



Melbourne Youth Conference 2025

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy



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1. Introduction

1.1. Organisation Background

Melbourne Christadelphian Youth Conference (referred to through this policy as “MYC”) is an organisation for youth within the Melbourne Christadelphian community, primarily aged between 15-32 years old. The Organisation periodically organises a week-long youth conference for the youth from this community and its sister communities around the country every 8 years (approximately).

1.2. Purpose & Scope

This document outlines policies and procedures implemented by MYC, aiming to establish a safe environment for children, young people, and vulnerable persons. This includes providing a comprehensive set of policies and practices that ensure that MYC operates in a safe, inclusive, and spiritually enriching manner, in alignment with the organization’s religious objectives and legal obligations. The scope of this document extends to all committee members, volunteers, attendees, and/or other stakeholders associated with events organised by MYC.

The main activities organised by MYC include:

- Week-long youth conferences with around 300 children and young people staying on-site at a for-purpose conference venue, participating in various activities.
- Small single-evening in-person events to raise funds for the main conference event.
- Primarily-online fundraising drives.

While this document primarily focuses on children, **its scope includes all children and vulnerable persons, extending to those who may be influenced by those who hold positions of authority.**

Any comments, directions, or protections made about or with regard to children may be taken to include those in positions of vulnerability, except where distinction is made by law.

1.3. Commitment to Safeguard Vulnerable People

The Melbourne Christadelphian Youth Conference is deeply committed to the safety, wellbeing, and equity of all children, young people, and vulnerable individuals who engage with our organization. Guided by our biblical values, we are dedicated to creating a safe and friendly environment where all participants, including children, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, elderly individuals, people with disabilities, and those with diverse identities or mental health challenges, are respected, protected, and empowered.

We have zero tolerance for child abuse, abuse of vulnerable people, and all forms of harm or mistreatment. Our commitment extends to actively preventing harm, fostering a culture of safety, and acting in the best interests of each individual. We believe that everyone should be informed of their rights, encouraged to express their unique needs and cultural

backgrounds, and participate in decisions that significantly affect them. Racism and discrimination will not be tolerated within our organization.

We also seek to engage families and communities as active partners in promoting safety and wellbeing, ensuring that their voices are heard and that their concerns are taken seriously. Through this commitment, we strive to create an environment where all people feel safe, valued, and supported.

1.4. Legislative Background

These policies align with Scriptural principles, the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (2018), and the Victorian Child Safe Standards (2022) which adhere to the legal obligations specified in the Victorian Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (amended in 2014).

2. Leadership, Governance, & Culture

2.1. Organisation Structure

MYC falls under the governance of the Melbourne Christadelphian Ecclesias Committee (MCEC). The organisation is run by a committee made up of individuals elected by the MCEC (“the committee”), and MYC reports back to the MCEC, as per MYC’s Organisation Rules.

The majority of the committee is made up from the organisation’s target demographic, however some individuals may be elected as ‘senior members’ to bring wisdom, support, and additional years of experience to the committee. These leaders are selected based on their standing in the Christadelphian community, commitment to MYC’s purpose, and adherence to standards outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-12, emphasizing integrity and dedication.

2.2. Embedding Child Safety in Organisational Culture

Child safety is embedded in all aspects of MYC’s governance and culture. The committee actively promotes a safe and inclusive environment by implementing MCEC’s child protection guidelines. This includes:

- **Code of Conduct:** Establishing clear behavioural expectations for all committee members, hosts, leaders, volunteers, and sub-committee members (collectively “MYC members”), and attendees, which emphasize respect, safety, and spiritual integrity.
- **Child Safety Training:** Ensuring that all MYC members receive appropriate training in recognizing and responding to child safety risks for their position.
- **Risk Assessments:** Regularly evaluating and addressing risks related to conference activities and environments to ensure the physical and emotional well-being of attendees.
- **Regular Reviews:** Child safety and wellbeing shall be a regular item at committee meetings.

2.3. Supporting Cultural Identities

MYC is committed to fostering an environment that respects and celebrates the diverse cultural identities of all participants. Guided by our biblical values, MYC actively supports the right of each individual—whether child, young person, or adult—to express their cultural heritage, beliefs, and identity within our shared space.

We recognize the importance of cultural safety and inclusivity, especially for children, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, elderly individuals, people with disabilities, and those with diverse identities or mental health challenges. Our commitment is to ensure all participants feel valued, protected, and empowered to engage authentically, in an atmosphere free from discrimination or racism.

Through our policies and practices, MYC encourages open expression and respects the unique perspectives that each cultural background brings to our community. By promoting mutual understanding, empathy, and respect, we aim to cultivate an inclusive, welcoming environment where everyone can experience a sense of belonging and spiritual enrichment.

2.4. Roles & Responsibilities

2.4.1. Melbourne Christadelphian Ecclesias Committee

The MCEC will oversee governance on behalf of the Melbourne ecclesias. Their role is to ensure the MYC committee receive sufficient support for effectively implementing the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy. Their responsibilities include ensuring:

- MYC has a well-documented Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy.
- A qualified and appropriately screened committee are elected to form the organisation.
- Support and guidance are provided in forming the necessary safety policies and procedures.
- The committee maintain valid WWCCs for the duration of their appointment.
- One individual from the senior members of the committee is nominated as Head of Organisation.
- The controls contained in the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy for the management of risk of harm to children and young people are in place.
- The complaint and incident reporting, investigation and disciplinary procedures are effectively conducted.
- All necessary insurances are in place.

2.4.2. MYC Committee

The MYC Committee is responsible for:

- Maintaining a valid WWCC for the duration of their appointment, for all members aged 18 years old and over.
- Complying with the requirements of the Code of Conduct.

- Periodically reviewing and updating the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy. This is to include the incorporation of any required improvements or gap closures identified through learnings from child safety incidents.
- Responding to child safety incidents.
- Taking annual refresher training
- The appointment of Child Safety Officers and Head of Organisation.

2.4.3. Head of Organisation

As a delegate of the MCEC, the Head of Organisation will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that child safety is a priority at MYC activities, establishing a culture of child safety, and overseeing the implementation of Child Safety & Wellbeing policies and procedures.
- Identification and mitigation of risks to children's safety at MYC activities.
- Ensuring MYC members are aware of their responsibilities regarding child safety and providing appropriate training and support.
- Implementing procedures for reporting and responding to allegations of child abuse, including cooperating with relevant authorities.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of Child Safety & Wellbeing policies and procedures and making improvements as necessary.
- Ensuring the required records related to child safety are maintained accurately.

2.4.4. Child Safety Officers

The Child Safety Officers are responsible for:

- Keeping abreast with changes in legal requirements associated with Child Safety. This can be achieved by keeping a valid subscription for email updates from The Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP).
- Reviewing Child Safe policies and procedures in line with the standards and legislative requirements.
- Informing the Committee regarding changes and recommending actions required to maintain compliance.
- Maintaining the register for Working with Children Checks for MYC.
- Ensuring all members of MYC have received sufficient training.
- As the focal point for Child Abuse incident and allegation reporting, ensuring appropriate action is taken to inform the Committee and relevant Authorities.
- Assisting and coordinating the resolution of general complaints related to child Safety and wellbeing.
- Assisting and coordinating Child Abuse or allegation investigation.
- Coordinating the annual Child Safe Policy refresher, if required.
- Conducting induction of new committee members, children and young people on the Child Safe Policy.

2.4.5. MYC Attendees

All MYC attendees are responsible for:

- Being aware of the requirements of the Child Safe Policy.
- All Adults must recognise their spiritual, moral and legal obligation to keep Children safe and to report incidents or reasonable belief of Child Abuse and Misconduct.
- Being proactive in sharing ideas to improve child safety and wellbeing.
- Contributing to future updates of the Child Safe Policy document.

3. Code of Conduct

3.1. Code of Conduct for All Volunteers & Leaders

All MYC members WILL:

- comply with the requirements of this Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct at all times.
- act in accordance with the scope of their role at the MYC organised activity.
- treat all children and young people with respect, kindness, honesty, and care.
- support children and young people to express their culture and value the culture of others.
- respect a child's wishes relating to physical contact e.g. hugs, kisses, handshakes.
- take action to support and respond to children who are experiencing vulnerability, including making inquiries and responding where there are signs of increased vulnerability.
- take action to uphold equity for all children, promote children's safety and prevent child abuse and harm.
- have zero tolerance of racism and act on any incidents of racism.
- listen and respond appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people at MYC activities.
- respond quickly, fairly and transparently to any serious complaints made by a child, young person or their parents.
- report any concern, allegation, disclosure or observation of child abuse to the Child Safety Officers or Authority as outlined in the reporting procedure and in line with mandatory reporting requirements, including the Reportable Conduct Scheme.
- report and act on any behavioural complaints, concerns or observed breaches regarding this Code of Conduct.
- limit photography and filming to group shots and capture images that relate directly to the MYC activity. Any photography or filming that does not meet this requirement will require consent from parents or guardians.

All MYC members will NOT:

- use hurtful, discriminatory or offensive behaviour or language with children.
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- bully or harass children.
- engage in unwarranted, unwanted and/or inappropriate physical contact between an adult and a child.
- where possible be alone together with a child (i.e. one adult with one child that is not their own).
- develop 'special' relationships that could be seen as favouritism such as offering of gifts or special treatment.
- have unauthorised contact with children and young people online, on social media, video call or by phone.
- use any computer, mobile phone, digital device, camera or video to exploit or harass Children.
- compel or organise interaction between an alleged perpetrator of child abuse and the alleged victim of child abuse.

3.2. Code of Conduct for All Attendees

All MYC attendees WILL:

- Comply with the requirements of this Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct at all times.
- Treat each other, leaders, and guests with respect and kindness, regardless of differences.
- Respect and maintain physical and emotional boundaries.
- Report any concerns, allegations, or disclosures of abuse in accordance with the MYC Complaints and Reporting Process.
- Report any breaches of this Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct.

All MYC attendees will NOT:

- Engage in any unlawful activity with or in relation to a child.
- Engage in any activity that is likely to physically, sexually or emotionally harm a child.
- Unlawfully discriminate against any child or their family members.
- As an adult, be alone with a child unnecessarily.
- Arrange personal contact, including online contact, with children they are working with for a purpose unrelated to MYC activities.
- Disclose personal or sensitive information about a child, including images of a child, unless the child and their parent or legal guardian consent.
- Use inappropriate language in the presence of children, or show or provide children with access to inappropriate images or material.
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child harm or abuse.

4. Data Privacy & Record Keeping

4.1. Records to Keep

Records of MYC committee and subcommittee membership roles and durations, positions of authority, individuals elected as hosts, attendance details, checks and reports must be kept and maintained by the child safety officers, including all revisions, iterations and history of all records:

- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy
- Risk Assessments
- Committee membership
- Subcommittee membership
- Individual roles with positions of authority
- Attendance records of MYC events
- Working with children checks
- Incident reports
- Disclosure or allegation reports
- Training records

4.2. Confidentiality

All records are made and kept in accordance with our privacy policy.

Except where expressly allowed under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 or other relevant legislation, all matters regarding allegations of harm to a child are confidential.

MYC expressly recognises that:

- The identity of the person who notifies the Authorities about suspected harm, or risk of harm to a child must not be disclosed
- The identity of children who are the subject of an investigation into suspected harm or any order under the Children Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) must not be disclosed unless written approval is granted under the Act
- As a general rule, information or documents given by people involved in performing duties under Child Protection Legislation are confidential and must not be disclosed
- Disclosure will be permitted if it is for purposes directly related to a child's protection or welfare or if it is otherwise required or permitted by law.

4.3. Record Retention

Records must be kept for a minimum of 50 years, or the longer of current or past legislation. As this may extend past the lifetime of any one person, the implementation must take this into account.

4.4. Record Repository

These official records must be kept in a secure, safe and private repository.

Paper copies of confidential material should be scanned into the repository, and then securely destroyed.

4.5. Record Access

The following persons may have access to the confidential records:

- Child Safety Officers
- Secretary
- Head of Organisation

General records, like registration details, attendance records, committee member positions, and volunteer lists will be accessed by other members of the committee and subcommittees, as required.

5. Volunteer Recruitment, Screening, and Training

5.1. Recruitment

The main MYC committee is initially formed by the MCEC and their processes. Casual vacancies in the committee are to be filled by the remaining committee in line with the MYC constitution.

Recruitment of sub-committee positions is to be managed by the heading main committee member.

Other MYC members are to be elected by the main committee's approval, with appropriate screening in place.

5.2. Initial and Ongoing Screening

All MYC members must provide two character-references as part of the screening process.

Those over the age of 18 must provide a valid working-with-children-check, or equivalent. These are to be validated by MYC and the validity ensured through to the conclusion of their activities with MYC.

In all cases of recruitment, the community web-of-trust shall be utilised as a portion of screening. In cases where direct familiarity with an individual is not had by any member of the committee (e.g. interstate attendees volunteering to assist with first-aid) a reference check be sought from their home ecclesia (or equivalent) as to their suitability. This may count as one of their references.

In any cases where a WWCC (or equivalent / exemption) is unable to be supplied, or reference screening raises issues, the individual in question is not to be allowed to be



involved in MYC planning activities, due to the innate nature of involvement with children. Additional control measures may also be required for them to partake as an MYC attendee.

5.3. Training

All MYC members must complete child safety and protection training, proportional to their role.

Training must be taken, at minimum, within the prior 12 months involvement in any MYC event.

This training may be provided through an appropriate online training partner that meets the needs of the organisation.

All members will be provided with a copy of the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy.

All members will be made aware of who the Child Safety Officers are.

In addition, MYC will communicate the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy, Codes of Conduct, and relevant procedures in the manners below:

Event Attendees	Parents, Guardians, Community Members	MYC Members, Staff, Volunteers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration form agreements • Website • Event orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Registration forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Training platform • Screening process

6. Complaint & Reporting Process

6.1. Legal Obligations

Several key laws oblige individuals to make reports to relevant authorities in certain situations.

Failure to disclose – Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 has an obligation to report that information to police. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence.

Failure to protect - Individuals in positions of authority within an organization have a duty to address risks of child sexual abuse by adults associated with their organization. A person in such a role commits the offence if they are aware of a risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to mitigate or eliminate it but fail to act or act negligently in fulfilling this obligation.

Reportable Conduct Scheme – Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual or physical offence, sexual misconduct, neglect or psychological harm committed by a child, young person or adult against, with or in the presence of a child under the age of 18 must report to the CCYP and notify a Child Protection Officer and/or Head of Organisation. Failure to disclose the information is a criminal offence.

Mandatory Reporting – Certain professional groups have a legal requirement to report a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse to child protection authorities. In Victoria, these are registered medical practitioners, nurses, midwives, registered teachers and early childhood teachers, school principals, school counsellors, police officers, out of home care workers (excluding voluntary foster and kinship carers), early childhood workers, youth justice workers, registered psychologists, and people in religious ministry.

6.2. Managing Allegations of Abuse, Risk of Harm, or Misconduct

6.2.1. Identifying a Child Safety Complaint

(a) A complaint may include the following:

- An allegation that has been made against a person concerning their behaviour towards a child.
- A concern that has been raised about a child's safety or wellbeing.
- A suspicion that abuse may be occurring, or that a child may be at risk of abuse.
- A disclosure of abuse made by either a child, or other adult (includes disclosures about historical child abuse).
- A breach of the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy or the Code of Conduct.

(b) Complaints relating to children may involve (refer to [\[vic.gov.au\]](http://vic.gov.au) for help in identifying the forms and possible signs of child abuse):

- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse
- Emotional / Psychological abuse
- Neglect
- Exposure to family violence.

6.2.2. Receiving a Complaint

When receiving a complaint, the following process should be followed:

(a) Listen

When a child is making a disclosure, you should:

- Allow the child to use their own words
- Consider whether the child's parent, guardian or carer should be present

- Remain calm, patient and be supportive
- Do not ask suggestive or leading questions
- Do not interrogate the child. You should avoid asking too many questions that may overwhelm them.

(b) Reassure

Reassure the child that:

- They have done the right thing by voicing their concern
- What has happened is not their fault
- You are taking their concern seriously
- You believe them.

(c) Respect

- Respect that it may take the child time to disclose information
- Explain what the next steps will be (using language appropriate to the child's age and capability)
- Avoid making promises that you cannot keep, for example that you will not tell anyone about what has happened
- Ask the child what kind of support they would like from you or the organisation.

Note: If a person initiates a child safety complaint on behalf of a child and the affected child is not present, you should adopt the same process outlined above.

6.2.3. Conflict of Interest

A child safety officer or head of organisation must not be involved in any matter related to an allegation of child abuse where there may be a real or perceived conflict of interest.

6.2.4. Reportable Conduct Scheme

MYC will report any reportable allegation made against an MYC member to the CCYP within 3 business days of becoming aware of the allegations in accordance with the reportable conduct scheme, followed by a 30-day update, along with other reporting requirements for the CCYP:

Three business day notification	30 calendar day update	Advice on investigation	Outcomes of investigation	Additional documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of the worker or volunteer • Date of birth • Police report • Organisation contact details • Head of organisation's name • Initial advice on the nature of the allegation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of the allegation • Details of your response to the allegation • Details about any disciplinary or other action proposed • Any written response from the worker or volunteer about the allegation and the proposed disciplinary or other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of investigator • Contact details • As soon as practicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of findings and reasons for the findings • Details about any disciplinary or other action proposed • Reasons for taking or not taking action • As soon as practicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commission may request further documents from the head of the organisation

Members are strongly encouraged to advise a child safety officer if they become aware of conduct which may constitute a reportable allegation, which includes conduct which occurs outside the course of a person's involvement with the organisation.

6.2.5. Stand-Down

Where MYC has received allegations or has concerns that any member may have engaged in conduct that has or could give rise to harm to a child, MYC may, at its discretion stand the member down while an investigation is conducted. This may involve removing or limiting their contact with children, liaising with authorities, enacting management plans, etc.

6.2.6. Disclosures

Where required by the organisation's insurer, they must be advised of any complaint or disclosure reported to the relevant authorities.

A person who attends MYC events, or is an MYC member and who is the subject of a complaint, whether related to the activities of MYC or not, must:

- Immediately inform the child safety officers,
- Comply with MYC's directions regarding that person's involvement with the organisation, participation in the organisation's activities, and interactions with children, and
- Keep MYC informed of the status of the investigation into the complaint and its resolution

6.3. Reporting Procedure

MYC is committed to ensuring that children that engage with MYC are kept safe from harm and the risk of harm.

When MYC suspects that a child or young person has been harmed or is at the risk of harm, MYC will handle that suspicion in a manner which prioritises the safety of children.

All MYC members are responsible for reporting reasonable beliefs that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, in accordance with this policy and the procedure detailed in this section.

Confidentiality must be maintained in line with Section 4.2 during and following this process.

6.3.1. Determine whether the child is in immediate danger

If a member believes the child is at immediate risk of abuse, they will notify police immediately by telephoning 000. They will also stay with the child (if within their presence) and take all reasonable steps to ensure their safety.

6.3.2. Determine whether there is an obligation to report

A member who:

- in the course of carrying out their duties, forms a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection because they have suffered or are likely to suffer from significant harm as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse:
 - **must** disclose that information to the police or the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) if they are a mandatory reporter, or
 - may **voluntarily** disclose that information to the police or the DFFH if they are not a mandatory reporter
- who forms a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or neglect) may make a voluntary report to DFFH or the police
- who is an adult and forms a belief, on reasonable grounds, that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria against a child under the age of 16 years by an adult, must make a report to the police as soon as practicable
- who is aware of a substantial risk that a child will become the victim of a sexual offence committed by another adult associated with MYC must not negligently fail to reduce or remove that risk (noting that reporting to DFFH or police is one way to reduce or remove that risk).

If a member suspects on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is, or may be, at risk of harm by another member, then:

- that suspicion must be reported in the same way as if it arose in relation to a person outside of MYC, and
- the person is strongly encouraged to report that suspicion to a child safety officer or the head of organisation so that steps can be taken to minimise potential harm to children.

If a member is uncertain as to whether they need to make a report, they should discuss their observations and concerns with a child safety officer.

A member is not required to consult with MYC or gain the support of MYC prior to making a report.

6.3.3. Make a report (if required)

If a member determines they must make a report or should make a voluntary report, the member must report that suspicion by making a telephone notification to the relevant authority.

Almost all reports are made to child protection by phoning the appropriate DFFH division phone number. The correct division is determined by the location of the child – see <https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/child-protection-contacts>.

- DFFH
 - during business hours by contacting the relevant Division Intake team
 - (A) North Division: 1300 598 521
 - (B) South Division: 1300 555 526
 - (C) East Division: 1300 360 452
 - (D) West Division: 1300 360 462
 - if between 5:00pm and 9:00am Monday to Friday, or at any time on a weekend, by calling the After Hours Child Protection Emergency Service on 13 12 78

You may also wish to contact the below:

- Victoria Police:
 - by dialling 000 if it is an emergency
 - by contacting your local police station (contact details available at: <https://www.police.vic.gov.au/location>)
- Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team (SOCIT)
 - Area contact details available at <https://www.police.vic.gov.au/sexual-offence-child-abuse-teams-centres>

A report must be made by a mandatory reporter each time that person becomes aware of any further grounds for their belief a child may have suffered or is likely to suffer harm as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse.

If a member makes a notification in accordance with this section, the person is strongly encouraged to notify a child safety officer that they have made that notification.

If a child safety officer or head of organisation is notified that a child is, or may be, at risk of harm, they must:

- take immediate steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of any child which may be at risk or danger
- confirm that the concern has been reported in accordance with this section, and if not, assist the member to make the report
- assist or direct the member to complete an Incident Report Form.

6.3.4. Cooperate with regulatory authorities

The member and MYC will cooperate with any investigation by the police or DFFH.

Support will be provided to the child(ren) as deemed appropriate by the child safety officer.

All correspondence from regulatory authorities should be directed to a child safety officer and/or the head of organisation.

MYC will not interview the child(ren) further or otherwise investigate until the police and/or the DFFH have provided it with written permission to do so.

DFFH or the police may conduct interviews of MYC children and young people without their parents' knowledge or consent.

When a police officer or child protection practitioner from DFFH attend MYC premises, a member of the leadership team should request to see identification before permitting them to have access to the child.

MYC will notify Working with Children Check Victoria of the allegations.

6.3.5. Internal investigation

Once clearance has been provided to MYC by the relevant regulatory authorities, it will conduct its own internal investigation if the conduct is subject to the reportable conduct scheme.

If the conduct is not subject to the reportable conduct scheme MYC may decide to conduct its own internal investigation.

The head of organisation will appoint a relevant person to manage the internal investigation. If required, an external investigator will be appointed.

The investigation will be undertaken in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice and will comply with the obligations under the reportable conduct scheme.

All members are expected to fully cooperate with any internal investigation.

6.3.6. Evaluation & Debrief

Following an internal investigation, findings and recommendations should be made.

MYC has full discretion to put in place safety management plans or take disciplinary action where it forms a reasonable belief that it is not safe for a member to interact with children in accordance with its duty of care.

The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required.

MYC will endeavour to offer support to any member or community member involved where appropriate.

MYC will endeavour to follow up with impacted parties and debrief the outcome and resolutions with them, while complying with confidentiality.

Any required policies or procedure reviews or adjustments will be made.

7. In-Person & Online Environment Safety

7.1. Risk Management

MYC recognizes the potential risks associated with its programs and services, particularly in areas such as:

- Providing adequate supervision of children,
- Ensuring safety during overnight stays,
- Managing online environments where children engage with MYC, and
- Interaction with third-party contractors that may have received lesser training

To address and mitigate these risks, MYC implements the following measures:

- Ensuring all MYC members comply with the MYC Privacy Policy and understand their responsibilities regarding privacy and the appropriate handling of information.
- Requiring adherence to the MYC Code of Conduct, which outlines clear expectations and responsibilities when interacting with children.
- Conducting regular reviews of identified risks and monitoring the effectiveness of implemented risk controls.

- Embedding child safety into MYC's broader risk management strategy, ensuring it is a fundamental consideration in all planning and decision-making processes.
- Providing training for MYC representatives to ensure they understand and comply with the child safety policies, including risk management protocols.
- Minimising contact of contractors with children, and ensuring that a second MYC-trained adult is present with them where contact is unavoidable.

7.2. Risk Management at Public Events

Public events hosted by MYC present distinct risk management requirements compared to closed or overnight events. These events are typically open to a wider audience, with parents or guardians retaining primary responsibility for their children. While the absence of overnight stays and the informal nature of public gatherings reduce some risks, MYC remains committed to maintaining a safe and welcoming environment.

Formal attendance logs are often impractical at public events due to their open nature. Instead, MYC ensures sufficient responsible representatives are present and clearly identifiable to provide guidance and address any concerns. Event locations are assessed for safety and suitability, and behavioural expectations are communicated to all attendees to promote a positive atmosphere.

Although the supervision requirements are different, MYC's duty of care remains unchanged. All representatives are expected to uphold the organization's child safety standards, monitor for potential risks, and respond appropriately to any concerns during the event.

7.3. Guidelines for Online Interactions

Online environments pose unique challenges for protecting children and vulnerable people. MYC does not operate hybrid or online events, limiting the risk of these environments.

MYC does operate social media channels, used for presenting a public front for the organization and disseminating information, as well as email communication for distributing information to attendees, members, and interested parties. In addition, MYC offers may offer an attendee-facing mobile app for managing information during events.

Social media accounts shall be monitored by more than one individual. In the case where there is a single marketing committee member, this shall be an additional one of the child safety officers or senior committee members.

Where ongoing communication with a child is held in an online environment, a second adult (another committee member or parent) should be included in the discourse. Exceptions apply for cases where it is exceptionally difficult to do so due to the mass-nature of a distribution (e.g. emailing all attendees) or fielding non-ongoing queries (potentially in response to a mass distribution).

8. Continuous Improvement

This policy, along with codes of conduct, and safety procedures will be reviewed and updated (if necessary):

- when the committee become aware of any legislative changes that have significant impact on the manner in which child protection issues are to be dealt with
- if deemed necessary as a result of community feedback, complain, incident, or near-miss.
- when directed or amended by a committee meeting
- when directed by the MCEC
- at least every two years, if during the committee's active planning period

9. Succession Planning

Per MYC's organisation rules, the organisation operates in cycles of active planning, while planning an event, and dormancy, while awaiting the national round to return to Melbourne.

During these dormant periods, a small subset of the committee remains elected, performing minimal duties to keep the organisation operational.

Access to the record repository is to be maintained as described in Sections 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5.

At the commencement of the following active period and election of a fresh committee, care must be made to ensure that:

- necessary reviews are made to this (and other relevant documents) as described in Section 8.
- necessary positions, such as child safety officers, are appointed
- handover of the record repository, ongoing investigations, and/or incidents to the relevant appointed individuals (as described in Section 4.5) is made.

10. Document Change Management

Date	Revision	Description
2024-12-02	1.0	Initial document. Adapted from the Association of Australian Christadelphian Ecclesias Inc's "Safeguarding Children Policy Template", Dandenong Ranges Christadelphian Ecclesia's "Child Protection Policy", Southern Cross Kids' Camps "National Child Safety Policy and Procedure", and Melbourne CYC's "Child Safe Policy"

11. Appendix A – Bible Tenets

The following Bible tenets underpin this organisation's policies and procedures.

- The Bible teaches that children are God's heritage. "...Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 19:14; Psalm 127:3).
- The Bible teaches that in all things we should "do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). This provides the over-arching goal and guide for planning, managing and deciding all matters within the organisation.
- The Bible teaches that we should practice the commandments of Christ and the fruit of the spirit (John 14:15, 15:14, Galatians 5:22-24; Ephesians 4: Philippians 4:8).
- The Bible teaches that we are to be holy and to abstain from all appearance of evil (1 Peter 1:15-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22).
- The Bible teaches that all forms of abuse, including child abuse, violate the commandments of Christ and are contrary to the fruit of the spirit (Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:3-12; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10).
- The Bible teaches that we are to love God with all our heart, strength, soul and mind, and to love our neighbour as our selves. (Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 19:19; 22:37-39; Mark 12:29-31; Luke 10:27; Romans 13:9; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8).
- The Bible teaches that we should obey the laws of the land in which we live, except where they directly contravene the teachings of the Bible (Romans 13:1-5; Matthew 22:21; Acts 5:29)
- The Bible teaches that we have a particular duty of care for those within the community who may be vulnerable or have special needs (Psalm 82:3-4; Proverbs 31:9; Acts 20:35; James 1:27).
- The Bible teaches that those who have oversight of the community have a responsibility to tend and protect it from "wolves" (Acts 20:28-32)

12. Appendix B – Compliance with the CCYP’s 11 Child Safe Standards

Standard 1 - Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.

- MYC has a value of zero tolerance to bullying and discrimination. Racism of any kind will not be tolerated. MYC recognises that children from Aboriginal backgrounds may be at greater risk of abuse
- MYC will take all instances of discrimination and bullying seriously and respond immediately on becoming aware of such instances
- MYC will always speak of First Nations peoples and culture with respect

Standard 2 - Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

- MYC’s child safety process is active and includes:
 - training of adults and children
 - regular review of the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy
 - regular risk assessments
 - screening of adults involved in MYC
 - understanding reporting requirements
 - casual reminders of child-safe responsibilities to attendees at MYC events
 - regular agenda-item at committee meetings

Standard 3 - Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

- The dignity of the child is important
- A child-friendly child-safe poster is regularly on display
- Children are consulted as appropriate about plans impacting them
- Children are informed about their right to safety and encouraging them to speak up if they feel uncomfortable

Standard 4 - Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

- Members of the community (including attendee’s families) are regularly reminded that child safety is a priority and that we all have a responsibility to make our community safe for children and young people
- Members of the community (including attendee’s families) are given the opportunity to provide feedback and input into our processes

- Child safety is a regular agenda item for committee meetings

Standard 5 - Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

- We accept that everyone, even though created in the image of God, is unique and will have differing abilities
- Every child should be encouraged to use their talents to serve others and in so doing to grow themselves and thrive as part of the community
- Discussion with carers will be prioritised with a view to enabling all children to participate fully in activities

Standard 6 - People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

- MYC has established a screening process for people wishing to be involved with its organisation process, given that its work is primarily involved with children:
 - All new adult members will be required to provide a valid Working with Children Check, or equivalent
 - All new members will be required to provide at least two character-references
 - All members will have regular child-safety training
 - All members will receive a copy of the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy and associated Procedures

Standard 7 - Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.

- Any incidents or reports will focus on the wellbeing of the child
- MYC will follow the due process outlined in Scripture and in our Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy, following the relevant laws about reporting and privacy.
- MYC will endeavour to make the reporting process clear and accessible to adults and children
- Complaints will be taken seriously and responded to quickly

Standard 8 - Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

- All members will be given a copy of the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy
- All members will have regular child-safety training

- All members will be regularly made aware of who the organisation's child-safety officers are
- A child-safety PowerPoint slide will be periodically displayed at appropriate times (e.g. at the beginning of major events)

Standard 9 - Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

- Risk assessments will be conducted regularly
- The Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy outlines general standards for safely operating in physical and online environments
- Where third-party contractors are engaged, appropriate action will be taken to minimise the risk of their contact with children

Standard 10 - Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.

- The Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy will be formally reviewed regularly
- Implementation of the policy will be formally reviewed prior to running major events
- MYC holds child safety as a core value and implementation of the policy will be continually reviewed and improved
- These policies and procedures are reviewed and updated as legislation and best practices change

Standard 11 - Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

- MYC has a Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy
- MYC has a clear Code of Conduct that sets out expectations of MYC members (staff and volunteers) that includes examples to help clearly illustrate behaviours that are and are not appropriate
- MYC has a clear complaint and incident reporting process

13. Appendix C – Glossary of Terms

Adult – an individual at or over the age of 18 years.

Appropriate Authorities – State police, or relevant State child agencies authorised under child protection legislation.

Betrayal of Trust – is a term used to describe additions to the Working with Children Act and the Children and Families Act in Victoria that introduced three new offences: The ‘grooming offence’, a ‘failure to disclose’ offence and the ‘failure to protect’ offence.

Breach – A breach is any action or inaction by any member of the organisation, including children and young people, that fails to comply with any part of this Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Policy.

CCYP – Commission for Children and Young People.

Child(ren) and young person – an individual under the age of 16 or 18 years depending on the relevant legislation.

Emotional Abuse – behaviour by a parent, caregiver or other person that can destroy the confidence of a child resulting in significant emotional deprivation and trauma. It encompasses a range of behaviours that harm a child and involves impairment of a child’s spiritual, social, emotional, cognitive and intellectual development, and negative disturbance of a child’s behaviour.

Failure to Disclose – It is an offence for an adult to have a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16, and to not report the offence to Victoria Police unless there is a ‘reasonable excuse’ or an exemption applies. Maximum penalty is 3 years imprisonment.

Failure to Protect – It is an offence that applies to people who hold a position of authority within a relevant organisation that works with children, if they know of a substantial risk that another adult associated with the organisation may commit a sex offence against a child under 16 within the organisation’s care and they have the power or responsibility to remove or reduce that risk BUT they negligently **fail to do so**. Maximum penalty is 5 years imprisonment.

Grooming offence – this criminal offence targets communication, including online communication, with a child under the age of 16 or their parents with the intent of committing child sexual abuse. This offence targets predatory conduct undertaken to prepare a child for sexual abuse at a later time with the groomer (aged 18 years old or over) or another adult. It does not necessarily involve any sexual activity or even discussion of sexual activity – for example, it may only involve establishing a relationship with the child, parent or carer for the purpose of facilitating sexual activity at a later time. Maximum penalty is 10 years imprisonment.

Harm – any detrimental effect of a significant nature to a child’s physical, spiritual, psychological or emotional well-being.

Major Event – an MYC Event that has a longer duration, overnight stays, or other higher risk potential. This category generally only includes the organisation’s primary conference event.

MYC – Christadelphian Melbourne Youth Conferences, also known as The Organisation.

MYC Event – an activity that is officially organised and/or advertised by the organisation for members, family, friends and invited guests, held in a community venue or at other

specified locations. The activity may not necessarily be conducted by MYC members and could include a person contracted by the organisation for a specific purpose.

MYC Member – any Person in Authority involved with the organisation’s operations.

Neglect – where a child is harmed by failure to provide the basic physical and emotional necessities of life such as adequate and proper food, clothing, medical aid, lodging and care.

Non-contact offence – such as the use, possession, editing, exchange, or manufacture of illegal or indecent images or recordings of children or young people in sexualized, explicit, or offensive material.

Parent and caregiver – the child’s mother, father or someone else having or exercising parental responsibility for the child. A parent of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child includes a person who under Aboriginal or Islander custom, respectively, is regarded as a parent of the child.

Person in authority – includes committee members, speakers, hosts, presenters, teachers, and volunteers.

Physical Abuse – non-accidental injury to a child by a parent, caregiver or other person. It includes injuries caused by excessive discipline, severe beatings or shakings, bruising, lacerations, welts, burns, fractures and dislocation. Physical abuse may result in permanent physical and/or psychological damage or death.

Public Event – an MYC Event that is run in a public or semi-public setting, where parents retain primary responsibility over their children. This includes community fundraiser events and other events where children are not being cared for by the organisation or partaking in overnight stays.

Reasonable Excuse – Includes:

- A fear for safety, either to the victim or another person as a result of the disclosure
- The information has already been disclosed to police (for example, because a mandatory report has been made to child protection)
- It does **not** include a concern for ‘perceived interests’, such as reputation, legal liability or financial status.

Other **exemptions** include:

- the victim requests confidentiality (exemption does not apply if the victim is under 16 at the time of disclosing the abuse, or has an intellectual disability and is unable to make an informed decision about the disclosure)
- the person is a child when they received the information
- the information would be privileged (for example, client legal privilege)
- the information is confidential communication
- the information is in the public domain
- where police officers are acting in the course of their duty

Reasonable suspicion – there is evidence to indicate there is a risk of harm to a child based upon indicators such as those outlined in [Identify signs of child abuse \(vic.gov.au\)](https://www.vic.gov.au/identify-signs-of-child-abuse).

Reportable allegation – a reportable allegation arises when a member forms a reasonable belief that there has been: (i) a sexual offence, sexual misconduct or physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of a child, (ii) behaviour causing

significant emotional or psychological harm to a child, (iii) significant neglect of a child, or (iv) misconduct involving any of the prior.

Risk of harm – concern about the safety, welfare and well-being of a child for any of the following reasons:

- The child’s basic physical or psychological needs are not being met or are at risk of not being met;
- The parents/caregivers have not arranged necessary medical care;
- The child is at risk of being physically or sexually abused or ill-treated; and,
- The child is living in a household where there have been incidents of domestic violence and, as a consequence, the child is at risk of serious physical or psychological harm.

Sexual Abuse – any sexual act or sexual threat imposed on a child including intercourse, assault, penetration, acts of indecency such as touch (including use of objects), exposure, harassment, and suggestive behaviour, in any form, and exposure of children to pornographic material. Coercion, which may be physical or psychological, is intrinsic to sexual abuse and differentiates such abuse from consensual peer sexual activity.

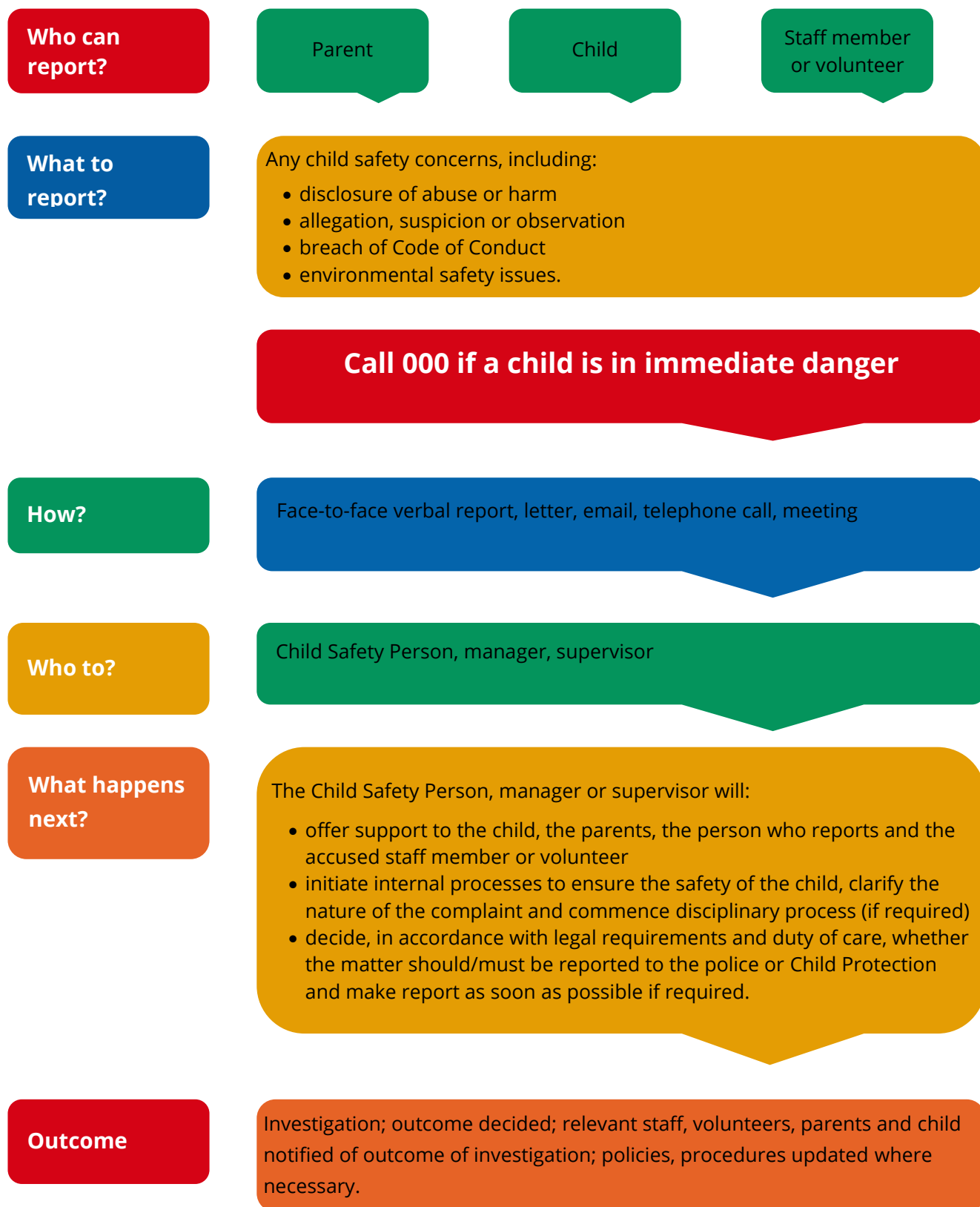
Statutory Responsibility – People or organisations that, under law, have duties and special rights in the area of child protection.

Training – provision for those engaged with children in activities organised or conducted under the auspices of the organisation to understand their responsibilities under the terms of the organisation’s policy on child safety and protection.

Vulnerable Person -

Working With Children Check (WWCC) – a background screening process required by law for individuals who work with or care for children in Australia. It assesses a person's criminal history and other relevant information to determine whether they pose a risk to the safety of children. Known by alternative names in other states, such as the Working with Vulnerable People Check (ACT and Tasmania) or the Blue Card (Queensland).

14. Appendix D – Reporting Flowchart



For more information on the Child Safe Standards visit <http://www.ccyp.vic.gov.au/> or see A GUIDE FOR CREATING A CHILD SAFE ORGANISATION