

# Helpful Definitions

## SAFE PLACES

Take steps to keep vulnerable people safe from spiritual, physical, sexual or emotional abuse and /or bullying.

## FRIENDLY PLACES

Value, respect and include all people.

## SAFETY OFFICER

Also known as risk management officer, responsible for the oversight of the implementation of this Policy.

## SAFE LEADER

Has been through a recruitment process, understands responsibilities, is supervised, and is an accountable team player.

## SAFE PROGRAM

All risks have been assessed and events thought through and planned, these programs have had permission to proceed from their ministry coordinator (a role that may be undertaken by a pastor, elder, deacons or other senior leader).

## TEAM LEADERS

Responsible for individual teams and programs. They will jointly recruit team members and complete safety management plans and for their individual programs.

## TEAM MEMBERS (AND JUNIOR TEAM MEMBERS)

Responsible for working with their team to minister in the context of programs.

## OUR POLICY

Our policy applies to all pastors, elders, staff members and volunteer workers associated within the ministry of the Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT. Our policy takes into account:

### NSW

- The Ombudsman Act
- The Commission for Children and Young People Act
- Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection)
- Children Legislation Amendment 2009

### ACT

- Children & Young People Act (1999)
- Protection Orders Act (2001)

# More Information

## OUR SAFE CHURCH POLICY IS SUPPORTED BY:

- Creating Safe Spaces Recommendations
- Creating Safe Spaces Workshop Workbooks
- Keeping the Balance Leader's Conduct Covenant
- Responding to Kids @ Risk Procedure

## REPORTING SUSPECTED RISK OF SIGNIFICANT HARM (ABUSE)

**NSW:** Child Protection Help Line 13 21 11

### Counselling Help National:

Kids Help Line 1800 55 1800

Lifeline 13 11 14

Child Abuse Prevention Service (24 hr) 02 9716 8000

Family Crisis Centre (24 hr) 02 9622 0522

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If you'd like more information or would like to discuss anything about the Green Point Baptist Church Safe Church Policy, please contact GPBC office on 4369 1585 or email: [office@gpbc.net.au](mailto:office@gpbc.net.au).



# Safe Church Policy

**Green Point Baptist Church**

An Initiative of NSW & ACT Baptist Churches

**2019**



# Safe Church Policy

## Why a policy?

**Protection of vulnerable people is our responsibility.**

Our mandate comes directly from God. God identified classes of vulnerable people who were to be protected and given special care and treatment in society because of their powerlessness (Exodus 22:21-22, Deuteronomy 10:17-19, Jeremiah 22:2-4, James 1:27)

This policy takes into consideration all vulnerable people in our church programs, whether they be children, young people, elderly, those with disabilities or the emotionally and or spiritually vulnerable (i.e. those under the authority of church leaders).

We affirm that all people have the right to be emotionally and physically safe, respected, and have their views and opinions valued at all times.

We also live in a country that legislates for people's safety, particularly in the area of child protection. Our policy has been developed to help us live out our Biblical mandate and our responsibilities under NSW legislation.

### **Our policy has the following goals:**

To minimise the risk of abuse, ministry misconduct and the misuse of positional power within the church.

To ensure that all cases of suspected abuse and ministry misconduct are handled in a consistent, unbiased and thorough manner.

To ensure that leaders and programs are safe.

To ensure that all people are respected and valued, irrespective of their gender, age, country of origin, cultural heritage, socio-economic background or ability.

## Safe Leaders

**We commit to:**

### **a. Safe recruitment of leaders.**

We will screen all prospective Ministry Coordinators Team Leaders and Team Members in our ministries, before they are appointed.

For those working with children we will recruit using the Working with Children Check Guidelines.

We will have a minimum church attendance requirement for all prospective volunteer leaders.

### **b. Adequate training of leaders.**

We require that all leaders attend an Introduction to Creating Safe Spaces (or SCTA endorsed) workshop within their first year of ministry and attend a refresher workshop every 3 years.

We require all leaders to attend additional ministry-specific training as required by our church leadership.

### **c. Continued supervision of leaders.**

We commit to ongoing leadership training, supervision and support for leaders.

All leaders will agree to follow our Leader's Conduct Covenant.

### **d. Responding to allegations of risk of harm(abuse) and serious ministry misconduct.**

All leaders will report disclosures or suspicions of child abuse, according to NSW legislation by using the procedure in Responding to Kids @ Risk (i.e. mandatory reporting).

Where a leader has an allegation of ministry misconduct made against them the Association of Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT Complaints Process will be followed.

## Safe Programs

**We commit to:**

### **a. Emotionally safe environments.**

We will offer participants, including children, the opportunity to provide input in the programs and the activities in which they participate by; fostering and valuing their ideas, and encouraging participation in all areas of the life of the church, as far as is sensible and practical.

We will obtain appropriate information relating to the program participants, including children's health and family situation, to ensure that we are able to care for their physical and emotional needs.

### **b. Safe physical environments.**

All leaders will follow the Safe Church Procedures for Safe Physical Environments.

Leaders will exercise a duty of care through the use of forms, checklists and templates in the Safe Church manual for establishment and maintenance of safe environments in our church.

A "Church Safety" Officer or team will be appointed to ensure that the following areas are incorporated into establishing and maintaining a safe physical environment: fire safety, building safety, first aid, food safety practices, risk assessment for activities, adequate ministry supervision for activities, transport, critical incident and emergency recommendations. Team Leaders are to complete a ministry approval process annually. Team Leaders submit their plans to their Church leadership who grant ministry approval.