

Safe Church **PLANNING SAFE PROGRAMS** Facilitator Guide

RESOURCES

Required:


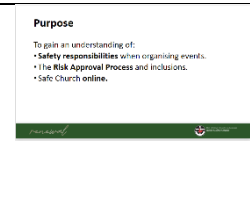
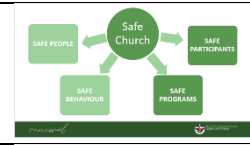
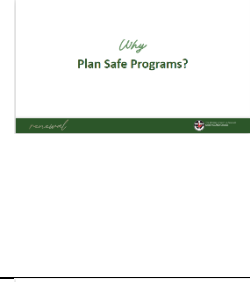
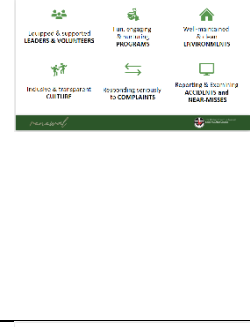
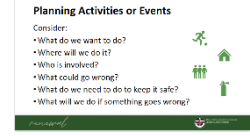
- Equipment to display PowerPoint.

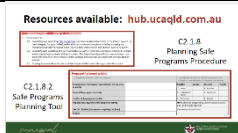
Optional (location/trainer preferences):

- SC Planning Safe Programs **Handout** (1pp or direct attendees to The Hub).
- SC Planning Safe Programs **Quiz** (1pp or digital quiz or complete in small groups using slides).
- SC Planning Safe Programs **Answers** (1 copy, if marking individually).

Reference document (optional, but available on the Hub and referred to in Handout which is also on the Hub):

- C2.1.8.2 Safe Programs Planning Tool.

	<p>Welcome to Safe Church – Planning Safe Programs Training.</p>
	<p>The purpose of this module is to gain an understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety responsibilities when organising events. • The Risk Approval Process and inclusions. • Safe Church online.
	<p>This module focuses on Safe Programs and Safe Participants.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do we plan for safe programs? • To foster a vibrant culture across all ministries where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ People are welcomed. ○ Physical, emotional, behavioural and spiritual safety is prioritised. ○ Input and participation is valued. ○ People feel confident to speak up, even about small concerns.
	<p>Safe Ministries looks like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having well-equipped and supported leaders and volunteers. • Providing fun, engaging and nurturing programs. • Keeping well-maintained and clean physical environments. • Fostering an inclusive and transparent culture. • Responding seriously to complaints. • Reporting and examining accidents or near misses.
	<p>As activity or event organisers, it's important to plan appropriately, and to reduce risk, especially for reasonably foreseeable risks.</p>
	<p>When planning any activity or event you should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we want to do? • Where will we do it? • Who is involved? • What could go wrong? • What do we need to do to keep it safe? • What will we do if something goes wrong?



Resources to help you plan and reduce risks include:

- Planning Safe Programs Procedure.
- Safe Programs Planning Tool.

Remember - type the number code (C2.1.8) into the search function on the Hub.



The Safe Programs Planning Tool helps you to identify and reduce risks.



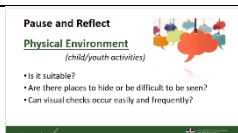
We can show God's love to the community by ensuring a safe and comfortable space.

Check the **venue**:

- Is clean, free of hazards and in good repair.
- Is suitable for your activities and the size of your group.
- Emergency Response Plan is attained and known.

Check the **equipment** is:

- In good condition with no hazards.
- Appropriate for the purpose and abilities of the participants.



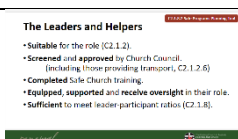
Discussion

Let's pause and reflect.

Consider the physical environment at your Church where child-related activities are held.

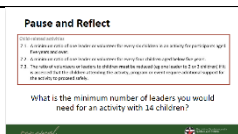
- Is it suitable?
- Can 2 leaders see the children at all times?
- Are there places to hide or be difficult to be seen?

Take 2 minutes and share with the person next to you.



Event leaders are integral in the planning and running of activities.

- **Suitable** for the role.
- **Screened** and **approved** by your Church Council, including those providing transport.
- **Completed** Safe Church training.
- **Maintain** a safe and supportive culture.
- **Equipped, supported** and **receive oversight** in their role.
- **Sufficient in quantity** to meet leader to participant ratios for activities involving young or vulnerable people.



Discussion

These are the ratios from the Planning Safe Programs Procedure.

What is the minimum number of leaders you would need for an activity with 14 children?

Take 2 minutes and discuss with the person next to you.

[**Hint**: consider if this number changes based on the age of the children]

[Continued over page]

Answer:

- 3 if participants are older than 5
- 4 if the majority of children are younger than 5
- Up to 7 if extra support is required, which depends on the context, location and participants involved

If there is a combination of ages and it borderlines on the ratios, err on the side of caution and include the higher number of adult leaders.



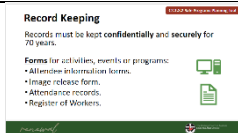
When planning activities, it is important to consider the participants and the impact of:

- **Age** – more support may be needed.
- **Ability** – skill levels vary even at the same age.
- **Activity requirements** – an activity such as a ‘chalk chase’ involving walking on pathways and crossing roads in the neighbourhood would pose different levels of risk depending on the age group.
- **Individual needs**.

It is not appropriate or acceptable to assume everything will be fine because ‘most’ children will be okay. People should not be unreasonably excluded from activities as a result of their age, abilities or skills.

For the planned activity:

- Describe the activities.
- Complete the risk assessment.

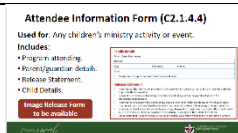


Record Keeping is important for all events, not just events with young or vulnerable people.

- Keep confidentially and securely.
- Digital forms or storing of records is acceptable.
- Retain for 70 years (especially child-related events due to legislative requirements).

Templates for **event forms** can be found on the Hub.

[Details on following slides]



Attendee Information Form

- Used for any child-related event or program (e.g. Creche, Sunday School, Youth Group, Mainly Music).
- Used when a new child/family attends an event.
- Suggested to review details at the beginning of each year.
- Includes:
 - Program attending (e.g. Children's Church).
 - Parent or Guardian Details, especially in the case of an emergency.
 - Release statement – Please have the Image Release Form available, as it is referred to in this form.
 - Child details including health concerns, allergies and additional needs the young person might have.

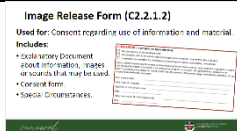
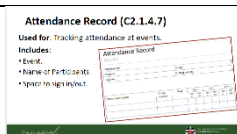


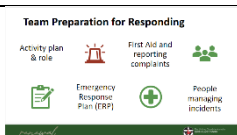
Image Release form:

- Generally connected with a Congregation/Faith Community rather than a specific event.
- One form completed per person.
- Used to understand and consent to (or restrict) use of information and materials.
 - Name, images, video, artistic or written work.
 - E.g. Photo of an activity shared on social media. Livestreaming those on stage in a worship service.
- Includes:
 - **Explanatory document** about information, images or sounds that may be used. An editable copy can be requested from the Safe Church Unit.
 - **Consent form.** For children, this is completed by their parent or caregiver, and high school students can give their additional consent.



Attendance Record:

- Used for recording attendees at events.
- Why – monitoring attendance for well-being, safety and insurance.
- Includes:
 - Event or program name
 - Date/s (or space for multiple events, such as 10 week long program)
 - Name of Participants, including leaders.
 - Space to sign in (or mark present).
- Child-related events must have a way to sign out – on paper, digital or a process where leaders check children are collected by relevant adult at the end of the event.

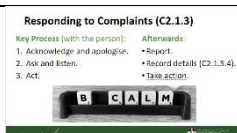


Team preparation for responding.

- Each person can bring their strengths to the team.
- Plan for situations where things go wrong, so each team member knows their role if the unexpected arises.

All leaders and helpers should know:

- The **activity plan**, and their **role** in that activity.
- The **Emergency Response Plan** developed for worst-case scenarios.
- The designated people for **first aid** and **reporting complaints**.
- Their **role** in **managing** or **responding to incidents**.



- As leaders or helpers, you may hear concerns or complaints from people.
- Ideally issues will be raised and addressed before they become complaints.
- Any complaint should be taken seriously, documented accurately and acted upon appropriately.
- Remember the B.C.A.L.M acronym from the Foundations module if someone is disclosing abuse.

[Optional to just read bolded points]

When responding to complaints,

1. **Acknowledge and apologise.**
2. **Ask and Listen.** – open questions, active listening, acknowledge facts and emotions.
3. **Act.** – Explain the next steps, including mandatory reporting.

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After you hear a complaint:

- **Report** to your leader, Ministry Agent and if applicable, to the Synod.
- **Record details** of the conversation using the 'Template for Complaints and Allegations'.
- **Take action.**

Pause and Reflect

If a serious safety concern was raised, do you know which member of the Church Council would be responsible for addressing and managing it?

Discussion

Let's pause and reflect.

If a serious safety concern was raised, do you know which member of your Church Council would be responsible for addressing and managing it?

Take a moment to reflect.

[**Hint:** it may be a Safety Coordinator, Safe Church Coordinator, Ministry Agent or Church Council Chair or delegate]

Risk Assessment

Programs
Recurring events

Events
One-off, or significant difference from program

- **Identify Risks** (what could go wrong?)
- **Assess impact** (consequences if it happens).
- **Prevent issues** (steps to reduce/control risk).

- Risks at any event should be assessed, reduced and recorded.
- Applicable for all events, but especially child-related events as they may lack the skills and experience to identify potential risks.
- **Risk assessments are essential to meet legislative and insurance requirements for any Church event.**
- Complete for:
 - **Programs – reoccurring events** (e.g. Sunday School) with a comprehensive risk assessment completed each year.
 - **Events – one-off events** (e.g. Church picnic or camp) or event with a significant difference from regular program (e.g. youth group pool party).

Risk assessments:

- **Identify risks** (what could go wrong?).
- **Assess impact** (what is the consequence if it happens?).
- **Prevent issues** (what steps can be done prior to reduce/control risk?).

Risk Assessment Tools

C2 3.8.2 Safe Programs Planning tool (on The Hub)

Safety Plan under 'Registrars'

Two risk assessment tools available (complete either, not both).

- **Safe Programs Planning Tool:**
 - On the Hub.
 - Risk Assessment with a matrix identifying likelihood and consequence of risk.
- **Safety Plans:**
 - On Protecht.
 - Question and answer format.

Risk Approval Process

Submit to Church Council

Submit to Church Council

Submit to Church Council

Submit to Church Council

- **Risk approval process** – events, hazardous equipment, workshop tools, transportation etc.
- Consider risks and can be used **as evidence in the event of an incident, injury, insurance or legal action.**

The person planning the activity will:

1. Complete the Risk Assessment.
2. Submit the Risk Assessment to the Church Council or delegate.

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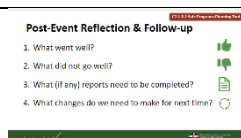
The Church Council or delegate will:

1. Review the Risk Assessment, give feedback and make changes if required.
2. Manage any hazards or risks that were identified.
3. Note any special conditions and approval needed. **If risk assessment includes 'extreme' risks or activity is not automatically covered by insurance, final approval required from Synod Insurance Team.**
4. Church Council endorses (or not) risk assessment, note in meeting minutes.



When responding to incidents:

- **Remain Calm** – helps you and those nearby.
- **Prioritise the safety of everyone** – physically and emotionally.
- **Provide First Aid** – if needed.
- **Complete the 'Speak Up!' internal Incident Reporting Form** – QR code / link on Hub / phone call.
 - Incidents, injuries, near misses, hazards, boundary violations, abuse, neglect, harm.
- **Follow mandatory reporting processes** – externally as required.



Post-event, it's a valuable time to reflect on the event considering the activities and safety of those involved.

Consider the 'what' as well as the 'why'.

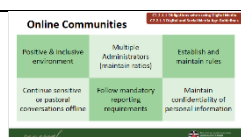
- **What went well?**
- **What did not go well?** Did another risk appear? If so, is what follow-up is needed?
- **What, if any, reports need to be completed?**
- **What changes do we need to make for next time?** Perhaps a small change, improvement or long-term change needed.



Our Safe Church culture should also continue online, considering the safety of those engaging in online ministries.



- Social Media representing the Church should be:
 - Positive, respectful and safe.
 - Align with the Church's vision and values.
- Formats include ways to:
 - Communicate externally (e.g. outreach or event reminders).
 - Foster connections in groups.
 - Communicate to individuals.
- Check privacy settings.
- Note Church social media should not be used for personal communication to family and friends.

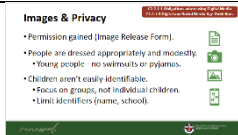


In online communities remember to:

- Build a **positive and inclusive** environment – no favouritism or unnecessary exclusion.
- Have **multiple administrators** – Minimum of 2 for accountability, meeting adult-child ratios and to retain account access if someone leaves.
- **Establish and maintain rules** – outline clearly in group settings.

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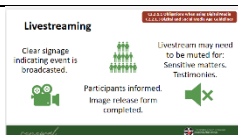
- **Continue sensitive or pastoral conversations** offline (e.g. phone call or in person). Especially if this comes from a young person, it is important to maintain appropriate ratios.
- **Follow mandatory reporting requirements.**
- **Maintain confidentiality of personal information.** (e.g. emails to whole Church should use BCC so email addresses are not shared without permission).



If using images on social media, it is important to respect the privacy of each person.

Before using any images ensure:

- **Permission is gained** in writing, or the image cannot be used online.
- **People are dressed appropriately and modestly.** You must not use images of young people in swimsuits or pyjamas in any Church social media.
- **Children aren't easily-identifiable**
 - Focus on groups, not individual children.
 - Limit identifiers (e.g. name or school uniform).



When livestreaming worship services/activities, ensure:

- Clear signage indicating the event is broadcasted.
- All participants (such as the worship team or person doing a Bible reading) are informed and have completed an image release form. If they do not consent, the visual and audio may need to be changed or muted to respect their decision.
- A livestream may need to be muted for:
 - Sensitive matters such as personal sharing or some prayer requests.
 - Testimonies, especially by young people.

[Note: the image release form does not need to be completed for each occasion, rather is ongoing consent connected with a Church]



Discussion

Let's pause and reflect.

For your strategies in protecting people in your online ministries:

- **What works well?**
- **What could be changed?**

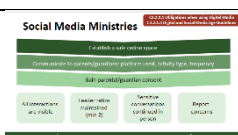
Take 2 minutes to share with the person next to you.

[Or, if you don't use any online ministries, think about if your Church started to use them – what would you put in place?]



If connecting with Young People on social media:

- Abide by platform age requirements, noting changes in 2024.
- Follow **'Digital and Social Media Age Guidelines'** for appropriate communication methods.



To Protect young people online and keep parents informed:

- Establish a safe online space.
- Communicate to parents/guardians the intended platform, activity type and frequency. [e.g. A weekly Bible Study via Zoom on a Wednesday afternoon from 4-5pm].

- Gain parental consent in a written format. This allows you to understand and respect the wishes of the parents regarding their child's use of social media.
- All interactions are visible to everyone (e.g. use a group chat rather than individual chat).
- Leader ratios maintained – minimum 2 adults can see any messages.
- Sensitive conversations paused and continued in person.
- Report any concerns that arise.

It may also be a great opportunity to remind young people and their parents about the importance of online safety in general.

QUIZ

Let's have a look at a few questions related to this module.

Quiz
Safe Church – Planning Safe Programs

Q1: What does a Safe Ministry look like?

- ☐ Equipped and supported leaders and volunteers.
- ☐ Fun, engaging and nurturing programs.
- ☐ Inclusive and transparent culture.
- ☒ All of the above.

Question 1: What does a Safe Ministry look like?

- A. Equipped and supported leaders and volunteers.
- B. Fun, engaging and nurturing programs.
- C. Inclusive and transparent culture.
- D. All of the above.

Q1: What does a Safe Ministry look like?

- ☐ Equipped and supported leaders and volunteers.
- ☐ Fun, engaging and nurturing programs.
- ☐ Inclusive and transparent culture.
- ☒ All of the above.

Answer:

D: All of the above.

Q2: Does a risk assessment need to be completed for an activity where no young or vulnerable people will attend?

- ☐ Yes.
- ☒ No.

Question 2: Does a risk assessment need to be completed for an activity where no young or vulnerable people will attend?

- A. Yes.
- B. No.

Q2: Does a risk assessment need to be completed for an activity where no young or vulnerable people will attend?

- ☒ Yes.
- ☐ No.

Answer:

A: Yes.

A risk assessment should be completed for any activity, event or program, regardless of who is attending.

Q3: If livestreaming a worship service, what must occur?

- ☐ Clear signage indicating the event is being broadcasted.
- ☐ Image release form completed by the participants who will be visible in the livestream.
- ☐ Livestream muted where needed for sensitive matters or testimonies.
- ☒ All of the above.

Question 3: If livestreaming a worship service, what must occur?

- A. Clear signage indicating the event is being broadcasted.
- B. Image release form completed by the participants who will be visible in the livestream.
- C. Livestream muted where needed for sensitive matters or testimonies.
- D. All of the above.

Q3: If livestreaming a worship service, what must occur?

- ☐ Clear signage indicating the event is being broadcasted.
- ☐ Image release form completed by the participants who will be visible in the livestream.
- ☐ Livestream muted where needed for sensitive matters or testimonies.
- ☒ All of the above.

Answer:

D: All of the above.

Q4: For a general event with no extreme level risks, who is responsible for approving it?

- ☐ Synod Insurance.
- ☐ Ministry Agent.
- ☐ Church Council or delegate.
- ☒ Another leader who did not complete the risk assessment.

Question 4: For a general event with no extreme level risks, who is responsible for approving it?

- A. Synod Insurance.
- B. Ministry Agent.
- C. Church Council or delegate.
- D. Another leader who did not complete the risk assessment.

Q4: For a general event with no extreme level risks, who is responsible for approving it?

☐ Synod Insurance.

☐ Ministry Agent.

☒ Church Council or delegate.

☐ Another leader who did not complete the risk assessment.

Answer:

C: Church Council or delegate.

A reminder that if it includes an extreme risk, you must get approval from your Church Council AND Synod Insurance.

Q5: Is a post-event reflection needed after an event is complete?

☐ Yes – to determine everything that went wrong.

☐ Yes – to determine what worked, what went wrong and consider changes for next time.

☐ No – once an event is complete, there does not need to be any action.

Question 5: Is a post-event reflection needed after an event is complete?

A. Yes – to determine everything that went wrong.

B. Yes – to determine what worked, what went wrong and consider changes for next time.

C. No – once an event is complete, there does not need to be any action.

Q5: Is a post-event reflection needed after an event is complete?

☐ Yes – to determine everything that went wrong.

☒ Yes – to determine what worked, what went wrong and consider changes for next time.

☐ No – once an event is complete, there does not need to be any action.

Answer:

B: Yes – to determine what worked, what went wrong and consider changes for next time.

Ministry Agents

Only

Confirm you completed the module:

- Scan the QR code.
- Complete the form.

• To aid with record keeping, **all Ministry Agents** need to:

- Scan the QR code.
- Complete the form.

• This will be accessible by your Presbytery to prove you have completed this module.

Thankyou!

Resources on The Hub:
hub.usccid.com.au

Contact Safe Church Unit:
safechurch@usccid.com.au
(07) 9377 9833

- Thank you so much for your time and effort with the training.
- Safe Church resources can be found on The Hub.
- Connect with the Safe Church Unit if you have any questions.