

Deutsche Evangelische Dreifaltigkeitskirche Eine Gemeinschaft in Gebet und in Geselligkeit



Child Safety Policy

German Lutheran Trinity Church, East Melbourne

Approved 5th February 2018

- ▶ OUR COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY
- ▶ The German Lutheran Trinity Church is committed to child safe practice.
- ▶ The care, the safety and the welfare of children are embedded in policies and practices which are intended to reflect a commitment to zero tolerance of child abuse.



What do I need to know?

- Children have the **right** to feel safe and to be safe, and to be protected from sexual, physical and emotional abuse and neglect.
- The Child Safe Standards provide a framework to help protect children from abuse.
- These Standards apply to **all** personnel in our church, including (but not limited to):
 - Pastor and all Employees
 - Church Committee
 - Volunteers
 - Students on placement



Child abuse is an act or omission by a parent, caregiver, other adult or child that endangers or impairs a child's physical or emotional health and development. Types of child abuse include:

Physical, emotional, sexual and neglect

- **Family violence:** occurs when children are forced to live with violence between adults in their home, and can be very harmful. Exposure to family violence places children and young people at increased risk of physical injury and harm, and has a significant impact on their wellbeing and development.
- **Grooming:** is the behaviours used to prepare a child with the intention of sexually abusing them. This includes building a trusting relationship with a child and their parents/carers, and 'special relationships' and spending time alone with children or outside the work role. It graduates from attention-giving and non-sexual touching to increasingly intimate and intrusive behaviours.



Physical abuse is intentionally causing or threatening to cause physical injury to a child, or inadvertently causing injury as a consequence of physical punishment or physically aggressive treatment.

Examples: Physical assault, hitting, shaking, restraining, etc.

Signs: Bruises, cuts, burns, fractures, covering up seemingly unnecessarily

Emotional abuse occurs when a person engages in inappropriate behaviours such as rejecting, ignoring, humiliating, isolating, threatening or verbally abusing a child, or allowing others to do so.

Examples: Yelling, ignoring, teasing, verbal abuse, bullying, etc.

Signs: Delayed physical/emotional development, withdrawn, low self esteem, shy, agitated, anxious, self harming



Sexual abuse is when any person uses their authority over a child to involve the child in any sexual activity.

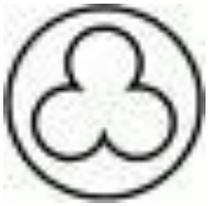
Examples: Fondling genitals, masturbation, penetration, voyeurism and exhibitionism, exposure to pornography, sexting, etc.

Signs: Bruising, withdrawal, anxious, over-sexualisation, secretive, low self esteem, weight loss, self harming

Neglect means failing to meet a child's basic needs such as providing adequate food, drink, shelter, clothing, supervision, hygiene or medical attention.

Examples: Withholding any basic need, lack of emotional support, no security or stability, withholding education, etc.

Signs: Hunger, lack of clothing, homeless, poor hygiene, stealing, skinny, tired, regularly ill, attention seeking



Important to remember:
not all child safety
issues are criminal or
high-impact. The
definition of child abuse
covers negligence and
minor cases of
inappropriate behaviour
or communication



Reporting

DO

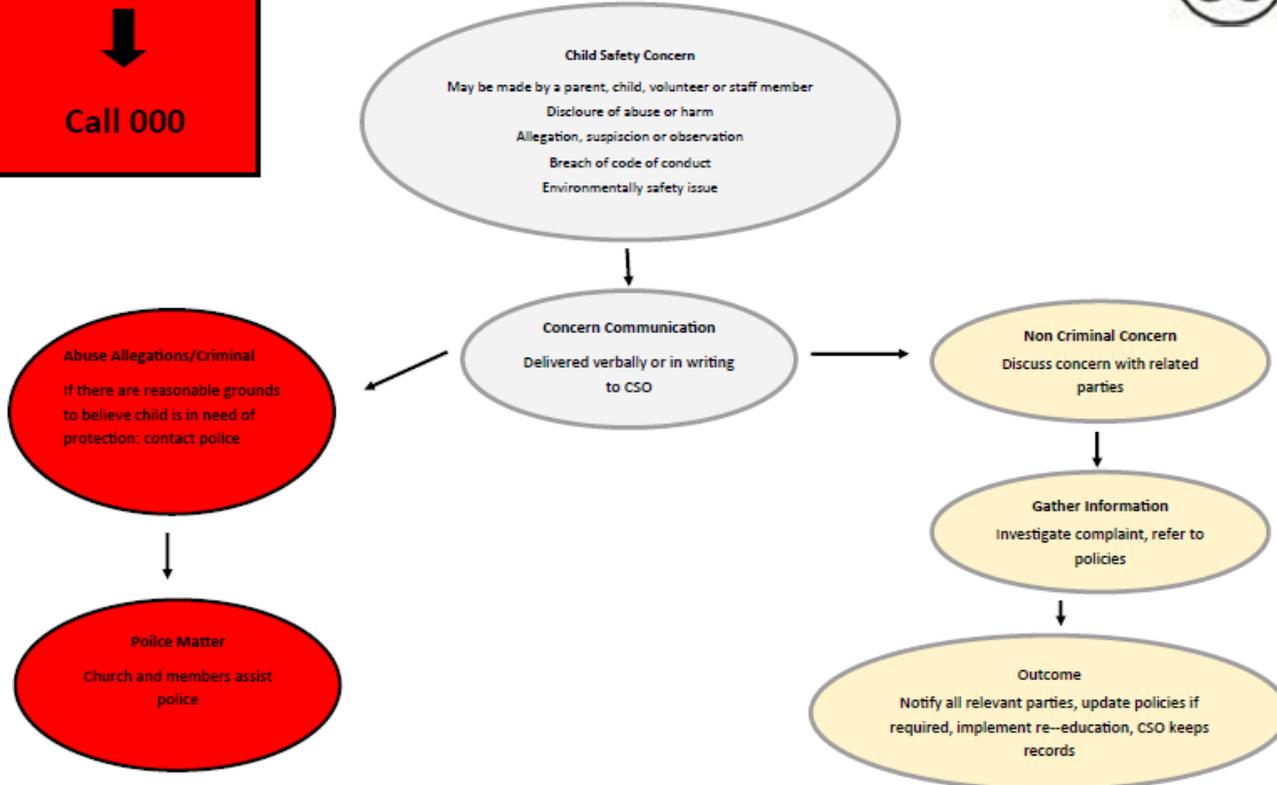
Reassure the child / young person that you believe them
Be calm, supportive and reassuring
Reassure them that the abuse is not their fault
Concentrate on their feelings rather than on questions and answers
Explain what you are going to do now that you have been told

DON'T

Make promises that you cannot keep
Promise not to tell anyone
Push the child to give details of the alleged abuse
Use leading questions
Leave the child alone in a distressed state, or write things down during conversation

**Child in immediate
Danger**
↓
Call 000

Child Safety Reporting Process German Lutheran Trinity Church



German Lutheran Trinity Church
Child Safety Incident Report Form



All incident reports must be stored securely.

Incident details

Date of incident:	
Time of incident:	
Location of incident:	
Name(s) of child/children involved:	
Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved:	

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

Does the child identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

No Yes, Aboriginal Yes, Torres Strait Islander

Please categorise the incident

Physical violence
 Sexual offence
 Serious emotional or psychological abuse
 Serious neglect

Please describe the incident

When did it take place?	
Who was involved?	

What did you see?	
Other information	

Parent/carer/child use

Date of incident:	
Time of incident:	
Location of incident:	
Name(s) of child/children involved:	
Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved:	

Office use:

Date incident report received:	
Staff member managing incident:	
Follow-up date:	
Incident ref. number:	

Has the incident been reported?

Child protection	
Police	
Another third party (please specify):	

Incident reporter wishes to remain anonymous?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

Yes No



Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements

- Strong and clear governance arrangements allow our leaders to ensure child safety is a focus within our church making child safety a top priority
- Taking a zero tolerance approach to child abuse, and to racial, religious or cultural discrimination



Standard 2

A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety

- Clear commitment to child safety. Demonstrate your commitment to child safety by documenting how your organisation will meet its duty of care and responsibilities
- Communicate commitment to child safety to staff, volunteers, children and families and the community
- Requiring all staff and volunteers to uphold this approach



Standard 3

A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

- Providing **clear written guidance** on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children
- Detailing acceptable and unacceptable behaviours relating to the **specific context of our organisation**
- **Educating** staff, volunteers, parents and children about the expected standards of behaviour and what will happen if a person does not comply
- **Acting** on concerns or allegations of non-adherence to your Code of Conduct.



Code of Conduct – Expected Behaviour:

- Treat all children and young people with respect regardless of race, colour, sex, language, ability, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, birth or other status
- Provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all children, young people, parents, employees and volunteers
- Encourage children, young people, parents, employees and volunteers to speak up about issues that affect them
- Refrain from using corporal punishment on children
- Immediately report concerns or allegations of child abuse in accordance with Trinity reporting process
- Comply with local, national and international child protection laws
- Ensure that, whenever possible, another adult is present when I am working with children, or in the proximity of children
- Advise my supervisor or church council of my involvement in any situation where my actions could be misinterpreted
- Advise my supervisor or church council if I am involved in any situation which would be likely to bring the organisation into disrepute, and
- Advise my supervisor or church council if I am investigated for any crime or charged with any criminal offence.
- Ensure photographs, films, videos and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be perceived as sexually suggestive
- Ensure images are honest representations of the situations and the facts



Code of Conduct - Unacceptable Behaviour:

- Use inappropriate language – whether of an offensive, discriminatory, demeaning, abusive or sexual nature – when speaking with or whilst in the presence of a child or young person
- Engage in behaviour to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade a child or young person, or otherwise emotionally abuse a child or young person
- Act in a sexually provocative manner or engage children in any form of sexual activity, including paying for sexual services
- Hold, kiss, cuddle or touch a child in an inappropriate, unnecessary or culturally insensitive way
- Condone or participate in, behaviour with children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- Discriminate against or in favour of particular children to the exclusion of others
- Hire children for domestic or any other labour which is inappropriate for their age or development, interferes with their education or play, or places them at risk of injury
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves such as toileting them or changing their clothes
- Sleep in close proximity to any children unless it is absolutely necessary, in which case I will keep my supervisor/manager informed and ensure another adult is present, where possible (noting that this does not apply to my own children)
- Access or create sexually abusive images of children, and
- Use computers, mobile phones, video or digital cameras or any other technology for the purpose of exploiting or harassing children.



Standard 4:

Screening, supervision, training, and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing staff

- Communicating our commitment to child safety
- Having clear duty statements as in our code of conduct
- Recruitment processes:

Screening: includes criminal record checks, identity checks

Selection

Interviews: targeted, behavioural-based interview questions

References: verbal referee checks

Working with children checks (WWCC),

Training

Induction

Supervision and Reviews.

- Providing high quality supervision and professional development, including understanding the nature and signs of abuse, cultural competency and the vulnerability of particular groups of children.



Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.

Also refer to page 8-10

- Recognising the safety of children is everyone's responsibility
- Having a clear and understood procedure for reporting concerns and allegations, including child and family friendly versions
- Children and families are encouraged to report if they feel unsafe or concerned
- People within the organisation are aware of their duty of care and legal responsibilities, and know what to do to respond appropriately
- Concerns and complaints are acted upon appropriately
- Accurate records are kept securely.



Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

- Thinking about the church, its activities and the children it provides services to, and planning how to make the activities as safe as possible
- Being proactive to reduce the likelihood of risks emerging or escalating, rather than responding when harm has occurred.



Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

- Supporting children and young people to understand their rights, contribute to child safety planning and to raise concerns
- Actively promoting the participation of children within the Sunday School, Godly Play principles, encouragement and respecting to share experiences, feelings, opinions, expression of emotions through music and non verbal actions, allowing children to express critic and suggest improvements through questions about stories and the program itself
- Seeking their views about what makes them feel safe and unsafe, including cultural safety
- Establishing an environment of trust and inclusion that enables children to ask questions and speak up if they are worried or feeling unsafe