



Uniting Church in Australia
Synod of Victoria and Tasmania
Croydon Uniting Church

Keeping Children Safe: Code of Conduct



A critical element of creating a safe environment for children's safety is our behaviour. This Code of Conduct is based on a template which clearly explains what behaviours are expected from everyone associated with the Uniting Church.

All Employees, People in Specified Ministries and Volunteers involved in and when working with Children within the life of Croydon Uniting Church will be asked to read, acknowledge and abide by this Code of Conduct.

Employees, volunteers and people in specified ministries **will**:

- Consider the safety and needs of children as paramount.
- Treat all children with respect.
- Read and abide by relevant policies and procedures for keeping children safe.
- Behave in a manner which is consistent with the values of the Uniting Church in Australia.
- Encourage open communication between all children, parents, staff, vulnerable adults, volunteers and people in specified ministries through the use of empowering and supportive language.
- Enable children to participate in the decisions that affect them.
- Model appropriate behaviours and redirect unwanted behaviours of children, at all times using appropriate behaviour management strategies.
- Respond to any concerns or suspicions of child abuse, and speak up when concerning behaviours of colleagues are observed.
- At all times be transparent in our actions and whereabouts, and remain aware of each child and the adults who are with the children.
- Seek advice, support and assistance for child protection matters where needed.

Employees, volunteers and people in specified ministries **will not** unless otherwise formally authorised¹:

- Be alone with a child without an open door.
- Sleep in the same room as a child – exceptions occur for camping situations, where at least 2 adults will be present and permission from parents will be clearly sought.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for him/herself, such as assistance with toileting or changing clothes.
- Without prior parental/guardian consent, seek to make contact and spend time alone with any child outside program times, including through personal social media networks or face to face and phone contact.
- Photograph or video a child without the consent of the child and his/her parents or guardians.

¹ There may be settings and events where some variation to the following is required. Such variation will need to be authorised in advance by the Croydon Uniting Church - Church Council which has adopted the policy.

Any questions can be address to Church Council, or addressed to the Culture of Safety Unit of UCA Vic/Tas Synod safechurchpolicies@victas.uca.org.au or 03 9340 8810.

- Disclose information unless specifically required by law or policy.

Employees, volunteers and people in specified ministries **will not** under any circumstances:

- Engage in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children.
- Use inappropriate, offensive or discriminatory language when speaking with a child.
- Hold, kiss, cuddle or touch a child in an inappropriate, unnecessary, uninvited, or culturally insensitive way in public or isolation.
- Behave provocatively or inappropriately with a child and/or in a way that could be considered as 'grooming'.
- Develop a sexual relationship with a child or a relationship with a child that may be deemed exploitative or abusive.
- Condone or participate in, behaviour of a child which is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Act in a way that shows unfair and differential treatment of a child.
- Smack, hit or physically assault a child.
- Physically restrain or remove/isolate a child or children unless the child's or children's behaviours endanger themselves or others.
- Have inappropriate conversations with a child either in person, through social media or in any other way.
- Use the Croydon Uniting Church's computers, mobile phones, video and digital cameras inappropriately or for the purpose of exploiting or harassing a child.
- Make a complaint that they know to be untrue, malicious or improper.

Breaches of this Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary measures or if required by law, reporting to the authorities.

Children

We recognise that children can also be perpetrators of abuse. We will provide children with guidance about appropriate and acceptable behaviour. We will educate and guide children to manage their behaviour if it is considered harmful to others and/or unacceptable.

We will promote and teach children to behave in a respectful, honest and fair way.

We will educate children to live by the **Children's Code of Conduct** as follows:

I will:

- Treat people with respect and honesty.
- Listen to what other people have to say.
- Not hurt, abuse, bully or tease anyone else or exclude other children from games and activities.
- Not have or use tobacco, alcohol or banned drugs or misuse other medication.
- Listen to instructions given by an adult leading an activity.
- Ask questions and ask for help if needed.
- Talk to a trustworthy adult about any concerning behaviour, unwanted attention or behaviour that makes me afraid or uncomfortable.
- Make sure an adult knows where I am at all times.

This Code of Conduct was formally adopted by:

Croydon Uniting Church - Church Council

Name: Carolyne Chandler

Position: Church Council Co-Secretary

on: 15th November 2016