

Child Safe Guidelines – Western Australia

Document B - Safe Conduct within the Church

The church in Western Australia intends and expects that everyone should feel welcome, valued and safe when gathering in meetings.

For these Guidelines, the term “church” is used to refer to our ministry and broader fellowship as a collective. This is consistent with the scriptural meaning of “church” a body or gathering of people united by faith. Whilst commonly referred to as the Ministry and Fellowship, “church” has been used to reflect the combined responsibility of both in the context of this matter. It is also to help recognise and retain the sanctity of our individual fellowship and relationship with God.

The term “we” or “our” refers to either the church generally or responders specifically, depending on the context in which it appears.

The term “responders” refers to individuals selected from the Western Australian ministry and others who may be called upon to assist in responding to allegations and supporting case management. They are not counsellors or investigators. Their role is to assist in child safety concerns and to help respond in accordance with these Guidelines.

We believe the Scriptures offer a complete and guiding example for conduct. These Guidelines are practical steps we can take to uphold those principles by helping protect children and the vulnerable amongst us.

We value all who support the furtherance of the gospel in their lives and homes. Everyone (including ministry workers, elders, parents, families, and friends) plays a part in making our gatherings safe and welcoming for all.

Roles & Responsibilities

Everyone’s contribution towards helping to create a safe and caring environment is appreciated and encouraged. It’s important that we all:

- Be aware of the importance of child safety.
- Take children's concerns seriously and respond supportively.
- Report known or suspected abuse to relevant authorities.
- Learn to recognise the signs of abuse.
- Communicate any areas of risk or concern.

Training options are also available for anyone wanting to build understanding in these areas – please make contact if interested.

Ministry Workers

We appreciate those who serve in the ministry and are grateful for their commitment. Their care in upholding child safe practices set an example for others and helps build mutual trust. Ministry workers are obliged to:

- Complete regular child safe training as directed or required, complete compliance checks and participate in scheduled reviews of these Guidelines.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from child abuse and/or risk of harm.
- Listen with openness and seriousness to all disclosures of harm or risk of harm.
- Fulfil mandatory reporting obligations.
- Refer all concerns to the appropriate authority and within the church as required but should not investigate a concern or question a child directly.
- Refer any concerns regarding fellow ministry personnel to the Western Australian Overseer (or to another Australian overseer where the allegation concerns the Western Australian overseer).
- Protect privacy and confidentiality, except where disclosure is legally required or to protect the safety of children.

Church Contacts

- WA overseer:
wa.cs.docs.2025@gmail.com
- Any WA Worker
- Training Options:
training.cs2025@gmail.com

Child Safe Training & Resources

- [WA Mandatory Reporting training](#)
- [Safe Ministry Australia](#)
- [Ministry Safe USA](#)
- [Child Protection Online Training Courses | Bravehearts](#)
- [Webinars for parents and carers | eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Child Safe Training](#)

Related documents:

- [WA Child Safe Guidelines](#)
- *Document A: Child Safety within the Church*
- *Document C: Reporting within the Church*
- *WA Concerns Form*

Spending time with children calls for transparency and care. To help everyone feel safe and at ease, it's important to:

- Respect a child's boundaries – and not intrude on a child's personal space.
- Respect parental authority by deferring behavioural matters to parents or guardians.
- Refrain from one-on-one interactions with a child unless in an open setting and/or with parental consent.
- Refrain from showing favouritism or forming inappropriate personal relationships with children or young people.
- Refrain from taking photographs or recordings of children or families without parental consent.

All are expected to communicate in ways that are respectful, and lawful. This includes:

- Listening to, and appropriately considering, the views of children, especially in matters affecting them.
- Refraining from keeping secrets with children—even those that may seem harmless.
- Refraining from comments regarding children's appearance, development, or any attribute of a personal nature.
- Using digital platforms appropriately in line with child safety principles, and avoid accessing or sharing any content that is harmful, illegal, or exploitative.

Visiting Ministry Workers

We warmly welcome visiting ministry workers and value their time and willingness to come and share with us. As part of the endeavours to promote child safety it is requested that they:

- Review and understand the child safety roles and responsibilities and reporting obligations in these Guidelines.
- Provide to the Western Australian Overseer either prior to arrival or upon arrival:
 - Any available current Working with Children Check (WWCC), police clearance, or equivalent clearance certification from their state or country of residence.
 - A current child safe training certificate from one of the following recognised providers:
 - Ministry Safe (USA), and/or Safe Ministry Check (Australia), or
 - Another internationally equivalent child safety training provider.

Elders and Their Spouses

We appreciate everyone who helps within the church, and we extend thanks to those who generously open their homes to host and facilitate fellowship meetings. Elders and spouses can support child safety by:

- Being aware of and upholding child safe practices.
- Encouraging parents to actively supervise their children, including when using facilities and before/after fellowship meetings.
- Listening with openness and seriousness to all disclosures of harm or risk of harm.
- Being familiar with these Guidelines and reporting pathways.
- Participating in child safe awareness training.

Parents and Guardians

Families and children are a valued part of our church and fellowship. We appreciate those who are able to share their homes for the sake of the gospel. Any hosting requirements or expectations should be communicated directly with those staying in your home.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to:

- Accompany and actively supervise children at all times before, during and after ministry organised meetings, including fellowship meetings, while using amenities and during conventions.
- Learn about child safety and teach children and teenagers in age-appropriate manner about personal and online safety and consent (See Child Safe Training and Resources).
- Be aware of any signs of harm or vulnerability and share any concerns.

Guideline Review

The Child Safe Guidelines for Western Australia – Document B: Safe Conduct within the Church replaces the previous *Guidance for Child Safety in Western Australia* and sets expectations for how we can all help to create a safe, and respectful environment in alignment with federal and Western Australian legislation, the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

These Guidelines have been reviewed by Irdi Legal, external counsel with expertise in child safeguarding, and are subject to biennial internal reviews.

Next review: October 2027