

Child Safety Policy & Practice For Eastern Districts Alliance Church

Contents

- Introduction
- Definitions
- 1. Statement of Commitment
- 2. The People responsible
- 3. EDAC Code of Conduct for Interacting with Children.
- 4. Recruitment, Training and Management Procedures for Team Members.
- 5. Reporting Guidelines and Directions for Handling Disclosures and Suspicions of Harm.
- 6. Managing Breaches of this Risk Management Strategy.
- 7. Risk Management Plans for High Risk Activities and Special Events.
- 8. Sun smart Policy.
- 9. Fire and Emergency Evacuation.
- 10. Transportation Issues
- 11. Attendance Monitoring.
- 12. Physical Contact
- 13. Toileting Children
- 14. Medical Issues.
- 15. Alcohol and Smoking.
- 16. Workplace Health and Safety.
- 17. Video and Photography.
- 18. Record Keeping
- 19. Other documents
- 20. Review
- Schedule 1: Responsibilities & policies
- Schedule 2: Permission to Proceed Process
- Appendix 1: Code of Conduct

Child Safety Policy & Practice For Eastern Districts Alliance Church

Introduction

This Child Safety Policy & Practice consists of a set of policies and practices designed to protect all children aged less than 18 years of age from harm whilst participating in any activities organised by Eastern districts Alliance Church (EDAC). Many of these policies and practices are broad in their application, in recognition that striving for best practice in all aspects of EDAC's operations will deliver the best outcomes for children.

Definitions

“**EDAC**” refers to Eastern Districts Alliance Church of the Christian & Missionary Alliance of Australia Inc.

“**C&MA**” refers to the Christian & Missionary Alliance of Australia Incorporated.

“**ChildSafe SP3 system**” refers to the system and resources developed by ChildSafe Limited for assisting organisations working with children to create a safe environment, develop best practices and effectively manage risk when working with children.

“**Risk Management Officer**” (RMO) refers to the person appointed by the BOE to be responsible for the implementation of this Policy & Practice. The RMO is also responsible for the implementation of ChildSafe SP3 system within EDAC.

“**Coordinator**” refers to the person(s) appointed by EDAC to be responsible for the implementation of this Policy & Practice within the children's ministries of the congregation.

“**BOE**” refers to the Board of Elders of EDAC which consists of the pastors and elected elders

“**Team Member**” refers to all EDAC members (paid and unpaid) as well as to all volunteers involved in working with children in a ministry of EDAC.

“**parents**” also refers to child guardians.

“**abuse**” includes but is not limited to: physical abuse, emotional abuse (including bullying), sexual abuse, and neglect

“**child**” or “**children**” refers to a person or persons who is/are under the age of 18 years.

“**disclosure**” occurs when someone informs a person in authority/leadership (or a trusted adult) within the church/community that they have been subject to abuse or know of abuse. A disclosure may or may not be an allegation or a notifiable circumstance, but it is the responsibility of the person in authority to investigate and take any appropriate action.

“**safe environment**” refers to an environment in which all those in our care are safe from abuse.

“**safe leader**” refers to someone who has been through a recruitment and training process, understands responsibilities, is supervised and is an accountable team player.

Child Safety Policy & Practice For Eastern Districts Alliance Church

“**safe program**” refers to a program in which all risks have been assessed and events thought through and properly planned.

“**vulnerable person**” is a person who may be susceptible to abuse, or exploitation based on factors such as their health status (physical or mental), age, grief, previous experience of abuse, social isolation or financial hardship. In this sense vulnerability can be temporary or permanent.

“**ministry**” or “**ministries**” refers to any activity authorised by EDAC.

“**Permission to Proceed Procedure**” – Is the procedure to be followed when planning any activity involving children and is set-out in Schedule 2 of this Policy and Practice.

Child Safety Policy & Practice For Eastern Districts Alliance Church

1. Statement of Commitment

EDAC is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all its members, as well as of all people who attend its services, programs and other events, with a special commitment to children, young people and vulnerable persons in recognition of the particular moral and legal responsibility it has to such people, and it will endeavour to provide a safe and supportive environment for everyone who attend its services, programs and other events. EDAC adopts the ChildSafe SP3 system and is committed to sound implementation of it. This Policy and Practice is intended to help EDAC achieve this

2. The People Responsible

2.1 The BOE accepts ultimate responsibility for ensuring EDAC is child-safe.

2.2 The BOE appoints _____ as Risk Management Officer ('RMO'). The RMO is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this Policy and Practice, and of ChildSafe SP3, into EDAC as a whole, and reporting quarterly to the BOE on this.

2.3 Coordinators are the persons responsible for the implementation of this Policy & Practice within the ministries of EDAC, and regularly reporting to the RMO on this. The Coordinators and their respective ministry areas are set out in Item 1, Schedule 1.

2.4 Team Leaders are the people in EDAC, who hold recognised leadership positions, or who are responsible for Team Members and participants, in children's ministries. The Team Leaders are accountable to the Coordinators for ensuring compliance with this Policy and Practice within their ministry area.

2.5 Team Members are people who are invited by Team Leaders to assist them in the ministry.

2.6 No one is accountable to themselves. Everyone is accountable to someone else.

3. EDAC Code of Conduct for Interacting with Children

3.1 This Code outlines expected behaviour of all persons working with children in EDAC (see Appendix 1).

3.2 A separate copy of this Code shall be signed by every Team Member (staff or volunteer) and a copy retained by EDAC.

3.3 Every person involved in ministry at EDAC must treat the safety and care of children as paramount.

4. Recruitment, Training and Management Procedures for Team Members

1. EDAC will ensure that the RMO, Coordinators, Team Leaders and all people who are recruited as Team Members receive the appropriate screening, (including interviews and reference checks), as well as training before being allowed to work with children in an unsupervised capacity.
2. EDAC require all Team Members to provide a copy of their current Working With Children Check card.
3. EDAC will maintain a register of all Team Members, including the status of their Working With Children Check card and the training they have completed.
4. Refresher training is required every three (3) years.
5. All Team Members must advise the RMO or a member of the BOE immediately there is any event that is likely to adversely affect their WWCC status and that would require EDAC to reconsider their suitability for working with children.

Child Safety Policy & Practice For Eastern Districts Alliance Church

6. The RMO will ensure that EDAC's Child Protection Policy and Practice is readily available to all Team Members with a requirement that they read and understand it and sign a statement to this effect (see Appendix 1).
7. A Team Member who has been charged with a violent or sexually related offence cannot be involved in child-related programs, unless approved by BOE
8. A team Member or Team Leader cannot go ahead with an activity unless "Permission-to-Proceed" has been granted by the Coordinators according to the Permission to Proceed Procedure. This is critical, foundational principle for all ministries.

5. Reporting Guidelines and Directions for Handling Disclosures and Suspicions of Harm

All Team Members must report to the RMO or a member of the BOE any allegations or suspicions of abuse or harm to a child involved in a church activity.

1. Abuse can be very serious and allegations require a high degree of care when handling. Children's complaints must not be ignored and must be investigated.
2. If the incident is considered serious, the Team Member is encouraged to, firstly, act to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing and, secondly, record in writing details of the incident at the earliest opportunity.
3. The Team Member must notify the RMO or the BOE at the earliest opportunity following the incident and prepare an incident report in accordance with the Incident Reporting Procedure. Where applicable the incident should be investigated by the RMO or the BOE in accordance with the Investigations Procedure. Steps must be taken to ensure the safety of children while the investigation is underway.
4. If the Team Member is dissatisfied with the RMO's or the BOE's response, the Team Member is encouraged to write to the National President of the C&MA.
5. The only person authorised to speak to the media in relation to any EDAC ministry or incident is the RMO. No other person should speak to or contact the media.

6. Managing Breaches of this Policy and Practice

1. If a Team Member or other person breaches any aspect of this policy and practice, the person who identifies the breach must report it to the RMO or the BOE at the earliest opportunity.
2. The RMO will maintain a record of all breaches in a dedicated file.

7. Risk Management Plans for High Risk Activities and Special Events

1. Where the church undertakes activities that are considered high risk (for example, outings and camps), the RMO will work with Team Members and volunteers to develop a specific, documented, risk management plan for those activities.
2. Adult to child ratios will be allocated in consultation between the RMO and the ministry leaders. A minimum of one adult per 10 children is expected.

Child Safety Policy & Practice For Eastern Districts Alliance Church

8. Sun smart Policy

EDAC recognises that skin cancer is a serious disease and actively promotes, encourages and supports skin protection at all events with which it is associated. While the majority of church activities take place indoors, certain activities may involve an outdoor environment.

Wherever possible, the church will:

1. Schedule outdoor activities and events to avoid the peak, ultraviolet period from 10.00am to 3.00pm.
2. Actively encourage Team Members, children and participants to wear sun protective clothing if they are involved in outdoor activities. This includes, where practical:
 - a. shirts or tops which have longer sleeves and a collar
 - b. longer legged shorts where appropriate
 - c. wide brimmed or legionnaire hats
 - d. sun glasses to protect the eyes
 - e. apply sunscreen to exposed skin
3. Provide adequate shade, or the option to access shaded areas for outdoor activities.
4. Provide easy access to drinkable water and encourage children to bring their own water bottles.

9. Fire and Emergency Evacuation

All Team Members are required to study and understand the fire evacuation procedures for the church building or other venues where church-related activities are held. They must explain these in simple terms to the children at least once a year and as often as appropriate especially when new children begin attending.

10. Transportation Issues

1. The transportation methods adopted by children to and from regular activities at the church building are not the concern of Team Members in general. However, if Team Members are concerned that parents may not be aware of certain risks, for example when a child is walking at night to catch public transport, Team Members are encouraged to notify the child's parents about the perceived risk.
2. If a situation arises where a child seeks alternate transport arrangements through a Team Member different from those understood by the child's parents, Team Members must first gain permission from the child's parents before allowing such alternate arrangements.
3. Team Members may not provide transport in their own car for a child (except their own child) without first obtaining permission of the child's parent. An exception to this is described in the next paragraph.
4. In the event that a child is not collected by their parents after an activity then after a reasonable period of waiting and the parents cannot be contacted, Team Members may be required to take the child to the Team Member's house while continuing to try to contact the parents. The Team Member should ensure, where possible, that there are other people at their house, and it is preferable that there is a third person in the vehicle during transportation. Team Members must never send children home in a taxi although parents of children may choose this option and organise it themselves after communicating the arrangement with Team Members.
5. Wherever possible a Team Member should not drive an unaccompanied child, as much for their own safety and protection, as the child's.

Child Safety Policy & Practice For Eastern Districts Alliance Church

11. Attendance Monitoring

1. Team Members are required to record and monitor the attendance of all children at an event, program or meeting.
2. Team Members must be aware of where all the children are at all times.
3. Children who leave an event, program or meeting without approval of a Team Member must be reported to their parents immediately.
4. The presence of any strangers or people not known to Team Members should immediately be drawn to the attention of other Team Members and investigated. If any such person cannot give a satisfactory reason for their presence, they should be politely asked to leave.

12. Physical Contact

1. Team Members are required to avoid physical contact with children, with the exception of their own children.
2. If physical contact is considered necessary, Team Members must ensure it is seen as appropriate to both the Team Members and the child (see guidelines below for what is considered appropriate touch) and that it takes place in full view of other Team Members and/or children.
3. Always ask permission from a child before touching them (e.g. hold hand up and ask, *High five?*). Children are the ones to initiate touch.

Guidelines for Appropriate Touch

Appropriate Touch 0-2 Years

- Hugging, patting, sitting on lap, rocking, holding hands are all appropriate forms of touch for this age group.
- When a child is upset, re-direct or distract the child with an activity, game or craft.

Appropriate Touch 3-4 Years

- Open hugs, sitting on lap or beside leader, holding hands are all appropriate forms of touch for this age group.
- When a child is upset, re-direct or distract the child with an activity, game or craft.

Appropriate Touch School Age

- Touch should always be on the bony parts of the body (shoulders, hands, arms, though not the head).
- Touch should always be open not closed (i.e. a side on hug, not a face to face hug).
- Touch should always be brief not lingering (i.e. a quick pat not a long lingering rub, a quick handshake not a long lingering hand rub).
- No school age child is to sit on a leader's lap (even if injured or upset).
Tips on how to avoid this:
 1. Invite children to sit beside you (pat ground to indicate where you'd like them to sit).
 2. Leaders sit down after children are all seated.
 3. Leaders sit with their knees bent (children are less likely to sit on leader if the leader's legs are bent and their knees are up).

Child Safety Policy & Practice For Eastern Districts Alliance Church

13. Toileting Children

1. Parents are encouraged to change nappies or take their child to the toilet prior to signing-in or checking-in their child into a program.
2. Ideally, Parents are to be called to change nappies. Team Members may change nappies if approved by the Team Leader.
3. Junior Team Members (i.e. teenagers) and male Team Members (unless the child's parent) are never to supervise children to the toilets.
4. Team Members are encouraged to use toilets before and after programs.
5. Children should be toileted by Team Members according to the protocols in the Team Leader and Team Member training manuals.

14. Medical Issues

1. Team Members must be aware of children's medical issues; especially food allergies, epilepsy, diabetes etc. These are best obtained from parents with instructions as to the appropriate course of action if or when their child has a medical incident.
2. A written record of the medical issues of children will be kept, with all Team Members made aware of parents' preferred action.
3. At least one Team Member should have appropriate First Aid qualifications.
4. Team Members must not administer medication to any child unless requested by a parent.

15. Alcohol and Smoking

1. Smoking is not permitted, and Alcohol must not be consumed by any child or Team Member during a children's program.
2. during a children's program.

16. Workplace Health and Safety

Team Members must always take care to comply with Workplace Health and Safety requirements. In particular:

1. Keep fire exits and passageways clear of equipment such as chairs, tables, etc.
2. Do not ask or encourage children to lift heavy loads; no one should attempt to lift more than they are capable of lifting.
3. The location of a First Aid kit should be familiar to all Team Members
4. When a sound desk, amplification and PA system is required children and Team Members must be briefed on acceptable sound levels.
5. A minimum of two adults should be present while waiting for children to be collected.
6. Any activities that could foreseeably result in injury or accident should not be allowed to occur without appropriate safety precautions first put in place

17. Video and Photography

EDAC Team Members must remain vigilant regarding the taking of unauthorised photos or video recordings of children. EDAC Team Members should report to the RMO or the BOE any concerns they have of inappropriate photography or recording.

Child Safety Policy & Practice For Eastern Districts Alliance Church

18. Record Keeping

Information and documents that contain personal information must be stored confidentially and securely in accordance with the EDAC Privacy Policy.

19. Other documents

The procedures and other documents that will be used by EDAC to implement this Policy and Practice are set out in Items 4 and 5 in Schedule 1.

20.- Review

This policy must be reviewed and updated by 30 April 2020_____. The person responsible for this is named in Item 6 of Schedule 1.

This policy was adopted by resolution of the BOE on 13 May 2019_____.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robinson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal pink line.

.....
Signature of Chair or Secretary

Child Safety Policy & Practice For Eastern Districts Alliance Church

Schedule 1

Item #	Description	Names and/or Positions
1.	RMO	EDAC Compliance Officer
2.	The Coordinators in EDAC:	EDAC Ministry Director EDAC Admin Assistant
3.	The people that must have valid Working with Children Check cards and be screened:	Each member of the Pastoral Team All paid employees All members of the BOE The RMO and all Coordinators Team Leaders and all Team Members in Children's Church. Team Leaders and all Team Members in Kid's Club
4.	Primary policies and procedures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Practice contained in SP3 Team Members Guide, pages 15-28 • Recruitment Procedure • Training Procedure. • Permission to Proceed Procedure. • Discipline Procedure. • Incident Reporting Procedure. • Investigations Procedure. • Privacy Policy.
5.	Other relevant documents:	Disciplinary Form Grievance Procedure Form Incident & Accident Form CSE3-IR Alleged Child Abuse Disclosure CSE3-IR Leader Application Form CSE3-OA
6.	Person/position responsible for ensuring policy is reviewed and updated:	RMO

Child Safety Policy & Practice For Eastern Districts Alliance Church

Schedule 2.

Permission to Proceed Process

Team Leader	<p>For an activity, e.g. Kid's Club, the Team Leader will prepare the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application for permission to proceed with the activity • Safety information • Team member information • Participant information • Activity information <p>The above information to be provided on the specified forms and the forms passed to the Coordinators. For activities like Kid's Club, Mainly Music, etc. the above may only need to be supplied annually unless there is an atypical activity during the year which will need a specific activity information form and a safety information form.</p>
Coordinators	<p>The coordinators will review the application for permission to proceed using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General safety and care checklist • Activity checklist <p>Communicate permission to proceed, or permission denied to Team Leader. Liaise with Team Leader to resolve areas of concern.</p>
RMO	Assist when requested for unresolved areas of concern,

Child Safety Policy & Practice For Eastern Districts Alliance Church

Appendix 1

EDAC Code of Conduct for Interacting with Children

This Code outlines expected behaviour and practice of all persons working with children in EDAC.

Purpose

Following this Code will help to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from adults. It will also help Team Members to maintain the standard of behaviour expected of them and will reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations of abuse being made against them.

Upholding this code of conduct

All Team Members are expected to report any breaches of this Code to the RMO or any member of the BOE.

Team Members who breach this Code may be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Serious breaches may also result in a report being made to authorities such as the police, local statutory child protection authorities and/or the C&MA National Office.

Guidelines When Caring for Children

1. Read, understand and comply with EDAC's Child Safety Policy and Practice.
2. Behave in a manner consistent with your position as a positive role model and as a representative of EDAC and the C&MA.
3. Operate within the C&MA's standards as published in the Legal and Best Practice Manual.
4. Treat children with gentleness and respect, and exercise a *duty of care* for the welfare, safety and health of all children, young people and vulnerable persons.
5. Allow children to determine the degree of physical contact they have with you, without showing favouritism.
6. Respect everyone's right to personal privacy at all times and take special care in relation to the use of toilets and bathrooms.
7. Avoid, wherever possible, unaccompanied or unobserved activities with individual children and young people.
8. Do not promote your own beliefs, behaviours or practices where these are incompatible with those of EDAC or the C&MA.
9. Always ensure language is appropriate and not offensive or discriminatory.
10. Adhere to EDAC's policies in regard to drugs, smoking and alcohol, and ensure that the *duty of care* to children is met in these areas.
11. Understand that emotional abuse (including bullying), physical abuse, sexual abuse or verbal abuse, neglect or any other type of abuse is unacceptable conduct by any EDAC member or Team Member.
12. Alert your ministry leader if you find yourself in a situation where a Team Member of the opposite gender is required.
13. Always be polite, firm, and under control in dealings with children and young people.
14. Report any allegations or suspicions, of abuse or behaviour that does not comply with this code of conduct to the RMO or your ministry leader.

Child Safety Policy & Practice For Eastern Districts Alliance Church

Behaviours to Avoid

- DO NOT conduct a sexual relationship with a child, young person or vulnerable person or indulge in any form of sexual contact with a child, young person or a vulnerable person.
- DO NOT make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people.
- DO NOT either exaggerate or trivialise abuse issues.
- DO NOT spend time alone with a child. Always ensure another adult is within sight when conducting one-to-one coaching, instruction, etc.
- DO NOT use any physical means to control or discipline a child, other than restraint by holding to prevent injury to themselves or others.
- DO NOT do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as going to the toilet or changing clothes.
- DO NOT be alone with members of the opposite sex.

I, _____, have read and understand the EDAC Child Safety Policy & Practice document, and I promise to adhere to it at all times, to the best of my ability.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____