* POLICY ...

“Why have one?”

“What does it cover?”

“What are we committed to?”



### WANT MORE INFORMATION?

#### Safe Place Services (Adventist Church)

Australia 1800 220 468 or New Zealand 0800 442 458 or website  
[www.safeplaceservices.org.au](http://www.safeplaceservices.org.au)

**ACT—Office for Children, Youth & Family Support** 1300 556 729

**NSW—Community Services** 132 111

**NT—Department of Health & Families** 1800 700 250

**NZ—Child, Youth & Families (CYFs New Zealand)** 0508 326 459

**QLD—Department of Child Safety** 1800 811 810 (for details of nearest  
Local Office) or 1800 177 135 (after hours)

**SA—Families SA Child Abuse Report Line** 131 478

**TAS—Department of Health & Human Services Child Protection**  
Intake 1300 737 639

**VIC—Department of Human Services** 1300 650 172 or 131 278 after  
hours

**WA—Department of Child Protection** 08 9222 2555 during office  
hours; Perth after hours 08 9325 1111; Regional after hours 1800 199 008



**Local Conference Safe-Place Coordinator:**



## Local Church Child-Safe Environments Policy



**Seventh-day Adventist Churches  
of Australia and New Zealand**

## WHY HAVE A CHILD-SAFE POLICY?

There are several reasons such as:

1. Children are a precious gift from God to be nurtured and protected.
2. The Church is to protect the vulnerable.
3. Child abuse and neglect occur within Adventist Christian families and Churches, including grooming and the sexual assault of children.
4. Various legislation requires community-based groups that work with children to comply with specific Policy standards and requirements.
5. Government and society expect 'safe place' practices to be adopted by religious organizations.
6. Child-Safe Churches help build awareness with families about their safeguards and Policy.
7. Churches that are intentionally Child-Safe can bring praise to God.

## WHO IS RESPONSIBLE IN OUR LOCAL CHURCH?

Everyone can play a part in keeping the Church a safe place for children and young people. Supporting the Code of Conduct and the Screening of all volunteers for children/youth is something everyone can do. Everyone can also look out for the wellbeing and safety of children around the Church, and report concerns to team leaders or someone in authority such as an elder.

The Church Board has also authorized a Safe-Place Coordinator to assist the Church implement the Policy.

## WHAT DOES THE "CHILD-SAFE ENVIRONMENTS" POLICY COVER?

The *Child-Safe Environments* policy helps the Local Church uphold and fulfill its duty of care towards children, families and volunteers.

The Child-Safe Policy covers the following areas, ensuring that the Church complies with legislation and established principles of good practice:

1. Responding to abuse and neglect when it occurs within the Church.
2. Screening and appointment procedures for volunteers working with children and young people. .
3. A code of conduct for everyone to follow.
4. Including risk management in the planning of safe programs for children/young people.
5. Guidelines for responding to allegations or complaints about the Sexual Abuse or Assault of children and young people within the Church.
6. Using Safety Agreements to manage risks in certain situations.
7. The various roles of the Church Board, local Church Safe-Place Coordinator, and the Conference Safe Place Committee.
8. The role of the Union's National *Child-safe Register*.

## OUR COMMITMENT AS A CHURCH IS TO ...

- Abide by the Child Safe Policy.
- Uphold the Code of Conduct.
- Report concerns and disclosures about child abuse & neglect to Government Child Protection Services (see back page for numbers), and to the Police in an emergency or if criminal activity is suspected.
- Follow recommendations made to the Church regarding the use of Safety Agreements.
- Consider the rights and needs of victim(s) of child sexual assault or abuse as a priority over those of a person convicted of such offence, despite the prior status and history of either party.
- Adhere to the procedures in the Church Manual regarding Church discipline and censure.
- Exclude a person with a conviction for a sexual, pornographic or violent offence against a child from ever holding Church office in a position of moral or spiritual authority OR from involvement in any position working with children / young people.
- Support both an alleged Victim/Complainant and Respondent (person subject of allegation) to the best of the local Church's abilities.
- Insist that all volunteers with children / young people complete legally-required criminal checks.