

# Safer Churches / Safer Places

At Generocity Church, we are committed to providing a safe environment for all people, particularly children, youth, and vulnerable individuals.

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# GC Child Protection Policy

## Generocity Church Child Protection Policy (Safer Churches)

### Purpose

The purpose of this Child Protection Policy is to safeguard children and vulnerable persons involved in all activities of Generocity Church. We are committed to providing a safe, nurturing environment where children and young people are respected, valued, and protected from harm. This policy reflects our commitment to the welfare of all people and our biblical mandate to love our neighbours as ourselves (Matthew 22:37-40).

### Scope

This policy applies to all individuals associated with Generocity Church, including:

1. All workers, including paid employees, volunteers, and members of boards
2. Guests or hirers of the church and its facilities
3. Contractors, subcontractors, delivery persons, or others engaged to provide services
4. Those who access our site and/or programs

### Policy Statements

1. Generocity Church commits to:
  - Embedding child safety in our institutional leadership, governance, and culture.

- Ensuring children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
- Informing and involving families and communities in promoting child safety.
- Upholding equity and respecting diverse needs.
- Ensuring people working with children are suitable and supported.
- Implementing child-focused processes to respond to complaints of child abuse.
- Providing staff with knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training.
- Promoting the safety of children in physical and online environments.
- Regularly reviewing and improving the implementation of child safety standards.
- Maintaining comprehensive documentation of how we are keeping children safe.

2. We acknowledge:

- The need for sensitivity and consideration of all people of Aboriginal, culturally &/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as any person with a disability.
- The primary role of parents and caregivers, as well as the role of children in child protection.
- The shared responsibility of the whole community for child safety and welfare.

## Code of Conduct

All individuals covered by this policy must:

1. Treat children and young people with respect and dignity.
2. Listen to and value children's ideas and opinions.
3. Welcome all children and their families and carers by being inclusive.

4. Respect cultural, religious, and political differences and act in a culturally sensitive way.
5. Model appropriate adult behaviour.
6. Use positive and affirming language toward children.
7. Respect the privacy of children and their families.
8. Adhere to role boundaries – refrain from using a position to initiate inappropriate relationships with children.
9. Follow organisational policy regarding communication with children, including social media policies.
10. Be proactive in reporting any concerns or allegations about child safety.

## Recruitment and Screening

1. All staff and volunteers working with children must:
  - Complete a comprehensive application process, including a detailed application form.
  - Provide references which will be carefully checked for supervisory roles.
  - Complete mandatory Police and/or Working with Children Check.
  - [Apply for a Working with Children Check | Service NSW](#)
  - Safer communities training to be done.  
<https://safercommunities.net.au/australian-christian-churches-online-training/>
  - Selecting the right course.
  - Course for ACC Credential Holders is for Pastors
  - Course for Volunteers is for all Generocity Church volunteers
  - Be a partner/member of the church and have attended for at least 6 months.
2. Under no circumstances will a person with a previous record of child-related offences be allowed to work with children or youth.

## Training and Education

### 1. All staff and volunteers must complete:

- Initial child protection training as part of their induction.
- Regular refresher training at least every two years.
- Ongoing education about child protection issues and best practices.

### 2. Training will cover:

- The church's child protection policies and procedures.
- Recognising the indicators of child harm including - physical, emotional, spiritual and sexual abuse.
- How to respond effectively to child safety issues.
- Building culturally safe environments for children.
- Reporting obligations and procedures.

## Reporting and Response

### 1. All staff and volunteers must report when:

- A child discloses abuse or harm.
- Someone else discloses knowledge of child abuse or harm.
- There is a reasonable concern that a child is at risk of harm based on observed indicators.

### 2. Reporting process:

- In cases of immediate danger, contact the police immediately.
- Report concerns to the designated Safe Ministry Officer/Team.  
saferchurches@generocitychurch.com.
- Use the NSW Government Mandatory Reporting Guide , all users of MRG must be registered <https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/mrg> and share information in the incident report <https://incident.generocitychurch.com.au/>

- Complete required incident report <https://incident.generocitychurch.com.au/> Documenting all information. This will be saved and sent to our Safe Ministry officer/team. All documentation will be held on a secured separate server for record keeping purposes.
- The Safe Ministry Officer/Team will take appropriate actions, including contacting authorities and conducting internal risk assessments.
- ACC Safer Churches Helpline: 1800 070 511.

3. All allegations will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated by independent parties with confidentiality where possible, unless legislative requirements require information sharing.

## Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years and updated as necessary to reflect changes in legislation, church activities, or best practices in child protection.

By implementing this Child Protection Policy, Generocity Church demonstrates its commitment to providing a safe environment for all children and young people involved in our programs and activities. We recognise that child protection is everyone's responsibility, and we are dedicated to fostering a culture where children are valued, respected, and protected.

**Safer Churches - Child Protection Policy | Last Reviewed: May, 2025 | Approved By: GC Board**

# Safer Churches – Roles and Responsibilities

At Generocity Church, we are committed to providing a safe environment for all people, particularly children, youth, and vulnerable individuals. Our Safer Churches framework is designed to ensure that safety remains a priority in all aspects of church life. The following roles and responsibilities are crucial for implementing and maintaining this framework.

## Safer Churches Officer

The Safer Churches Officer for Generocity Church is Executive Pastor Angela Mitchell. She is responsible for implementing and overseeing the Safer Churches Framework within Generocity Church. Their duties include:

1. Acting as the agency/organisation's hub:

- Serving as the primary point of contact for all Safer Churches matters.

2. Assisting workers:

- Providing guidance and support for workers dealing with Safer Churches concerns.

3. Promoting awareness and adherence:

- Educating staff and volunteers about the Safer Churches Framework.

4. Implementing the Safer Churches Framework:

- Ensuring policies and procedures are followed within the organisation.

5. Preparing reports:

- Presenting safety reports to the Governance Board.

6. Keeping records:

- Maintaining documentation related to the Safer Churches Framework.

7. Receiving concerns:

- Listening to concerns raised by workers and guiding them through the response procedure.

8. Making mandatory reporting calls:

- Reporting concerns to government agencies as required by law.

## **Ministry Coordinators / Program Leaders**

Ministry Coordinators and Program Leaders play a crucial role in maintaining safety within their specific areas of responsibility. Their duties include:

1. Implementing the Safer Churches Framework:

- Ensuring compliance with policies and procedures within their ministries.

2. Monitoring workers:

- Ensuring volunteers and staff adhere to safety standards.

3. Providing reasonable instruction:

- Offering guidance to workers on maintaining emotionally, spiritually, and physically safe environments.

4. Reporting to the Safer Churches Officer:

- Escalating any suspicions, allegations, incidents, or breaches of the relevant code of conduct.

## Management Group Members

Management Group Members are responsible for overseeing the effective implementation of the Safer Churches Framework. Their responsibilities include:

1. Maintaining a culture of safety:

- Encouraging a proactive approach to safety within church activities.

2. Liaising with the Safer Churches Team:

- Ensuring communication between teams for effective safety management.

3. Reporting to the Governance Board:

- Providing updates on the implementation and effectiveness of the Safer Churches Framework.

## Governance Board

The Governance Board holds the ultimate responsibility for ensuring the Safer Churches Framework is implemented and maintained. Their responsibilities include:

1. Ensuring the safety of all persons:

- Providing oversight for the welfare of children, youth, and vulnerable individuals.

2. Endorsing the Safer Churches Framework:

- Approving and supporting its implementation.

3. Assigning responsibilities:

- Delegating roles to ensure the effective management of safety concerns.

4. Monitoring compliance:

- Regularly reviewing and assessing the effectiveness of the framework.

5. Ensuring mandatory reporting obligations are met:

- Confirming that any disclosures of harm are appropriately reported to the authorities.

6. Fulfilling legislative requirements:

- Ensuring compliance with legal obligations related to child protection and safety standards.

By clearly defining these roles and responsibilities, Generocity Church ensures a robust framework for maintaining safety and accountability within all areas of ministry. Ongoing training, support, and review processes will be in place to uphold the highest standards of care and protection.

**Safer Churches - Child Protection Policy | Last Reviewed: May, 2025 | Approved By: GC Board**

# Safer Churches – Protection Guidelines

At Generocity Church, we are committed to providing a safe environment for all people, especially children and young people involved in our programs and activities. The following guidelines are designed to protect children and youth, as well as the volunteers and staff who work with them.

## Guidelines for Events, Activities, and Daily Operations

### 1. Event Planning:

- Complete a comprehensive Event Planning Checklist for all church events involving children or youth.
- Conduct a thorough risk assessment for each event or activity, considering factors such as venue safety, transportation, and emergency procedures.  
[zz Event Risk Assessment and Action Plan](#)
- Ensure appropriate adult-to-child ratios are maintained at all times:
  - Maintain a minimum of 4 adult workers (over 18 years) present for all programs.
  - Adhere to a 1:8 ratio for low-risk activities and up to 1:2 for high-risk activities.

### 2. Supervision:

- Implement a "two-adult rule" where no adult is ever alone with a child.
- Maintain clear lines of sight in all areas where children's activities take place.

### 3. Transportation:

- Obtain written parental consent for all off-site activities using our [zz Liability Release Form - Youth Activities](#)

- Ensure all drivers have valid licences, appropriate insurance, and have completed our [zz Volunteer Driver Application Form](#).
- Never allow a staff member or volunteer to transport a single child alone.

#### 4. Communication:

- Implement clear policies on communication with children, including guidelines for social media use.
- Obtain parental consent before photographing or videoing children, respecting their privacy and dignity. This can be captured during the online sign up for the event or registration form, if there is no online event form, use [zz Liability Release Form - Youth Activities](#)

#### 5. Physical Environment:

- Ensure all areas used by children are safe and appropriate for their age group.
- Regularly inspect play equipment and facilities for potential hazards.
- Implement infection control measures as outlined in our [PLACEHOLDER: Infection Control Best Practice Guide], including regular cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces.

## Specific Considerations for Child and Youth Protection

### 1. Age-Appropriate Supervision:

- Tailor supervision strategies to the developmental needs of different age groups.
- Ensure co-ed programs have both male and female workers present to provide appropriate support and oversight.

### 2. Toileting and Personal Care:

- Implement clear procedures for assisting children with toileting or personal care needs.
- Always have two unrelated adults present when assisting children with personal needs.

3. Discipline:

- Develop and communicate clear behavioural expectations for children and youth.
- Use positive reinforcement and redirection techniques for discipline.
- Strictly forbid any form of physical punishment or verbal abuse.

4. Emotional and Spiritual Safety:

- Create an environment where children feel respected, valued, and listened to.
- Be sensitive to children's emotional and spiritual needs, avoiding any form of manipulation or coercion.

5. Cultural Sensitivity:

- Respect and accommodate cultural differences in all gatherings.
- Ensure programs and activities are inclusive and culturally appropriate.

## Safety Measures for Volunteers and Staff Interacting with Children

1. Screening and Recruitment:

- Implement rigorous screening processes for all staff and volunteers working with children, including:
  - Completion of a [zz Volunteer Child/Youth Leaders Application & Registration Form](#)

- Thorough background checks, including Working with Children Checks
- Reference checks (at least two referees)
- Ensure volunteers in supervisory roles have been partners/members of the church for at least 6 months after acceptance.

### 2. Training:

- Provide comprehensive child protection training for all staff and volunteers, including:
  - Initial child protection training as part of their induction (safer churches training)
  - Regular refresher training at least every three years
  - Ongoing education about child protection issues and best practices

### 3. Code of Conduct:

- Read and adhere to our Codes of Conduct
  - [zz Code of Conduct - Paid Staff and Ministerial](#)
  - [zz Code of Conduct - Volunteer Worker](#)
- Include guidelines on appropriate behaviour, physical contact, and communication with children.

### 4. Reporting Procedures:

- Establish clear procedures for reporting suspicions or allegations of abuse.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their reporting obligations, including mandatory reporting requirements where applicable.

### 5. Supervision and Support:

- Provide ongoing supervision and support for staff and volunteers working with children.
- Conduct regular performance reviews that include child safety elements.

6. Personal Boundaries:

- Educate staff and volunteers on maintaining appropriate personal and professional boundaries with children and youth.
- Prohibit any form of favouritism or special treatment of individual children.

7. Social Media and Technology:

- Follow our Social Media Policy and its guidelines for online interactions with children and youth. [zz Social Media Policy](#)
- Prohibit private messaging or social media connections between staff/volunteers and children.

By adhering to these comprehensive protection guidelines, Generocity Church demonstrates its commitment to creating a safe and nurturing environment for all children and young people involved in our programs and activities. These guidelines reflect our understanding that child protection is everyone's responsibility, and we are dedicated to fostering a culture where children are valued, respected, and protected.

**Safer Churches - Child Protection Policy | Last Reviewed: May, 2025 | Approved By: GC Board**

# Safer Churches – Reporting and Response

At Generocity Church, we take our responsibility to protect children and young people very seriously. This section outlines our procedures for reporting child protection concerns and our strategies for responding to allegations or incidents.

## Procedures for Reporting Child Protection Concerns

### 1. Mandatory Reporting:

- All staff and volunteers must be aware of their mandatory reporting obligations as per ACC NSW legislation.
- Mandatory reporters must report suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities as soon as reasonably possible: preferably within 24 hours of becoming aware of an alleged or perceived incident, or up to 5 working days for any alleged non-compliance with this policy or Generocity Church's Code of Conduct.

### 2. Reporting Process:

#### a. Report to Local Safer Churches Person/Team:

- Report concerns to one of the appointed Local Safer Churches People, except when a disclosure occurs at a program or event, or a Child's/Young Person's immediate safety is at risk (sexual and physical abuse).
- In cases of immediate danger to a child, contact the police immediately by calling 000.

#### b. Complete Documentation:

- Complete the Generocity Churches incident report as soon as possible after making a report.
- The Local Safer Churches Person/Team will keep a local church log, upholding privacy principles.

c. Take Appropriate Action:

- The Local Safer Churches Person/Team will assist with:
  - Police/government Child Protection agency reporting

3. Reportable Conduct:

- If the allegation is made about any staff or volunteer, local procedures and laws must be followed and a report made available to Generocity Church, as soon as possible.
- The Senior Pastor or delegate is responsible for making these reports.

4. Confidentiality:

- All reports and the details of the reporting process must be kept strictly confidential to protect the privacy of all parties involved.
- Information should only be shared on a need-to-know basis and as required by law.

## Response Strategies for Addressing Allegations or Incidents

1. Immediate Response:

- Ensure the immediate safety of the child or young person.
- If there is immediate danger, contact the police (000).
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by reporting.
- Do not confront the alleged perpetrator.

2. Internal Investigation:

- The Safe Ministry Officer/Team will conduct an internal investigation in accordance with the organisations policies (Safer Places, Risk Management, WHS etc).

- All investigations will be conducted fairly, impartially, and in a timely manner.
- The investigation process will be child-focused, upholding the rights of children and young people in line with Child Safe Standards.

3. Suspension of Duties:

- Any staff member or volunteer who is the subject of an allegation of abuse will be immediately suspended from all child-related duties pending the outcome of all investigations.

4. Support for Affected Parties:

- Provide appropriate support and pastoral care for all parties involved, including the child, the family, and the alleged perpetrator.
- Offer access to professional counselling services where necessary.

5. Cooperation with Authorities:

- Fully cooperate with police and other relevant authorities in their investigations.
- Provide all necessary information and assistance as required.

6. Communication:

- Maintain clear communication with all parties involved, keeping them informed of the process and decisions made, while respecting confidentiality requirements.

## **Roles and Responsibilities in Handling Child Protection Issues**

1. Governance Board:

- Endorse the Safe Ministry Framework.
- Assign responsibilities for the management of the Framework.
- Monitor and review the implementation of the Framework.

- Ensure disclosures of harm are reported to all relevant regulatory bodies.
- Fulfil relevant legislative 'head of agency roles' in child protection-related investigations.

### 2. Senior Pastor:

- Ensure all child protection policies and procedures are implemented and followed.
- Make final decisions on disciplinary actions based on investigation outcomes.
- Report to the church board on child protection matters.

### 3. Safe Ministry Officer/Team:

- Receive and document all reports of child protection concerns.
- Conduct initial risk assessments and determine appropriate actions.
- Liaise with relevant authorities and oversee internal investigations.
- Implement procedures in relation to responding to Safe Ministry concerns, including child protection.
- Receive reports of incidents and/or concerns of risk of harm in relation to children or workers.

### 4. Ministry Coordinators/Program Leaders:

- Implement child protection policies and related procedures applicable to their ministry program/events.
- Monitor workers they oversee to ensure they are acting safely and according to policy and procedure.
- Provide reasonable instruction to workers regarding the provision of safe environments.
- Report to the Safe Ministry Officer any suspicions, allegations, incidents, or potential breaches of the relevant code of conduct.

### 5. All Staff and Volunteers:

- Be vigilant in identifying signs of abuse or neglect.

- Report any concerns immediately to the Safe Ministry Officer/Team.
- Maintain confidentiality and follow all child protection procedures.
- Take reasonable care that their actions do not adversely affect others' health and safety.
- Report all incidents or hazards to the Health & Safety Officer (or to a Team Leader) as soon as practicable.

### 6. Church Board:

- Regularly review and update child protection policies and procedures.
- Ensure adequate resources are allocated for child protection training and implementation.

By implementing these comprehensive reporting and response procedures, Generocity Church demonstrates its commitment to creating a safe environment for all children and young people. We recognize that child protection is an ongoing responsibility, and we are dedicated to continuously improving our practices to ensure the highest standards of safety and care.

**Safer Churches - Child Protection Policy | Last Reviewed: May, 2025 | Approved By: GC Board**

# Safer Churches – Training and Education

At Generocity Church, we recognize that effective child protection relies on well-informed and skilled staff and volunteers. Our training and education program is designed to ensure that all individuals working with children and young people are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to create a safe environment and respond appropriately to child protection concerns. Links for external websites are provided below.

## Training Requirements for Staff and Volunteers on Child Protection

### 1. Mandatory Training:

- As part of the induction process for new staff and volunteers
- At a minimum of every three years for all existing staff and volunteers
- First timers are to complete the Volunteer Essentials and then each time thereafter, Refresher Course will be required. Credentialed pastors are required to do the Induction Course 2nd Ed. There is a small fee for each course but all staff and volunteers are required to complete this as part of their obligations.
- All staff and volunteers must complete comprehensive child protection training following the link provided here: [ACC Safer Churches Training](#) and follow the headings for completion.
- All staff and volunteers must complete and provide a current Working with Children's Check for verification as part of their obligations. This can be applied for and renewed here: [Apply-for-a-working-with-children-check](#)

### 2. Training Content:

- Understanding the concepts of child protection
- Knowledge of indicators of child abuse and neglect
- Reporting procedures for child protection concerns
- The church's child protection policies and procedures
- Creating a child-safe environment
- Appropriate boundaries and behavior when working with children
- Cultural safety and working with diverse communities
- Responding to disclosures of abuse
- Record keeping and information sharing responsibilities
- The child protection training program shall cover:

### 3. Specialized Training:

- Safe Ministry Officers/Team members
- Senior Pastor and church leadership
- Those working with vulnerable populations (e.g., children with disabilities)
- Additional training shall be provided for those in leadership or specialised roles, such as:

### 4. Training Delivery:

- Training shall be delivered by individuals with appropriate qualifications and experience in child protection.
- A combination of face-to-face and online training modules may be used to ensure accessibility and comprehensive coverage of topics.

## **Education Programs to Raise Awareness of Child Protection Issues**

### 1. Awareness Campaigns:

- Conduct regular awareness campaigns within the church community to highlight the importance of child protection.
- Use various mediums such as newsletters, posters, and announcements during services to reinforce child protection messages.

## 2. Parent and Community Education:

- Recognizing signs of abuse
- How to respond to disclosures
- Online safety for children
- Positive parenting strategies
  
- Offer educational sessions for parents and caregivers on child protection topics, including:

## 3. Child-Focused Education:

- Personal safety
- Healthy relationships
- How to seek help if they feel unsafe
  
- Implement age-appropriate programs for children and young people to learn about:

## 4. Cultural Safety Education:

- Provide education on cultural safety, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and those from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Ensure all education programs are inclusive and culturally appropriate.

# Regular Updates and Refresher Courses

## 1. Annual Refresher Training:

- Conduct annual refresher sessions for all staff and volunteers to reinforce key child protection concepts and update on any policy changes.

2. Ongoing Professional Development:

- Encourage staff and volunteers to attend external workshops, conferences, or seminars related to child protection to enhance their knowledge and skills.

3. Policy and Procedure Updates:

- Whenever there are significant changes to child protection legislation or church policies, provide immediate updates and training to all relevant staff and volunteers.

4. Incident-Based Learning:

- Use de-identified case studies or lessons learned from incidents (while maintaining confidentiality) to educate staff and volunteers on practical application of child protection principles.

5. E-learning Modules:

- Develop and maintain a series of online learning modules that staff and volunteers can access for self-paced refresher training between formal training sessions.

## Training Documentation and Compliance

1. Training Records:

- Date of training
  - Content covered
  - Attendance records
  - Trainer details
- 
- Maintain detailed records of all child protection training completed by staff and volunteers, including:

2. Compliance Monitoring:

- Regularly audit training records to ensure all staff and volunteers are up-to-date with required training.
- Implement a system to notify individuals and their supervisors when refresher training is due.

### 3. Training Evaluation:

- Conduct regular evaluations of the training program to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.
- Seek feedback from participants to continually improve the training content and delivery.

By implementing this comprehensive training and education program, Generocity Church demonstrates its commitment to creating a culture of child safety. We recognize that ongoing education is crucial in maintaining a safe environment for all children and young people involved in our programs and activities.

**Safer Churches - Child Protection Policy | Last Reviewed: May, 2025 |**

**Approved By: GC Board**