



Baptist Churches
of South Australia

CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

SECTION 1 : CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

SECTION 2 : CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES MANUAL

Child Protection Policy

All workers (Pastors, employees and volunteers) of an employer church who are involved in the ministry of that church to children and/or youth are expected to comply with this policy and associated procedures.

These policies primarily relate to “Professional Standards” procedures and processes. For Work Health & Safety Policies refer to the Work Health & Safety Document (WHS).



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SECTION 1:

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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1. **Definitions:**

"BCSA" is Baptist Churches of South Australia Inc.

"Child abuse" is any significant conduct towards a child which is or may be detrimental to that child's physical, mental or emotional wellbeing, and includes neglect of the child.

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

"CPA" is the Children's Protection Act 1993

"Employer church" is a member of BCSA which employs the worker and where the context so permits includes BCSA.

"Mandatory reporting" is reporting as required by s11(1) of the CPA.

"Member Church" is a church which is a member of BCSA.

"Reasonable suspicion" (and including related phrases) is a slight opinion based on some credible evidence which is more than speculation, but less than a positive belief.

"Victim" is a child who is reasonably suspected of being subject to child abuse.

"Worker" is a pastor, employee of or volunteer of an employer church who is involved in the ministry of that church to children.

2. **Preamble**

The objects of this policy are to protect as far as possible children from child abuse and to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

3. **Protection for children**

- 3.1 The safety and wellbeing of children is to be the paramount consideration insofar as it is within the power of BCSA and its member churches to promote it.
- 3.2 Children are to be protected from any form of child abuse.
- 3.3 In dealing with child abuse BCSA and its member churches are to put the interests of victims and children generally above those of any church.

4. **Mandatory reporting**

Workers are to comply fully with their obligations of mandatory reporting under the CPA.

5. **Other cases of suspected child abuse**

- (1) Where child abuse is not reportable under the CPA and
- (a) Is reasonably suspected in the course of the duties of a worker; and
 - (b) The victim and/or the suspected perpetrator are associated with
 - (i) the worker's employer church,
 - (ii) BCSA or another member church, but not the worker's employer church

the worker, BCSA and its member churches will act in the best interests of the victim and children generally.

- (2) In any other case where a worker reasonably suspects child abuse that worker is to be encouraged to report it under the CPA and to act in the best interests of the victim and children generally.

6. **Involvement of child abusers in church activities**

Where BCSA or any member church knows, believes or reasonably suspects that any person associated with BCSA or such member church is or has been a perpetrator of child abuse it will act to protect children from abuse by that person.

7. **Co-operation with authorities**

BCSA and all member churches and workers will responsibly and reasonably co-operate with government law enforcement and child protection agencies.

8. **Interim measures pending determination of child abuse allegations.**

Where a worker is reasonably suspected of child abuse his or her continued employment with BCSA or the employer church during the period taken to make a final determination of whether that worker is guilty of any child abuse is to be determined by an independent committee.

9. **Training**

BCSA will provide specialised training for workers in child protection issues.

10. **Ministry covenants**

All workers who do not have a current written employment contract are to enter into a ministry covenant dealing with their suitability to be workers and agreeing to these policies and child protection procedures.

11. **Manual of procedures**

BCSA will publish a manual containing recommended procedures for implementing these child protection policies.

12. **Review of policies**

These policies will be subject to ongoing review.



SECTION 2:

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES MANUAL

Part A What is child abuse?

Part B Child safety responsibilities

Part C Miscellaneous

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1. **Preamble**

This manual sets out recommended procedures to give effect to the Child Protection Policies of the Baptist Churches of South Australia Inc. Individual Baptist Churches may adopt all or some of these procedures, but paragraph 4 on mandatory reporting cannot be modified and applies regardless of its adoption.

2. **Definitions**

Unless the context otherwise requires:

“BCSA” is Baptist Churches of South Australia Inc.

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

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

“Child Abuse” – see paragraph 3.

“Current National Police Check” is a National Police check that has been undertaken within the previous three (3) years

“DPS” is the BCSA Director of Professional Standards or his/her delegate.

“Employer Church” means a member church of BCSA which employs the worker.

“IMC” means the Interim Measures Committee set up under paragraph 6.4.1.

“Member Church” means a church which is a member of BCSA and which has adopted the applicable part of this manual. Where the context so permits it, it includes BCSA.

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

“POC Policy” means the ‘Person of Concern’ Policy. This policy sets out clear guidelines to churches in relation to the assessment and management of known sex offenders within churches. The objective of this policy is to ensure the highest levels of protection and accountability and the minimisation of risk in line with Baptist Insurance Scheme conditions and requirements.

“SEM” is the BCSA State Executive Minister.

“Senior Pastor” is the senior pastor in a Member Church which has multiple pastors, but where a suspected perpetrator of child abuse is the senior pastor or someone closely associated with him or her, or where the senior pastor is not readily available, it means the DPS or the SEM. (Where a Member Church has only one pastor he or she is the Senior Pastor referred to in this definition).

“Victim” means a child who is, or is reasonably suspected of being, subject to child abuse or potentially subject to child abuse.

“WHS” is Work Health & Safety.

“Worker” is a pastor, employee or volunteer, whether paid or unpaid, of an Employer Church who is involved in the ministry of that church with children.

PART A: WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

3. What is child abuse?

3.1 Abuse is a misuse of power by the abuser over the victim. An abuser is usually someone older and more mature than the victim, but an abuser can be another child. While most abusers are in a position of authority over the child, such as a parent, teacher or caregiver or the like, it can be anyone whose actions directly affect the child.

3.2 Abuse can take a variety of forms which include:

3.2.1 Physical abuse which is where victims suffer, or are likely to suffer, significant harm to their bodies.

3.2.2 Emotional abuse which is a chronic attack on the victim's self-esteem including by exposure to a dysfunctional environment including domestic violence.

3.2.3 Sexual abuse which is where the abuser's conduct towards the victim, viewed objectively, is for the sexual gratification of the abuser. It can include

- Fondling or inappropriate touching
- Oral sex
- Vaginal/Anal penetration
- Digital penetration
- Exposure/involvement of a child to/in pornographic material
- Involvement in child prostitution
- Child pornography

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

4. **Where reporting of child abuse to C.A.R.L. is required**

4.1 This obligation is placed on all workers by s11 of the CPA. It is a criminal offence not to comply with this obligation without a lawful excuse. No church can negate or modify this obligation (refer Appendix A).

- 4.2 If, but only if, each of A, B and C below is satisfied for an incident of suspected child abuse, the worker/suspector must notify C.A.R.L. of that suspicion as soon as practicable after he/she forms a reasonable suspicion (see paragraph 4.3 below) that :
- A. There is conduct in relation to a child which is:
 - (a) Sexual abuse (see paragraph 3.2.3 above); or
 - (b) Other abuse or neglect which causes, or is likely to cause, physical or emotional injury which is detrimental to the child's wellbeing or which puts the child's physical or psychological development in jeopardy. (Hence abuse, other than sexual abuse, which does not result in these consequences is not required to be reported under the CPA);
 - B. Such conduct is reasonably suspected by the worker to have occurred, or to be occurring; and
 - C. That reasonable suspicion is formed in the course of working for the Employer Church. (A suspicion based on what is seen or heard elsewhere does not have to be reported under the Act, but it can be).
- 4.3 Reasonable suspicion for the purposes of 4.2B above is a slight opinion based on some credible evidence which is more than speculation, but less than a positive belief. It must be based on some, albeit slight, positive evidence of the conduct and, for other than sexual abuse, of the requisite consequences. However, if a worker positively disbelieves what he/she has been told there can be no reasonable suspicion. It does not require proof that any child abuse has or is to occur.

4.4 Reporting to C.A.R.L. is done by telephoning the 24 hour Child Abuse Report Line on 131478.

4.5 Where a report is made under 4.1, but only if the child and/or the suspected perpetrator is associated with the worker's Employer Church, the worker must immediately inform the Senior Pastor (as defined in paragraph 2) of that church of the incident. A written report in the form of **Appendix B** is also to be given by the worker to the Senior Pastor as soon as practicable.

5. **Reporting of other child abuse**

If a worker reasonably suspects that child abuse has occurred involving either a child or a suspected perpetrator who is associated with his/her Employer Church, but it does not satisfy all of 4.2A, B and C above, he or she as soon as practicable must inform the Senior Pastor (as defined in paragraph 2) of that church of it and consult with the Senior Pastor on whether a voluntary report of it should be made to C.A.R.L.

6. **General provisions on all child abuse incidents**

6.1 The DPS (or delegate) is available to provide crisis response and ongoing consultancy, support and direction to workers and Member Churches throughout the entire process. After-hours access to the DPS can be arranged through a Senior Pastor and/or his or her delegate.

6.2 A worker is not to inform anyone else of the suspected child abuse without the permission of the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor in consultation with the DPS and/or the SEM will determine who else should be informed of it. (There is a

danger of defamation liability against the worker if ultimately the allegation cannot be proved).

6.3 Where a worker who reasonably suspects child abuse has occurred is under 18 years of age he or she is to be instructed to report such matters immediately to an adult supervisor in their ministry area who will then assist the worker to comply with the necessary procedures.

6.4 Where there has been a complaint of alleged child abuse against a worker and

(1) it is a term of the worker's Employment Contract or Ministry Covenant;

or

(2) the parties otherwise so agree

the continued employment of the worker by the Employer Church pending the final determination of the allegation of child abuse against him or her is to be decided by the Interim Measures Committee.

6.4.1 The IMC is to comprise of three independent persons who are to be professing Christians but not necessarily Baptists and who are to be appointed by the President of BCSA, or in the event of his/her unavailability or being conflicted, by the vice-president or immediate past President of BCSA.

6.4.2 The functions of the IMC are administrative and not judicial.

6.4.3 The IMC may for the period until the final determination of the allegation of child abuse:

6.4.3.1 Suspend the worker with or without pay;

6.4.3.2 Modify the duties of the worker;

- 6.4.3.3 Impose conditions on any continued employment of the worker or on his or her involvement in the activities of the Employer Church;
 - 6.4.3.4 Require that the worker not communicate with specified persons;
 - 6.4.3.5 Temporarily suspend the employment of the worker while the IMC reaches other decisions; and/or
 - 6.4.3.6 Revoke or modify any decision it has made.
- 6.5 In performing its functions the IMC:
- 6.5.1 Is not bound by the rules of evidence and may inform itself of relevant facts by proper means as it sees fit.
 - 6.5.2 Is to permit the worker or his or her agent to address it.
 - 6.5.3 Is to act with all reasonable expedition.
 - 6.5.4 Is not to make conclusions about disputed facts relating to the alleged abuse.
 - 6.5.5 Is as far as practicable to apply the Child Protection Policy of BCSA and is not to allow the implementation of that Policy to be displaced by any presumption of the innocence of the worker.
- 6.6 BCSA, Member Churches and workers will responsibly and reasonably cooperate with law enforcement and child protection authorities in their investigation and any prosecution of child abuse.
- 6.7 No workers are to make any statement to the media about any child abuse encountered in the course of their employment by a Member Church and all

inquiries about child abuse from the media are to be referred to the senior pastor, SEM or the DPS (see paragraph 34).

- 6.8 Workers are not to make any statements about child abuse encountered in the course of their employment by the Employer Church to any alleged perpetrator or anyone associated with or representing that alleged perpetrator.
- 6.9 Upon receiving any report about child abuse a Senior Pastor is to consult immediately with the DPS and/or the SEM about what steps should be taken in respect of it by the Employer Church.
- 6.10 The Senior Pastor is to ensure that all appropriate pastoral care/professional support is made available to all persons associated with the Employer Church who are impacted by the allegation, but only to the alleged perpetrator where he or she admits the allegation.
- 6.11 Workers are to be alert to any indicators of child abuse including
- When a child says that he/she has been abused;
 - When a child or adult says that he/she knows of a child subject to abuse; or
 - Observations of a child's behaviour, change in behaviour, emotional state and or injuries.

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

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

- Listen to the child/young person.
- Not ask leading questions.
- Reassure the child that you believe him/her. (If that be the case).
- Reassure the child that what has happened is not his/her fault.
- Reassure the child that telling you was the right thing to do.
- Document the child's disclosure as soon as possible.

- When documenting the disclosure use the same terminology as the child.
- Not make promises which cannot be kept, such as confidentiality.
- Reassure the child that there are people who can help to protect them.

A worker is not an investigator and does not have to do any detective work.

Even if the child abuse which is disclosed has ceased, reporting it is still necessary to protect other children from the abuser.

- 6.12 Where a person 18 years or over discloses that he or she was subject to child abuse while he or she was a child these procedures do not apply, but the person should be encouraged to take appropriate steps about the matter.

7. **Managing potential child abusers in churches**

- 7.1 Where a person who

7.1.1 is the subject of an unresolved complaint of child abuse; or

7.1.2 is reasonably suspected by a Member Church of having at any time engaged in child abuse

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

- 7.2 A known child abuser is not to be permitted to be present at any premises controlled by a Member Church or to take part in any activity controlled by it except in accordance with the terms of a formal agreement entered into between the church and that person which ensures the safety and wellbeing of children as per the Person of Concern (POC) Policy as amended from time to time.

- 7.3 If a known child abuser does not comply with the terms of an agreement referred to in 7.2 the church may exclude that person from all premises controlled by the church and/or activities controlled by it.

PART B: CHILD SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

8. Child Safety Responsibilities

- 8.1 A Member Church and its workers are to do everything reasonably available to them to promote the physical, emotional, mental and physical wellbeing and safety of the children who are involved in the life of that church (“the duty of care”). What is reasonable in a particular situation depends on its particular circumstances including the nature of the risk of harm to children and the practicability of the steps needed to eliminate it.
- 8.2 No set of detailed rules can be devised which when applied to a particular situation will clearly show what is the applicable duty of care. Paragraphs 9 to 31 contain some rules which it is always prudent to observe unless there is good reason not to do so. They should only be departed from where a conscious and responsible decision has been made by a Member Church that what is to be done satisfies its duty of care.
- 8.3 While Part B also applies generally to child abuse that issue is dealt with specifically in Section A.

9. Role of Workers

Any member in a Member Church working with children must

- Be emotionally and spiritually suited to the role to be undertaken;

- Be properly trained; (Refer to Appendix C)
- Have been selected for their role in work with children after a proper investigation of their suitability for such work;
- Have their performance in such work periodically reviewed.

10. Care and supervision ratios of workers to children

10.1 There is no fixed ratio which will necessarily satisfy the duty of care in all situations. It will depend on all of the circumstances which will include:

- The age, needs and behavioural history of the children present;
- The skills and experience of the workers;
- The environment in which the children are placed;
- The nature of any risks to which the children may be exposed;
- The ready availability of backup if there are difficulties.

10.2 The following table is based on similar tables used in the child care industry and may be used as a rough rule of thumb, but even compliance with it may not be sufficient to satisfy the duty of care in all situations.

RECOMMENDED MINIMUM SUPERVISION RATIO'S:

Under two years of age: 1 approved worker to every 5 children.

Two years to school age: 1 approved worker to every 5 children.

Primary school age: 1 approved worker to every 5 children

Secondary school age Jnr: 1 approved worker to every 10 children

Secondary school age Snr: 1 approved worker to every 15 children

Notwithstanding these minimum ratios it is recommended that, for children of primary school age or younger, a minimum of two (2) workers be present at all times.

If any lesser ratios are used, it should only be after a conscious and responsible decision by the Member Church that the supervision provided does satisfy its duty of care for the children.

11. **Physical health and safety**

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

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

12. **Transportation**

When a young person is travelling in a vehicle driven by a worker, or designated person, the vehicle will be driven carefully, adhering to the legal speed limits and road laws at all times. At no time should there be more passengers in a car than the number of seat belts which are in working order and available for use. Cars must be registered and driven by licensed drivers, holding current licences relevant to the type

and class of vehicle driven. In addition, motor cycles may be used by the registered owner, but the carrying of children and youth during official church activities as a pillion passenger without parental consent is prohibited. Hitch hiking is prohibited at all times.

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

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

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

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

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

13. **Punctuality**

Workers and designated helpers should stick to timetables to the best of their ability. If an activity is running significantly overtime, parents should be notified as soon as possible of the new anticipated time that their child/ren may arrive at the pre-determined point. If the activity is off-site and a delay has occurred, it may be appropriate to telephone one person who could inform all parents of the circumstances.

14. **Moral wellbeing**

Workers must ensure that any television programmes, videos, music, magazines and/or displays shown or used as part of the group's activities are suitable in content and appropriate to the age group represented, with due regard to Christian values. Whilst official television and movie ratings should be observed, there will be situations where those in leadership will have the responsibility of approving the viewing of certain material.

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

15. **Inappropriate behaviour of a worker**

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

16. **Bullying**

Bullying is a form of persistent harassment which demeans, threatens, intimidates or humiliates a person. For any person in leadership to act in such a manner is unacceptable, and will not be tolerated.

17. **Meetings/Locations**

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

18. **Pastoral Care/Support/Counselling**

It is the responsibility of individual churches to ensure that all workers are made aware of the difference between a qualified “counsellor”, and a person providing “pastoral care” support. The term “counsellor” relates to a suitably qualified person.

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

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

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

The counselling guidelines in the BCSA Code of Ethics Policy are applicable to this section.

19. **Managing inappropriate behaviours in children**

If a young child misbehaves within a church program or activity, firm but gentle verbal correction which is respectful and age-appropriate should be the first response. For a younger child a short period of “time out” may also be appropriate. A useful guide for determining the amount of time out is one minute for each year of the child’s age. However, it is not appropriate to use a time out strategy for children under three years of age. Parents should be made aware of these practices and procedures when enrolling children into activities/programs.

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

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

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

20. **Toileting small children**

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

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

- If this is not practicable the child should be encouraged to manage him/herself to the fullest possible extent, according to ability.
- When crèche workers or designated helpers must assist a child, another adult worker should be informed upon leaving the activity and upon returning.
- Where possible, it may be useful to accompany more than one child to the toilet at any given time.
- Male leaders are not to assist in the toileting of girls.
- At no time should a child be allowed to enter a public toilet alone whilst placed in a 'kids' church/ crèche related activity/program.

21. **Crèche/Kids Church activities/programs**

The issue of crèche/kids church workers with respect to Duty of Care is a vexed one, since so much depends upon volunteers, often on a very casual and perhaps even spontaneous basis. While a basic Duty of Care exists whenever any worker undertakes to supervise children (ie: with respect to reasonable foreseeability and proximity), it is highly recommended that there be at least one worker who is cognisant of

rudimentary Duty of Care, WHS and Child Protection requirements somewhere on site, and who could be available as a reference person/supervisor whenever such a program is functioning.

Where young children accompany their parents to Home Groups and other similar functions in private homes, arrangements which are made for the children's care and well-being and the nature of the activities in which they engage should be formally agreed upon and accepted by all the parents concerned, and the church advised in order to ensure that all standards are met. Any person/worker who specifically takes on the responsibility of the care of children should be expected to provide a level of care which fulfils Duty of Care standards, including a National police clearance check. It is the responsibility of churches to establish and promote such procedures.

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

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

For example: Children in junior programs (under 12 years of age) once checked into an activity must not be permitted to leave that activity or program unless collected by a parent or authorised person. A number of check in and out systems have been developed and successfully implemented. The Director of Professional Standards can assist with the development and implementation of a range of check in and out procedures in.

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

23. **Worker identification**

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

24. **Camping/Excursions/Activities**

The Church Leadership must approve of and endorse all camps and excursions as an official church activity, and parental consent must be obtained at all times for activities that are conducted off site. All standards previously identified in this document in terms of transportation, child/youth management and ethical standards apply.

Appropriate risk assessment, management and reporting should be undertaken (refer to Insurer for further detail).

In the case of camps and off site special events, parents/guardians must be supplied (in writing) specific information about the activity, including venue, contact details, all proposed activities as well as transport and sleeping arrangements, emergency/first aid arrangements and the names of designated leader/s. Special event medical/information forms (**Appendix E**) and permission to attend special event form (**Appendix F**) must be supplied to, completed by parents and maintained by the responsible program/ministry leader and workers.

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

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

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

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

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

No persons are permitted to shower together at any time.

At no time are leaders or workers permitted to provide, allow or consume alcohol or illegal drugs. If leaders are taking prescribed medication that would impair their ability to perform their role effectively, it is their responsibility to advise their designated leader.

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

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

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

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

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

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

25. **Staff/Volunteer screening and selection processes**

A major form of prevention relates to appropriate and stringent screening processes. Every worker engaged in child related ministries must be interviewed, screened and recommended by the leader who has ultimate oversight or management responsibility for that area of ministry.

An important part of this process will involve:

- A planned and prepared interview process approved by leadership.
- Presentation of references.
- The follow up of references.
- Agreement to undergo a National Police check.
- The completion of a ministry application form.
- Agreement by the applicant to meet with senior pastor/elders if required.

A written recommendation must then be prepared by the person who has management/oversight responsibility and be submitted to the Senior Pastor for endorsement/approval. Individual churches may include a panel such as senior pastor/s, elders, professional standards committee members, etc, as a part of an accountable recruitment, selection and appointment team.

Under normal circumstances no individual should be permitted to work in the areas of children's ministries until attending the church in which they seek to serve for a period of not less than one (1) year. Special circumstances may apply and include intimate knowledge of an applicant by people within the leadership/church, or impeccable references from other churches. Even in these circumstances the applicant should operate under a supervised probationary period of not less than six months, with no key leadership responsibilities. It is recognised that long term and intimate knowledge

of a person engaged in this area of ministry, may reduce components of the above screening and interview process.

It is acknowledged that from time to time additional helpers are engaged to provide support in relation to special events/activities. This may include parents or other people within the church who generously volunteer their services in terms of additional transport, or supervision during special events. It is unrealistic to expect those who fall into this category on a random basis to undergo additional training, however where possible a National Police clearance check should be obtained. (This may alter pending future legislative changes) In these instances an authorised leader/worker must be in attendance and accompany an “unauthorised” person at all times. It is a good practice for churches to think ahead and have a pool of “occasional” helpers suitably trained and police checked.

25. **Ministry Screening/Police Checks**

Current National Police clearance checks are essential for all pastors, staff, elders, board members, governance team members as well as **ALL** (workers) who serve in the area of children’s ministry.

It is the responsibility of each church to identify and ensure that the above people undergo a National Police clearance check every three years and maintain appropriate records.

In relation to International Police checks or concerns, contact the DPS.

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

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

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

Staff members and workers, who for whatever reason have not undergone a National Police check, are required to immediately do so.

Any person undertaking a ministry role either full/part time, paid/voluntary, who does not have a written employment contract must complete a ministry covenant form (Appendix G). For those with an existing written employment contract the Supplementary Employment Contract (Appendix H) should be adopted.

27. Screening processes / Police checks - Tradespeople

All tradespersons engaged to carry out work on church premises must produce a current National Police check document prior to being engaged/employed.

28. Character Reference Requests

In accordance with the BCSA Code of Ethics document, where pastors, elders, workers or representatives who are seen to be a church representative are asked to provide a character reference for anyone charged with a criminal offence the DPS should be consulted. There can be severe consequences associated with the provision of references.

29. Hiring out of Church facilities to outside groups

Groups privately hiring or using church facilities where children will be a part of that program must provide proof that persons responsible for any program relating to the care and supervision of children, have a current National Police clearance check.

30. Internet Access

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

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

31. Initiation/secret ceremonies

Initiations and or secret ceremonies are prohibited.

PART C: MISCELLANEOUS

32. Privacy

All information concerning children must be kept confidential and only disclosed to authorized persons. Procedures for storage of information concerning children associated with the church should be arranged with the Privacy Officer of the Member Church. Refer to the BCSA Privacy Policy as amended from time to time.

33. Workers' awareness

Workers should be aware:

- 33.1 Section 12 of the CPA protects workers against civil and criminal liability for having reported suspected child abuse to CARL under s11 of the CPA. S13 of the CPA provides that the identity of a notifier to CARL is not to be disclosed, but by the Ministry Covenant this does not prevent some officers of the church being told of it.
- 33.2 By s11(6) of the CPA it is an offence to influence or attempt to influence a person who is obliged to report child abuse to CARL not to do so.
- 33.3 Apart from a report to CARL a worker who informs another of suspected child abuse which cannot ultimately be proved can be liable for civil damages in defamation. Extreme care needs to be taken in making such an allegation to anyone other than CARL and the senior pastor of the employer church. A worker acting as a worker for the church in making such an allegation is

probably covered by church insurance against any damages which may be awarded for defamation.

33.4 If workers becomes liable in law to pay damages to any person who has suffered loss from any breach by them of their duties they are likely to be covered for such damages by church insurance.

33.5 Other than for damages in defamation the Volunteers Protection Act 2001 relieves a voluntary worker acting for the church from civil liability for any breach of duty provided they have acted in good faith and without recklessness.

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

34. **Media Management**

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

- Senior pastors (who are to seek advice from the SEM or DPS)
- The State Executive Minister and/or President
- The Director of Professional Standards or delegate

Appendix A MANDATORY REPORTING LEGISLATION SOUTH AUSTRALIA

STATE/LEGAL DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Legal definition in Section 6 of the Children’s Protection Act 1993, define the extent of abuse and neglect that the state has authority to intervene in.

6 (1) “abuse or neglect” in relation to a child means-

- (a) Sexual abuse of the child; or
- (b) Physical or emotional abuse of the child, or neglect of the child, to the extent that-
 - (i) the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, physical or psychological injury detrimental to the child’s wellbeing; or
 - (ii) the child’s physical or psychological development is in jeopardy.

THE LEGISLATION

Under Section 11 (1) and (2) of the Children’s protection Act 1993, the following people are obliged by law to notify Families SA if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child/young person has been or is being abused or neglected and the suspicion is formed in the course of the person’s work (whether paid or voluntary) or in carrying out of official duties.

The person must notify the department of that suspicion as soon as practicable after he or she forms the suspicion.

(2) This section applies to the following persons:

- (a) a medical practitioner;
- (ab) a pharmacist
- (b) a registered or enrolled nurse;
- (c) a dentist;
- (d) a psychologist;
- (e) a police officer;
- (f) a community corrections officer (an officer or employee of an administrative unit of the Public service whose duties include the supervision of young or adult offenders in the community)'
- (g) a social worker;
- (ga) a minister of religion;
- (gb) a person who is an employee of; or volunteer in; an organization formed for religious or spiritual purposes;
- (h) a teacher in an educational institution (including a kindergarten);
- (i) an approved family day care provider;
- (j) any other person who is an employee of, or volunteer in, a government or non-government organization that provides health, welfare, education, sporting or recreational, child care or residential services wholly or partly for children, being a person who
 - (i) is engaged in the actual delivery of those services to children; or

- (ii) holds a management position in the relevant organization the duties of which include direct responsibility for; or direct supervision of; the provision of those services to children.
- (3) A notification under this section must accompanied by a statement of the observations; information and opinions on which the suspicion is based.
- (4) This section does not require a priest or other minister of religion to divulge information communicated in the course of a confession made in accordance with the rules and usages of the relevant religion
- (5) A person does not necessarily exhaust his or her duty of care to a child by giving a notification under this section.
- (6) A person must not threaten or intimidate, or cause damage, loss or disadvantage to, a person to whom this section applies because the person has discharged, or proposes to discharge, his or her duty under subsection (1).
Maximum penalty: \$10,000.

Source:
Families SA
Child Safe Environments
Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
Policy for Mandated Notifiers

24 HOUR CHILD ABUSE REPORT LINE

(C.A.R.L) 13 14 78

Appendix B

“CONFIDENTIAL”

Baptist Churches of South Australia

CHILD ABUSE PRELIMINARY REPORT FORM (EXAMPLE)

Date: Time:

Church:

Child's name: DOB/Age:

Address:

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

CARL officer's name (if known)

Time/Date:

If not, reason?

Name of person reporting:
(if given, your name is protected by section 13 of the Children's Protection Act)

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

-
-
-
-

Name of person suspected?

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

Address: (if known)

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

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

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

.....

Any further details: (attach additional sheets if necessary)

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

Appendix C

BCSA Child Protection Training requirements

South Australia Child Safe Environments (CSE) Accreditation under Baptist Churches of SA requires that all “workers” as defined in this policy, undergo the established training program:

- The CSE Accredited 7 hour session, and
- The three hour refresher/update session every three years thereafter

Baptist Churches SA engages an external organisation to deliver this training, but accepts training delivered by other qualified (SA CSE) providers.

However, BCSA strongly recommends that the BCSA training strategy be undertaken based on the following advantages:

- The BCSA model has been specifically designed for BCSA and includes specialist components that standard packages do not include. Some additional components are particularly relevant to the church.
- Training is presented via the BCSA Office of Professional Standards by highly experienced (former) child protection investigators and prosecutors, coupled with pastoral ministry experience.
- The BCSA model also offers ongoing “on tap” support and consultancy to individuals and churches in relation to all matters relating to professional standards and child protection.
- All costs are met by BCSA .
- Additional training packages are available to churches from time to time, designed to add to, and build on the above mandatory level of training.

Appendix D

MEDICAL & HEALTH INFORMATION – GENERAL (EXAMPLE)

..... Baptist Church

Name:.....
(Surname) (Christian names)

Home Address:.....
.....

Next of kin for notification of any information:

Name.....

Relationship

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

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

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

If yes, the name of the fund

Medicare number

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

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

Regular doctor's name and phone number

Has your child had a tetanus immunisation? YES / NO

If so, when?

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

If so, please give details

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

If so, please give details

Any other comments?.....
.....
.....

(If more space required please add to the back of this form)

Appendix E

MEDICAL & HEALTH INFORMATION – SPECIAL EVENT (EXAMPLE)

..... Baptist Church

Name:
(Surname) (Christian names)

Is your child taking any regular or currently prescribed medication? YES / NO

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

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

Is there anything about your child's health which means that s/he should engage in only limited physical activity? YES / NO

If so, please give details.....

Does your child require a special diet because of health problems? YES / NO

If so, please give details.....

Is there any other information which may help us care for your child? YES / NO

If so, please give details.....

For emergency use only

In case of emergency, contact

Phone Number

Name of family doctor

Address of doctor phone

Name and address of any other medical specialist treating your child

Doctor phone

Do you give permission for an ambulance to be called if deemed necessary (any costs being the parent's responsibility)? YES / NO

Signed:..... date
(parent/caregiver)

Witnessed

Appendix F

PERMISSION TO ATTEND EVENT/CAMP FORM (EXAMPLE)

..... Baptist Church

As a parent/caregiver of:.....

I, give my consent for him/her to take

Part in the (special activity or camp) to be held at the (event site)

from to (or on)
(date) (date) (date)

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

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

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

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

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

Signed:.....date:

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

Appendix G

MINISTRY COVENANT

[Insert Name of Church]

I of
(name of worker) (address)

1. Declare that except as is stated below I have never
 - (1) been guilty of any sexual misconduct against any person;
 - (2) have never committed any criminal offence involving fraud, violence or drugs;
 - (3) have never committed any offence against road traffic laws (except parking offences);
 - (4) am of good character and suitable for ministry within a Baptist Church.(If exceptions to the above give details and if insufficient room place them in an attachment).
2. Acknowledge I have read and agreed to the Child Protection Policies of BCSA and the Child Protection Manual of Procedures.
3. Agree I will cooperate with the DPS in any investigation undertaken by the DPS in relation to a Member Church.
4. Agree I will attend and take part in education courses to fit me for ministry with children.
5. Acknowledge that by signing this covenant no legal contract is created between myself and my Employer Church or BCSA, but accept that it acts as a consent for the operation of the Child Protection Policy and the Child Protection Procedure Manual and that legal consequences may follow if I have knowingly given false answers to any of the questions 1 – 4 above.

Signature: Witness:

Full name: Name:

Address: Date:

Appendix H

SUPPLEMENTARY EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

[Insert Name of Church]

I of
(name of worker) (address)

- 1. Agree that this document contains additional terms for my employment by the above church and my continued employment is conditional upon my executing it.

- 2. Declare that except as is stated below I have never
 - (1) been guilty of any sexual misconduct against any person;
 - (2) have never committed any criminal offence involving violence or drugs;
 - (3) have never committed any offence against road traffic laws (except parking offences);
 - (4) am of good character and suitable for ministry within a Baptist Church.
 (If exceptions to the above give details and if insufficient room place them in an attachment).

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

- 4. Agree that if any allegation of child abuse is made against me the IMC is to have jurisdiction to determine whether, and on what conditions, my employment should be continued until the allegation is finally determined.

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

Signature: Witness:

Full name: Name:

Address: Date: