

SC016 Participation & inclusion of children and their caregivers

Our commitment to Children or Young People

- We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all Children or Young People who access any of our activities, programs, services or facilities.
- We are committed to providing Children or Young People with positive and nurturing experiences.
- We will support families and communities to promote Children or Young People's healthy development and wellbeing.

We expect ACC People to understand and acknowledge the significance of family relationships for Children or Young People.

Children or Young People's experience of their family is foundational for their development. Families can act as supportive resources for growth and resilience in Children or Young People. Family relationships can also restrain and harm Children or Young People's social, physical, cognitive and emotional development. Families are the single most significant influence in shaping the way Children or Young People develop and perceive their sense of identity. We expect ACC People to recognise, respect and work to strengthen the capacities of parents/carers and other family members to care and protect their Children or Young People.

We expect ACC People to make available information about the ACC Child Protection Policy to Children or Young People and their Parents/Carers.

The information will be made available in developmentally appropriate language.

We expect ACC People to put the rights of a Child or Young Person to the protection from harm ahead of any cultural and religious practices of families who come to our Churches.

No cultural or religious belief will take precedence over the right of Children or Young People to protection from harm.

We expect ACC People to understand and respond to the special needs of Children or Young People with developmental delays, additional needs or disabilities.

We acknowledge that Children or Young People with developmental delays, additional needs or disabilities have special needs. We expect ACC People to seek the learning and support they need to act in ways that communicate effectively with, and are supportive of, Children or Young People with developmental delays, additional needs or disabilities. We also understand that we will need to be proactive in recognising the additional vulnerability to harm that Children or Young People with developmental delays or disabilities experience.

PROCEDURE:

2.2.1 Children's participation & inclusion

- a. All workers will actively listen to children when they speak about matters that directly affect their sense of safety or wellbeing and will act on any concerns children or their caregivers raise with them.

- b. Ministry Coordinators will ensure that children will have opportunity to reflect on their experience at church and to make comments regarding the activities, program elements and other aspects of wellbeing, including workers' conduct.
- c. Ministry Coordinators will schedule time in the program to talk to children about their safety, usually at the beginning of the program or event and, as is practicable, will encourage the children to participate and contribute to safety discussions.
- d. The church board will provide information, including age appropriate signage, in relation to safety, acknowledging the need for sensitivity and consideration of those children of Aboriginal & Torres Strait heritage, and those from culturally &/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as any child with a disability.
- e. The church board will take steps to respect and promote the cultural identity of children of Aboriginal & Torres Strait heritage, and those from culturally &/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, through engagement with the children and their caregivers in relation to taboos and symbols and activities that are important to the children's cultural heritage, as is practicable given the nature of the program.

2.2.2 Engaging with caregivers & community

- a. The church board will promote open communication with parents and caregivers, and other community stakeholders, encouraging feedback on the program that their child has attended.
- b. The church board will, when reviewing the church Policy and Procedures, seek input from targeted groups of parents and caregivers.
- c. The church board will take reasonable measures to allow for communication and input from community members who have relationships with children accessing our programs, including up-to-date information on our website [where website does not exist – state where information can be obtained].