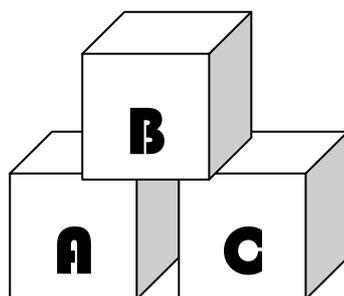


# ABC Guide



# To Safety

**Working with children and young people**

**Guidelines for volunteer leaders, paid workers, and parishes  
working with children and young people  
in the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand.**

**Provided as a benchmark to the seven dioceses in the Anglican Church in New  
Zealand and endorsed by the Tikanga Pakeha Ministry Council**

**A project of the Anglican Diocesan Youth Staff tikanga pakeha 2004.**

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# ABC Guide to Safety - Introduction

The **ABC Guide to Safety** is designed as a reference point for the development of your local parish or ministry unit Safety Policy.

## Your Own Policy

It is strongly recommended that every parish or ministry unit have its own Safety Policy designed for its own situation. This policy needs to be reviewed regularly, approved by vestry and discussed at least annually with leadership teams. The review process helps to remind people that this is an important issue and that the church takes it seriously.

## Guidelines Not Rules

The **ABC Guide to Safety** is not a set of national rules. It has been developed as a comprehensive set of guidelines highlighting the wide range of areas that may need to be considered in the variety of situations where ministry with children and young people is occurring under the auspices of the Anglican Church.

There are, however, some instances where the church is working towards making rules that will soon apply to all parts of tikanga pakeha.

These items are highlighted in a box. These **MUST** be part of a local policy.

## Acknowledging the Sources

The material for these Guidelines comes from four main sources and the writers want to acknowledge all the work done by the writers of those resources.

1. The Youth Ministry Office of the Anglican Diocese of Wellington who wrote *Safety Guidelines and Policies for Ministry with Young People* for use within their Diocese and then generously shared that with the rest of the country. September 1999.
2. *Safe Not Sorry*. A Handbook for selecting suitable people to work with children, 2000. Written by Anthea Simcock for the Institute for Child Protection Studies Inc. This is a very useful book to have if you are employing people working with children. Copies available from PO Box 679 Hamilton.
3. *Being Safe Keeping Safe*. Protocols for the safety of all involved in children and young people's programmes, 2000. Prepared by Shayne Mathieson. Research assistance from Stephen Booth for the Methodist Church of New Zealand Te Hahi Weteriana of Aotearoa.
4. Two section in the Appendix come from the *Keeping Them Safe - A Policy For The Protection Of Children And Young People And Those With Designated Responsibility For Them* from the Diocese of Christchurch.

**Bonnie Heberton, on behalf of the Anglican Diocesan Youth Staff tikanga pakeha, December 2002.**

# Terms and Definitions

## Safety First

The issue of safety has many facets.

Children and young people, and those who volunteer or are employed to work with them, all need to feel that they are safe in the broadest sense.

This means that buildings need to be safe; outdoor activities need to be safely managed; adults need to be aware of boundaries and safe practice; children and young people need to know that they will be protected from undue risk and harm; leaders need to feel safe from ill founded accusations of wrongdoing.

## What does it mean to be safe?

Safety is:

- Being free to be who you are.
- Having physical need met.
- An environment such that you can focus on the purpose of being together.
- Freedom from unacceptable danger or risks.

## These guidelines are designed to help you:

- Identify potential dangers and risks in working with children and young people.
- Provide a safe physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual environment for children and young people.
- Provide a safe environment for paid and volunteer people who wish to work with children and young people.
- Design a Safety Policy specifically for your own situation.

## Definitions

Children:	0 to Year 6	<i>Approx. 0 – 11 years old</i>
Youth:	Year 7 to Year 13	<i>Approx. 11 - 18 years old</i>
Leaders:	Anyone working with children and young people in a church context or in an organisation managed by the church in a voluntary or paid capacity, including but not limited to: clergy; paid employees; unpaid volunteers leaders; teachers and assistants.	
Parents:	The parent, guardian or caregiver who has the day-to-day responsibility for the child or young person.	

## **A – Z listing**

### **Abuse**

Children are at risk. At stages during their normal development, children are subject to particular risks. Babies and toddlers are totally reliant on adults for their care, and are unable to defend themselves, or explain the actions of an adult who is not treating them appropriately. Preschoolers are still unable to speak up for themselves, and in their quest for greater independence that can be mistaken as defiance, and may become the target for inappropriate discipline.

School age children, becoming more independent, and exploring their world and relationships, move beyond the daily supervision of their caregivers.

Adolescents demanding independence, pushing the boundaries, may be lured into relationships outside their control, or be victims of violence or bullying. Often their physical appearance suggests greater maturity than the teen can readily cope with.

It is the responsibility of adults to enable children to develop and grow in safe nurturing environments.

The single most effective point at which an organisation can minimize the possibility of abuse to children and young people in its care, is the appointment of new staff and volunteers.

Abuse can be emotional, physical or sexual.

See also **Disclosure** and **Screening Leaders**

### **Access**

Access to and within buildings is important. Ramps may be needed for people in pushchairs and wheelchairs. There are also areas within any building that may require restricted access e.g. access to a sanctuary area, access to cleaning materials and other hazardous substances or cupboards storing expensive equipment. Consideration should be given to how these restrictions will be enforced and maintained.

All nominated Fire Exits must be kept clear at all times and not covered with stacks of chairs, boxes or tables etc.

**Accommodation** See **Camping**

### **Alcohol**

Alcohol can be a destructive influence in a community setting. Whilst it may be appropriate at a family event or event for those 18 years and older, it is not recommended for an event that young people or children are attending under a church umbrella. Make sure that the consequences for bringing or consuming alcohol while at youth events are clearly known and then enforced as the need arises. It is the leaders' decision whether to talk to the parent/guardian about any incidents that do occur. This will not be an issue with some groups but will be important for others.

It is never appropriate for a leader to have responsibility for children or young people whilst under the influence of alcohol.

**Babies** Babies need a safe environment. Toys, electrical appliances, hazardous substances, sharp corners on furniture, unsupervised exits all need consideration where babies are concerned. Babies need a higher ratio of supervising adults than older children. Anyone providing a babysitting service needs to be over fourteen.

**Behaviour** **Children and young people**

The behaviour of children and young people covers a broad spectrum these days. Schoolteachers put considerable effort into learning and developing strategies for managing behaviour in positive ways. Leaders involved with programmes for children and young people should not expect to be able to manage behaviour well without training. Make use of the resources available in your local schools to help with this. Children and young people are not safe if the adults working with them cannot manage their behaviour well.

Young people are used to rules and boundaries. It is a useful exercise with any new group to set reasonable rules of behaviour and to revisit these annually with established groups. In most cases young people will be able to set suitable rules for themselves, as they know what is acceptable in a group setting.

Ground rules may include statements about group commitment, punctuality, 100% participation, appropriate humour and offensive language. Allow the group to reassess its ground rules, as boundaries do change over time. It is a good idea to write up the rules and display them particularly during the early stages of group formation.

**Leaders**

It is reasonable to expect a certain standard of behaviour from leaders as well. This needs to be clear to all leaders and may need to take the form of a written document that all leaders must sign. This could include expectations about the way adults will talk to children, preparation for activities, appropriate humour, safe ways of touching children and maintaining safe boundaries.

**Consequences**

It is important that consequences for breaches of the behaviour code are discussed before they happen so that there can be some consistency. It is also important to recognise that people are individuals and there can legitimately be different ways of dealing with different individuals without being inconsistent.

**Boundaries** Maintaining boundaries is always the responsibility of adults. It is never the fault of a child or young person, no matter what their actions, if boundaries are crossed. This puts a big onus on leaders.

**Physical touch**

The key to dealing with this issue is communication. Groups need to have clearly established physical boundaries, made in consultation with the participants. Participants should always try to obtain verbal agreement before initiating any form of touch, especially in a newly established group.

Within the youth group context and with children nobody should

engage in any form of physical activity that could be viewed as sexual in nature.

It is important to remember that physical boundaries are flexible and do change as relationships evolve. People must be prepared to listen. It is OK to apologise, especially if behaviour is unintentional but intrusive. However, an apology does not relinquish fault, thus re-emphasizing the need for communication. Touch is also very personal and what might be OK for one person may be offensive to another.

The biggest issue involving touch is intention verses response. For example, someone might want to hug me, but I may not be comfortable receiving the hug at that point in time. The actions are well intentioned, but could be perceived as threatening.

Using indicators is often helpful: don't be scared of finding something appropriate to agree on for each situation. People must be encouraged to say or indicate when they are uncomfortable. Problems arise when people are not able to be up front about something feeling bad. Prevention is far better than a cure.

Physical Icebreaker games are very useful in pushing out the boundaries of a group and allowing people to become more physically comfortable with each other. Physical touches is OK in a youth group and with children, so long as it is mutual and no pressure is put on to conform or consent!

Generally, it is not appropriate to deliberately touch people on parts of their body that would be covered when they are in swimming togs.

### **Physical Spaces**

In any environment, the boundaries for safe play and activity need to be clearly outlined from the start. See also **Access**

### **Relationship Boundaries**

When providing pastoral care for a young person it is important to make sure that the person is aware of the level of confidentiality you are prepared to provide. See **Confidentiality**

An adult leader must never sacrifice his or her own safety! It is OK to not want to be alone with a young person. Choosing a public place to meet, or a place where you are both visible, is often a sensible way to go. Set up some basic safety guidelines or boundaries and agree to them with the young person. Some basics might be:

1. Do not visit a young person when they are home alone.
2. Never try to counsel someone in a car.
3. Don't shut yourself in a room alone with a young person.
4. Leave the door open or find another way to be visible.
5. Agree to meet for a limited number of times and then assess whether to continue – again for a limited number of times.

These guidelines are as much about the adult's safety as the young person's.

### **Sexual Boundaries**

To initiate any form of sexual relationship with a child or young person for whom you have some responsibility of care, is abusing the child/young person, abusing your position of responsibility and stepping outside the boundaries of safe practice. *It is always the*

*adult's responsibility to maintain this boundary no matter what the behaviour of the young person.*

## **Camping**

### **Consent**

The consent of a parent/guardian for any person below the age of 16 must always be obtained prior to the event. Persons 16 years and over can and should consent to medical treatment if the need arises. The same is true of younger children if they have sufficient maturity.

Information about the event needs to include:

1. Details of the event you are running.
2. A medical form making you aware of any illnesses or disabilities a participant may have as well as any details of medication they may be on and their allergies.
3. A disclaimer where the person signing accepts responsibility for any accident or loss of property that may occur and gives permission for medical help to be sought if necessary.

Consent forms need to be signed by a parent/guardian, or by the participant if over the age of 16. It is also essential that you obtain emergency contact phone numbers and names and the relationship of that person to the participant.

Examples of **Disclaimers** see **Appendix D**

### **Camp relationships and teenagers**

It is always a good idea to discourage young people from forming intimate relationships at camp, simply because it can change the group dynamics of a camp. People who want to be intimate in a group setting make others feel uncomfortable and often exclude people. Also, encourage young people to put off starting a relationship until after camp. This moves their behaviour outside your responsibility. This helps the camp atmosphere and teaches young people to take more responsibility for their own relationships.

*There is NO circumstance where it is appropriate for a relationship between a leader and a camper to be formed during camp!*

### **Sleeping Arrangements**

Guidelines about sleeping arrangements will depend on your own attitudes as a leadership team and the venue for the camp. Marae-style sleeping is now quite commonly accepted for youth events. In other situations, it is entirely appropriate for males and females to be separated into single-sex bunkrooms. In any situation it is wise to have leaders sleeping in with, or at least adjacent to, groups of young people and for there to be more than one leader in each space. When sleeping in co-ed spaces there must be adequate changing and toilet facilities and they must be gender-exclusive either in separate spaces or at separate times.

See also **Outdoor Activities**

## **Cell Phones**

It is wise to ensure there is a well-charged cell phone available for activities beyond the normal venue or even in the normal venue if there is no land line available. You may also want to make a group policy about use of cell phones by young people at youth events.

**Code of Ethics** The Anglican Church has specific legislation dealing with Code of Ethics and Code of Practice in ministry. It applies to ordained ministers and licensed lay people and also to those who offer ministry in the name of the church. This includes children's and youth workers and volunteer leaders. Each Diocese also has its own policy. Details of these documents should be made available to all leaders and should be talked through with leaders as they begin their ministry.

**Confidentiality** It is important to make sure that any person you are talking to in a specifically pastoral conversation is aware of the level of confidentiality you are prepared to provide. This means that the young person is then responsible for what they choose to share with you, and should not be surprised or threatened if a third party needs to be brought into the relationship.

As most youth/children's workers and volunteer leaders are not trained counselors it is best to have a policy like the following: If you as the caregiver become aware of a situation where the young person you are relating with is causing harm to themselves or being harmed by another person, or the person is involved in criminal activity, you are obliged to seek help. That may be a parent/guardian, the Police, Child, Youth and Family Service, or another third party agreed upon by the young person involved. *A caregiver never offers complete confidentiality.*

It is important to remember that the worker/leader can share any information with their supervisor. That is not a breach of confidentiality.

**Consent** It is wise to get consent from parents/guardians for activities which involve a level of risk e.g.: a day tramp; rafting trip; horse riding etc. or where the children or young people will be away from the normal venue and will be traveling in vehicles. Consent for traveling in other people's vehicles can be sought once at the start of each year or on a case-by-case basis. Keep a record of signed consent forms for reference.

**Contact details** Keep an up to date list of contact details for all children and young people who attend regular programmes and events in case of emergency. Details could include:

1. Names of parents/caregivers.
2. Phone contact at times you will be meeting.
3. Address.
4. Any medical conditions that are likely to affect the child's participation in the regular events.
5. Special dietary requirements that are likely to affect the child during regular events e.g. the need to avoid food colourings in drinks and snacks.
6. You may also need to establish which parent has custody of the child at which times and who is allowed to collect a child from an event. This will not be necessary for all children.

Remember – this information is private and must be kept in a place that other children/young people cannot access. Do not ask for information that you do not need.

**Culture** Aotearoa New Zealand is now a multi cultural society. Ministry to youth and children is likely to put leaders and workers in touch with children from a number of ethnic backgrounds. The safety of these children, young people and their families needs to be guarded in respect of recognising that they may not understand the subtleties of kiwi culture and colloquial language. Some aspects of humour do not work across cultures. Sometimes Christians get the cultural aspects of their Christian practice mixed up with the Gospel and may try to change the cultural practices of other ethnic groups in the name of Christianity. These issues need to be discussed within the leadership team as you work with new cultural groups. Different cultural groups also have a variety of approaches to discipline within their families. From a pakeha perspective, some of these may seem harsh. From another perspective pakeha families may seem ill disciplined. There is much to be learnt by talking through these issues as they arise.

**Disclosure** In the event of a child or young person disclosing any form of abuse to you, be aware of the following:

1. The primary consideration in the event of any disclosure is the physical and emotional welfare of the child or young person.
2. Children will rarely disclose more than once, so you need to be alert (but not paranoid).
3. Do not question the child or young person – that is the task of a trained or skilled person only.
4. Do not go and confront the alleged abuser. Qualified people will give the alleged abuser information about the allegation, and the opportunity to fully respond to it.
5. Reassure the child or young person that you will do what you can to prevent the abuse happening and keep them safe.
6. Reassure the child that it was a good thing that they told someone.
7. Do not make promises you are unable to keep.
8. Contact help immediately. If you do not know where to go ask a senior colleague in your organisation without giving details. Contact the Police or Child Youth and Family Services. They will be able to give you advice.

**Earthquakes** In the unlikely but possible event of an earthquake it is wise to have an emergency plan for the site you regularly use for your activities.

**Finance** Often overlooked in safety matters, but it is important that leaders, particularly, are protected from both accusations of stealing and the temptation to misappropriate funds. The parish or organisation you are working with needs to set up some guidelines for the handling of money within the activities of the children's and youth ministry that should then be monitored by the Parish or Organization Treasurer. It is very important to have clear boundaries when it comes to finance. This is an easy area in which to get caught out. Some general principles:

1. Make sure it is clear who handles money in your youth leadership or children's ministry team. The parish can give you instruction

on that. It may be appropriate for the parish treasurer to handle money.

2. The parish treasurer should check all finances.
3. If you are collecting money for a specific purpose, record all the money you receive and receipt each person for amounts over \$5, even if they do not want a receipt. Keep a duplicate copy of the receipts.
4. Check with your parish treasurer if your parish is G.S.T. registered. If so you can claim back the G.S.T. on your expenditure within your church's finances.
5. If you operate a cheque book, or regularly collect money from youth members, it is advisable that at least two people are responsible for this, including the collecting of money.
6. If a young person is responsible for a large amount of money it is advisable to have a responsible adult working along side them in an advisory role. This could be the parish treasurer or another member of the leadership team.
7. It is good practice that the person who banks money is someone other than the person who collects it. This is a safe guard for both people.

**Fire** Just as children and young people do at school, establish and discuss with any regular group a fire evacuation plan and practice it occasionally. Know where to locate extinguishers and how to use them.

**First Aid** It is recommended that at least one person in any leadership team has a current First Aid certificate. A First Aid kit should be easily accessible for all activities and a regular check needs to be kept on the contents to make sure it is well stocked and the drugs are still within their Use By Date.

**Games** Be aware of how different members of any group enjoy and participate in different games. Some people don't like rough and tumble. Some people don't like anything but running around games. You can't please everyone all the time but make sure you are including everyone at some time with a good range of games. Watch out for the dominant members of the group who can pressure you into choosing the type of games they like to play at the expense of other members.

Be aware that at some stages in their adolescent development, young teenagers can become quite uncoordinated and feel very awkward about that. Some teenagers also experience pain in their limbs as they grow rapidly. These things are real and not imaginary. Do not tease or draw attention to teenagers going through this phase.

Children and young people with physical disabilities also have the right to play and deserve to be catered for in any group setting by the careful planning and preparation of leaders. The children or young people and their family members can give you the best information about what they can and cannot do. Many games can be adapted to suit all sorts of abilities given the will and the creativity.

**Ground Rules** See **Behaviour**

**Harassment** See **Sexual Harassment**

**Humour** Be aware of a group's humour. At times groups can use humour in a very destructive way. Humour is inappropriate when it comes at a personal cost to anyone. This can at times be hard to distinguish, as a joke could be funny for everyone at first, but become less funny for some people if it carries on for too long. It is better to laugh with someone, rather than at them. This should always be kept in mind. As a leader you can stop a joke at any time. Humour can also become exclusive and can make it difficult for new members to break into the group. Trying to keep "in jokes" to a minimum is sensible. Often young people view Christianity as all serious, or that it means they have to be serious. It is important to offer young people the gift of having fun that isn't at the expense of others.

**Information** Always give parents and caregivers full information about any programmes you are running. Include:

- Cost
- Starting times
- Finishing times
- Venue
- Contact details of the adults involved
- How they can contribute/assist

Keep parents and caregivers well informed about what is happening.

See also **Consent**

**Internet** If you are using the internet to run a web page about your ministry or communicating with leaders and children/young people via the internet, you may need to consider some of the following:

1. You cannot control who accesses your web site so do not publish names and contact details of children/young people and only those of adults who have given their assent.
2. Permission needs to be given before email addresses are circulated widely with any group. For children and young people under 16 this permission will need to be given by parents.
3. People with malicious intent can extract photos of children from web sites. You will need to develop a Parish policy on what photos it is appropriate to include on a web page and get appropriate permission from the subjects.
4. Some of the advertising on free web pages is dubious and may not be appropriate alongside your message or for the children/young people who will visit the site. Paying the money for a proper site may be the only way around this.

### **Job Description, Code of Behaviour and Volunteer Covenants**

It is important to have a formal agreement when employing people in ministry with children and young people. If a youth or children's ministry leader has a Letter of Authority or is Licensed by the Bishop, they must be given a Diocesan Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct.

They are required to abide by these documents. Each Diocese has its own system so please check with your Bishop.

It is equally important to have some kind of agreement for volunteers.

A 'Code of Behaviour' or volunteer contract establishes some boundaries for leadership. You may like to include a declaration of commitment, safety guidelines and the Diocesan Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics and Sexual Misconduct guidelines.

It is helpful to include the obligations of the volunteer to the parish and the youth or children's ministry, as well as the obligations of the parish to the volunteer. If you do not wish to create a volunteer agreement you can ask youth and children's leaders to sign a copy of the Diocesan Code of Conduct.

See **Sample Job Description** in **Appendix C**

## **Licenses**

### **Drivers License**

When working with teenagers there is a temptation to overlook the strict requirements of a restricted license and to make use of the extra transport options. This is not a safe option for anyone. The following restrictions apply to anyone holding a restricted drivers license:

1. They may not drive between 10pm and 5am unless they have a supervisor in the front passenger seat.
2. They may not take any passengers unless a supervisor who has held a full drivers license for at least two years accompanies them.

Source: NZ Land Transport Safety Authority.

### **Bishop's License**

Each Diocese has a policy about the licensing (or not licensing) of people involved in ministry with children and young people. Some will require only paid workers to be licensed, others require all volunteers to be licensed, some Dioceses do not issue licenses for this area of ministry at all. Check with your Bishop and/or Diocesan Office to be clear about the policy in your Diocese. The purpose of licensing is to place people clearly under the authority of the Church in whatever ministry is listed on their license and also to establish the responsibility of the church towards the ministry and the person offering it. Only Bishops issue licenses.

## **Medical**

In the event of a medical emergency, it is important that you know what steps to take and where to find the First Aid Kit. It is helpful to have at least one leader present who has done their First Aid training.

You may be dealing with children who are on medication. In most instances, this will not require any action on your part but if you are doing an activity for an extended period, make sure you are well informed about the administration of the drugs and any possible side effects. Talk with the parents/caregivers to gain some understanding of the child/young person's condition and the effects of the medication.

See also **First Aid** and **Consent**

## **Mentoring**

A mentoring, coaching or a one-on-one discipling style of leadership is often the most moving and life-changing form of youth/children's ministry. It is hugely rewarding as a leader but can be very emotionally draining. It requires a large commitment from the leader. In some ways, it is like being a Godparent or a spiritual guide. It is relational ministry at its best.

Be aware of the issues surrounding a one-on-one relationship. Also, beware of creating a relationship of dependence or co-dependence. That is: the young person/child becoming dependent on you, or of you needing the young person/child to need you. This can creep up on you without any intent. This kind of situation can open you up to sexual temptation, accusation or misunderstanding.

Set yourself, or as a leadership team set, some guidelines to help prevent this.

Your mentoring relationship may pose some issues that question or interfere with the authority of the parents of the young person/child. Be very careful in this situation. You must make informed choices about the way you act and the extent of your relationship with the young person/child. Never undermine a child/young person's relationship with their parent/s.

**Outdoor Activities** If you are doing a group activity in the outdoors that involves any obvious element of danger, you need the assistance of a qualified or trained and experienced person.

### **Instructors**

1. Check their qualifications or experience.
2. Ask to see their logbook (for activities like abseiling, rafting, caving etc, they should keep a logbook).
3. Ask who else they have done this activity with. From this you can then check with other groups who have used them.

If you do not do this, you are putting your young people at risk.

### **Consent**

Prepare your group for the activity. Make them aware of the dangers, hopefully without completely frightening them. Make sure the participant's parents, or the participants themselves if they are over 16, have signed a consent form. This must outline any risks associated with the program, and should have space for the parent to inform you of any relevant needs of the child. If you do not, you may find that you are liable for any resulting accidents.

*Source: Schools Code of Practice.*

Do not let a young person ever do a dangerous activity (that is an activity with a high amount of risk) without a signed consent form.

Schools and groups such as Scouts and Guides are required to complete a Risk Assessment Management Form prior to going on activities involving a high level of risk.

Sample **RAM form** is included in **Appendix E**.

This is not a requirement for church groups but it is well worth considering going through the process of filling in the form with the leadership team as a useful planning exercise.

Remember that no matter how much you prepare for an event/activity you cannot eliminate every single risk. Freak occurrences/accidents do happen from time to time. Risk taking is

also an important part of growing up. The aim is to manage the risk and eliminate the dangers that can be avoided, modeling this approach for the young people you are working with.

## Ratios

There is considerable debate amongst churches over whether there are stated legal guidelines for supervision of young people under the age of 16. The advice of the Ministry of Education for the purposes of this document is that, since the self-managing schools legislation of 1990, each school is required to establish its own written policies regarding supervision and ratios, both on site and on “away” activities. These are expected to be mindful of the particular situation and needs of the young people concerned, and may vary according to the context. The key issue is to ensure that you have established acceptable guidelines before a situation takes place.

In terms of a leader/participant ratio with children and young people a recommended ratio for meaningful participation is 6:1. In most instances, it is best to have a minimum of two leaders present even with a small number of children or young people.

Toddlers require much closer supervision and a ratio of 3:1 would be more appropriate. When taking small children on an outing a ratio of 3:1 is the regulation required for adequate supervision. Source: Early Childhood Regulations.

You will need to make the decision as to what ratio you want for your children’s and youth ministry.

It is always good to have a gender balance within a leadership team. This is mainly due to issues of approachability. If you don’t have both male and female leaders, identify someone else to fulfill this place (e.g. the vicar/s, another adult, a parent – ask the young people to identify someone). Ask parents/parishioners to volunteer just to turn up and be present. Young people need to have a choice of leaders when needing to talk about issues.

It is often helpful to predetermine which participants specific leaders should focus on, thus minimising the chance of any participant feeling excluded. This is particularly good for establishing a secure relational ministry, and small group ministry.

If there is only one of you, this is not an ideal situation and should not be a regular occurrence. This is for your own safety as a leader as well as the young people. If an incident does occur where a leader has to accompany a participant away from the site, someone still needs to be in a supervisory role with the rest of the group.

If your group has an upper age limit you can ask the young people in your parish who are a year or more older to be junior or assistant leaders. You will need to assess their ability to fulfill that role. You will also need to go over the requirements of them and their responsibilities. Never leave them alone with the group for any significant length of time.

The law does not allow parents or guardians to leave young people under 14 years old unsupervised for a significant length of time. (*“Those under 14 years old can be left for a time that is reasonable or under conditions that are reasonable having regard to all the circumstances”* Source: Section 10B, Summary Offences Act.). As you have *parentus locus*, that is you are caring for young people on behalf of their parents, it is essential to provide supervision at all times. This

does not mean you have to be in the room or same space as them at all times but you must be accessible to them.

### **Outdoor Activity Ratios**

A useful ratio as a guide for outdoor activities is 1:4. This used to be the recommended ratio prior to 1990. Some outdoor professionals require this for their own code of conduct: check with your instructor, if you are using one. For general outdoor activities especially around water, take into account the needs of your particular young people: are there some with special needs who may need one-on-one supervision? Will there be a number of high energy or ADHD younger teens, or is your group fairly docile?

Regulations concerning school property state that no child under 8 may be near a swimming pool without the presence of a person over 14. Whilst this is binding on schools only, it is sensible to consider similar precautions when around any water, for example at a parishioner's home for a BBQ and swim.

When taking a group of very young children on an outing a ratio of one adult to three children is required.

### **References**

**See Appendix B.** When employing anyone to work with children and young people references are essential. It is also necessary to check the references. The single most effective point at which an organisation can minimize the possibility of abuse to children and young people in its care, is the appointment of new staff and volunteers.

When selecting volunteers and paid workers who will be working closely with children, it is recommended that you carry out a check on Criminal History (see below). Three types of checks are available:

1. Criminal history (obtainable from the Department of Courts).
2. Police Vetting (obtainable from Licensing and Vetting Service Centre, NZ Police).
3. Personal reference check with referees.

### **Criminal History**

Law Enforcement System, commonly known as the Wanganui Computer. Not only will a check on the information held by the Wanganui Computer show any convictions, it will also give you an opportunity to check the truthfulness of the applicant. It will show whether there are currently any charges against them, whether they hold a current driver's license, or whether they have ever been charged with a crime.

Obtaining the information:

1. An individual is entitled to obtain information about his or herself.
2. The person may authorise the release of his or her information to a third party such as an employer.
3. A third party may only obtain the information with the written consent of the person concerned.
4. Applications must be in writing on a special form provided by the Department of Courts and available from the local District Court.

A pamphlet for the public is available from the Department of Courts PO Box 2750 Wellington.

### **Police Checks**

The Police have a vetting service for approved organisations providing care for children, young people or the elderly. For information about registering for this service, write to:

The Police Licensing and Vetting Service  
PO Box 3017  
Wellington

### **Personal references**

Check all references by phone or questionnaire:

1. Ask only job-related questions.
2. People say more on the phone than they do in writing.
3. Consider it a red flag if the person has lived in an area for a considerable period but doesn't supply local references.
4. Watch out for undated, unsigned, references with no contact details.
5. Check that the references show clearly how well or for how long the person has known the candidate.
6. You must have the applicant's permission before contacting referees.

When you are carrying out reference checks and interviews consider the characteristics of sexual offenders. Be alert to answers that indicate the person has low self-esteem, or feelings of inadequacy, or whether they suffer from a sense of alienation or isolation. Look also for indications of those with little insight into their own behaviour and with rigid defence systems or denial and rationalization.

**Safe Not Sorry (see page 3) is a handbook devoted to the selection of suitable people to work with children. If this is something you are doing regularly, get hold of a copy of this book for more comprehensive information.**

**Relationships** Whilst you cannot stop youth group members from forming relationships of the boyfriend/girlfriend kind, you can have agreements about how they will carry that relationship out during youth group. Give guidelines or as a group make them together, about physical displays of affection, and other exclusive behaviour. Encourage those who are couples to split up for activities. Sometimes guidelines like this are helpful for siblings and cousins also. No youth group leader should ever enter into a relationship (of a boyfriend/girlfriend nature) with a youth group member. This should be made clear to youth group members. It is always the responsibility of the leader, not the young person, to maintain the boundaries.

**Reporting** Regular reporting is part of accountability. The leaders of any area of ministry and the parish vestry need to work out what kind of reporting is appropriate and how often.

If something unusual happens at an event with children or young people that could have repercussions for the leader or the young person, report it immediately e.g.: a climbing accident; a fight between children; a leader and child ending up in what could be considered a compromising situation. Parents need to be informed if

their child has suffered any form of injury. The church authorities also need to be informed. This should include a written summary of what occurred with as much detail as you can remember and giving a copy to the parish. By getting the incident out in the open immediately there is a lesser chance for it to become a contentious issue later.

**Responsibility** Christian leadership is a call from God to ministry within the Christian community. It means you are responsible for more than just yourself. Your intentions and actions are open to the scrutiny of the Christian community. It is to them, and God, you are accountable, as well as yourself.

Responsible leaders are essential to any form of children's and youth ministry. Leaders must be reliable and accountable for their actions. You must be able to trust that they will carry out the tasks they agree to.

Any person who has exhibited any form of ongoing reckless behaviour should not be placed in a leadership role. People who are more interested in meeting their own needs than those of the children and young people should also be avoided.

Young people 16 years-of-age and over may be used as leaders in charge of other young people if, after suitable screening, they are considered responsible people. Leaders must accept that they are not at an activity for themselves but to be there for others.

#### **Half Hour Rule**

It is reasonable to expect that you will be responsible for children and young people from 30 minutes before the advertised start time of a programme until 30 minutes after the finishing time. If parents drop children off much earlier or do not collect them until much later, it is the parent's choice to do so and you cannot be held responsible for them during that extra time. Due care would of course be given, but parents have responsibilities too.

**Risk management** See **Outdoor Activities**

**Selecting Leaders** See **Appendix B**. It pays to be discerning when choosing people to fill some type of leadership role. People can acquire skills over time, so it is important to establish what it is you are looking for in potential leaders. Some important characteristics are maturity, responsibility, communication skills and flexibility. Maturity is important because there need to be clear lines between participants and leaders. A mature leader can discern when it is time for work and when it is time to play. Maturity is not about age, but mindset. Leaders should have good communication skills. This means they have an ability to listen, and to give and follow clear instructions. Flexibility is particularly important in relationships with young people. The reason being, that adolescence is a time for exploring boundaries and forming identity. While a leader's role is not to control a young person, but to enable, boundaries need to be set, monitored and maintained by leaders.

A leader does not have to have all the answers. Being called to leadership can often be the most appropriate place for people to

grow and become secure in their Christian faith.

Develop a selection process for leaders. Every leader should be scrutinized by this system. The single most effective point at which an organisation can minimize the possibility of abuse to children and young people in its care, is the appointment of new staff and volunteers. Develop a form for potential leaders to fill out. Include questions such as:

1. Past experience working with children/young people.
2. Why they want to be involved in ministry with children/young people.
3. What they see as their strengths, and weaknesses.
4. Ask them to include a character reference or to include the name of a referee and a letter from their vicar, a home group, care cell leader, youth leader, spiritual guide or previous minister.
5. Offer them the chance to disclose anything from their past that may inhibit their ministry with young people.
6. You may have other questions that specifically apply to your children's/youth ministry.

Interviewing potential leaders is very useful. This gives you the opportunity to talk about the vision and direction of your youth ministry and to see if they have similar or complementary views. It gives you an opportunity to talk about volunteer covenants / contracts, the code of behaviour and the safety guidelines you have set in place.

See also **References**

**Sexual Harassment** Sexual harassment is:

- B**ehaviour of a sexual nature.
- U**nwanted by the recipient.
- R**epeated or initially serious.
- P**ower is usually abused.
- D**etrimental effect on the person and/or organisation.

Some examples of Sexual Harassment:

- Touching, rubbing, space invading.
- Leering, ogling, looking.
- Sexual "jokes".
- Sexual remarks, comments, suggestions.
- Indecent exposure.
- Obscene letters, faxes, emails, text messages, phone calls.
- Repeated unwanted invitations.
- Threats of job loss for complaining

Sexual harassment is not:

- A handshake at the church door.
- A hug between friends.
- Mutual flirting.
- Any relationships of mutual intimacy and equal power.

How can you tell the difference between normal behaviour and sexual harassment? These questions may help:

1. Would you do or say this in front of your spouse, partner or

- parent?
2. Would you do or say this to a colleague of the same sex as you?
  3. Would you like your behaviour to be reported in the local newspaper?
  4. Does it need to be said or done at all to enhance the relationship?

The Anglican Church does not tolerate sexual harassment. There are clear procedures for dealing with complaints. Every parish should have brochures and posters displayed outlining how to make a complaint and who to talk to.

### **Sleeping Arrangements** See **Camping**

### **Smoking**

It is up to you whether you want to be inclusive or exclusive about smoking. This would include your attitude to leaders as well as young people.

In terms of the law, smoking is still a bit of a grey area when it comes to young people. It is illegal to sell tobacco products to someone under the age of 18. It is not illegal for anyone to actually smoke. In some cases, it has been known for young smokers to be provided with tobacco from their parents.

We suggest that you take a hard line on smoking during youth group time and during group sessions at a camp. As most youth group sessions only last a matter of hours, some agreement should be able to be reached. There are issues of self-control and group participation that you can use as boundaries for anti-social behaviour like smoking. It is up to the leaders or the group to make a decision as to whether participants can smoke during youth group or at camps or not. The issue is to not make young people feel rejected by the group because they smoke.

If young people smoke and their parents do not know, you will have to decide how you make boundaries around this behaviour. You need to choose whether to tell their parents or to keep it confidential. It is important to remember that as youth leaders you are in relationships with parents as well as young people.

A constructive way of dealing with this issue is to designate a certain space where people can smoke and specific times when people can smoke. When finding a space for smoking you should make sure that you are not in a smoke free area, or a fire risk area. Give people an ashtray and ask them to pick up their butts. Make them responsible for their actions.

Another option is to have a form for their parents/caregivers to sign so that both you and their parents know they are smoking.

**Spiritual Formation** Be aware that you will relate to children, young people and their families with different spiritual understandings and expectations, particularly when involved in community outreach and programmes that are open to the public at large. Respect this and consider it when planning activities. Talk over any issues that arise with other leaders in your parish.

**Supervision** Any youth or children's leader providing regular in-depth pastoral care must receive regular supervision. Supervision is a time for a pastoral caregiver to unpack any issues that may have arisen for them in their ministry. Talking with a designated person outside the caregiver's ministry situation does this. This is recommended to be either outside your parish, maybe even denomination, or outside your area of ministry (Your vicar is not suitable for this role). Supervision enables a pastoral caregiver to offload, seek advice and develop skills. These are essential to a caregiver's safety, and any pastoral relationship. Supervisors must be trained or experience in this role. When finding a supervisor it is often helpful to find someone who is removed from children's/youth ministry and the parish/ministry unit. This means that the supervisor is able to have a more objective view of anything discussed in supervision sessions, and ensures that they won't be implicated in any situation that may arise. Your supervisor is your first line of support, no one else's. Remember supervision is confidential, within the guidelines of confidentiality.

**Support** Good support for children's and youth leaders ensures a safe environment for everyone. It also helps leaders enjoy what they are doing and grow in the process rather than burning out.

1. Regular prayer for children's and youth ministry is essential and very beneficial. Spiritual support is often overlooked in these areas. To achieve this you may suggest to your leaders that they find someone outside of the ministry team to specifically pray for them. It is also a good idea to regularly pray together as a team, for each other and your children's/youth ministry.
2. Apply agreed procedures for ensuring safety for children and young people to all people who work with them in the name of the church.
3. Write job descriptions, or expectations and boundaries for all children and youth leaders, whether volunteer or employed. Have each leader sign these.
4. Leadership meetings should include some debriefing of activities with children and young people and accountability systems. Use supervision or debriefing as a means of assessing and removing risks.
5. All those in employed youth/children's ministry and those who are doing in-depth pastoral care as volunteers should be getting professional supervision. See **Supervision**
6. Ensure adequate, ongoing training of all volunteers and paid staff in children's and youth ministry.

**Transport** Co-operate with parents to ensure children and young people are picked up or taken home safely. If anyone leaves a programme without prior agreement, let the parent/caregivers know. Make your own policy about adult leaders taking children and young people home. The area of particular concern is when there is one adult and one child/young person in a car, especially if they are of the opposite sex. This cannot always be avoided, but talk with all leaders and parents about how to minimize the risks.

In exceptional circumstances, get phone permission from parents for special travel arrangements.

When you are going on a group outing, transport issues you need to consider are:

1. Providing enough seating in vehicles so that there are safety belts for everyone and car seats for those children who must be required to be in one.
2. Whether you let young people drive themselves.
3. Whether you let other young people be passengers of young drivers with appropriate licenses.
4. Seeking parental permission.
5. Insurance. Be clear beforehand about who will cover the excess of an insurance policy if there is an accident in a borrowed vehicle on a church outing.
6. Vehicle loading. There can be dangers in overloading a van with gear as well as people. Consideration needs to be given to the driving safety of any vehicle on a long trip or with a lot of gear.

It is recommended that you ask parents to sign a permission slip for transport. Where travel is regularly involved in a programme, it may be possible to get one note signed for the year. See **Consent**

If young people travel in other young people's cars as passengers, you may need their parent's/caregivers permission, especially if the passengers are under 16 years of age.

Many parishes use the rule that those who drive youth group members or children must be over 20 years old and/or have had their full driver's license for two years or more.

Some others use the rule that only people over 25 years old with a full license are allowed to drive. This often depends on insurance.

Make sure that young drivers have a full license. Ask for a copy of their driver's license and their driving record. See **Licensing**

## **Videos**

Every video shown to children and young people should be pre-viewed by an adult. Whether or not they might be able to access the movie at home or by going to the movies themselves, many movies are not suitable for a children's or youth setting in a church context. It is not appropriate to show a video with a censor's rating above the age of the participants.

Videos are very valuable as tools for teaching, stimulating discussion, expanding or highlighting ideas or just for fun but they need to be used carefully.

Be aware that different families may have different standards of what is appropriate for their children/young people to view.

## **Violence**

Violence of any kind is not part of a safe environment for children and young people. Violent behaviour from leaders is never acceptable. With good selection, training, support and guidelines it should not occur.

See also **Culture**

Violence between children or young people may flare up unexpectedly. Leaders need to have talked through an intervention strategy so that they are prepared for the possibility.

Ongoing violence between regular participants needs a planned approach by leaders. This should be prepared in consultation with

the parents. Again, the resources at your local school may be of help for training in this area.

If you suspect a child or young person is the victim of family violence:

1. Encourage the person to talk but don't pry.
2. Believe what you hear and don't underestimate the danger for the victim.
3. Don't confront the family.
4. Consult a person who can help you work out what to do next.
5. There are people and agencies skilled and experienced in dealing with family violence. Use them.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers are mostly genuine, caring people wanting to do the best for their communities. However there are always a few who are seeking to meet their own needs, and from whom children and young people need protection.

The only way an organisation can reduce the risk of taking on unsafe people is to screen everyone carefully. When people wish to take up work involving contact with children or young people, whether it be paid or voluntary, their application should be treated in exactly the same way.

### **The Dilemma**

When someone comes freely offering their services, and you are desperately in need of volunteer help, it can be very difficult to tell that person that they will have to go through a recruitment process before we will accept their offer. It is very tempting to accept people simply because they are offering.

*Do not be tempted.*

If you don't have the time or resources to check all volunteers as thoroughly as you would like, try to ensure that there is always another trusted adult around whenever that person is around children.

If you find yourself scrambling at the last minute to find enough people to take young people or children away for a camp, and do not have time to check volunteers, you could have a recipe for disaster. After all, what better access could a paedophile have to children than at a camp – away from parents, with no familiar supports, and a chance to be alone with children in the dark?

Treat volunteers the same as paid staff. Beggars must be choosers!

## **Water**

Check that hot water heaters in all usual venues are set at safe temperatures for children. Plunket recommends 55-65° F.

On outdoor activities, be aware that many waterways contain contaminants such as Giardia. Ensure an adequate clean water supply is available for the duration of the outing. Teach children and young people how to avoid activities that will contaminate the water when they are out in the bush.

Water based activities carry particular risks. Adequate supervision at all times is essential and skilled instructors are required for activities such as canoeing and rafting. See **Outdoor Activities**

## APPENDIX A : IMPLEMENTATION

### KEEPING THEM SAFE: ANGLICAN DIOCESE CHRISTCHURCH

The following section comes from the *Keeping Them Safe* Policy of the Anglican Diocese of Christchurch. It offers one way of implementing a safety policy across a whole diocese.

#### **The Parish/Ministry Unit's Children and Young People's Safety Officer (CYPSO):**

The Vestry of each parish/ministry unit engaged in work with children and young people shall appoint a Children and Young People's Safety Officer (CYPSO) from their membership. This person could be your children/young people's ministry leader or youth worker. Where the CYPSO is a paid employee the Vestry has responsibility for all employment issues.

When appointing the CYPSO, two references shall be obtained and police vetting undertaken. (The Vestry shall appoint someone to obtain and check forms as detailed in Police Vetting above.) Where possible, the CYPSO should have experience in working with children and/or young people.

**The role of the CYPSO** is to ensure the implementation of this document in the Parish/Ministry Unit including:

- Attending Diocesan training on this policy
- Overseeing training all people with responsibility for children and young people (either by doing it themselves or by arranging for workers to attend Diocesan and/or other appropriate training opportunities.)
- Ensuring the adoption of and adherence to appropriate policies
- Reporting to the Vestry annually (or more frequently as required)
- Reporting to the Diocese bi-annually regarding compliance with this document.

## APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT OF PEOPLE WHO WILL HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

### KEEPING THEM SAFE: ANGLICAN DIOCESE CHRISTCHURCH

This section covers recruitment of people with responsibility for children and young people. It comes from the *Keeping Them Safe* policy of the Anglican Diocese of Christchurch. These guidelines state that all parish/ministry units, whether recruiting by personal invitation or by public advertising, should follow the process outlined below:

Remember that the crucial thing is the safety of the children and young people in our care. All workers should understand this, and realise that our insistence on checks for all does not in any way imply that any individual is under suspicion.

### Recruitment of Leaders

Procedures to Follow	Recommended Practice	Resources
<b>Keep a record of the recruitment process.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Keep a separate file for each applicant.</li> <li>➤ Compile and complete a Checklist for each applicant.</li> </ul>	<i>Safe Not Sorry</i> page 8 See privacy section re storage of information etc
<b>Give an Information Package to all Applicants/ Candidates.</b>	Packages should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Position/job description</li> <li>➤ Application form</li> </ul>	<i>Employing Youth Ministry Staff</i> pp 37-47
<b>Complete an application form, including a declaration as to the accuracy and completeness of the information provided.</b>	The application form should be tailored to suit the needs/requirements of your parish/ministry unit. Information required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivation for wanting to work with children and young people</li> <li>• Personal experience/skills to work with children and young people</li> <li>• Previous relevant work experience</li> <li>• Previous relevant training/education</li> <li>• Membership of a relevant professional body eg, Canterbury Youth Workers' Collective if appropriate</li> <li>• Person's willingness to share the ethos of the Anglican Church</li> <li>• Provision of a Curriculum Vitae</li> <li>• A covering letter.</li> </ul>	pp 10-12 and

<p><b>Hold an Interview</b> which should be well planned and structured.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Minimum of 2 interviewers (see <i>appointment decision</i> below)</li> <li>➤ Interviewee may be invited to bring a support person/whanau</li> </ul>	<p><i>Safe Not Sorry</i> pp 13-15</p>
<p><b>Get Permission for Police Vetting</b> if 17 or over.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Police Vetting : <i>Use the process appropriate for your diocese.</i></li> <li>➤ <b>Note:</b> A record does not <b>necessarily</b> preclude an appointment unless the offending has been violent or sexual in nature or there is ongoing concern about honesty. Parish/ministry units should consider the type of offending, when the offending took place, rehabilitation of the offender etc.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Safe Not Sorry</i> pp 16-17</p>
<p><b>Check Referees – candidate should supply 3 referees</b>  one of whom should have known the applicant for at least 3 years.</p>	<p>These could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current or previous employer(s)</li> <li>• Current or previous church leader eg, vicar, youth leader.</li> <li>• Person who can attest to ability to work with children and/or young people</li> <li>• Someone the applicant didn't initially list but whom the applicant agrees may be approached, eg, previous employer.</li> </ul>	<p>pp 18-19 &amp; Appendices 4, 5, 6 &amp; 7 of <i>Safe Not Sorry</i></p>
<p><b>Make a Decision.</b> At least 2 people nominated by the vestry shall be involved in the recruitment process and appointment decisions.</p>	<p>The appointment panel could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People with qualifications/experience in working with children and young people, eg, teacher, health nurse etc.</li> <li>• An independent person, eg, youth advocate, appropriate person from another church etc.</li> <li>• If not part of the panel, the CYP SO should be consulted.</li> </ul> <p>It is important to take account of gender and cultural considerations.</p>	

The panel must ensure that church and legal requirements are met. For example the panel cannot discriminate illegally against any applicant under the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1993. It is within your rights to appoint a Christian who is committed to the ethos of the Anglican Church to serve in a ministry/teaching role.

## Recruitment of Assistants

Procedures to Follow	Recommended Practice	Resources
<b>Keep a record of the recruitment process.</b>	➤ Complete a Checklist for each person being considered.	<i>Safe Not Sorry</i> p 8 See privacy section re storage of information etc
<b>Give written information about the task and expectations to each person concerned.</b>	➤ Position/job description – this can include simple things like the time that would be involved, expected attendance at training meetings, what resources are to be used, how to be reimbursed for materials, who will provide backup and support, whom you should ring if you are sick or unexpectedly unavailable.	
<b>Provide an Application Form.</b>	The application form should be tailored to suit the needs/requirements of your parish/ministry unit for the particular task and may vary in formality but should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivation for working with children and young people</li> <li>• Personal experience/skills to work with children and young people.</li> </ul>	<i>Safe Not Sorry</i> pp 10-12
<b>Interview the person.</b> This may be informal.	➤ Time should be set aside to outline the role and assess the person's suitability for it.	<i>Safe Not Sorry</i> pp 13-15
<b>Get Agreement for Police Vetting</b> if 17 or over.	Police Vetting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Police Vetting : <i>Use the process appropriate for your diocese.</i></li> <li>➤ <b>Note:</b> A record does not <i>necessarily</i> preclude an appointment unless the offending has been violent or sexual in nature or there is ongoing concern about honesty. Parish/ministry units should consider the type of offending, when the offending took place, rehabilitation of the offender etc.</li> </ul>	<i>Safe Not Sorry</i> p 16-17
<b>Ask for two character referees</b> one of whom who should have known the person for at least 2 years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact referees about person's suitability for the particular job and especially suitability to work with children/young people as appropriate</li> </ul>	pp 18-19 and Appendices 4, 5, 6 and 7 of <i>Safe Not Sorry</i>

<p><b>Make a decision.</b> 2 people nominated by the vestry shall be involved in the recruitment/ appointment process.</p>	<p>➤ The CYP SO and the appropriate children's or youth ministry leader should be consulted if they have not been involved in the process.</p>	
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## Recruitment of Special Events Workers/Speakers

Just as a teacher must stay in a classroom when a visitor is present, so must a Leader or Assistant stay with a visiting worker, unless that person is known to have been cleared to work safely with children and young people.

Procedures to Follow	Recommended Practice	Resources
<p><b>Check Suitability.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Get a written or verbal reference provided by an appropriate person who can attest to the suggested worker's character and relevant skills</li> </ul>	<p>pp 18-19 &amp; Appendices 4, 5, 6 and 7 of <i>Safe Not Sorry</i></p>
<p><b>Issue an Invitation.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The children's or young persons' leader wishing to issue an invitation should consult with the CYP SO and the vicar or vestry</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Get evidence of appropriate qualifications.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eg, Instructor's qualification, current first aid certificate, etc.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Meet with worker (if possible.)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time should be set aside to clarify expectations</li> </ul>	<p><i>Safe Not Sorry</i> pp 13-15</p>

## Use of Helpers

It is understood that for practical purposes it will be necessary from time to time to have help from other people to fill in for absentees, to act as helpers for special events, like a holiday programme or a camp, or to provide extra assistance in the crèche on a busy day, to give a few examples.

Because these people will be working either **in the presence of or under the direct supervision** of Leaders or Assistants they will not be expected to have undergone any form of police checking.

However, if such people become **regular** Leaders or Assistants for any activity, and/or their task involves their being alone or unsupervised for more than just a very brief time, **then the checking procedures must be followed.**

## APPENDIX C: SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION AND COVENANT

### YOUTH MINISTRY OFFICE, ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF WELLINGTON

#### Volunteer Children's/Youth Leader's Job Description:

Statement of Purpose / Goal of children's/youth ministry in this place: (such as bringing all those under 25 in this area into a relationship with Christ.)

**Style of youth ministry:** (Mentor relationships, youth group programme, youth service, combination – name them.)

      (name of leader)       is called by the community of       (parish name)       to be a leader in Ministry with Children/Young People.

**Role of volunteer:** (kid's club, Sunday school, youth group, worship, mentor).

**Tasks to be carried out:** (List them, with the amount of time expected.)

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

Include expectations like attending leaders meeting, training sessions, prayer meetings etc.

**Hours expected to be given doing this ministry:** \_\_\_\_\_ (in total)

**Overseen by:** (vicar, vestry, vestry member, children's/youth coordinator)

**Accountable to & how:** (vicar, youth coordinator, other youth leaders, youth leadership team meeting, monthly report to vestry, 12 month review.)

**Support structure available:** (prayer group, house group, children's/youth team support group, supervision, parish staff meeting, on going training etc)

**Expected involvement in parish life:** (attending specific worship services, attending vestry meetings, parish social gatherings, etc)

NB: You may want to include something about reimbursement of expenses.

**Both parties listed below agree to these terms and conditions.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
signed by volunteer

printed name

\_\_\_\_\_  
signed by vestry secretary / Chair

printed name.

This is to be included as part of a leader's volunteer or employment agreement, or used on its own.

**Declaration of commitment - to be signed by all those who participate in leading a ministry with young people in the Anglican Diocese of Wellington.**

Name of leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated:        /        /

I declare that:

- 1) I will work within the procedures laid out in the “**(name of parish or youth ministry) Safety Guidelines**” document.
  - 2) I will work within the structures, guidelines, procedures and philosophies of the **(name of parish or youth ministry.)**
  - 3) I have disclosed whether I have ever been accused or convicted of any offense involving physical or sexual abuse / harassment.
  - 4) I recognise that my behaviour must be compatible with the Diocesan code of conduct, code of ethics and sexual misconduct procedures. I understand that if a complaint is leveled against me the diocesan procedures will be followed, which could lead to the Human Rights Commission or the Police being involved.
  - 5) I will work under the guidance and leadership of the **(name of the parish or youth ministry).**
- 

**Please retain a copy in your ministry / mission unit’s records and give a copy to the signatory.**

You can include a copy of the Diocesan Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics and Sexual Misconduct procedures with the youth leader’s copy of the Declaration.

**Once your leaders have signed this declaration, along with a copy of their volunteer job covenant, keep these forms together in a safe place for the parish’s record. If someone ceases to be in your leadership team please destroy their signed declaration.**

## APPENDIX D: EXAMPLES OF DISCLAIMERS

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### *For camps or one off events:*

Any event contains an inherent element of risk. In registering for this event I acknowledge this and understand that all possible steps will be taken to reduce the risk to acceptable levels. I consent to medical treatment being administered to my child as appropriate.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/guardian)

I am happy for \_\_\_\_\_ (name of child or young person) to participate in this event. I understand that all possible steps have been made to reduce risks and accept that the leaders may have make decisions in relation to their personal safety on my behalf including medical treatment.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/guardian)

I give permission for \_\_\_\_\_ to go on this excellent adventure and agree to cover any costs incurred in a medical emergency. I expect to be advised immediately. I also agree that the leaders will be free from any liability in the event of any injury or loss that this child may sustain to person or property.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/guardian)

### *Especially for a family event:*

I acknowledge that \_\_\_\_\_ (name of church or youth group) has organised this event \_\_\_\_\_ (name it if you want) but that, as their parent/s I/we am/are responsible for the safety & behaviour of our child/children.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/guardian)

*(This can be used for those over 16 in relation to their own behaviour as well).*

### *For youth groups:*

I understand the rules set down for \_\_\_\_\_ (name of youth group or youth ministry) and agree to behave in a way that respects them.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Young person)

### *For parents of youth group members:*

I understand the rules set down for \_\_\_\_\_ (name of youth group or youth ministry) and that all possible steps have been taken to ensure safety of all members. If my child's behaviour steps outside the rules I understand that I/we, as their parent/s, will be required to remove them from \_\_\_\_\_ (name of youth group or youth ministry).

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/guardian)

**APPENDIX D : APPENDIX E : RISK ANALYSIS AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (RAMS) Sample 1**

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Name/Group

Date

Activity/situation

Location

<b>Analysis</b>	<b>Description</b>		
<b>Risks</b>  Accident, injury and other forms of loss.			
	<b>People</b>	<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Environment</b>
<b>Causal Factors</b>  Hazards Perils Dangers			
<b>Risk Management Strategies</b>  Normal Operations			
<b>Risk Management Strategies</b>  Emergencies			

## RISK ANALYSIS AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (RAMS) Sample 2

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Name/Group

Date

Activity/situation

Location

Risks (potential losses)

1 _____	4 _____
2 _____	5 _____
3 _____	6 _____

	Causal Factors	Risk reduction Strategies
<b>People</b> skills, attitudes, age, fitness, ratios, experience, health etc.		
<b>Equipment</b> clothing, shelter, transport, activity specific gear, safety gear etc		
<b>Environment</b> weather, terrain, water, season etc		

## RISK ANALYSIS AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (RAMS) Completed Sample

**Name/Group** St Nick's Kids Club

**Date** 11/11/11

**Activity/situation** Camp

**Location** Happy Valley Camp

**Risks (potential losses)**

Children getting lost

Children becoming ill

Children have an accident on physical activities

Vehicle accident

	<b>Causal Factors</b>	<b>Risk reduction Strategies</b>
<b>People</b> skills, attitudes, age, fitness, ratios, experience, health etc,	Poor information system for children and adults re plan and environment Insufficient supervision or incompetent leadership	Supply good information about layout of camp venue to children and leaders  Prepare leaders appropriately with regard to expectations as supervisors. Make sure appropriate ratios of adults/children for various activities
<b>Equipment</b> clothing, shelter, transport, activity specific gear, safety gear etc	Lack of appropriate clothing for the conditions Lack of hygiene around food preparation and ablutions Faulty vehicles Inexperienced drivers Lack of medication Insufficient food and drink	Supply clear gear list to parents Check all bags before departure Take spare outdoor clothing Set out guidelines for hand washing in kitchen Leaders to supervise ablution block cleaning Reminder notices for children to wash hands put up in toilets Check transport prior to departure Follow parish policy on vetting drivers Check medication is available for those who need it Ensure children have regular food and drink
<b>Environment</b> weather, terrain, water, season etc	Weather foul Slip on walking track River running through the camp	Have a contingency plan for wet weather Know alternate routes on walking tracks Outline clear guidelines about river being off limits. Supervision during water activities to be at ratio of 1:4

## APPENDIX F : WORKSHOP OUTLINE FOR USE WITH LEADERS

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This workshop is designed for use with leaders who are working with children and young people. It will highlight a range of safety issues and could be used as a way of designing a new safety policy or reviewing an existing one.

1. *Begin by asking what people understand by safety, then give the following as definitions:*

**Safe means:**

- Free to be who you are.
- Physical needs are met.
- Environment is such that you can focus on the purpose of being together.
- Freedom from danger or risks.

2. *Outline the aims of the workshop as follows:*

**Aims:**

- Identify potential dangers and risks.
- Help you provide a safe environment for children and young people.
- Help you provide a safe environment for volunteer and paid helpers.
- Design safety guidelines for your own situation.

3. *Activity:*

Work in small groups to identify potential dangers and risks for every letter of the alphabet. Each group do an A-Z list but get some work to backwards from Z and some start at A. Compare notes and compile a big list.

Talk through ways of minimising some of these risks.

4. *Highlight the following Key Issues:*

**Key Issues:**

- Believing that this is an issue and talking about it at least annually as a leadership team and with parish council. Discuss with every new team member.
- Looking at the particular issues for your unique setting.
- Safe for adults and safe for children/young people.
- Prepare a written policy before something happens. Update it annually.

5. *Activity:*

In small groups, consider some scenarios. Identify the issues. Suggest practical preventive measures and solutions.

Instructions: Choose one or two scenarios that are similar to situations you might face. Consider:

- What should be in place before the incident occurs to help resolve the situation or even prevent it from occurring?
- What should take place when the incident occurs?

## Scenarios

1. St Alpha's run a weekly kids club after school on a Wednesday. They always need more helpers. Tom Kinder arrives at the parish office one day. He introduces himself as someone new to the area and offers his help with the kids club, which he has seen advertised. He says he has worked in this area of ministry before and wants to help. The parish secretary is enthusiastic about his offer and gives him the number of the club co-ordinator. He phones her and offers to begin helping at the club meeting next week.
  2. You are bringing four teenagers home from a concert. It involves an hour's travel from the venue to the first home. On the way home a fan belt breaks and you know the car won't get you all home.
  3. Sally and James are on a camp with fifteen young people they've been working with over a two-month period. They are all referrals from the local high school. The camp includes some rock climbing and abseiling as well as plenty of time swimming at the river. They are having difficulty at night keeping everyone in their own beds! One night Sally finds two people missing from the bunkrooms.
  4. A 9 year-old arrives at church in a bad mood, and her parent seems stressed: in the Sunday school class she swears at other children and spits at the teacher.
  5. Todd delivers a group of teenagers home after youth group in his van. They all live on his route home and the parents were grateful when he offered to drop them off. It's an eight-seater van but he can easily get another three in without too much trouble. The parish does however have a policy that all young people on church trips must be in a seat with a seat belt. One night there are nine people to be taken home. One of the other leaders offers to take the extras but she only has a restricted license and can't take passengers without another adult in the car. Who will take the young people home?
  6. A soccer skills group being run after school in the church grounds by one of the parishioners is proving to be very successful with ever increasing numbers of children attending. Extra helpers are brought in for crowd control. They notice that, within the group of children there are several new migrants whose English is still quite limited. Some of the other children are teasing them: calling them names they know they will not understand and trying to teach them swear words.
  7. During a game of indoor soccer one of the leaders trips and falls onto a heater. She gets quite a bad burn on her leg.
6. Guidelines
- Look through some sample parish / organisation / denomination guidelines.
  - Begin to design or evaluate your own.

## ABC Safety Lists generated at “Passing It On” Safety Workshops January 2002

Using the workshop format on the previous page, several small groups generated the following lists of potential risks, hazards and areas needing safety consideration.

- A asthma, accident, abuse, allergies, accusation, alcohol, access, aggression
- B broken bones, bee stings, burns, bumps & bruises, bullies, behaviour
- C crash, cramps, cars, cuts, confidences, concussion, counseling, camps, concerts, cleaning, culture
- D drowning, darts, dark rooms, drugs, daredevil acts, drivers, dogs, disclosure
- E electrocution, eye problems/injuries, earthquakes, emotions, elevators, exits, escapees
- F first-aid people, foot injuries, fires, freezing, friends, flirting, fears, feelings, fire apparatus, freedom, fire egress, food, furniture
- G group dynamics, ground rules, games, gates, gas, gatecrashers, gender
- H hypothermia, hyperactivity, harassment, hugs, hygiene
- I injuries, injections, intensity, insecurities, illness, indiscretion, indecencies
- J jokes, jealousy
- K kissing, knives, kitchen
- L lost property, lost persons, love, lust, leaders, lights, licenses, language, litter
- M malnutrition, movies, money, musical equipment, music
- N next-of-kin, notification, nuisances, noise, neighbours, nighttime
- O outings, outdoor activities, opposition, organisation
- P peer pressure, plans, preparedness, policies, privacy, play, poisons, paint, possessions, property, put-downs
- Q queer kids, questions, quiet times
- R races, racism, relationships, rosters, rules, road safety regulations, road safety, respect
- S sleeping arrangements, sex, sexuality, smoking, sunscreen, sores, swimming, swearing
- T traveling, toilet arrangements, troublemakers, troubleshooting, trust, times, transport, tagging
- U underwear, undressing, unconsciousness
- V vertigo, vomiting, videos, valuables
- W water activities, washing arrangements, wiring
- X x-factor
- Y youth, yachting, yelling
- Z

*“Passing It On” is a biennial training event for children, youth and family workers held in Rotorua. It is run by the Youth Staff in the Diocese of Waiapu but is open to people from all Dioceses and other denominations as well. At every second event, a workshop on safety issues is included in the workshop options.*

## APPENDIX G: Developing Your Own Safety policy: A Guide

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1. Describe the children's and youth ministry in your parish. Think as broadly as you can, not just the people that come to "youth group" or "Kids club."
2. Write out your statement of purpose.
3. Describe how this ministry relates to the parish and is accountable to the parish.
4. Describe how the parish relates to this ministry and supports this ministry.
5. Using the ABC Guide prepare a statement on each of the following:

**Leaders** for example:

- a. Selection
- b. References
- c. Boundaries
- d. First Aid
- e. Supervision and support
- f. Finance
- g. Reporting

**Children and young people** for example:

- h. Behaviour
- i. Alcohol
- j. Smoking
- k. Ground Rules
- l. Physical Touch
- m. Relationships

**Parents and Caregivers** for example:

- n. Information
- o. Consent
- p. Transport
- q. Medical
- r. Behaviour

6. Work through the policy with the Vestry, parents, young people and leaders and use your Diocesan Youth staff as well. Design it to fit your situation.

## APPENDIX H: Web Sites and other resources with useful information

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**[www.knowledge-basket.co.nz/privacy/legislation/1993028/docoooo8.html](http://www.knowledge-basket.co.nz/privacy/legislation/1993028/docoooo8.html)**

The 12 Privacy Principles for the Protection of Children and Young People.

**A useful source of information is the Ministry of Education website “Te Kete Ipurangi” which contains the Codes of Conduct governing school charters, legal obligations of care, Education Outside The Classroom etc.**

**[www.tki.org.nz/e/community/eotc/resources](http://www.tki.org.nz/e/community/eotc/resources)**

### **Other Resources:**

- *The Ethical Conduct And Complaints Procedures* of your Diocese
- *Safe Not Sorry* produced by the Institute for Child Protection Studies
- *Employing Youth Ministry Staff* produced by the Anglican Youth Network
- *Keeping Them Safe - A Policy For The Protection Of Children And Young People And Those With Designated Responsibility For Them* – The Anglican Diocese of Christchurch.
- *Breaking the Cycle - an inter-agency guide to child abuse* – Child Youth Family Services
- *Being Safe, Keeping Safe: Protocols for the safety of all involved in children’s and young people’s programmes* – developed by the Methodist Church of NZ
- Canterbury Youth Workers’ *Collective Code of Ethics* (relevant for those working with young people)
- *Ethical Conduct In Youth Work* - National Youth Agency (UK)