Safe Church PLANNING SAFE PROGRAMS Handout

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Safe Programs & Ministries

- Equipped and supported leaders and volunteers.
- Fun, engaging and nurturing programs.
- Well-maintained and clean physical environments.
- Inclusive and transparent culture.
- Responding seriously to complaints.
- Reporting and examining accidents or near misses.

Planning Activities or Events

- Appropriate planning, consideration and risk mitigation is important.
- 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?

The Venue

- Clean, free of hazards, and in good repair.
- Suitable for the activities and group.
- Emergency Response Plan is attained and known.

The Equipment

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

The Leaders and Helpers

- Suitable for the role.
- Screened and approved by Church Council (including those providing transport).
- Completed Safe Church training.
- Equipped, supported and receive oversight.
- Sufficient to meet leader-to-participant ratios.

The Participants

- Age (e.g. young children may need more support).
- Ability (e.g. skill level may vary even at same age).
- Activity requirements.
- Individual needs (specific support or provisions).

The Planned Activity

- Outline within Safe Programs Planning Tool.
- Additional preparations may be required.
- Ensure a risk assessment is completed.

Record Keeping

- Records kept confidentially and securely for 70 years.
- An equivalent digital form can be used.

Attendee Information Form

- Used for children's ministry activities or events.
- Includes parent/guardian details, release statement and child details (including allergies and needs).

Image Release Form

- Required for ALL people to give (or deny) consent regarding use of information and materials (photo).
- Provides continual consent (i.e. not linked to event).
- Includes explanatory document and consent form.

Attendance Record

- Used to track attendance (applicable for any event).
- Include sign in space for young people.

Register of Workers

- One register applicable across whole Congregation or Faith Community (not ministry specific).
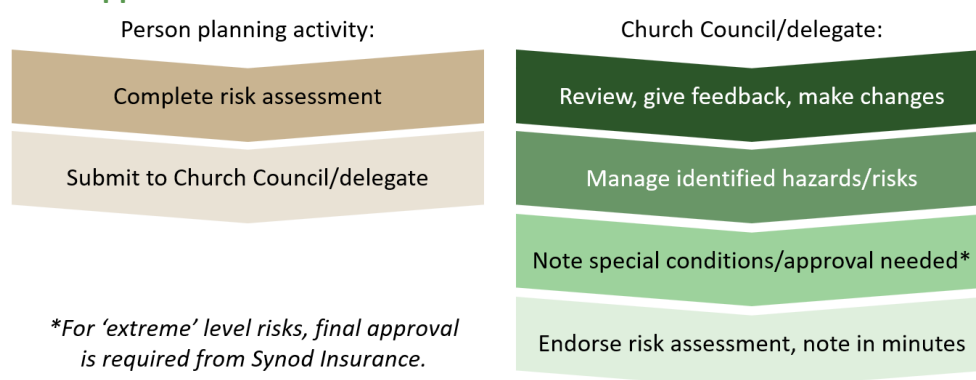- Please inform of updates to Blue Cards etc.

renewal

The Uniting Church in Australia
QUEENSLAND SYNOD

Team Preparation for Responding	Responding to Complaints
• Know activity plan and role in that activity. • Know the Emergency Response Plan, especially for worst-case scenarios. • Know the designated people for first aid and reporting complaints. • Know key people involved in managing reasonably foreseeable incidents.	• Acknowledge and apologise. • Ask and listen (clarify understanding, acknowledge facts, thoughts and emotions. No promises made). • Act (explain next actions, including reporting). • Report the complaint. • Record details of conversation. • Take action relevant to the situation.

Risk Assessments	Risk Assessment Tools
• Required for programs (recurring events) and events (one-off/significant difference to program) • **Identify risks** (what could go wrong?). • **Assess impact** (consequences if it happens). • **Prevent issues** (steps to reduce/control risk).	• Safe Programs Planning Tool with Risk Assessment Excel template on the Hub. • Safety Plan (under 'registers' on Protecht).

Risk Assessment Approval Process

Person planning activity:

Complete risk assessment

Submit to Church Council/delegate

Church Council/delegate:

Review, give feedback, make changes

Manage identified hazards/risks

Note special conditions/approval needed*

Endorse risk assessment, note in minutes

*For 'extreme' level risks, final approval is required from Synod Insurance.

Responding to Incidents	Post-Event Reflection and Follow-Up
• Remain calm. • Prioritise the safety of everyone. • Provide First Aid (if applicable). • Complete Incident reporting Form (QR code/link). • Follow Mandatory Reporting Processes.	• What went well? • What did not go well? • What (if any) reports need to be completed? • What changes do we need to make for next time?

Social Media	Online Communities
• Positive, respectful and safe. • Aligns with Church's vision and values. • Page/post (communicate externally). • Groups (smaller communities, restricted access). • Messages (communicate to individuals/groups). • Young people – abide by age restrictions, parental consent required, interactions visible.	• Positive and inclusive environment. • Multiple administrators (maintain ratios). • Establish and maintain group rules. • Continue sensitive or pastoral conversations offline. • Follow Mandatory Reporting Requirements. • Maintain confidentiality of Personal information.

Images and Privacy	Livestreaming
• Gain permission to use any photos/videos. • People dressed appropriately and modestly (young people not to be in swimsuits or pyjamas). • Children aren't easily-identifiable (focus on groups, limit identifiers such as name or school uniform).	• Clear signage to indicate event is broadcasted. • Participants informed (e.g. person reading Bible) and have completed image release form. • Livestream may need to be muted for sensitive matters or testimonies.

Mandatory Reporting - Injury - Illness - Abuse - Neglect - Boundary Violations - Hazards - Near Misses - Property Damage