

Austral-Asian Christian Church (AACC)

Child Safe Policy & Procedures

Review and approval history:

Date	Version	Approved by	Signature
	Initial Approval	CMC Chairman	
	Review		

Part I: Child Safe Policy

1. Our Belief

- 1.1. All children or youth people (CYP) have the right to be respected and valued as well as feel emotionally, physically and spiritually safe at all times.
- 1.2. CYP should never experience harm or risk of harm of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all CYP and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

2. The purpose of AACC child safe policy is to:

- 2.1. Show staff, volunteers, parents, guardians, carers, young people, and children that AACC is committed to the safety of CYP within its programs, ministries and events, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, disability and family/social background.
- 2.2. Set out appropriate standards of behaviour and practices for people working and volunteering with CYP
- 2.3. Increase staff and volunteer awareness of risks to CYP and the strategies in place to minimize them
- 2.4. Build staff and volunteer knowledge of how to identify if a CYP is, or may be, at risk of harm and respond appropriately
- 2.5. Comply with the legal requirement in Australia and South Australia, namely the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 and Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016

3. Definition

- 3.1. A child is a person who is under the age of 18 years. Sometimes, older children can be referred to as youth. Under this definition, the AACC ministries and programs that are child related include but not limited to,
 - AWANA and AWANA Trek
 - Cantonese Youth Fellowship (CYF)
 - Mandarin Youth Group(MYF)
 - English Youth Group
 - BB Worship
 - BB Playgroup
 - Chinese Classes
 - Child minding during various church, fellowship or cell group activities.
- 3.2. Staff is anyone working for or on behalf of AACC with a financial gain.
- 3.3. Volunteer is anyone working for or on behalf of AACC without a financial gain.
- 3.4. Harm and risk of harm include but are not limited to physical and emotional harm, family violence, sexual harm, neglect, bullying.

4. Statement of commitment to child safety
 - 4.1. AACC is committed to ministering to CYP by providing a church environment that is physically, emotionally and spiritually safe.
 - 4.2. AACC is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all CYP and will endeavour to provide a safe and supportive environment for CYP by the following safeguarding measures: recruitment and screening processes, training and professional development, code of conduct, child safety officer, procedure for reporting and complaints, safe practices and review.
 - 4.3. The following values reflect the culture that we are committed to promoting within AACC; due diligence, integrity, duty of care, transparency, inclusivity, collaborative ministry, Christian ethics and the gospel principles.
5. We aim to provide a safe environment to children and youth by:
 - 5.1. Minimizing the risk of harm, misconduct and the misuse of positional power.
 - 5.2. Ensuring thorough handling of all cases of suspected harm and misconduct.
 - 5.3. Fostering safety for leaders and programs.
 - 5.4. Fostering individual values and nurturing mutual respect.
6. We recognize that:
 - 6.1. The welfare of the child is paramount and is everyone's responsibility as outlined in the National Framework for Protection of Australia's Children.
 - 6.2. All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
 - 6.3. Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experience, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
 - 6.4. Working in partnership with children, youth, their parents, carers and other organizations/agencies is essential in promoting youth's welfare.
7. Communication to stakeholders
 - 7.1. In the start of terms for each children related ministries, we will issue a statement of church commitment to child safety to children, young people and their families. Children and young people are informed about their rights, how can they participate in decisions affecting them and empowering children to raise any matters that are concerning them.
 - 7.2. Copies of this Child Safe Policy are freely available upon request to all stakeholders, including church congregation, children, young people and their families.
8. Recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers
 - 8.1. All staff and volunteers must obtain a Working with Children Checks (WWCC), prior to commencing work with CYP. The WWCC can only be performed by DHS online.
 - 8.2. The program-in-charge for the ministry shall appoint volunteers to the program according to the result of the WWCC, outcome of interview (if any), suitability of the volunteer in the ministry.

- 8.3. No participation in the ministry is allowed before appointment is made for the volunteer by the program-in-charge.
- 8.4. This recruitment and screening process applies to all AWANA/AWANA Trek leaders, mentors and fellowship committee members of Cantonese Youth Fellowship, Mandarin Youth Group and English Youth Group, helpers of BB worship and BB playgroup, teachers and teaching assistants of Chinese Classes, helpers in child-minding services in church, fellowship or cell group activities.

9. Training and professional development of staff and volunteers

- 9.1. All staff and volunteers are entrusted with the authority to influence other people. This influence carries with it great power and the ability to lead others and guide, teach and encourage. They need to undergo initial and ongoing training to ensure that they are aware of the responsibilities that come with the role they have.
- 9.2. It is also recommended that ongoing professional development be provided by way of regular team meetings, praying together, sharing meals together and planning together. All staff and volunteers are encouraged to meet together as well as attend more formal training events which will include regular updates and refreshers on the initial training.
- 9.3. They are also asked to attend The AACC Safe Environment for Children and Youth Training (held every 6 months). During this training, the AACC Child Safe Policy and Procedure will be communicated to the attendees. All staff and volunteers will need to take this training every 3 years to update their skills and knowledge.

10. Code of Conduct

- 10.1. A code of conduct provides the minimum expected behaviors of all staff and volunteers within AACC.
- 10.2. Staff and volunteers working with children or young people must understand and sign the “AACC Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers working with children and youth” as seen in Appendix I.
- 10.3. Staff, volunteers, church members, parents, carers and children can request at any time a copy of our code of conduct from the Child Safe Officer.
- 10.4. In case of a breach of the code of conduct, it will initially be handled by Program-in-charge and the Child Safe Officer, then eventually by the Church Management Committee (CMC) and the pastors of AACC.

11. Child Safety Officer

AACC appoints a Child Safety Officer (CSO) to ensure that the AACC Child Safe Policy and Procedures are being followed. The CSO is responsible for:

- 11.1. Liaising with the Child Safe Environment accredited trainer to coordinate the staff and volunteers of children or youth related ministries.
- 11.2. Administering WWCC checks, providing assistance to staff and volunteers who need to obtain WWCC, keeping a record of all staff and volunteers who had obtained a WWCC.

11.3. Immediately contact the Department of Human Services Screening Unit when CSO become aware of certain information regarding any person involved with AACC, including any serious criminal offence, child protection information or disciplinary / misconduct information.

12. Risk Assessment, Review and update

12.1. Initial risk assessment of AACC child safe environment performed. Risks identified and actions to minimize risk adopted as per this child safe policy and procedures. The risk assessment is attached as Appendix II for reference. This policy and the risk assessment will be reviewed every 5 years from the date of approval by the CMC Chairman or when necessary, as circumstances risen.

12.2. Review and approval history:

Date	Version	Approved by	Signature
	Initial Approval	CMC Chairman	
	Review		

Part II: Child Safe Procedures

1. Procedures for obtaining a Working with Children Check (WWCC)
 - 1.1. Volunteers who would like to participate in a child-related program shall express their interest to the program-in-charge. The program-in-charge then provides the name and email address of the volunteer to CSO for a WWCC check.
 - 1.2. CSO initiates a WWCC application for the volunteer, by providing the name and email address of the volunteer to the Screening Unit of Department of Human Services (DHS).
 - 1.3. Screening Unit of DHS will then email the volunteer, asking them to,
 - 1.3.1. Log into the system
 - 1.3.2. Confirm their identity
 - 1.3.3. Complete and submit the application
 - 1.4. The Screening Unit no longer issues screening clearance certificates for any check.
 - 1.5. Individuals will be notified of the outcome of a check by email.
 - 1.6. Where an organization has initiated an application on behalf of a person, the individual and the requesting organization will be notified of the outcome of a check by email.
 - 1.7. WWCC is free for volunteers and is valid for 5 years from the date of issue (it is valid for volunteer work only).
2. Procedures for reporting suspicion that a child or youth may be at risk
 - 2.1. In order to ensure the child's or the youth's safety and wellbeing, all staff and volunteers need to take due care not to overlook the physical or behavioural signs or indicators of child or youth harm/risk of harm. The staff or volunteer must report suspicion of harm or risk of harm to a child to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) (13 14 78) directly.
 - 2.2. The staff or volunteer can, at their discretion, inform the program-in-charge of the related ministry/program of the incident or their report to CARL. The program-in-charge should then report the concern to the CSO who will forward it to the CMC if the suspicion is substantiated. The CMC should follow-up by brainstorming any possible strategies, which includes talking to the child or the youth, their parents/carers, consulting a professional or log a report to the authority basing on the degree of seriousness of the case.
3. Procedures for complaints of breaches of the child safe policy and follow-up
 - 3.1. Any matters concerning child safety or risk of harm are not to be dealt with using the complaints process. Please refer to section 2 above.

- 3.2. Any staff member, volunteer or participants can make a complaint or report a breach of the Child Safe Policy by phoning, emailing or talking to the program-in-charge, CSO, other staff member or pastor. AACC will attempt to resolve the matter within 14 days.
- 3.3. Where a staff or a volunteer has an allegation of misconduct made against them, they will temporarily be withheld from duties which involve contacting children or youth.
- 3.4. The program-in-charge, CSO and the CMC will investigate the breach of Child Safe Policy and at the same time provide support to complaints and respondent. Depending on the complexity of the case involved, appropriate help from professionals may need to be sought in order to arrive at a just and fair resolution.

4. Procedures for safety of AWANA activities

- 4.1. Sign in/out system - a sign in/out system should be maintained for all AWANA programs with an aim to:

- 4.1.1. Letting leaders or teachers know who is actually present at the activity
- 4.1.2. Clarifying who is responsible for each individual and when this responsibility begins and ends.
- 4.1.3. Preventing a child or youth to find their own way in or out of a program without appropriate supervision.
- 4.1.4. Preventing a child or youth from leaving the program unaccompanied by an adult or being collected by an inappropriate person.
- 4.1.5. Serving as a record to ensure that all in attendance are present and accounted for in case of emergency evacuation.

4.2. Identifying Leaders

In order to easily identify leaders and those authorized to work with children and youth during a program or activity, all leaders in the children's programs should wear uniforms and name tags that display their name.

4.3. Personal Particulars of children or youth

- 4.3.1. For the purpose of operational safety, the current family contact details and relevant information regarding the child's or the youth's medical history and current health situation should be kept in AWANA's database.
- 4.3.2. This information must be kept confidential and be accessible only to those people who need to use it.

4.4. Photo-taking and publishing images of children and youth

- 4.4.1. As a general rule, photo-taking of AWANA activities must be made by a specifically appointed person and feature activities by groups, and not on individuals. Photos featuring the full face and body shots of children or youth taking part in activities should be avoided as there may be a heightened risk of images being misused.

4.4.2. Excessive photos taken for an individual, including children, youth, church leaders/workers/volunteers, by another individual on cameras or personal mobile devices should not be allowed to minimize the chance of photo misuse.

4.4.3. Only use photos or images of a child or youth for church use and promotions(printed form or online sharing included), if the permission/disclaimer has been given (either written or verbally) by the child, parents or carers.

4.5. First Aid Kits

4.5.1. A suitable, up-to-date and accessible first aid kit must be kept in a clearly visualized position and is available for use at all times when there is an AWANA activity running at AACC.

4.5.2. The church administration is responsible for regular replenishment and update of the First Aid kit in compliance with Australian Standards.

4.5.3. A portable First Aid Kit should be brought along whenever there is an AWANA activity running outside AACC.

4.5.4. All AWANA activities should have a qualified first aider present.

4.6. Dealing with an incident or emergency

4.6.1. In an emergency, all leaders of the AWANA have a duty of care. Common sense dictates that in an emergency, whilst leaders should not act beyond their capabilities and qualifications, they are expected to do what they can to take appropriate action, including being aware of the action plans and emergency instructions and following them.

4.6.2. When an accident or emergency occurs, medical advice should be sought regardless of the apparent degree of the injury. It is important that relevant family members are notified.

4.6.3. Where accidents requiring first aid involve a child, the parent of the child that is present should be responsible for the first aid, with the clear understanding that the first aiders are there to support the parent in the administering of the first aid.

5. Procedures for safety of Cantonese Youth Fellowship, Mandarin and English Youth Group activities.

AACC youth fellowship/group composed of mostly youth over 18 years of age, and a small percentage (less than 20%) of youth who are 15-18 years old. As their degree of autonomy is higher than that of AWANA and AWANA Trek, simpler safe practices should be adopted.

5.1. An attendance system (for under 18 only) should be maintained for the leaders to know who is actually present at the activity. It also served as a record to ensure that all in attendance are present and accounted for in case of emergency evacuation.

5.2. Personal Particulars of youth

- 5.2.1. For the purpose of operational safety, the current family contact details and relevant information regarding the youth's medical history and current health situation should be kept in the fellowship/group database.
- 5.2.2. This information must be kept confidential and be accessible only to those people who need to use it.
- 5.3. Photo-taking and publishing images of youth
 - 5.3.1. As a general rule, photo-taking of fellowship activities must be made by a specifically appointed person and feature activities by groups, and not on individuals. Photos featuring the full face and body shots of youth taking part in activities should be avoided as there may be a heightened risk of images being misused.
 - 5.3.2. Excessive photos taken for an individual, including youth, church leaders/workers/volunteers, by another individual on cameras or personal mobile devices should not be allowed to minimize the chance of photo misuse.
 - 5.3.3. Only use photos or images of a youth for church use and promotions(printed form or online sharing included), if the permission/disclaimer has been given (either written or verbally) by the youth and parents/carers.
- 5.4. First Aid Kits
 - 5.4.1. A suitable, up-to-date and accessible first aid kit must be kept in a clearly visualized position and is available for use at all times when there is a fellowship/group activity running at AACC.
 - 5.4.2. The church administration is responsible for regular replenishment and update of the First Aid kit in compliance with Australian Standards.
 - 5.4.3. A portable First Aid Kit should be brought along whenever there is a fellowship/group activity running outside AACC.
 - 5.4.4. All fellowship/group activities should have a qualified first aider present.
- 5.5. Dealing with an incident or emergency
 - 5.5.1. In an emergency, all leaders of the fellowship have a duty of care. Common sense dictates that in an emergency, whilst leaders should not act beyond their capabilities and qualifications, they are expected to do what they can to take appropriate action, including being aware of the action plans and emergency instructions and following them.
 - 5.5.2. When an accident or emergency occurs, medical advice should be sought regardless of the apparent degree of the injury. It is important that relevant family members are notified.

6 Procedures for safety of BB worship and BB Playgroup activities

Parents are usually present in a BB worship or BB Playgroup activity, hence only simplified safe procedures are needed in these activities

- 6.1 An attendance system should be maintained for the leaders to know who is actually present at the activity. It also serves as a record to ensure that all in attendance were present and accounted for in case of emergency evacuation.
- 6.2 Photo-taking and publishing images of children and parents
 - 6.2.1 As a general rule, photo-taking of BB worship or BB playgroup activities must be made by a specifically appointed person and features the activities and groups, and not on individuals. Photos featuring the full face and body shots of children and parents taking part in activities should be avoided as there may be a heightened risk of images being misused.
 - 6.2.2 Excessive photos taken for an individual, including children, parents, church leaders/workers/volunteers, by another individual on cameras or personal mobile devices should not be allowed to minimize the chance of photo misuse.
 - 6.2.3 Only use photos or images of children and parents for church use and promotions, (printed form or online sharing included) if the permission/disclaimer has been given (either written or verbally) by the parents.

7 Procedures for safety of Chinese classes activities

- 7.1 Sign in/out system - A sign in/out system should be maintained for all Chinese classes with an aim to:
 - 7.1.1 Let teachers/teaching assistants know who is actually present at the activity
 - 7.1.2 Clarify who is responsible for each individual and when this responsibility begins and ends.
 - 7.1.3 Prevents a child or youth to find their own way in or out of a program without appropriate supervision.
 - 7.1.4 Prevent a child or youth from leaving the program unaccompanied by an adult or being collected by an inappropriate person.
 - 7.1.5 Serve as a record to ensure that all in attendance are present and accounted for in case of emergency evacuation.
- 7.2 Identifying teachers

In order to easily identify those authorized to work with children and youth, all teachers/teaching assistants in the Chinese classes should wear a name tag that displays their name.
- 7.3 Personal Particulars of children or youth
 - 7.3.1 For the purpose of operational safety, the current family contact details and relevant information regarding the child's or the youth's medical history and current health situation should be kept in Chinese classes' database.
 - 7.3.2 This information must be kept confidential and be accessible only to those people who need to use it.
- 7.4 Photo-taking and publishing images of children and youth

- 7.4.1 As a general rule, photo-taking of Chinese classes activities must be made by a specifically appointed person and features the activities and groups, and not on individuals. Photos featuring the full face and body shots of children or youth taking part in activities should be avoided as there may be a heightened risk of images being misused.
- 7.4.2 Excessive photos taken for an individual, including children, youth, church leaders/workers/volunteers, by another individual on cameras or personal mobile devices should not be allowed to minimize the chance of photo misuse.
- 7.4.3 Only use photos or images of a child or youth for church use and promotions (printed form or online sharing included), if the permission/disclaimer has been given (either written or verbally) by the parents or carers.
- 7.5 First Aid Kits
 - 7.5.1 A suitable, up-to-date and accessible first aid kit must be kept in a clearly visualized position and is available for use at all times when there is a Chinese class activity running at AACC.
 - 7.5.2 The church administration is responsible for regular replenishment and update of the First Aid kit in compliance with Australian Standards.
 - 7.5.3 A portable First Aid Kit should be brought along whenever there is a Chinese class activity running outside AACC.
 - 7.5.4 All Chinese classes activities should have a qualified first aider present.
- 7.6 Dealing with an incident or emergency
 - 7.6.1 In an emergency, all teachers/teaching assistants have a duty of care. Common sense dictates that in an emergency, whilst leaders should not act beyond their capabilities and qualifications, they are expected to do what they can to take appropriate action, including being aware of the action plans and emergency instructions and following them.
 - 7.6.2 When an accident or emergency occurs, medical advice should be sought regardless of the apparent degree of the injury. It is important that relevant family members are notified.
 - 7.6.3 Where accidents requiring first aid involve a child, the parent of the child that is present should be responsible for the first aid, with the clear understanding that the first aiders are there to support the parent in the administering of the first aid.

Appendix I

AACC Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers working with CYP

Caring for CYP brings additional responsibilities for staff and volunteers of AACC. All staff and volunteers of AACC are responsible for promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of CYP by:

- sticking to AACC's child safe policy at all times and taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of CYP
- treating all staff, volunteers, children, young people and parents including those of different race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes and religious beliefs with respect and honesty and ensure equity is upheld
- being a positive role model to CYP in all your conduct with them
- setting clear boundaries about appropriate behaviour between yourself and the CYP in AACC – boundaries help everyone to understand their roles
- listening and responding appropriately to the views and concerns of CYP
- ensuring another adult is always present or in sight when conducting one to one coaching, instruction or other activity
- being alert to CYP who are, or may be at risk of harm, and reporting this quickly to the Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78)
- responding quickly, fairly and transparently to any serious complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian
- encouraging CYP to 'have a say' on issues that are important to them.

Staff and volunteers must not:

- engage in rough physical games
- develop any 'special' relationships with CYP that could be seen as favouritism, such as the offering of gifts or special treatment
- do things of a personal nature that a child or young person can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- discriminate against any child or young person because of age, gender, cultural background, religion, vulnerability or sexuality.

Breach of the Code of Conduct:

All allegations of misconduct will be followed up by CMC and the pastors. The staff and volunteers involved will be temporarily withheld from duties which involve contacting children or young people until final resolution has been made.

I agree to abide by this code of conduct

Name:.....

Signature:..... Date:.....

Appendix II

Risk assessment for AACC child safe environments

Person Responsible	Joseph Chu, Coordinator, Child Safe Policy Committee	Date of Review	3 rd August, 2022
Approved By	Louis Hui, Chairman, Church Management Committee	Date of Next Review	1 st August 2027
Signature of approver		Date of approval	
Organization Name	Austral Asian Christian Church		
Purpose	Ensure that AACC provides a safe environment for all children and young people		
Locations	294-300 Morphett Street, Adelaide SA 5000		
Risk name and description		Actions to minimize risk	
Culture of organization is not child-safe focused		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child focused Code of Conduct is in place that sets the behavioural standards expected including what happens when a breach occurs Culture of management reflects the strong commitment of AACC to the safety of children and young people (part 4 of Child Safe Policy) National Principles for Child Safe Organizations are embedded in policies and procedures We meet the requirements of the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017</i> (which mandates child safe environments) and the <i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016</i> (which mandates Working with Children Checks) 	
Organizational staff (including staff & volunteers) harm CYP		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment processes including undertaking referee checks to ensure the suitability of persons before they are employed/volunteer with our organization is completed Interview questions (no prior preparation) should gauge an applicant's understanding of Child-safe principles and actions that would be taken to prevent harm to CYP. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All employees and volunteers have WWCC with 'not prohibited' result prior to working with children and young people • WWCC updated every 5 years • CYP and their families are given a copy of our Child SFE Policy and complaints and feedback process as part of a welcome/induction pack
Organizational staff (including staff & volunteers) do not understand their obligations to report harm or risk of harm to the Child Abuse Report Line (or SA Police if child/young person is at immediate risk)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All employees and volunteers trained in Safe Environments – Through their Eyes on commencement and refresher training every 3 years after • All employees and volunteers must abide by the child safe environments policy and Code of Conduct (latter is signed on commencement with organization)
We hold overnight and/or off-site activities with CYP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For overnight activities (eg camps and excursions), CYP must be supervised by a minimum of 2 adults of the same gender as the children attending. • Recruitment processes including undertaking referee checks to ensure the suitability of persons before they are employed/volunteer with our organization is completed • All employees/volunteers over the age of 18 years have a 'not prohibited' WWCC • In the event of billeting arrangements, host adults should have a CYP attending the same event, and have a not-prohibited WWCC
Unauthorized images taking of children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photo taking of CYP must be made by a specifically appointed person. Photo featuring the full face and body shots of CYP should be avoided. Excessive photo taken for an individual should not be allowed. Use of photos of CYP in promotion must have consent from CYP & their parents/carers
Physical safety of CYP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated first aid kits available and qualified first aider present at all CYP activities

Appendix III

**When you feel that you/your children is harmed
or at risk of harm**

You can report to Child Abuse Rerpoort Line (CARL) 131478

You may inform Program-in-Charge / Child Safe Officer / Pastor

Church will conduct investigation on the incident if the Department of Child Protection or Police advised that we can proceed with this

Church will offer support to the child and their family.

Church will also offer support to the alleged staff / volunteer

Church will conduct formal investigation if initial investigation substantiated the claim

Church will conduct disciplinary actions and review the Child Safe Policy as necessary

Ministry_____Program-in-Charge_____

Child Safe Officer : Yuki Chu

