

An Australian Baptist Response to Working with Children and Youth.

Nationally agreed standards

Australian Baptists are committed to promoting the welfare of children participating in any of their ministries or activities by protecting their rights and also protecting them from harm. This is facilitated through:

- 1. Fostering a culture of Child Safety** through constant communication and reinforcement of these principles at all levels in all our churches and/or organisations
- 2. Establishing Codes of Conduct** for all persons working with children and/or youth which set out clear standards of behaviour and attitudes required of anybody working with children and/or youth.

3. Rigorous screening and selection processes for determining the suitability of persons to work with children and/or youth. All persons working with children and/or youth will also be given an appropriate induction and receive ongoing training during the time of their involvement.

4. Clear and transparent processes for dealing with Concerns including how disclosures, suspicion of harm and /or allegations of potential harm are handled and reported to relevant authorities. This would also include appropriate responses for anyone seeking redress. All complaints will also be taken seriously and responded to promptly.

5. Risk Management Approaches which prevent, identify and assess risk in the physical and online environment including the mitigation of those risks through appropriate strategies and action (e.g. Risk management plans formulated and implemented)

6. Mechanisms promoting the participation and empowerment of children and/or youth through listening and input from children and/or youth. Particular attention will also be given to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children.

7. A commitment to transparent and regular communication to all parents and other stakeholders regarding our principles and the processes adopted in ensuring the welfare of children and/or youth participating in our activities or ministries. Regular feedback will also be invited from families whose children and/or youth are involved in our ministries or activities.

8. Addressing privacy considerations by ensuring children and/or youth's personal information is treated appropriately. This includes how the information is collected, stored and used.

9. A commitment to continuous improvement that involves reviewing, monitoring and adapting policies and procedures in response to changing

circumstances, legislation and the needs of those in our care.

10. **Compliance** with all relevant legislation and regulations related to working with children and/or youth including working with children checks or their equivalent.

Whilst legislation related to the protection and welfare of children and/or youth varies in each state, these nationally agreed standards are consistent with standards in each of the state jurisdictions. Additional information related to each state can be obtained from the following websites.