



Uniting Church in Australia

Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

2. Keeping Children Safe Code of conduct



The Avenue Uniting Church, Blackburn

A critical element of creating a safe environment for children's safety is our behaviour. This Code of Conduct clearly explains what behaviours are expected from everyone associated with the Uniting Church.

Employees, volunteers and people in specified ministries **will**:

- Consider the safety and needs of children as paramount.
- Treat all children with respect.
- Read and abide by relevant policies and procedures for keeping children safe.
- Behave in a manner which is consistent with the values of the Uniting Church in Australia.
- Encourage open communication between all children, parents, staff, vulnerable adults, volunteers and people in specified ministries through the use of empowering and supportive language.
- Enable children to participate in the decisions that affect them.
- Model appropriate behaviours and redirect unwanted behaviours of children, at all times using appropriate behaviour management strategies.
- Respond to any concerns or suspicions of child abuse, and speak up when concerning behaviours of colleagues are observed.
- At all times be transparent in our actions and whereabouts, and remain aware of each child and the adults who are with the children.
- Seek advice, support and assistance for child protection matters where needed.

Employees, volunteers and people in specified ministries **will not** unless otherwise formally authorised¹:

- Be alone with a child.
- Sleep in the same room as a child.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for him/herself, such as assistance with toileting or changing clothes.
- Without prior parental/guardian consent, seek to make contact and spend time alone with any child outside program times, including through personal social media networks or face to face and phone contact.
- Photograph or video a child without the consent of the child and his/her parents or guardians.
- Disclose information unless specifically required by law or policy.

Employees, volunteers and people in specified ministries **will not** under any circumstances:

- Engage in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children.
- Use inappropriate, offensive or discriminatory language when speaking with a child.
- Sleep in the same bed as a child.
- Hold, kiss, cuddle or touch a child in an inappropriate, unnecessary, uninvited, or culturally insensitive way in public or isolation.
- Behave provocatively or inappropriately with a child and/or in a way that could be considered as 'grooming'.
- Develop a sexual relationship with a child or a relationship with a child that may be deemed exploitative or abusive.
- Condone or participate in, behaviour of a child which is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Act in a way that shows unfair and differential treatment of a child.
- Smack, hit or physically assault a child.
- Physically restrain or remove/isolate a child or children unless the child's or children's behaviours endanger themselves or others.
- Have inappropriate conversations with a child either in person, through social media or in any other way.
- Use the Entity's computers, mobile phones, video and digital cameras inappropriately or for the purpose of exploiting or harassing a child.
- Make a complaint that they know to be untrue, malicious or improper.

Breaches of this Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary measures or if required by law, reporting to the authorities.

¹ There may be settings and events where some variation to the following is required. Such variation will need to be authorised by the Church Council of The Avenue Uniting Church. If you have any questions regarding this please contact the Culture of Safety Unit safechurchpolicies@victas.uca.org.au or 03 9340 8810.

Children

We recognise that children can also be perpetrators of abuse. We will provide children with guidance about appropriate and acceptable behaviour. We will educate and guide children to manage their behaviour if it is considered harmful to others and/or unacceptable.

We will promote and teach children to behave in a respectful, honest and fair way.

Our Children's Code of Conduct is as follows:

I will:

- Treat people with respect and honesty.
- Listen to what other people have to say.
- Not hurt, abuse, bully or tease anyone else or exclude other children from games and activities.
- Not have or use tobacco, alcohol or banned drugs or misuse other medication.
- Listen to instructions given by an adult leading an activity.
- Ask questions and ask for help if needed.
- Talk to a trustworthy adult about any concerning behaviour, unwanted attention or behaviour that makes me afraid or uncomfortable.
- Make sure an adult knows where I am at all times.

Name of entity:	The Avenue Uniting Church, Blackburn
Adopted/approved by:	Church Council
Signature.....
Name.....
Position.....	Date.....

This Code of Conduct is to assist with the implementation of the Keeping Children Safe Policy of the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, adopted by the Synod Standing Committee on 24 June 2015.