

SC044 Safe Emotional/Spiritual Environments Procedures

We have identifying the following areas as having unique “risks” in relation to the spiritual and emotional environment for all people who participate in our programs and as such requiring procedure to ensure safe and friendly environment for all people.

a. Spiritual safety

- Use of the Bible: The Bible will not be used to emotionally or spiritually bully or manipulate people. The Bible will be used to teach all people about the love of God, God’s interactions with people, and to encourage their faith journey.
- Role of the church in spiritual development: We acknowledge the primary role of parents and caregivers in the spiritual development of children. We will clearly advertise and communicate with parents and caregivers the aims and practices of each program in terms of what children will be invited to participate in, in relation to spiritual activities, e.g. prayer, Bible study, Bible talks, spiritual direction, participation in quiet times, or group discussions.
- Right of all people to choose what to participate in spiritually: We will invite, not demand or coerce, people to engage in activities of a public/group spiritual nature, e.g. Bible reading, praying aloud, answering group discussion questions.
- Exercise safe practices when praying specifically for an individual person:
 - i. Where a person requests that they do not want to participate in individual prayer, it will be respected.
 - ii. In the case of prayer for the need of a child, particularly in relation to healing or specific charismatic gifts:
 - prior to the event or program, we will communicate with parents that this will be an option offered at the event or program;
 - we will seek permission from a child prior to praying for them;
 - we will advise parents of outcome of prayer.

b. Emotional safety

- Handling private information appropriately:
 - i. We collect, and store program participants’ personal information in line with the National Privacy Act i.e: private information is only collected if necessary; individuals concerned are advised of its intended use; personal information collected is stored securely and not divulged to others without the consent of the individual involved; any personal information the church is holding which is no longer required, is out of date or incorrect, is either destroyed or amended to be accurate.
 - ii. We collect all relevant personal, medical and other relevant personal information of program participants to ensure their safety (see SC050 - Information Form).
- Respecting the needs of the individual
 - i. We will take into consideration individuals’ needs and make appropriate and reasonable modifications to cater for these as far as is practicable, including ensuring the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with culturally diverse backgrounds

and any person with a disability. This includes consideration of activities that may cause a problem culturally for those involved. When our Management Group suspects an activity could be a problem they will consult the affected program participant or their family, prior to asking them to take part.

- Communication
 - i. Workers have a responsibility to ensure that their conversations are not abusive or offensive within the normal range of these terms. As a general principle all workers will consider the impact of their words and actions before they speak or act.
 - ii. If it is necessary to speak to a program participant privately, workers will inform their supervisor of the intention to do so, and the conversation will occur in the sight of other workers.
 - iii. Workers will consider the impact of distance and personal space in front or behind participants when communicating. Workers are to consider the distances they stand or sit from the people they are leading and determine if they may be making the person uncomfortable because they are operating within an inappropriate space for an interaction.
 - iv. We acknowledge that the use of electronic media for communication is part of everyday life, however, we need to be mindful of the position of trust and power we have been entrusted with as leaders. As such our workers will:
 - as far as it is practical interact electronically with all people as a team, not as individuals, e.g. group emails or SMS;
 - seek parental permission before communicating with a child electronically, and only do so with the parent's full knowledge;
 - not transmit, retrieve or store any communication that is: discriminatory or harassing, derogatory, obscene, sexually explicit or pornographic, defamatory, threatening, for any purpose that is illegal or contrary to the relevant code of conduct;
 - do not send any electronic communication that attempts to hide the identity of or represent the sender as someone else.
 - v. Boundary setting (establishment of program 'Rules') & discipline
 - Program Director / leaders will communicate, prior to the program or event, the expectations in relation to behaviour of participants.
 - Program Director /leaders will engage participants in a time of establishing boundaries in relation to acceptable behaviours for the program/event.
 - Workers will not engage in physical discipline of a child.