

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND CODES OF CONDUCT

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Introduction

Policy statement

Our organisation is committed to child safety.

We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.

We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

Our organisation is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.

Our organisation has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.

Our organisations is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.

We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

What is a Child Safe organisation

A child safe organisation will:

- be preventative rather than reacting to an unfortunate incident after it happens
- understand and act on the moral and legal imperatives of protecting children in their care
- acknowledge the damage an incident of abuse would do to the child, their family, people within and outside the organisation, as well as with the organisation itself
- introduce safeguards that will protect children, staff, volunteers and the organisation
- have clear boundaries of roles between staff and children
- be open to outside accountability
- have adequate staff, staff supervision and training
- recognise and act on children's rights and

- know that the organisation is doing all that it can to protect children

Scope

- All Ministries authorised by or under the control of the Church, including those ministries undertaken at the Church's premises or away from the Church's premises.
- All Leaders within the Church or engaged by the Church.

Authority

These are the Policy and codes of conduct of Wonga Park Christian Reformed Church. It has been approved by the Pastor and Youth pastor. Policies and Procedures will be reviewed by Childcare Coordinator on annual basis and presented to Session for approval

External Policies

We acknowledge that some Ministries in the Church might have external affiliation with other organisations. These organisations will possibly have policies governing the issues of Member and/or Child Safety and Abuse. The Church's Policy and Procedures are not intended to replace or conflict with the other policies, but instead to operate in conjunction with these policies to ensure child safety in the Church.

The Kids Hope Program is operated as an individual program with its own safety program and therefore the Kids Hope volunteers will not be managed through the Wonga Park Childsafe program. A copy of our Policy and Codes of conduct document will be made available to the Kids Hope leader to distribute to the volunteers.

About Childsafe

Wonga Park, together with the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia, use the Childsafe Management Online System to administer their Child Safety Policies and Procedures.

ChildSafe Limited is a Harm Prevention Charity, established by Scripture Union (SU) Australia in 2007. The roots of the ChildSafe Safety Management Online System lies in the safety and care processes within SU movements in Australia and New Zealand. Since 2003 SU has been intentionally developing ChildSafe with a specific desire to improve child and vulnerable people safety among Australasian churches and community organisations. All funds generated by sales of ChildSafe publications and subscriptions are applied solely for this goal.

All Youth Leaders will have access to the Safety Management Online System. This will give access to online training as well as template documents that leaders will need to perform their duties.

If you are unsure of your password to the Safety Management Online System, please contact the Childsafe Coordinator.

Hierarchy and definitions

The Childsafe Management System use specific terminology to describe a Childsafe hierarchy. At Wonga Park we use the same terminology for most positions.

Child

Any person below 18 years of age. We realise that this includes teenagers who might more usually be termed 'young people'. The intention is to include all who are minors, where we have a particular duty of care

Program

A set of activities and events authorised and run by our Organisation. This may include a vacation camp, an activity day or coaching day for example.

Activity

Elements that make up a program such as a Fun Day, a hike or a fundraising event.

Risk Management Officer

At Wonga Park CRC the Pastor, with the support from Session, particularly the Elders for Youth and Sunday school as well as the Youth Pastor, will fulfill the role of Risk Management officers. Together with the Childsafe Coordinator, they will assess risks and determine strategies to minimise risk.

Childsafe Coordinator

The Childsafe Coordinator is the administrator for child safety.

Team Leader

Team Leaders are given responsibility for leadership of a program or Ministry. At Wonga Park CRC the Team Leaders are the Youth Leader, the Coordinators for Junior and Senior Sunday school, Crèche Coordinator and GEMS coordinator.

Team Member

Team Members are all people working with children. They work within a broader team, and have limited responsibilities. Their primary focus will be on the participants in their program.

Helper

Any unpaid person who is invited by a Leader to assist them in their Ministry.

Any Helper who provides assistance in a Children's Ministry must be **supervised** by a Team Member **at all times** and will be accountable to that Member.

Team Members who accept the assistance of a Helper must be satisfied of the Helpers maturity and their suitability for Children's Ministry. Since helpers are always directly supervised by a Team Leader or Team member, they may include children under the age of 18.

Leader

Any person (paid or unpaid) over the age of 18 who is responsible for the control and safety of members placed in their care whilst holding a formal position in a recognised Ministry of the Church. A leader could include but is not limited to:

- Pastors, Elders for Youth and Sunday School
- Team leaders and members for Sunday school
- Team leaders and members for Youth Group
- Team leaders and members for Crèche and GEMS
- Small Group Leaders,
- Music, Drama or other Ministry Leaders and
- Leaders for special occasions such as Sunday school fun days etc

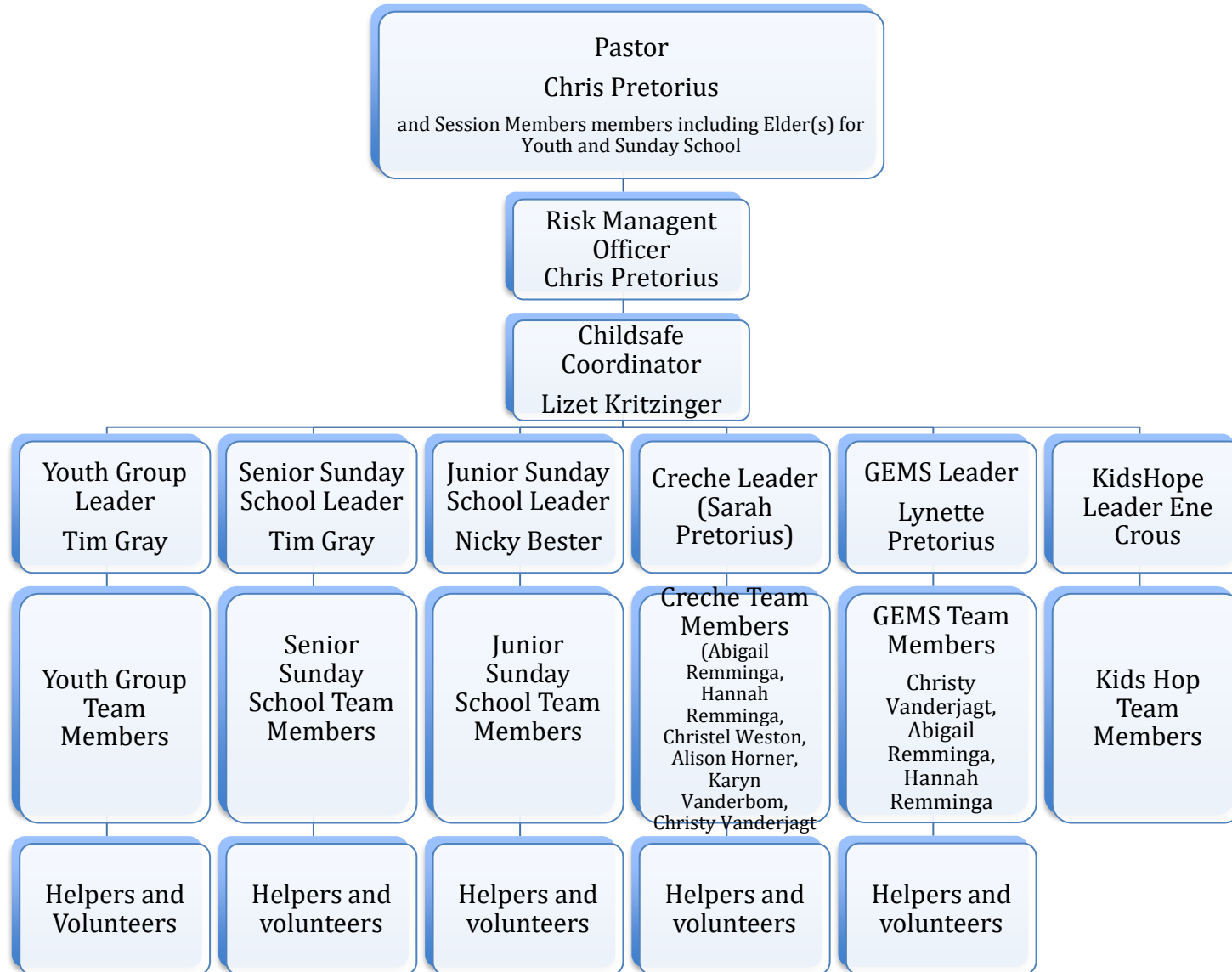
Member

Any person, including children, who attends or participates in Church Ministries.

Childcare workers

Anyone working with children including Elders for Youth and Sunday school, ChildSafe coordinator, Team Leaders, Team members, Helpers

The current structure at Wonga Park CRC:



Policies

Information of participating children and Privacy

All parents of children up to the age of 18, participating in programs or activities offered by Wonga Park CRC, must complete a Medical Permission Form at the beginning of each year. This needs to be available at ALL meetings and activities for the group throughout the year in case of medical emergencies and must be kept safe and secure between meetings. A copy will be kept by the Childsafe Coordinator. Care will be taken by all Team Leaders that Medical Information remain private. The childsafe coordinator will ensure that the medical permission forms are updated every year. Additionally, the Childsafe coordinator will distribute relevant documentation to the team leaders of each ministry.

Visiting children:

Visiting children will provide emergency contact details if parents or guardians will not remain on the premises.

Information regarding allergies or any relevant medical information for the individual will be collected.

Selection and Screening of Children's Ministry workers

All childcare workers will fill out an Application Form. The person appointing the childcare worker will also have an interview with the new worker. All childcare workers will sign off on this Policy document before commencement of their duties.

Risk Management Officer, Childsafe Coordinator and Team Leaders

The Youth Pastor, together with session, will approve the appointment of above positions. They also have a Sample referee questionnaire.

Team members

Team leaders will appoint their team members with the approval of the Youth Pastor and/or Session.

Working with Children checks

Before a Childcare worker can commence their duties they are required by law to be in possession of a current Working With Children check. Details on how to apply can be found online at <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/home/about+the+check/>. Please send your registration information to the Childcare Coordinator as soon as possible. No one will be allowed to serve in a youth or children's ministry position until they have completed their WWCC application.

Training

ChildSafe training is relevant to anyone who engages in work with children, young people and families. ChildSafe sets a standard of safety and care for the organisation and it is important that everyone involved is informed and agrees to uphold it.

All childcare workers at Wonga Park must complete the relevant training offered by ChildSafe.

The Childsafe Online System offers training for all levels of Childcare workers. This training can be offered

- face-to-face by the organisation using the Childsafe Resources or another organisation using the Childsafe system.
- online by each individual
- using printed ChildSafe resources by individuals or in group format

At Wonga Park we expect self-training (online or using printed resources) before commencing volunteer duties if face-to-face training is not immediately available.

All childcare workers will sign off on this Policy document before commencement of their duties.

Training modules to be completed:

	Childsafe Team Members training	Childsafe Team Leaders Training	Childsafe Coordinator training
Pastor (excluding Youth Pastor)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Youth Pastor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Elders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Risk Management Officer and Childsafe Coordinator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Team Leaders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Team Members	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Helpers	Under direct supervision of a Leader		
Kids Hope	Copy of Policy and Codes of conduct document will be supplied to them		

Risk assessments

- Each Team Leader will conduct a risk assessment of their regular program and activities outlining the possible risks, the level of risk and possible precaution measures to implement. This will be reviewed annually.
- An application for Permission to proceed will be made with the Risk Manager who will provide Permission to proceed before the program or activity may proceed. Should the Risk Manager have any concerns, he/she will discuss this with the Team Leader.
- Each activity that is not part of the regular program scope will need a separate risk

assessment.

- No program or activity may proceed without permission to do so

Transport

- All drivers of private cars transporting children will have a valid Working with Children check
- All drivers of private cars transporting children must be in possession of a Probationary P2 license (Green "P's")
- Parents must give permission before children may be transported in private cars.
- The car driven must be roadworthy and insured
- All passengers must wear seat-belts at all times
- There should be a mobile phone available in the car in case of accident or running late due to unforeseeable situations. This is so that the passengers can call parents and relieve them of any unnecessary worry.
- No leader will transport a single child at any time unless explicit approval has been given by parents
- Always make sure your passengers enter their house before driving away, either wait in the car or walk your passenger to their front door. This is not just a courtesy this is necessary for making sure that you have safely taken them home.
- Drivers are not allowed to smoke in the vehicle
- Drivers are not allowed to use any Alcohol or Drugs when transporting children
- All Drivers will sign a Driver's Declaration Form

Location of activities

All programs and activities will take place in an area that is visible to any parent/guardian or any other member of the public.

All window coverings, blinds and curtains will be opened to allow people to look into the rooms

No Childcare worker will be alone with a child. Private conversations will take place under the "Two worker policy" where a second worker must be present or in close enough proximity to be able to see the child and Childcare worker. This will also take place in an area that is visible to the public.

Should a Childcare worker have only one child in their class, that child can join another group if appropriate.

All activities will have a leader/child ratio of 1:4 for ages 0-4, 1:8 for primary age (5-11) and 1:10 for secondary aged kids 12-18. For teaching classes, where the focus is on spiritual and academic growth rather than physical activity, a ratio of 1 team leader or team member to 15 children aged between 12-18 years old will be permissible.

Attendance

Programs that operate while parents leave the premises will have a sign-in sheet where parents can sign their children in when arriving and out when leaving.

Visiting children will provide emergency contact details if parents or guardians will not remain on the premises.

Information regarding allergies or any relevant medical information for the individual will be collected.

First Aid

Location

There are two First Aid Kits at Wonga Park

- 1) A fixed box located in the kitchen on the wall, near the service bench.
- 2) A portable First Aid bag for use for off-site activities.

Signage

Adequate signage (white cross on green background) will be displayed on the property to indicate the location of First Aid Kits.

Triple Zero (**000**) is the primary national emergency number in Australia.

Content

The content will be in accordance with guidelines provided by St John of God and The Red Cross.

First Aid personnel

First Aid Personnel undertake initial treatment of injuries. The initial management provided by first aid personnel should be consistent with their level of training or competence. When first aid management required is beyond the level of training and competence of the personnel available, they should recommend that the person seek medical assistance

The ChildSafe Coordinator will make a list of Members with First Aid qualification will assess the need for further training

Name	Relevant Training
Roger Fernando	Level 2
Wendy Harrison	Registered Nurse
Lynette Pretorius	Level 2
Ryan Weston	Level 2
Elzette Kritzinger	Level 1

Analgesics

The dispensing of drugs needs to be managed by a medical practitioner (or an occupational health practitioner such as a registered division 1 nurse), not a first aid officer. Paracetamol and other Scheduled or over-the-counter medications require appropriate medical supervision and, despite their ready availability, should only be dispensed by persons with training in the administration of non-prescription medications. These drugs have been shown to be the major source of abuse and pilfering of first aid kits. Accordingly, analgesics will **not** be included in first aid kits at Wonga Park CRC

Review

The First Aid Kit will be reviewed 4x per year by the First Aid Officer when all items will be re-stocked. Expiry dates of all products will also be checked.

The relevance of the content will be reviewed once per year in October.

Accuracy of nearby Emergency Services will also be checked.

Incident report Templates will be kept with the First Aid Kits

Reporting of incidents

Critical and non-critical events will be documented. Copies of the Report Templates will be kept with the FIRST AID Kits

The Childsafe Incident Report **must** be completed in the event that

- An outside emergency service is contacted for the event
- An individual is taken to the hospital, a doctor's surgery, an emergency dental surgery or other medical professional
- An injury results in a participant being unable to participate for 24 hours
- Where there is an alleged illegal act, a participant is sent home, serious leader dispute, damage or loss of property or
- In cases related to child protection
- If in doubt, please complete a report on the event

Note: Reporting is not necessary for minor cuts and abrasions although a note must be made in the First Aid booklet to ensure items used get re-stocked

The Childsafe Incident Report will be submitted to the Risk Management Officer or Childcare Coordinator

Physical contact

Choice and Initiation

Some people do not seek or enjoy physical contact and are entitled to determine the degree of physical contact they have with others except in exceptional circumstances, i.e. when needing medical attention. It is therefore inappropriate, in the normal course of events, to initiate physical contact with a child. When a child initiates physical contact the childcare worker may respond to this in an appropriate way.

Adult Responsibility

Physical contact between adults and children may be misconstrued. Any physical activity that is or may be construed as sexually stimulating to the adult or child is inappropriate and must be avoided. As children may or may not be aware of creating such situations, it is the duty of the adult to be alert to such circumstances and to act accordingly.

Appropriate physical contact

Administration of first aid

Supporting children who have hurt themselves

Non-intrusive gestures to comfort a child or young person who is experiencing grief, loss or distress, such as a hand on the upper arm or upper back

Non-intrusive touch such as congratulating a child by shaking hands or patting upper arm

Good practice

Seek child's permission to touch

Even non-intrusive touch can be inappropriate when the child indicates that he/she does not wish to be touched

Respect and respond to any signs that a child is uncomfortable with touch.

Use verbal directions instead of touch

In some circumstances, staff may need to discourage younger children from inappropriate touch. This should be done gently and without embarrassment.

Nappy changes and toileting assistance

Supervision of toddlers will only occur when a parent or guardian is present on the premises. In the event of a child needing assistance with toileting or nappy change, the parent/guardians will be asked to perform these duties.

Inclusive culture

Your organisation should be inclusive to all children and families. In particular, your organisation should establish a culture that supports:

- cultural safety for Aboriginal children, for example by working in partnership with Aboriginal peoples and Aboriginal community controlled organisations
- cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- the safety of children with a disability

Safe food handling

Childsafe provides guidelines on safe food handling. All Team Leaders should consider this as part of their risk assessment when providing food in their programs.

All information regarding children with food allergies and food intolerances will be provided to the Team Leaders to consider when supplying food in their programs

Building guidelines

The Board of Management will be responsible for the task of ensuring a safe building and equipment. A copy of the Guidelines provided by Childsafe will be given to them.

Equipment

All childcare workers should know how to operate equipment correctly and safety guidelines must be adhered to.

Audio-visual

Parents will give permission through the Medical Permission form for children to view audio-visual material during programs and activities.

All audio-visual material will be age-appropriate as classified by the Australian Classification Board :

G, PG and M ratings are guidelines only and do not carry aged restrictions. It is the responsibility of the Team Leader to ensure that all audio-visual material is appropriate for the age group.

Media

Parent will give permission on the Medical Permission form for photographs and video recordings of children to be used appropriately.

Any media of children (if consent was provided on the Medical Permission form) will only be used for presentations to the congregation, displays around the church building or online on "Closed group" social media sites for church members only.

Any additional use of media will require specific permission from the parents.

Discipline

It is not the responsibility of the Church or its Leaders to discipline a Child. It is appropriate for Leaders to employ general behavior management strategies (such as mixing seating arrangements or separating disruptive children into different groups). At no time however, will a leader administer any form of physical, emotional or mental discipline. If a Child does not abide by the rules set down by the Leader, or is an obstruction to the care of other Children or may cause harm to other Children, the Child will be removed and referred back to their parent or guardian.

Abuse

Abuse can be defined as an act that endangers a child's physical or emotional health or development

Child abuse includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse. All leaders and volunteers need to have an understanding of all these forms. They need to learn about the nature of child abuse, and develop an awareness of how and why some children are victimised. It is important that all participants know what are appropriate and inappropriate behaviours in relationships with children. This will enable staff and volunteers to recognise dangerous situations and act before children are abused.

Child abuse thrives on secrecy. To prevent child abuse in our organisation we need to develop and maintain an open and aware culture

- Listen to children
- Believe children
- Learn about child abuse and protective behaviours for children and young people
- Teach children about their rights and protective behaviour strategies
- Instill a culture of safety and awareness into your organisation

The physical and sexual abuse of children **are crimes and must be reported** to the. If a child discloses any such abuse, the organisation must listen, respond and report to the police. It is important to 'validate' a child's disclosure, no matter how you feel about it. This means listening to the child, taking them seriously and responding and acting on the disclosure by reporting to the police. Children, parents, staff and volunteers must be encouraged and supported in their efforts to protect themselves and others.

An incident of any nature must be immediately reported to the Childsafe Coordinator. Childsafe Incident Report will be used for this purpose.

If there are reasonable grounds to suspect a Child has been or is suffering Abuse, the ChildSafe Coordinator must be informed immediately.

If an allegation of abuse is made against a Team Leader, Team Member or Helper, the Childsafe Coordinator must be informed immediately.

Confidentiality is extremely important. Since Child Abuse is a serious incident the ChildSafe Coordinator will immediately involve other members higher up in hierarchy to report to the police and make further decisions (Risk Management officer, Pastors and Session)

Where an allegation is made the accused person will be removed from all Children's ministry pending the outcome of all investigations. This means that the person is relieved from their duties while the matter is investigated. Both the child and the alleged abuser have rights and need protection and due process.

Once the authorities have been notified, they should be left to conduct any investigation. It is important that the child is not required to repeat their disclosure to more people than absolutely necessary with Wonga Park, as well as the investigating authority and the courts. Interviewing the child is best left to trained people who are skilled in the process. If a disclosure of abuse is made, the person who receives the disclosure will maintain appropriate pastoral care to the one making the disclosure.

Any disclosures by a Child and all details of the subsequent investigation will be documented promptly and the documents will be held in a secure location where a breach of privacy cannot occur.

The Church reserves the right to carry out Church disciplinary procedures in accordance with the Church Order of the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia.

Alcohol and drugs

The consumption of alcohol by persons under 18 or the use of illegal drugs during an activity is not to be condoned by any Leader. Any Child found to be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs is to be counseled and the parents/guardians contacted so the Child can be returned home immediately.

Victorian legislation

Working with children checks

Child ministry volunteers must have a current Working With Children check card as described in **Working with Children Act 2005**

A person is guilty of an offence if he or she does not have a current assessment notice; and he or she engages in child-related work, knowing that it is child-related work; and he or she knows that he or she does not have a current assessment notice or is reckless as to whether he or she has one.

Exemptions can be found at

<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/home/about+the+check/who+needs+a+check/exemptions/exemptions>

Mandatory standards

New mandatory Child Safe Standards that ensure all organisations dealing with children have appropriate responses in place for allegations of child abuse and misconduct have been released online. They can be found at <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards-resources>

Mandatory reporting

- The Victorian offence for failure to report child sexual abuse to the police came into effect on 27 October 2014. It requires that all adults (including volunteers) who hold a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed against a child under the age of 16 in Victoria must report that belief to police, unless they have a reasonable excuse (defined in the Act) for not doing so. The penalty for the offence is up to three years imprisonment.
- In addition to this there is
- The new Victorian offence for failing to protect a child from a **risk** of sexual abuse commenced on 1 July 2015. The 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. The penalty for the offence is up to five years imprisonment.

Important contact details

How to make a report to Child Protection

Note that it is preferred that all reporting is made in conjunction with the relevant church authorities (Risk Management officer and Session)

Who to contact?

- To report concerns that are life threatening call Victoria Police 000
- After hours Child Protection Emergency Service - 13 12 78
(5.00pm - 9.00am Monday - Friday, 24 hours on weekends and public holidays)
A state-wide after hours emergency service that receives new reports, as well as concerns for existing child protection clients who are considered to be at immediate risk and require urgent after hours service.

Note: this is an emergency service for weekends and after hours only and will pass on cases to the relevant regions the following working day

- To contact a child protection office close to you call a local office. For Wonga Park it is East Division Intake - 1300 360 391

Kids Helpline

About

Kids Helpline is Australia's only free, 24/7 phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25.

Link

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/organisation/>

Contact details

1800 55 18000, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Lifeline

About

Lifeline is a national charity providing all Australians experiencing a personal crisis with access to 24 hour crisis support and suicide prevention services.

Contact details

131114

CATT – Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team – Eastern Health

About

The Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team are responsible for assessing all persons who are being considered for hospital admission and determining whether or not a less restrictive setting is more suitable.

CATT services also provide treatment and support for people whose acute mental illness can be managed in the community as an alternative to hospitalisation. These services operate from 8am - 10pm, 7 days a week.

Contact details

1300 721 927

Childsafe

Link

<http://www.childsafe.org.au>

Safety Management online

Access Childsafe resources and online training

<https://www.smo.org.au/auth/login>

Child Wise

About

Child Wise is dedicated to protecting children from abuse by:

Educating children, parents and carers about risks and personal safety strategies.

Working with child-focused organisations to improve child protection mechanisms and create safer environments for children and young people.

Researching and responding to emerging risks to children and young people.

Helping to shape regional and national policy through advocacy and partnerships.

Providing information, support and referral to victims, families and concerned members of the public through our **toll-free Helpline**.

Link

<http://www.childwise.org.au>

Contact details

Childwise Helpline 1800991099

Any further questions?

Childsafe Coordinator

Lizet Kritzinger

Mobile: 0405762190

Email: Lizet.krit@gmail.com

Risk Management Officer

Chris Pretorius

Email: pastor@wpcrc.org.au