

Austral-Asian Christian Church (AACC) Child Safe Policy & Procedures

Part I: Child Safe Policy

1. Our Belief

- 1.1. All children or youth have the right to be respected and valued as well as feel emotionally, physically and spiritually safe at all times.
- 1.2. A child or youth should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and youth and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

2. The purpose of AACC child safe policy is to:

- 2.1. Show staff, volunteers, parents, guardians, carers and children that AACC is committed to the safety of children and youth within its programs, ministries and events, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, disability and family/social background.
- 2.2. Set out appropriate standards of behaviour and practices for people working and volunteering with children and youth
- 2.3. Increase staff and volunteer awareness of risks to children and youth and the strategies in place to minimize them
- 2.4. Build staff and volunteer knowledge of how to identify if a child or youth is, or may be, at risk and respond appropriately
- 2.5. Comply with the legal requirement in Australia and South Australia, namely the Children and youth (Safety) Act 2017 and Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016

3. Definition

- 3.1. A child is a person who is under the age of 18 years. Sometimes, older children can be referred to as youth. Under this definition, the AACC ministries and programs that are child related include but not limited to,
 - AWANA and AWANA Trek
 - Cantonese Youth Fellowship (CYF)
 - Mandarin Youth Group(MYF)
 - English Youth Group
 - BB Worship
 - BB Playgroup
 - Chinese Classes
 - Child minding during various church, fellowship or cell group activities.

- 3.2. Staff is anyone working for or on behalf of AACC with a financial gain.
- 3.3. Volunteer is anyone working for or on behalf of AACC without a financial gain.
- 3.4. Harm and Risk of Harm include but are not limited to physical and emotional harm, family violence, sexual harm, neglect, bullying.

4. Statement of commitment to child safety

- 4.1. AACC is committed to ministering to children and youth by providing a church environment that is physically, emotionally and spiritually safe.
- 4.2. AACC is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children and youth and will endeavour to provide a safe and supportive environment for children and youth by the following safeguarding measures: recruitment and screening processes, training and professional development, code of conduct, child safety officer, procedure for reporting and complaints, safe practices and review.
- 4.3. The following values reflect the culture that we are committed to promoting within AACC; due diligence, integrity, duty of care, transparency, inclusivity, collaborative ministry, Christian ethics and the gospel principles.

5. We aim to provide a safe environment to children and youth by:

- 5.1. Minimizing the risk of harm, misconduct and the misuse of positional power.
- 5.2. Fostering thorough handling of all cases of suspected harm and misconduct.
- 5.3. Fostering safety for leaders and programs.
- 5.4. Fostering individual values and nurturing mutual respect.

6. We recognise that:

- 6.1. The welfare of the child is paramount and is everyone's responsibility as outlined in the National Framework for Protection Australia's Children.
- 6.2. All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- 6.3. Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experience, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

- 6.4. Working in partnership with children, youth, their parents, carers and other organizations/agencies is essential in promoting youth's welfare.

7. Recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers

- 7.1. All staff and volunteers should obtain a Working with Children Checks (WWCC), or any WWCC equivalent during the transition period. The WWCC can only be performed by DHS online.
- 7.2. The program-in-charge for the ministry shall appoint volunteers to the program according to the result of the WWCC, outcome of interview (if any), suitability of the volunteer in the ministry.
- 7.3. No participation in the ministry is allowed before appointment is made for the volunteer by the program-in-charge.
- 7.4. This recruitment and screening process applies to all AWANA/AWANA Trek leaders, mentors and fellowship committee members of Cantonese Youth Fellowship, Mandarin Youth Group and English Youth Group, helpers of BB worship and BB playgroup, teachers and teaching assistants of Chinese Classes.
- 7.5. Whilst helpers in child-minding services in church, fellowship or cell group activities are exempted from this recruitment and screening process, at least 2 helpers shall simultaneously be present at the time of service for any activities held at church premises.

8. Training and professional development of staff and volunteers

- 8.1. All staff and volunteers are entrusted with the authority to influence other people. This influence carries with it great power and the ability to lead others and guide, teach and encourage. They need to undergo initial and ongoing training to ensure that they are aware of the responsibilities that come from the role they have.
- 8.2. It is also recommended that ongoing professional development be provided by way of regular team meetings, praying together, sharing meals together and planning together. All staff and volunteers are encouraged to meet together as well as attend more formal training events which will include regular updates and refreshers on the initial training.
- 8.3. They are also asked to attend The AACC Safe Environment for Children and Youth Training (held every 6 months) and repeat the same training every 3 years.

9. Code of Conduct

- 9.1. A code of conduct lists what behaviour is acceptable and what behaviour is unacceptable. It is a straightforward guide of behavioural dos and don'ts.
- 9.2. Staff and volunteers working with children or youth must understand and sign the "AACC Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers working with children and youth" as seen in Appendix I.
- 9.3. Staff and volunteers should monitor the interaction between children / youth and ensure that no bullying or harassment by or against them.

10. Child Safety Officer

AACC appoints a Child Safety Officer (CSO) to ensure that the AACC Child Safe Policy and Procedures are being followed. The CSO is responsible for:

- 10.1. Liaising with the Child Safe Environment accredited trainer to coordinate the staff and volunteers of children or youth related ministries.
- 10.2. Administering WWCC checks, provides assistance to staff and volunteers who need to obtain WWCC, keep a record of all staff and volunteers who had obtained a WWCC (or WWCC equivalent during the transition period).
- 10.3. Handling all the complaints and subsequent follow-up actions in cooperation with the program-in-charge and the CMC.

11. Review and update

- 11.1. This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or when necessary, as circumstances arise.

- 11.2. Review and approval history:

Date	Version	Approved by	Signature
	Initial Approval	CMC Chairman	
	Review		

Part II: Child Safe Procedures

1. Procedures for obtaining a Working with Children Check (WWCC)

- 1.1. Volunteers who would like to participate in a child-related program shall express their interest to the program-in-charge. The program-in-charge then provides the name and email address of the volunteer to CSO for a WWCC check.
- 1.2. CSO initiates a WWCC application for the volunteer, by providing the name and email address of the volunteer to the Screening Unit of Department of Human Services (DHS).
- 1.3. Screening Unit of DHS will then email the volunteer, asking them to,
 - 1.3.1. Log into the system
 - 1.3.2. Confirm their identity
 - 1.3.3. Complete and submit the application
- 1.4. The Screening Unit no longer issues screening clearance certificates for any check.
- 1.5. Individuals will be notified of the outcome of a check by email.
- 1.6. Where an organisation has initiated an application on behalf of a person, the individual and the requesting organisation will be notified of the outcome of a check by email.
- 1.7. WWCC is free for volunteers and is valid for 5 years from the date of issue (it is valid for volunteer work only).

2. Procedures for reporting suspicion that a child or youth may be at risk

- 2.1. In order to ensure the child's or the youth's safety and wellbeing, all staff and volunteers need to take due care not to overlook the physical or behavioural signs or indicators of child or youth harm/risk of harm. The staff or volunteer may report suspicion of child abuse to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) (13 14 78) directly.
- 2.2. The staff or volunteer can, at their discretion, inform the program-in-charge of the related ministry/program of the incident or their report to CARL. The program-in-charge should then report the concern to the CSO who will forward it to the CMC if the suspicion is substantiated. The CMC should

follow-up by brainstorming any possible strategies, which includes talking to the child or the youth, their parents/carers, consulting a professional or log a report to the authority basing on the degree of seriousness of the case.

3. Procedures for complaints of breaches of the child safe policy and follow-up

- 3.1. Complaints concerning child safety can be made to the program-in-charge, the CSO, staff or the pastor of AACC
- 3.2. Where a staff or a volunteer has an allegation of misconduct made against them, they will temporarily be withheld from duties which involve contacting children or youth.
- 3.3. The program-in-charge, CSO and the CMC should investigate the validity of the claim and at the same time provide support to alleged victims and perpetrators. Depending on the complexity of the case involved, appropriate help from professionals may need to be sought in order to arrive at a just and fair resolution.

4. Procedures for safety of AWANA activities

- 4.1. **Sign in/out system** - a sign in/out system should be maintained for all AWANA programs with an aim to:
 - 4.1.1. Let leaders or teachers know who is actually present at the activity
 - 4.1.2. Clarify who is responsible for each individual and when this responsibility begins and ends.
 - 4.1.3. Prevents a child or youth to find their own way in or out of a program without appropriate supervision.
 - 4.1.4. Prevent a child or youth from leaving the program unaccompanied by an adult or being collected by an inappropriate person.
 - 4.1.5. Serve as a record to ensure that all in attendance are present and accounted for in case of emergency evacuation.

4.2. Identifying Leaders

In order to easily identify leaders and those authorised to work with children and youth during a program or activity, all leaders in the children's programs should wear uniforms and name tags that display their name.

4.3. Personal Particulars of children or youth

- 4.3.1. For the purpose of operational safety, the current family contact details and relevant information regarding the child's or the youth's

medical history and current health situation should be kept in AWANA's database.

- 4.3.2. This information must be kept confidential and be accessible only to those people who need to use it.

4.4. Photo-taking and publishing images of children and youth

- 4.4.1. As a general rule, photo-taking of AWANA activities must be made by a specifically appointed person and features the activities and groups, and not on individuals. Photos featuring the full face and body shots of children or youth taking part in activities should be avoided as there may be a heightened risk of images being misused.
- 4.4.2. Excessive photos taken for an individual, including children, youth, church leaders/workers/volunteers, by another individual on cameras or personal mobile devices should not be allowed to minimize the chance of photo misuse.
- 4.4.3. Only use photos or images of a child or youth for church use and promotions(printed form or online sharing included), if the permission/disclaimer has been given (either written or verbally) by the parents or carers.

4.5. First Aid Kits

- 4.5.1. A suitable, up-to-date and accessible first aid kit must be kept in a clearly visualized position and is available for use at all times when there is an AWANA activity running at AACC.
- 4.5.2. The church administration is responsible for regular replenishment and update of the First Aid kit in compliance with Australian Standards.
- 4.5.3. A portable First Aid Kit should be brought along whenever there is an AWANA activity running outside AACC.
- 4.5.4. All AWANA activities should have a qualified first aider present.

4.6. Dealing with an incident or emergency

- 4.6.1. In an emergency, all leaders of the AWANA have a duty of care. Common sense dictates that in an emergency, whilst leaders should not act beyond their capabilities and qualifications, they are expected to do what they can to take appropriate action, including being aware of the action plans and emergency instructions and following them.

- 4.6.2. When an accident or emergency occurs, medical advice should be sought regardless of the apparent degree of the injury. It is important that relevant family members are notified.
- 4.6.3. Where accidents requiring first aid involve a child, the parent of the child that is present should be responsible for the first aid, with the clear understanding that the first aiders are there to support the parent in the administering of the first aid.

5. Procedures for safety of Cantonese Youth Fellowship, Mandarin and English Youth Group activities.

AACC youth fellowship/group composed of mostly youth over 18 years of age, and a small percentage (less than 20%) of youth who are 15-18 years old. As their degree of autonomy is higher than that of AWANA and AWANA Trek, simpler safe practices should be adopted.

- 5.1. **An attendance system** (for under 18 only) should be maintained for the leaders to know who is actually present at the activity. It also served as a record to ensure that all in attendance are present and accounted for in case of emergency evacuation.

5.2. Personal Particulars of youth

- 5.2.1. For the purpose of operational safety, the current family contact details and relevant information regarding the youth's medical history and current health situation should be kept in the fellowship/group database.
- 5.2.2. This information must be kept confidential and be accessible only to those people who need to use it.

5.3. Photo-taking and publishing images of youth

- 5.3.1. As a general rule, photo-taking of fellowship activities must be made by a specifically appointed person and features the activities and groups, and not on individuals. Photos featuring the full face and body shots of youth taking part in activities should be avoided as there may be a heightened risk of images being misused.
- 5.3.2. Excessive photos taken for an individual, including youth, church leaders/workers/volunteers, by another individual on cameras or personal mobile devices should not be allowed to minimize the chance of photo misuse.
- 5.3.3. Only use photos or images of a youth for church use and promotions(printed form or online sharing included), if the

permission/disclaimer has been given (either written or verbally) by the youth.

5.4. First Aid Kits

- 5.4.1. A suitable, up-to-date and accessible first aid kit must be kept in a clearly visualized position and is available for use at all times when there is a fellowship/group activity running at AACC.
- 5.4.2. The church administration is responsible for regular replenishment and update of the First Aid kit in compliance with Australian Standards.
- 5.4.3. A portable First Aid Kit should be brought along whenever there is a fellowship/group activity running outside AACC.
- 5.4.4. All fellowship/group activities should have a qualified first aider present.

5.5. Dealing with an incident or emergency

- 5.5.1. In an emergency, all leaders of the fellowship have a duty of care. Common sense dictates that in an emergency, whilst leaders should not act beyond their capabilities and qualifications, they are expected to do what they can to take appropriate action, including being aware of the action plans and emergency instructions and following them.
- 5.5.2. When an accident or emergency occurs, medical advice should be sought regardless of the apparent degree of the injury. It is important that relevant family members are notified.

6 Procedures for safety of BB worship and BB Playgroup activities

Parents are usually present in a BB worship or BB Playgroup activity, hence only simplified safe procedures are needed in these activities

- 6.1 An attendance system should be maintained for the leaders to know who is actually present at the activity. It also serves as a record to ensure that all in attendance were present and accounted for in case of emergency evacuation.
- 6.2 Photo-taking and publishing images of children and parents
 - 6.2.1 As a general rule, photo-taking of BB worship or BB playgroup activities must be made by a specifically appointed person and features the activities and groups, and not on individuals. Photos

featuring the full face and body shots of children and parents taking part in activities should be avoided as there may be a heightened risk of images being misused.

- 6.2.2 Excessive photos taken for an individual, including children, parents, church leaders/workers/volunteers, by another individual on cameras or personal mobile devices should not be allowed to minimize the chance of photo misuse.
- 6.2.3 Only use photos or images of children and parents for church use and promotions, (printed form or online sharing included) if the permission/disclaimer has been given (either written or verbally) by the parents.

7 Procedures for safety of Chinese classes activities

- 7.1 **Sign in/out system** - A sign in/out system should be maintained for all Chinese classes with an aim to:

- 7.1.1 Let teachers/teaching assistants know who is actually present at the activity
- 7.1.2 Clarify who is responsible for each individual and when this responsibility begins and ends.
- 7.1.3 Prevents a child or youth to find their own way in or out of a program without appropriate supervision.
- 7.1.4 Prevent a child or youth from leaving the program unaccompanied by an adult or being collected by an inappropriate person.
- 7.1.5 Serve as a record to ensure that all in attendance are present and accounted for in case of emergency evacuation.

7.2 Identifying teachers

In order to easily identify those authorised to work with children and youth, all teachers/teaching assistants in the Chinese classes should wear a name tag that displays their name.

7.3 Personal Particulars of children or youth

- 7.3.1 For the purpose of operational safety, the current family contact details and relevant information regarding the child's or the youth's medical history and current health situation should be kept in Chinese classes' database.
- 7.3.2 This information must be kept confidential and be accessible only to those people who need to use it.

7.4 Photo-taking and publishing images of children and youth

- 7.4.1 As a general rule, photo-taking of Chinese classes activities must be made by a specifically appointed person and features the activities and groups, and not on individuals. Photos featuring the full face and body shots of children or youth taking part in activities should be avoided as there may be a heightened risk of images being misused.
- 7.4.2 Excessive photos taken for an individual, including children, youth, church leaders/workers/volunteers, by another individual on cameras or personal mobile devices should not be allowed to minimize the chance of photo misuse.
- 7.4.3 Only use photos or images of a child or youth for church use and promotions(printed form or online sharing included), if the permission/disclaimer has been given (either written or verbally) by the parents or carers.

7.5 First Aid Kits

- 7.5.1 A suitable, up-to-date and accessible first aid kit must be kept in a clearly visualized position and is available for use at all times when there is a Chinese class activity running at AACC.
- 7.5.2 The church administration is responsible for regular replenishment and update of the First Aid kit in compliance with Australian Standards.
- 7.5.3 A portable First Aid Kit should be brought along whenever there is a Chinese class activity running outside AACC.
- 7.5.4 All Chinese classes activities should have a qualified first aider present.

7.6 Dealing with an incident or emergency

- 7.6.1 In an emergency, all teachers/teaching assistants have a duty of care. Common sense dictates that in an emergency, whilst leaders should not act beyond their capabilities and qualifications, they are expected to do what they can to take appropriate action, including being aware of the action plans and emergency instructions and following them.

- 7.6.2 When an accident or emergency occurs, medical advice should be sought regardless of the apparent degree of the injury. It is important that relevant family members are notified.
- 7.6.3 Where accidents requiring first aid involve a child, the parent of the child that is present should be responsible for the first aid, with the clear understanding that the first aiders are there to support the parent in the administering of the first aid.

Appendix I

AACC Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers working with children and youth

All staff and volunteers of AACC are responsible for promoting the safety and well-being of children and youth by:

1. Adhering to AACC's child safe policy at all times and taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and youth
2. Treating everyone with respect and honesty (this includes staff, volunteers, students, children, youth and parents)
3. Remembering to be a positive role model to children and youth in all your contact with them
4. Following the church expectation about appropriate behaviour between yourself and the children and youth – boundaries help everyone to carry out their roles well
5. Listening and responding appropriately to the views and concerns of children and youth
6. Ensuring another adult is always present or in sight when conducting one to one coaching, instruction or other activities
7. Being alert to children and youth who are, or may be at risk, and reporting this to the Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78)
8. Responding quickly, fairly and transparently to any serious complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian
9. Encouraging children and youth to 'have a say' on issues that are important to them.
10. Providing feedback to both children and parents or guardians.

Staff and volunteers must not:

1. Engage in rough physical games
2. Develop any inappropriate relationships with children and youth that could be seen as favouritism such as the offering of gifts or special treatment
3. Do things of a personal nature that a child or young person can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
4. Discriminate against any child or young person because of age, gender, cultural background, religion, vulnerability or sexuality.

I agree to abide by this code of conduct

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix II

**When you feel that you/your
children is harmed or at risk of
harm**

**當你感到你或你的孩子受傷害/有受傷害
風險**

**You may report to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on
13 14 78 你可向兒童受虐熱線131478報告**

**You may inform the Program In Charge/ Child Safe Officer /
Pastor 你可同時知會事工負責人/兒童安全主任/牧者**

**Church will conduct initial investigation on the incident
教會會作初步調查**

**Church will offer support to the children and their family.
教會會向該兒童及其家庭提供支援**

**Church will also offer support to the alleged staff /
volunteer**

教會亦會向被指控員工/義工提供支援

**Church will conduct formal investigation if initial
investigation substantiated the claim 若初步表證成立，教會
會進行正式調查**

**Church will conduct disciplinary actions and provide
improvement on Child Safe Policy**

若指控成立，教會會採取紀律行動，並改進兒童安全政策

Ministry 事工：

Program in Charge 事工負責人：

Child Safe Officer 兒童安全主任: Yuki Chu