



URBAN VOICE

Child Protection Policy

Definition of a child

We define a child as 'every human being below the age of 18 years' (UNCRC)

Why do we have a child protection policy?

At Urban Voice, we believe it is necessary to have a child protection policy in order to do all we can to provide a safe, loving environment in which our children can grow and develop. We believe that by stating the ways in which we intend to do this and by implementing good practice, we are taking seriously the need for child protection within our church community.

We believe that every child has the right to be treated fairly and respected for who they are. Every child has the right to be free from physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

We want to provide a safe environment where our beliefs about children are upheld and where the abuse of them is prevented by administering the following practises within our church community:

Registration/dismissal Procedure

Pre-school Children

- Each child will be registered by the adult responsible for the child. An adult is required to accompany the child to their venue and wait with them while they are registered. The child's presence will be recorded and the adult will receive a number card.
- Adults are required to collect their children promptly after the meeting. Please note children will not be allowed to be taken by an adult who does not have the appropriate number card.
- If it is necessary to call a parent during the meeting, the child's number will be shown on the screen.

Grade 1-3

- Registration will take place within the venue where this group meets and administered by the group leaders.
- These children are not required to be accompanied by an adult.

- They will be dismissed by their group leaders at the end of the meeting and are not required to be collected by an adult.
- If the adult responsible wishes to collect the child, they must specify this arrangement with the group leader.
- An initial headcount will be done by the group leader as the children enter the room.

Grade 4-6

- The children will register under the supervision of a small group leader.
- They will then be dismissed by their group leaders at the end of the meeting and are not required to be collected by an adult.
- An initial headcount will be done by the group leader as the children enter the room.

Grade 7-9

- Are required to self-register as soon as they enter the room.
- When they are dismissed by their group leaders at the end of the meeting, they are not required to be collected by an adult.
- An initial headcount will be done by the group leader as the children enter the room.

The **kids patrol volunteer** visits each of the groups during the morning and records the total number of children for each age group.

Contact details are updated twice a year. Parents are required to fill out the forms of preschool children. The forms will include noting down any allergies that the child may have.

The forms will be available for new children to fill out throughout the year.

Discipline Procedures

Pre-school Children

- Children will be given a verbal warning by the team leaders. In the case of a serious discipline issue the adult responsible will be called upon to remove the child.
- If a child is in distress and not settling in their class, the adult responsible will be called upon to come and settle the child and if necessary, to remove the child.

Grade 1-9 children

- An initial warning will be given by the team leaders, but in the case of a serious discipline issue, or if the unacceptable behaviour continues in spite of the warning, the Kids patrol volunteer will be asked to remove the child.
- The Kids Patrol volunteer will supervise the child in a public place (i.e. the church foyer).
- The Kids Patrol volunteer will return the child to the group leader after the period of time that was specified by the group leader.
- Follow up with parents will be used where necessary.
- In cases of very serious discipline issues the child may be banned from attending their group for a specified period of time, after consultation with leaders of Urban Kidz.

- Please note that Urban Voice does not allow any physical punishment of children within any of the different age groups.

Kids Patrol Volunteer

- The kids patrol volunteer provides support for the leaders by removing a disruptive child, so that the remaining children can continue with their program.
- The child should be supervised in a public environment for a period of time until he/she is ready to be returned to their group (eg: the foyer)
- The kids patrol volunteer will at no time be alone with a child in an enclosed area.
- They will also undertake to check the premises and ensure that there are no children causing disruptions in the church environment.

Medical Procedures

- First Aid kits containing basic equipment will be stored in each different room.
- A larger first aid kit is kept in the church office if more specialised equipment is required.
- A box of plastic gloves will be stored in each room with the first aid kits and gloves should be worn at all times when performing any type of first aid involving broken skin.
- Leaders of Urban Kidz are not permitted to administer medication without permission of parents.
- In the event of a medical emergency, the assistance of a trained first aider or a medical doctor within in the congregation will be enlisted.
- In the event of a medical emergency, every effort will be made to contact the child's parent immediately.
- A seriously injured child will, at the discretion of the medical doctor, trained first aider or children's ministry co-ordinator, be transported to hospital for further assistance.

Disclosure and follow up

- If a child discloses any information that causes concern, an incident report must be filled out.
- Incident Report Forms will be kept in a known place within each of the children's rooms.
- The completed reports are then to be given to the child protection co-ordinators, who will ensure that the appropriate action is taken.
- The reports will be treated as confidential and kept in a locked cupboard.
- A separate form will then be filled out explaining the appropriate follow up which has been taken by the child protection co-ordinators. These forms will also be treated as confidential and kept in a locked cupboard.
- When a volunteer joins a team the procedure for disclosing information will be explained in more detail by their group leader.
- Children will be informed in their groups who the child protection co-ordinators are, should they wish to disclose information.
- Photographs of the child protection co-ordinators will be displayed in a public place.

Roles of Leaders

- When a new volunteer has joined a team they must agree to submit a certified copy of their ID book, so that we can request a Police Clearance certificate confirming that they do not have a criminal record.
- If the potential volunteer does have a criminal record, they may be accepted as volunteer at the discretion of the head of children's work, if the reason for the record does not disqualify the leader.
- No volunteer will be accepted in the children's ministry if they have committed a crime of a sexual nature, or are suspected of having committed such a crime.
- Police clearance must be obtained within the first term of working with the children. If it is not produced, or if there are objections to this being undertaken, then the person may not be allowed to volunteer on the children's teams.
- Teenagers 16 years and older are also required to provide police clearances.
- Volunteers younger than 16 years old will be required to sign a code of conduct and expected to adhere to this at all times. If they are found to be in violation of this code, the group leader reserves the right to remove that person from their team.
- Volunteers must avoid being on their own with a child.
- When taking a pre-school child to use the toilet, at least 2 volunteers must be present at all times.
- The toilet door must be kept open and the volunteers should not enter the toilet stalls without another volunteer present.
- Volunteers are not required to change the nappies of small children and can call the adult responsible for the child if this is required.
- All leaders must dress appropriately when on duty. The team leader has the right to address these issues with a leader where necessary.
- All our leaders must provide us with up-to-date contact details and inform the leader of their group if there are any changes to these details.
- We value a child's right to privacy and will not allow the children to be photographed, except by appointed people. Individual photos will then only be displayed within the church premises with parental consent.
- No individual photos of children will be displayed on the church website.
- If parents who are not leaders wish to attend the groups with their children, they must not be required to supervise children or be left alone with children who are not their own.
- We are happy for visitors or potential leaders to come and see the children's work but the team leader has the right to ask someone to leave if necessary.

Teenage Volunteers (14-18)

- The level of responsibility given to a teenager needs to be determined by the team leader.
- Teenagers should not be left alone or given responsibilities beyond their capacities.
- They should be offered support and supervision by adult team members and where possible should be mentored by an adult team member.

Physical Environment

- Equipment and play areas will undergo regular maintenance. If a leader sees a piece of equipment needing attention, they should inform the relevant group leader.
- The rooms should be kept tidy and safe.
- Moveable equipment such as sound equipment, cables etc should be stored as safely as possible and leaders need to be aware of and monitor any possible safety risks.
- Fences around the premises should be kept in good condition and repaired as soon as possible if damaged.
- Outside doors near the children's rooms should be kept locked unless in use.

Fire Safety

- We comply with the churches fire safety procedures

Transport

Transport to and from Church

- When children are transported to church on a bus or a taxi engaged by Urban Voice, their parent or guardian must have signed an indemnity form giving permission for the child to make use of the transport.
- Hired transport must be safe and roadworthy, in compliance with the legal requirements.
- Children must not accept lifts from people they do not know.
- If children receive lifts from church members, it is to be recorded in a book which is kept in the church office, stating who is being taken and who is taking them.
- If children receive lifts from church members, it must be in compliance with the legal numbers permitted per vehicle and children are required to wear safety belts.
- Children are not allowed to be transported in canopied or open bakkies at any time.
- This information will be communicated to the children and the church members.

Transport to outings/camps

- When transported in cars children are to be taken in legal numbers per vehicle and are required to wear safety belts.
- Children are not allowed to be transported in canopied or open bakkies at any time.
- A record of which children are travelling in which vehicle should be taken by the leader organising the outing.
- Hired forms of public transport should be safe and roadworthy in compliance with legal requirements.

Procedures for camps/outings

- Signed indemnity forms must be given by each child in order for them to attend.
- First Aid kits will be taken on all outings
- In the event where leaders sleep in the same vicinity as children there must be at least two same sex leaders per room.
- Children will always be separated into male and female groups for sleeping arrangements.
- Swimming activities must always be well supervised by sufficient competent swimmers.
- During swimming activities, a minimum ratio of 1 adult per 4 children must at all times be adhered to and there must always be a minimum of 2 adults in attendance.
- We will assess the need for applying further safety measures, should the venue (the sea, a large pool with deep water, the colour of the water) or the children (swimming ability, numbers, age) require such measures. We will restrict swimming areas and numbers, if needed, to ensure the safety of the children.
- Children who disregard the safety regulations for swimming or other high risk activities will be not be allowed to continue with the activity.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Gary Welsh', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above a horizontal line.

Gary Welsh on behalf of the Elders

(Appendix 1)

Definition of abuse

At Urban Voice we concur with the World Report on Violence and Health and define abuse as “all forms of physical and or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

Within this broad definition of child maltreatment we distinguish six particular aspects of abuse as follows.

Child Sexual Abuse is the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and can not give consent, or that violate the laws or social taboos of society. Child sexual abuse is evidenced by an activity between a child and an adult or another child who by age or development is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power, the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person. This may include but is not limited to the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity; the exploitative use of a child in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices; the exploitative use of children in pornographic performances, internet pictures and materials. The recent use of technology such as the internet by adults to entice children to meet or participate in virtual sex is also an abuse.

Neglect and negligent treatment is the inattention or omission on the part of the caregiver to provide for the development of the child in: health, education, emotional development, nutrition, shelter and safe living conditions, in the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caretakers and which causes, or has a high probability of causing harm to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. This includes the failure to properly supervise and protect children from harm as much as is feasible.

Emotional Abuse includes the failure to provide a developmentally appropriate, supportive environment, including the availability of a primary attachment figure, so that the child can reach their full potential in the context of the society in which the child lives. There may also be acts toward the child that cause or have a high probability of causing harm to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. These acts must be reasonably within the control of the parent or person in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. Acts include restriction of movement, degrading, humiliating, ‘scape-goating’, threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing, or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

Physical Abuse is an act of another party involving contact intended to cause feelings of [physical pain](#), [injury](#), or other physical [suffering](#) or [bodily harm](#). It includes actions such as smacking, slapping, pulling, pushing or pinching.

Sexual exploitation is the abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes; this includes profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the exploitation of another. Child prostitution and trafficking of children for sexual abuse and exploitation is one example of this.

Commercial or other exploitation of a child refers to the use of a child in work or other activities for the benefit of others. This includes, but is not limited to child labour. These activities are to the detriment of the child’s physical or mental health, education, moral or social- emotional development. Children being recruited into the army would fall into the category.

(Appendix 2)



Confidential Incident Report Form

Details of the child:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Number: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Information that has been disclosed:

Name of Person that information was disclosed to:

Date: _____

Time: _____

Name and signature of child protection officer to receive and follow up with this form:

Signed: _____



Confidential Follow Up Report Form

Name of child:

Date of Birth:

Description of Information that has been disclosed:

Follow Up action taken:

Name of person contacted

Date:

Time:

Any Further action required:

Name of child protection co-ordinator completing this report

Signed:

Date:

(Appendix 4)



Declaration form for Urban Kidz volunteers

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Number: _____

Are you a Christian? Yes No

Are you a member of Urban Voice? Yes No

If No do you intend to become a member and complete the Get Connected course? Yes No

Are you prepared to submit to and work alongside the leadership of Urban Voice? Yes No

Have you ever been convicted of or investigated for a criminal offence? Yes No

If YES please give full details:

Are you willing to provide a police clearance form? Yes No

I _____

Declare that I have read the Urban Voice child protection policy and have understood the values that the Urban Voice children's work wishes to uphold. I am aware of the appropriate ways of acting around children and understand the roles and expectations of a volunteer serving in Urban Kidz.

I declare that the information I have given is correct to the best of my knowledge and I am willing to obey the guidelines given to me.

Signed: _____ Date: _____