



Crossway Group Child Protection Policy

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Approved by	Crossway Board
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Responsibility	Director of Operations



Acceptance, Amendments and Review:		
Approval Date	Part	Amendments or other action
7 Dec 2016	6	Provisions permitting the restricted use of social media included
18 Apr 2017	6	Information on Wrongs Act Included
	8	Revised Part 8 replaced previous part and minor related changes
	10	Attachments included
17 Oct 2017	Various	Information on 'Reportable Conduct Scheme' included
3 March 2020	Whole	Review of entire Policy
January 2023	Whole	Review and update entire Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document contains the Child Protection Policy (the Policy) for Crossway Baptist Church Inc. and its related entities (the Group or Crossway) to promote and maintain a Child Safe culture. The Policy provides the basis for respective Crossway departments to develop and establish operational procedures and processes specific to their individual ministry areas. For clarity, the general procedures included as part of this document form a mandatory part of this Policy.

1.1 Biblical Framework

Crossway upholds the Bible as God's word and the ultimate authority by which we live (2 Timothy 3:16-17). This Policy is informed by Biblical teaching and its principles are to be applied in submission to Scripture.

The Bible:

- affirms the value God places on children (Psalm 127:3; Matthew 18:3-5; Matthew 19:14). Jesus taught and modelled the care with which we are to welcome and protect them (Matthew 18:5-6; Mark 10:14-15);
- instructs believers to abstain from sexual immorality (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20);
- calls believers to uphold truth and justice, bearing in mind that the guilty are not to be acquitted and the innocent should not to be condemned (Exodus 23:6-7; Proverbs 17:15);
- teaches that the Church is empowered to wisely judge and settle trivial disputes between believers (1 Corinthians 6:1-8);
- upholds that God has established governments and believers are to submit to their authority (Romans 13:1; Daniel 2:21).

1.2 Principles

Crossway, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and legislative requirements, recognises that all children and young people, especially those of an Aboriginal culture, have a right to:

- be, and to feel, safe in their:
 - environment;
 - identity and culture;
 - communication and/or physical barriers;
 - accessibility;
 - diversity of background and/or other influences;
- be provided with protection; and

- the opportunity to flourish emotionally, culturally, socially, economically, educationally and spiritually.

Crossway is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in its care, for example, while participating in Crossway worship services, age-related activities and/or programs or as part of a Crossway activity while using its facilities or external sites.

Crossway acknowledges:

- Empowerment and participation are particularly important for children and young people who are more likely to be misunderstood, marginalised, or suffer discrimination. This includes children and young people who are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, from newly-arrived communities, who identify as LGBTQIA+ and/or who have a disability.
- Creating organisations that are culturally safe, inclusive, welcoming and accessible benefits all children and young people.
- Children and young people have exceptional insights into their lives, needs and the world around them and it is their human right to be heard on matters affecting their lives.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of Crossway's Child Protection Policy, consistent with the Child Safe Standards, is to:

- promote an organisational culture that prioritises the best interests of children and young people;
- ensure all Personnel understand their responsibilities and obligations on safeguarding children, including preventing abuse and reporting suspicions of abuse; and
- ensure the safety and protection of children and young people in the delivery of Crossway's programs.

This Policy is intended to assist all Personnel to:

- uphold their legal responsibilities when working with children and young people;
- follow Crossway's Child Safe Reporting Procedures, including recognising the different types of abuse and neglect;
- comply with the Reportable Conduct Scheme; and
- ensure the needs of all individuals involved in an incident are being met or addressed, and appropriate guidance is given to matters of concern, including potential breaches of Crossway's Codes of Conduct.

Compliance with this Policy ensures all incidents are reported and managed in a way that is responsive to the immediate circumstances of the incident, the rights of those involved, and wherever possible, any risks of recurrence are minimised.

2. SCOPE

The Child Protection Policy applies to all Personnel and Crossway volunteers.

It applies wherever children and/or young people are participating in Crossway services, activities and/or programs, in all our operational environments. It also applies where Personnel and volunteers have become acquainted with children and young people only as a result of contact through Crossway services, activities and/or programs.

All hirers of Crossway's venues and facilities will also be provided with this Policy and be required to sign off on compliance in the Hire Agreement.

This Policy also covers the abuse of a child and/or young person in the community, caused by a member of the community but witnessed by or reported to Crossway Personnel.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

Keeping children and young people safe is a shared responsibility within Crossway. We have developed a framework of policies and procedures to address risks to child safety and to establish a safeguarding culture and practices for the children and young people using Crossway's services, activities and programs.

3.1 Crossway's Commitment

Crossway is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, and as such, is committed to creating and maintaining a child-safe organisation. Crossway understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility. Crossway is determined to be a child-safe organisation with zero tolerance for child abuse.

Our commitment flows from our Christian beliefs and will be enacted through the implementation and monitoring of the Child Safe Standards, to comply with relevant jurisdictional requirements.

3.2 Crossway's Responsibilities

Crossway recognises its legal and moral responsibilities to keep children and young people safe from harm. Crossway promotes their health and wellbeing and supports their best interests. Crossway has policies, procedures, and training in place that support the leadership team, employees and volunteers to achieve these commitments. Crossway creates

environments where all children and young people, including children with a disability, Aboriginal children, and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, have a voice - they are listened to, their views are respected and they contribute to how we plan for, design and implement our services and activities.

4. RECRUITMENT, SCREENING AND SELECTION

Crossway will be vigilant in recruitment, screening and selection of staff, contractors and volunteers to ensure they are safe and suitable to work with children and young people.

A current Working with Children Check ("WWCC") noting it is for work at Crossway must be held:

- by all staff and volunteers. This includes those who will not have intentional, or potential for, contact with children and young people in undertaking their role(s).
- contractors who undertake work at a Crossway campus or property must have a WWCC or be escorted or monitored at all times while they undertake their activities.

Renewal: The WWCC card is valid for five years unless surrendered or revoked. Crossway is notified of cards that are due to expire and are noted for work at Crossway. Action must be taken as soon as possible by the cardholder to renew the card. A person who no longer holds a valid card and has not taken action to renew the card within thirty (30) days will not be permitted to undertake any activities that may involve intentional or the potential for contact with children and young people.

Exemption: WWCCs are required within Crossway as outlined above. However, the members of the Executive Team may resolve to grant an exemption from gaining a WWCC. Such exemptions are not to be seen as commonplace and will only be granted in the most extraordinary of circumstances.

5. TRAINING, SUPPORT AND DUTY OF CARE

Crossway provides a system of onboarding, training and supervision of all Personnel and volunteers.

5.1 Onboarding, Training and Supervision

All new Personnel are provided with Crossway's Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct which clearly details the behavioural expectations around children and young people. Personnel are informed that a copy of this Policy is available on Teamsite and publicly available on the main website crossway.org.au. Personnel are offered support to understand the Policy and guidelines and procedures specifically developed for their relevant ministry

areas. All Personnel are required to familiarise themselves with these documents and confirm that they have read, understood and will comply with them.

Regular supervision is built into the Crossway culture in the form of team meetings and one-on-ones to provide ongoing training, development and support for all Personnel. Crossway will also provide training guidance relating to Child Safety.

Volunteers are provided with a copy of the Policy and Volunteer's Code of Conduct and offered support to understand and sign off that they will comply. Personnel responsible for leading ministries are responsible to develop and communicate any child safe procedures and processes to volunteers.

5.2 Duty of Care

All Personnel and volunteers have a duty of care and at times a legal obligation to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent harm to any child and/or young person.

Personnel are advised that any breaches, including minor breaches, to Crossway's Code of Conduct and/or the Child Protection Policy are required to be reported and documented. This duty of care includes Personnel being vigilant and alert to report and document harm to any child and/or young person using Crossway facilities, regardless of whether the child and/or young person is participating in a service, activity or program organised or operated by Crossway.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

All Personnel have a responsibility to identify and assess potential risks in ongoing programs and one-off activities. Online, physical or psychological risks associated with activities must be determined at the outset and risk mitigation strategies are to be put in place prior to commencement of the activity.

7. PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

Crossway values the experiences and insight of children and young people, particularly those of an Aboriginal and culturally-diverse background. Crossway is committed to empower them by encouraging them to share their insight and feedback. In particular, all Personnel commit to listen when children and young people speak about matters that affect their safety and wellbeing.

All children, young people and families within Crossway are informed of this Policy and provided with unconditional support and mechanisms to feel empowered to speak up if they feel, hear or see something that does not feel right to them or makes them feel unsafe. They will be heard without judgement and their feedback or complaints are taken seriously and

responded to promptly and thoroughly. Children and young people are provided with age-appropriate communication to raise awareness of how they can speak up if they have any concerns and appropriate feedback channels are provided for children and young people, with assurance that their concerns will be addressed.

8. CONSEQUENCES OF BREACHING THIS POLICY

If Crossway Personnel fail to report instances, allegations or concerns in relation to abuse or neglect of a child or young person by Personnel within our organisation, or by others in the community, Crossway views such a failure as a serious matter that breaches this Policy and may result in disciplinary action.

In addition to any internal proceedings and reporting, all incidents covered under the Reportable Conduct Scheme and involving Mandatory Reporters will be reported to the Commission for Children and Young People (the Commission) and any breaches of law will be reported to the police.

If an allegation has been made against a member of Crossway Personnel relating to inappropriate behaviour towards a child or young person, whether during or outside of work, Crossway reserves the right to suspend that Personnel during the investigation period.

Crossway understands that a failure to report incidents of abuse, neglect and harm of a child or young person may be classed as a criminal offence.

This Policy prohibits all Personnel from discussing any concerns or allegations with unauthorised Personnel within or outside the organisation. Such a prohibition has not been designed to limit, in any way, their rights and responsibilities to report their concerns or allegations, but rather represents our organisation's commitment to ensuring privacy, confidentiality and false, misleading or vexatious allegations. The Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012 will prevail in any situation whereby reporting of Personnel has occurred.

9. RESPONDING TO CHILD SAFETY CONCERNS

The four steps that all personnel must follow regarding incidents, allegations, disclosures or reasonable concerns of abuse or neglect, or breaches of policy are:

- Responding
- Reporting
- Sharing of Information
- Supporting

9.1 Responding

Immediate responses must mitigate further harm and ensure the safety of children and young people, Personnel and members of the public. Reduce the harm and risk to those impacted by the incident by:

- Calling Emergency Services on 000 if required
- Making the surroundings safe to prevent immediate recurrence of the incident, for example, removing potentially harmful person(s) increase supervision of children and young people
- move uninvolved children and young people away from incident
- move to a safe place, alerting others to risks that extend beyond the local environment, for example, other areas within Crossway facilities
- provide immediate care and support to any affected child or young person, and others involved in the incident by addressing:
 - physical well-being e.g. providing first aid
 - emotional well-being (including psychological) e.g. arranging for coverage of duties and supervision
- facilitating access to counselling and Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

When responding to a disclosure or allegation by a child or young person, all Personnel should respond by:

- listening to the allegation or disclosure supportively, without dispute
- clarifying the basic details, without seeking detailed information or asking suggestive or leading questions, guided by our Child Safe Incident Report
- providing reassurance that the child or young person has done the right thing in telling you, are believed, and our organisation will take immediate action in response to the disclosure/allegation
- explaining to the child or young person that other people may need to be told, in order to stop what is happening; do not promise to keep any information a secret
- reporting the matter as per organisational policy requirements to the Child Protection Officer recording notes as early as possible to ensure all information is captured before completing Crossway's internal Incident Report

In your responses, you will need to consider the specific needs of the child or young person. Consider the unique qualities of a child or young person including, for example, whether the child is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, has a disability, identifies as LGBTQI+, has a culturally and linguistically diverse background and/or is unable to live at home.

9.2 Reporting

Once the immediate response to the situation is completed, it is important to fulfil the internal and external reporting requirements. All Personnel are required to report any reasonable concerns or instances of abuse or neglect (including cases in which a child or young person has suffered, or is likely to suffer significant harm from abuse or neglect) immediately.

It is not the role of Crossway Personnel to identify or investigate an allegation/concern. However they must continually report each new instance of suspicion of harm and/or breach of policy as they become aware, and seek advice from their supervisor when they are unsure.

All reports must be documented fully, written factually and objectively. Clear and accurate reporting can assist to support any internal or external investigation which may transpire after an incident. Reports should be submitted formally to Child Protection Officers. A Child Safety Report will be available as a fillable form on the Child Safety page of the Crossway website.

Contacts:

Child Protection Officers	cpo@crossway.org.au
Department of Fairness, Families and Housing	After hours Child Protection Emergency Service – 13 12 78
Victorian Commission for Children and Young People	130078 29 78

Crossway will appropriately investigate all allegations, suspicions or observations relating to a breach of the Policy, in accordance with its obligations. Where allegations, suspicions or observations are reported, CPOs, Senior Pastor or Executive Team will be responsible to:

- determine if the allegation, suspicion or observation warrants escalation to external parties for further investigation;
- determine if the Personnel involved should be temporarily suspended or stepped down from their regular assigned duties during the course of external investigations;

Crossway will fully cooperate and support external investigations in accordance with legal requirements.

Reporting to the Board

At each meeting, the Board is to be advised of:

- all allegations and actions being undertaken;
- current matters under investigation, both external and internal;
- the result of investigations, both external and internal; and/or
- any matters in which the Child Protection Code of Conduct has been invoked.

The Executive Team shall make this a regular agenda item, reportable at every Board meeting with a positive attestation should there be no active incidents or ongoing investigations.

Correspondingly, every Executive Team member shall ensure they receive a positive attestation from every department head for the corresponding reporting cycle, to ensure no incidents are missed.

If the Executive Team considers that there are sound and justifiable reasons for withholding the identities of the alleged perpetrator and any child or young person who is party to the complaint, the report to the Board may be de-identified.

Regardless of whether the information provided is de-identified, the information provided to the Board must remain confidential. Any breach of this confidentiality, not permitted or required by the law, by members of the Board shall be a breach of the Code of Conduct.

9.3 Sharing of Information (Confidentiality and Privacy)

Crossway maintains the confidentiality and privacy of all concerned (including the alleged perpetrator), except if doing so compromises the safety or wellbeing of the child or young person and/or investigation of the allegation. After an incident has been reported and where appropriate, the information sharing process with the child or young person, their families and involved Personnel will begin as soon as reasonably possible. The process will be adapted to fit the child or young person, family and Personnel needs, and the requirements of any investigation processes.

CPOs, Senior Pastor or The Executive Team will be responsible to ascertain if an incident or allegation falls under the Reportable Conduct Scheme and should be reported to the Police and/or Child Protection. Where Police and/or Child Protection are involved, Crossway will provide the authorities with information about the incident to assist them in their investigations.

If the incident has reached the threshold to report to external agencies, Crossway will consult with the relevant child protection authority/police to determine what information can be shared with parents/guardians. This can include not contacting the parents/guardians in circumstances where they have allegedly been engaged in the abuse, or the child is a mature minor and does not wish their parent/guardians to be contacted. Alternatively, it may include contacting the parents/guardians and provide the agreed information as soon as possible.

Police and/or Child Protection will be consulted about the disclosing of information to child or young person, their families and Personnel.

The decision to share information will consider:

- whether the ongoing safety of those involved in or impacted by the incident is compromised by the sharing or non-sharing of information
- the advice of police and child protection (care will be taken not to compromise their investigations)
- the rights of those impacted by the incident to privacy, confidentiality, procedural fairness and a presumption of innocence in accordance with Crossway policies and employment law
- the need (of those potentially impacted by the incident) to know of the incident.

9.4 Support

Supporting the needs of those impacted by the incident should include considerations of cultural safety and wellbeing for:

- the child or young person and their family (this includes any specific support needs for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, the culturally and linguistically diverse, with lived experience of disability, a member of the LGBTQI+ community, or a child or young person who is unable to live at home)
- Personnel and other children and young people who witnessed and/or reported the incident
- any Personnel against whom a complaint is made, for example, offering Employee Assistance Program
- other Personnel impacted by the incident.

All Personnel who are aware of the incident note that:

- any allegation does not mean the person is guilty, and that the allegation will be properly investigated and will include the right to procedural fairness.
- they are not to discuss any element of the incident with anyone outside of Police, child protection authorities and/or Crossway's Child Protection Officers, and only in direct relation to the investigation of the allegation.

10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Board Members	<p>The Church Constitution notes "[t]he business of the Church must be managed or under the direction of a Board". Consistent with this rule, the Church Board has the ultimate responsibility for the promotion of a "top-down" culture in relation to child protection and ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a child and young person's best interests will be considered paramount and commits to prioritising the best interests of all children and young people
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	<p>participating or interacting with Crossway's programs and services;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the effective management of all matters relating to safeguarding children and young people, including that reports from the Executive Team are presented to the Board in a timely manner, as required by this Policy. For example reports of allegations and related activities, for applications seeking an exemption from having a WWCC <p>Crossway entities have appropriate:</p> <p>policies and practices in place to minimise the risk of child abuse occurring within the organisation; and</p> <p>strategies consistent with this Policy to respond to all suspicions and allegations of child abuse;</p> <p>all matters required by the policy are undertaken and, where applicable, within the statutory guidelines and time frames;</p> <p>The Board is required to understand and act consistently with this Policy and Crossway's Code of Conduct.</p>
Senior Pastor	<p>The Senior Pastor is primarily accountable to the Church Board for ensuring that appropriate policies and practices are implemented, monitored and reported on, and evaluated in a timely and diligent manner.</p> <p>This includes reviewing and understanding this Policy, Crossway's Code of Conduct, reporting any suspected child abuse (internal or external by Crossway entities) to a Child Protection Officer or the relevant state child protection authority, Victoria Police, the Baptist Union of Victoria and/or the Board.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Senior Pastor is required to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reviews of organisational culture and attitudes towards child protection are performed; all Personnel are aware of the zero-tolerance approach taken towards abuse of children and young people; strategies that will safeguard children and young people accessing Crossway services, programs and activities are implemented and promoted; prompt response to any changes in child-related legislation and other statutory requirements, bringing

	<p>these to the attention of the Board and ensuring any necessary response;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support is provided to or facilitated for Personnel as they undertake their safeguarding responsibilities, ensuring that access to training, development and emotional support are provided; • all Personnel are aware of their obligation to report suspected abuse of a child or young person, in accordance with this Policy. <p>The Senior Pastor may delegate any of the above responsibilities and duties to the other members of the Executive Team, but retains responsibility for the activities and must ensure that delegated duties are actioned appropriately. All delegations of the above duties by the Senior Pastor must be in writing.</p> <p>The Senior Pastor, as head of the organisation, is responsible for the "Reportable Conduct Scheme" and must meet the requirements of section 16K of the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005.</p>
Child Protection Officers (CPO)	<p>CPOs are appointed to have specific responsibility for children and young people, parents and Personnel to raise any child safety concerns and to handle the initial response to any allegations or complaints made. They are responsible to the Executive Team and may, under direction, handle the management of allegations. The names of all CPOs should be publicised in the various ministry areas of Crossway.</p> <p>Crossway CPOs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all members of the Executive Team; • the Crossway Children and Families Lead Pastor; and • the LifeCare CEO <p>The appointments are to persons holding the above positions or, in the absence of the person who normally undertakes the duties of the position, the CPO role will pass to the person acting in or undertaking the duties of the role during the period of the absence.</p> <p>In the event that the governance structure changes or expands, the Executive Team must ensure that there are sufficient CPOs appointed across all ministry areas and entities.</p> <p>CPOs are required to:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand, promote and act in line with this Policy and Crossway's Code of Conduct; • make themselves available for consultation with any Personnel or parents/caregivers relating to matters of child safety and wellbeing; • provide advice and support regarding application and implementation of this Policy to any Personnel; • be proactive in raising any concern of this Policy in responding to child protection; • attend appropriate child protection training, at least annually. <p>CPOs are responsible and must report directly to the Senior Pastor or his delegate (the Senior Pastor reports directly to the Chairperson of the Board).</p>
Crossway Personnel	<p>Crossway Personnel must as appropriate to their role:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be familiar with, understand and act consistently with this Policy and Crossway's Code of Conduct; • attend appropriate training and development on child protection issues, as required; • proactively seek assistance and advice from managers, supervisors, CPOs and/or Executive Team members on the safeguarding of children and young people; • ensure that team members attend training and understand child protection issues, where supervision is a role requirement..
Parents/Guardians/Carers and family members over 18 years	<p>Parents, guardians, carers and family members over 18 years of age accessing Crossway programs, services and activities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be advised of this Policy, which may be found on the crossway.org.au website; • on request, to be provided with a summary of the Policy; and/or • have access or on request, be provided with this Policy statement, and Crossway's Code of Conduct, including the process of reporting any suspected child abuse.

11. RECORDS AND DOCUMENTATION

All records pertaining to allegations and reported incidents, on completion of the action by Crossway and/or external investigating agencies, are to be stored confidentially by the designated CPO or Executive Team member in the following situations:

- if it is considered by the CPO or Executive Team member that there is no basis on reasonable grounds to refer the matter for external investigation and/or to undertake an internal investigation;
- where there has been no referral for an external investigation, but an internal investigation has been undertaken;
- where the matter has been referred to an appropriate external investigating agency for action and, if required, an internal investigation has been undertaken
- for a period of not less than 45 years.

This action is to be taken so that Crossway will be able to show, in the event of any subsequent historical enquiries, the nature of the complaints received and the action to protect the interests of the child or young person.

12. REVIEW

This document will be reviewed every two (2) years in consultation with stakeholders. Some circumstances may trigger an early review. This includes but is not limited to legislative changes, organisational changes, incident outcomes and other matters deemed appropriate by the Executive Team and/or Senior Pastor. Records are retained to document each review undertaken. Such records may include minutes of meetings and documentation of changes to policies and procedures that result from a review.

For all queries or feedback regarding this Policy, please contact Director of Operations.

13. DEFINITIONS

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child	A person under the age of 18 years who identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Person
Bullying	Bullying involves the inappropriate use of power by one or more persons over another less powerful person or group and is generally an act that is repeated over time. Bullying has been described by researchers as taking many forms which are often interrelated and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Verbal (name calling, put downs, threats);

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical (hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting); • Social (ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating); • Psychological (spreading rumours, stalking, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions).
Child Abuse	<p>Child abuse includes:</p> <p>any act committed against a child involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a sexual offence • grooming offences under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958 <p>the infliction, on a child, of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical violence • serious emotional or psychological harm <p>the serious neglect of a child including exposure to family violence and its effects.</p>
Child or Young Person	A person under the age of eighteen or a vulnerable young person who is included under the purview of the Commission for Children and Young People.
Child Safe Organisation	An organisation that meets the Child Safe Standards by proactively taking measures to protect children and young people from abuse.
Child Safe Standards	Child Safe Standards are designed to drive cultural change in organisations, so that protecting children and young people from abuse is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of leaders, employees and volunteers; provide a minimum standard of child safety across all organisations; and highlight the role all organisations have in keeping children and young people safe from abuse.
Child Safety	Child Safety includes matters related to protecting all children and young people from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to suspicions, incidents, disclosures or allegations of child abuse.
Emotional or Psychological Abuse	Emotional or psychological abuse occurs when a child or young person does not receive the love, affection or attention they need for healthy emotional, psychological and social

	<p>development. Such abuse may involve repeated rejection or threats to a child or young person. Constant criticism, teasing, ignoring, threatening, yelling, scapegoating, ridicule and rejection or continual coldness are all examples of emotional abuse. These behaviours continue to an extent that results in significant damage to the child or young person's intellectual or emotional wellbeing and development.</p>
Family Violence	<p>Family violence occurs when children and young people are forced to live with violence between adults in their home. It is harmful to children and young people. It can include witnessing violence or the consequences of violence. Family violence is defined as violence between members of a family or extended family or those fulfilling the role of family in a child or young person's life.</p> <p>Exposure to family violence places children and young people at increased risk of physical injury and harm and has a significant impact on their wellbeing and development.</p>
Grooming	<p>Grooming is a term used to describe what happens when a perpetrator of abuse builds a relationship with a child or young person with a view to abusing them at some stage.</p> <p>There is no set pattern in relation to the grooming of children and young people. For some perpetrators, there will be a lengthy period of time before the abuse begins. The child or young person may be given special attention and, what starts as an apparently normal display of affection, such as cuddling, can develop into sexual touching or masturbation and then into more serious sexual behaviour. Other perpetrators may draw a child or young person in and abuse them relatively quickly. Some abusers do not groom children or young people but abuse them without forming a relationship at all.</p> <p>Grooming can take place in any setting where a relationship is formed, such as leisure, music, sports and religious activities, in internet chatrooms, in social media or by other technological channels.</p>
Harm	<p>Harm to a child or young person, is any detrimental effect of psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical abuse;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; • sexual abuse or exploitation; • a single act, omission or circumstance; • a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.
Neglect	<p>Neglect is the persistent failure or deliberate denial to provide the child or young person with the basic necessities of life. Such neglect includes the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, adequate supervision, clean water, medical attention or supervision to the extent that the child or young person is likely to be significantly harmed. Categories of neglect include physical neglect, medical neglect, abandonment or desertion, emotional neglect and educational neglect. The issue of neglect must be considered within the context of resources reasonably available.</p>
Personnel	<p>Crossway Directors of Board, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors engaged directly by Crossway.</p>
Physical Abuse	<p>Physical abuse occurs when a person subjects a child or young person to non-accidental physically aggressive acts. The abuser may inflict an injury intentionally or inadvertently as a result of physical punishment or the aggressive treatment of a child or young person. Physically abusive behaviour includes (but is not limited to) shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, biting, burning, excessive and physically harmful over-training and kicking. It also includes giving children and young people harmful substances such as drugs, alcohol or poison. Certain types of punishment, whilst not causing injury can also be considered physical abuse if they place a child or young person at risk of being hurt.</p> <p>Physical abuse also includes threats to physically harm.</p>
Physical Violence	<p>Physical violence committed against, with, or in the presence of a child or young person can fall into two categories. Physical violence can be either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • actual physical violence where a Personnel intentionally or recklessly uses physical force against, with, or in the presence of a child or young person without a lawful reason, which has the ability to cause injury or harm to the child or young person. Actual

	<p>physical violence can include hitting, punching, kicking, pushing or throwing something that strikes a child or young person.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • apprehended physical violence where a Personnel intentionally or recklessly engages in conduct or behaviour against, with, or in the presence of a child or young person that is capable of causing a child or young person to think that physical force is about to be used against them or another person. This could include words, gestures or actions that cause a child or young person to believe physical force is about to be used against them, regardless of whether or not the Personnel actually intended that any physical force would be applied.
Reasonable Belief	<p>A reportable allegation is made where a person makes an allegation, based on a reasonable belief, that a Personnel has committed reportable conduct or misconduct that may involve reportable conduct. This includes where a reportable allegation is made against the head of the organisation.</p> <p>A reasonable belief is more than suspicion. There must be some objective basis for the belief. However, it is not the same as having proof and does not require certainty.</p> <p>For example, a person is likely to have a reasonable belief if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • observed the conduct themselves • heard directly from a child or young person that the conduct occurred • received information from another credible source (including another witness). • Heads of the organisation do not need to agree with or share the belief that the alleged conduct has occurred. They do not need to notify the Commission about the allegation if it is plainly wrong or has no basis at all in reality.
Reasonable Steps	<p>Personnel may breach duty of care towards a child or young person if they fail to act in the way a reasonable or diligent professional would have acted in the same situation.</p> <p>In relation to suspected child abuse, reasonable steps may</p>

	include (but are not necessarily limited to): acting on concerns and suspicions of abuse as soon as practicable, seeking appropriate advice or consulting with other professionals or agencies when unsure of what steps to take, reporting the suspected child abuse to appropriate authorities such as Police or Child Protection, arranging counselling and/or other appropriate support for the child or young person, providing ongoing support to the child or young person and sharing information with other Personnel who will also provide care and support.
Reportable Conduct	<p>There are five types of 'reportable conduct' listed in the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sexual offences (against, with or in the presence of, a child) • sexual misconduct (against, with or in the presence of, a child) • physical violence (against, with or in the presence of, a child) • any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child • significant neglect of a child
Sexual Abuse	<p>Sexual abuse occurs when an adult or a person of authority involves a child or young person in any sexual activity. Perpetrators of sexual abuse take advantage of their power, authority or position over the child or young person for their own benefit. It can include making sexual comments to a child or young person, engaging children and young people to participate in sexual conversations over the internet or on social media, kissing, touching genitals or breasts, oral sex or intercourse with a child or young person. Encouraging a child or young person to view pornographic magazines, websites and videos is also sexual abuse. Engaging children and young people to participate in sexual conversations over the internet is also considered sexual abuse.</p>
Sexual Exploitation	<p>Sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where offenders use their power (physical, financial or emotional) over a child or young person, or a false identity, to sexually or emotionally abuse them. It often involves situations and relationships where children and young people receive something (food,</p>

	<p>accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money etc.) in return for participating in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can occur in person or online, and sometimes the child or young person may not even realise they are a victim.</p>
Sexual Misconduct	<p>Sexual misconduct captures a broader range of inappropriate behaviours of a sexual nature that are not necessarily criminal.</p> <p>Sexual misconduct refers to conduct that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is of a sexual nature; • occurred against, with, or in the presence of a child or young person.
Sexual Offences	<p>In Victoria, it is an offence to engage in certain sexual behaviours against, with or in front of a child or young person. Many of these behaviours are reportable conduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sexual assault • indecent acts • possession of child abuse material • 'grooming' a child or young person in order to commit a sexual offence. <p>A full list of the relevant sexual offences is set out in clause 1 of Schedule 1 to the Sentencing Act 1991.</p> <p>NOTE: A Personnel does not need to be charged with, or found guilty of a sexual offence for their behaviour to be a reportable conduct.</p>
Significant Neglect	<p>Significant neglect occurs when there is a significant, deliberate or reckless failure to meet the basic needs of a child or young person in circumstances where the adult understood the needs of the child or young person, or could have understood those needs if they had turned their mind to the question, and had the opportunity to meet those needs but failed to do so.</p> <p>Examples of different types of neglect could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisory neglect: This may occur when a person responsible for the care of a child or young person is unable or unwilling to exercise adequate supervision or control of the child or young person, or

	<p>fails to seek or comply with appropriate medical treatment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical neglect: This may occur where there is the failure to meet a child or young person's physical needs including the provision of adequate and appropriate food, clothing, shelter or physical hygiene needs. • Educational neglect: This may occur when there is a failure to ensure that a child or young person's formal education needs are being met. • Emotional neglect: This may occur where there is a failure to provide adequate nurturing, affection, encouragement and support to a child or young person.
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Appendix 1: Background and Resources

Responding to and reporting child abuse and neglect is one component of being a child-safe organisation and is part of being compliant with Child Safe Standards (“the Standards”) and the Reportable Conduct Scheme. Mandatory reporting is also required.

The Victorian Child Safe Standards

The *Child Safe Standards* (“Standards”) were a part of the response to the 2013 Victorian “Betrayal of Trust” Inquiry”. They were introduced following an amendment of the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005*; a subsequent amendment in 2021 replaced the original Standards and introduced eleven Standards to apply from 1 July 2022. All Victoria Organisations which provide services for children and young people are required to comply with the Standards. Crossway is required to comply as it is a religious organisation.

The eleven Standards are:

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
2. Child safety and wellbeing are embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
3. Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
4. Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
5. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
6. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
7. Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused
8. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
9. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed
10. Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved
11. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people

Although all children and young people are vulnerable, some face additional vulnerabilities, namely Aboriginal children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities and children with a specific gender or sexual identity. Consequently, in applying the Standards, organisations must embed and promote four key principles:

- the cultural safety of Aboriginal Children;
- the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- the safety of children with a disability;
- the safety of children regardless of gender or sexual identity.

The Standards help build a child-safe culture within an organisation and ensure that organisations are accountable for the safety of children and young people using their services and facilities. Compliance with the Standards is regulated and monitored by the Commission for Children and Young People.

Legislated Child Protection Processes

There are two related, but distinct processes in the legislation which require child protection responses from Crossway, the first outlines a vital process in requiring the reporting of actual or suspected abuse while the second requires the Crossway CEO (the Senior Pastor) to report certain conduct to the Commission of Children and Young People (the Commission).

a. Mandatory reporting

Mandatory reporting is the legal requirement of members in certain professional groups to report to child protection authorities any reasonable belief, formed while carrying out the duties of the profession that child physical or sexual abuse has occurred.

At Crossway, this will be relevant for some staff, which include but are not limited to school counsellors, registered psychologists, registered teachers, early childhood teachers and people in religious ministry. For a complete list, refer to <https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/mandatory-reporting>.

Three criminal offences have been introduced to improve responses within organisations and the community to child sexual abuse. The offences form part of the Victorian Government's response to the recommendations of Betrayal of Trust, the report of the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and other Non-Government Organisations. The three offences are:

a) Failure to disclose offence

The offence requires that any adult (aged 18 and over) who holds a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child (aged under 16) disclose that information to police (unless they have a reasonable excuse). The failure to disclose offence helps to ensure that protecting children and young people from sexual abuse is the responsibility of the whole community.

b) Failure to protect offence

The failure to protect offence applies to people within organisations who knew of a risk of child sexual abuse by someone in the organisation and had the authority to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently failed to do so. This offence encourages organisations to actively manage the risks of sexual offences being committed against children and young people in their care to protect them from harm.

c) Grooming offence

The offence of grooming for a child under the age of 16 years targets predatory conduct designed to facilitate later sexual activity with a child.

b. Reportable Conduct Scheme

The Reportable Conduct Scheme ("the Scheme") requires organisations involving children to respond to allegations of child abuse and other child-related misconduct made against their workers (employees and contractors) and volunteers and to report any allegations to the Commission for Children and Young People (the Commission). There are five types of reportable conduct:

- Sexual offences against, with or in the presence of a child
- Sexual misconduct against, with or in the presence of a child
- Physical violence against, with or in the presence of a child
- Any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child
- Significant neglect of a child

The Commission provides independent review and has the power to receive allegations and findings of reportable conduct, assess an organisation's systems to prevent, notify and investigate reportable conduct, provide oversight of workplace investigations, investigate allegations in some circumstances, refer findings to professional registration bodies and the Working with Children Check Unit, build the capacity of organisations to respond to allegations of abuse and report to Parliament on the performance of the scheme and trends.

The Scheme does not replace or interfere with Police investigations. Organisations covered by the Reportable Conduct Scheme should contact the Commission for clarification and guidance, and to talk through any issues of concern.

Telephone: (03)8601 5281

Email: contact@ccyp.vic.gov.au

Further information is also available on the Commission for Children and Young People's website at www.ccyp.vic.gov.au

Policy Context

In developing the Child Protection Policy, the following legislative framework is relevant:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children
- Australian Human Rights Commission National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- Victoria Child Safe Standards Act 2015 (including the 2022 Amendment)
- Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme
- Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012
- Crimes Amendment (Protection of Children) Act 2014
- Crimes Amendment (Grooming) Act 2014

Useful Resources

- <http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au>
- www.cmy.net.au
- <http://fecca.org.au/>
- <https://aifs.gov.au/>
- [http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/site/templates/Grants_Reports/\\$file/SCU_Safe_At_School_Final_2014.pdf](http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/site/templates/Grants_Reports/$file/SCU_Safe_At_School_Final_2014.pdf)
- <http://www.reconciliationvic.org.au/>
- <https://antar.org.au/>

Appendix 2: General Procedures

These general procedures constitute an integral part of Crossway's Child Protection Policy and must be given due consideration as individual departments develop ministry-specific procedures and processes, as needed.

Role Boundaries

All Personnel will not, of their own volition or at the request of a program or service user, act or engage in activities, or provide additional support or care outside the confines of their duties (as specified in their position description) when delivering a Crossway program or service. This includes but is not limited to:

- providing unauthorised transportation to a child or young person
- providing a babysitting/nanny service to a child or young person
- seeking contact with a child or young person, or former participants, outside Crossway services or programs, (for example, via social media)
- accepting an invitation to attend any private social function at the request of a child or young person who has participated, or is participating, in Crossway programs or services, including at the request of their family
- developing any 'special' relationships with a child or young person that could be seen as favouritism (for example, offering gifts or special treatment for specific child or young person)
- engaging in inappropriate open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children and young people (for example, personal social activities)

Pre-existing Relationships with Children and Young People

Crossway recognises that some staff or volunteers may have pre-existing relationships with children and young people who access Crossway's programs and services, and as such may, in some instances, undertake babysitting/nanny/transport services and/or attend a function at the request of a child or young person, or their parent/guardian. To ensure the safety of children and young people, Personnel are required to disclose pre-existing relationships to Crossway's Child Protection Officers. If a staff member or volunteer is required to provide assistance to a child or young person which is beyond the expectations of that person's role, or beyond the scope of Crossway's usual programs or services, the staff or volunteer must immediately:

- Refer the matter to Child Protection Officers
- Seek management advice
- Call 000 if the child or young person is in immediate danger

Crossway provides a broad range of services including direct and indirect services to children and young people. We acknowledge that Personnel will at all times need to apply common

sense and good judgement, especially when dealing with exceptional circumstances and/or critical instances involving children and/or young people.

Language and tone of voice

All Personnel, in the presence of children and young people, will use language and a tone of voice which:

- provides clear direction
- is reassuring
- is not discriminatory, racist or sexist
- is not derogatory, belittling or negative
- is not intended to threaten or frighten
- is not profane or sexual

Supervision

All Personnel are required to avoid one-to-one unsupervised situations with children and young people to whom Crossway provides programs and services, and (where appropriate and possible) conduct all activities and/or discussions with children and young people in view of other adult colleagues. Crossway acknowledges that this may not be possible in the provision of some services such as Children and Youth Services, and in providing supervision to work experience students. Personnel responsible for supervising children and young people participating in Crossway programs or services must ensure that those children and young people are not exposed to risks that pose a threat to their health, safety or welfare, this includes risks posed by other children and young people.

Crossway aligns itself to the recommended ratios stipulated by the Baptist Union of Victoria as follows:

The recommended adult/child ratio is:

- 0-2 years old = 1:3
- 2-5 years old = 1:4
- 5-12 years old (primary school) = 1:8
- 12-18 years old (high school) = 1:15

All ministries should have enough leaders (over the age of 18) to ensure that the participants and program is safe. All ministries with children and young people should have two leaders minimum at all times. More leaders, and leaders with higher qualifications and experience, will be required for more specialised programs or participants with higher needs.

Parents may choose to stay within the ministry area with their child/children during any Crossway program/activity/service; during this time, the parent and their child/children will

not be included as part of the adult/child ratio. Parents are only to care for their child/children; they must not care for any other child/children.

Electronic and online communications

All Personnel are required to follow this Policy and all other policies in relation to electronic communications and social media. All electronic communication between Personnel and children and young people must be authorised by a direct supervisor. Where the direct supervisor is unable to provide guidance, the communication should be referred to the Kids and Youth Ministry Leads. No personal electronic mediums can be used to communicate with children or young people unless at least two adults are included on the communication. All Personnel must not have any online contact with a child's parent and/or guardian unless it is transparent to the organisation and forms part of an approved ministry program (for example distribution of e-newsletters or responding to enquiries via Crossway's public Facebook pages).

Where a parent and/or guardian is not included in the communication (for example, direct messaging via social media/text messaging):

- restrict such communication to issues directly associated with delivering Crossway ministry programs and services, such as event communication
- ensure that this communication is via a channel which is visible and accessible to the manager or direct supervisor of that team

Giving gifts

All Personnel are prohibited from giving personal gifts to children and young people to whom Crossway provides ministry programs and activities. It is permissible however to give promotional, corporate or recognition of service (student placement) gifts. In this case, each child or young person in Crossway should receive the same items.

Photographs of children and young people

Images (photograph and film) of children and young people can only be taken if the following requirements are met:

- Prior permission to photograph or film the child or young person is granted by the parent or guardian of the child or young person via Consent Form
- The context is directly related to participation in or promotion of Crossway's activities
- The child or young person is appropriately dressed and posed
- Each time an image of a child or young person is used, parental and/or guardian approval is obtained

- Any caption or text which accompanies an image is checked so that it does not identify a child or young person if such identification is potentially detrimental
- Images are not to be distributed to anyone outside of Crossway other than the child or young person's parent and/or guardian, without the written approval of the child or young person's parent and/or guardian
- Images are stored in compliance with Crossway's obligations, the Privacy & Data Protection Act 2014 and Crossway's Privacy Policy

Physical contact with children and young people

Any physical contact with children and young people must be in a manner which is safe and adheres to the Child Safe Standards. Physical contact must be appropriate to the delivery of Crossway's activities and ministry programs. All Personnel should not under any circumstances have any physical contact with children or young people participating in activities and services that:

- would appear to a reasonable observer to have a sexual connotation
- intends to cause pain or distress to the child or young person
- is physical, for example, wrestling, horseplay, tickling or other roughhousing
- is unnecessary, for example, assisting with toileting when a child does not require assistance
- is initiated against the wishes of the child or young person, except if such contact may be necessary to prevent injury to the child or young person or to others, in which case:
- physical restraint should be a last resort and only occur in an urgent or emergency situation, for example, when applying first aid or for the protection of another child or young person
- All such incidents must be reported to the Child Protection Officer or direct supervisor as soon as possible, and any physical contact initiated by a child or young person that is sexual and/or inappropriate must be reported to the Child Protection Officer.

Overnight stays and sleeping arrangements

Crossway will not support overnight stays or sleepouts involving children and young people without a thorough risk assessment and approval of the Child Protection Officer and the Executive Team.

Transporting children and young people

Children and young people are to be transported only in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of Crossway activities and services (for example, transporting to/from camp), and only with the permission of the child or young person's parent/guardian. Where transportation of a child or young person requires Personnel to be one-on-one with that child

or young person, it must be in order to remove a child or young person from harm or threat of harm.

Protecting children and young people during Pandemics and Epidemics

Infectious diseases like COVID-19 can disrupt the environments in which children and young people grow and develop. Disruptions to families, friendships, daily routines and the wider community can have negative consequences for children's well-being, development and protection. In addition, measures used to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19 can expose children and young people to protection risks. Home-based, facility-based and zonal-based quarantine and isolation measures can all negatively impact children, young people and their families.

Outbreaks of infectious diseases can quickly change the context in which children and young people live. Quarantine measures such as school closures and restrictions on movements disrupt children's routine and social support while also placing new stressors on parents and/or guardians who may have to find new childcare options or forgo work. Stigma and discrimination related to COVID-19 may make children and young people more vulnerable to violence and psychosocial distress. Children, young people and families who are already vulnerable due to socio-economic exclusion or those who live in overcrowded settings are particularly at risk.

Advocacy with other tiers of government, collaboration with other sectors, and child protection-specific programming are key priorities during a COVID-19 response.

Appendix 3: Key Indicators of Abuse

ABUSE CATEGORY	PHYSICAL INDICATORS	BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS
Physical	<p>Unexplained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cuts, abrasions, bruising or swelling • burns, scalds, cigarette burns, rope burns or marks on arms, legs, neck or torso • fractures, strains or sprains and/or dislocation of limbs • recurrent injuries • mouth, teeth or dental injuries • ear or eye injuries • sickness/nausea • covering themselves with clothes inappropriate to weather conditions • bite marks • Disclosure of physical violence or threats of physical violence 	<p>Avoidance and/or fear of a particular person or Personnel</p> <p>Sleep disturbances</p> <p>Sudden or marked changes in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • behaviour and/or demeanour (e.g. mood swings, uncharacteristic aggression) • daily routine • appetite • Unusual passivity and/or withdrawal • Self-harm and/or suicide attempts • Inappropriate explanations of how injuries occurred • Excessive compliance to staff • Rough handling of others and/or objects
Sexual	<p>Direct or indirect disclosure of abuse or assault</p> <p>Trauma to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen, thighs or genitalia</p> <p>Difficulty walking or sitting down</p> <p>Pain, itching, bleeding and/or discharge in genital and/or anal area; bruising.</p> <p>Self-harm, abuse, suicide attempts</p> <p>Torn, stained or blood- stained underwear or bedclothes</p>	<p>Sleep disturbances</p> <p>Inappropriate or unusual sexual behaviour or knowledge</p> <p>Sudden or marked changes in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eating patterns • social patterns • behaviour or temperament (i.e.: anxiety attacks, panic attacks, clinical depression, refusal to attend usual places e.g. work, school, respite,

	Sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy Unexplained money or gifts Recurrent pain on passing urine or faeces	going to bed fully clothed, excessive compliance to staff, inappropriate or excessive masturbation)
Psychological	Speech disorders Delay in physical development, failure to thrive Injuries sustained from self-harm or abuse and/or suicide attempts Anxiety attacks	Self-harm and or self-abusive behaviours Challenging or aggressive behaviour Excessive compliance to staff Very low self-esteem or feelings of worthlessness Clinical depression Marked decline in interpersonal/social skills Extreme attention-seeking behaviour
Neglect	Physical wasting or at unhealthy weight levels Poor dental and/or hygiene health Recurrent wear of same, ill-fitting and/or dirty clothes or clothes not suitably for weather conditions Food is consistently poor quality, insufficient, inedible and/or unappetising Persistent illnesses without appropriate medical treatment Persistent infestations such as scabies or head lice Disclosure of being left alone for long periods of time that are inappropriate to age or maturity	Constant tiredness Persistent hunger Unexpected poor skills, social and/or interpersonal, communication and others Consistent failure to attend appointments, events and activities Persistently denied opportunities to socialise with others in the community, excessively clingy or fearful
Family Violence	Eating and sleeping difficulties	Fearfulness, Numbing

	<p>Concentration problems</p> <p>Inability to play constructively</p> <p>Clinginess</p> <p>Defiant behaviour, temper tantrums, rebellious and aggressive behaviour</p> <p>Physical abuse of others</p> <p>Cruelty to pets and/or other animals</p> <p>Avoidance of peers</p> <p>Academic failure, drop out of school</p> <p>Delinquency and/or offending</p> <p>Substance abuse</p> <p>Eating disorders</p> <p>Depression, suicide ideation and/or attempts</p>	<p>Increased arousal</p> <p>Adjustment problems</p> <p>Developmental delay</p> <p>Physical complaints</p> <p>Overly compliant behaviour</p> <p>Withdrawal, loss of interest in social activities</p> <p>Self-harm</p> <p>Poor school performance</p> <p>Use of controlling behaviours</p> <p>Distrust of adults</p> <p>Violent behaviours, violence toward a parent/care-giver, particularly mother</p> <p>Early pregnancy</p>
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Appendix 4: Child Safe Reporting Process

During the course of your work or volunteering, you may observe, hear or be informed about suspected child abuse (sexual, physical, emotional, psychological, neglect or grooming).

Who Can Report?	<div>STAFF + VOLUNTEER</div> <div>CHILD</div> <div>PARENT + BYSTANDER</div>
What To Report?	<p>Any child safety concerns, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- disclosure of abuse or harm- allegation, suspicion or observation- breach of Code of Conduct- environmental safety issues.
CALL 000 IF A CHILD IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER ¹	
How?	<p>Use choice of: face-to-face verbal report, written report, letter, email, phone conversation or meeting, as soon as possible</p> <p>E: CPO@crossway.org.au P: 03 9886 3700 www.crossway.org.au/feedback www.crossway.org.au/childsafetyreport</p>
Who?	<p>Child Protection Officers, Relevant Supervisor, Executive Team, Senior Pastor or Board Member, if complaint is against a senior officer</p>
What Happens Next?	<p>The Child Protection Officers, Senior Pastor, Executive Team or Board Member will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- offer support to the child, the parents, the person who reports and the accused staff member or volunteer- initiate internal processes to ensure the safety of the child, clarify the nature of the complaint and commence disciplinary process (if required)- decide, in accordance with legal requirements and duty of care, whether the matter should/must be reported to the police or Child Protection and make report as soon as possible, if required.
Outcome	<p>Investigation; outcome decided; relevant staff, volunteers, parents and child notified of outcome of investigation; policies, procedures updated where necessary.</p>
CONTACTS: Emergency 000 Department of Fairness, Families and Housing AH Child Protection Emergency Service 131278 Victorian Commission for Children and Young People 1300 782 978	

Note: ¹ Immediate danger and risk is any direct concern about any physical harm or sexual abuse to a child.



Crossway Group Child Protection Policy (New South Wales Supplement)

Effective Date	7 September 2023
Approved by	Crossway Board
Next Review Date	11 March 2024
Responsibility	Director of Operations

1. INTRODUCTION

This Policy Supplement ("Supplement") provides for Crossway's operations in New South Wales ("NSW"). It is to be read in conjunction with Crossway's "Child Protection Policy" ("Principal Policy"). The Principal Policy must be applied in NSW except where NSW has materially different requirements or practices. This Supplement outlines these differences.

2. NEW SOUTH WALES CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

The NSW Child Safe Standards follow the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. It has ten Standards while Victoria has eleven.

The NSW Standards are:

1. Child Safety is embedded in institutional leadership, governance and culture.
2. Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and involved.
4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account.
5. People working with children are suitable and supported.
6. Processes to respond to complaints of child sexual abuse [and other types of harm] are child-focused.
7. Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training.
8. Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse [or other types of harm] to occur.
9. Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved.
10. Policies and procedures document how the institution is child safe.

The NSW and Victorian Standards are similar in effect. The additional Standard in Victoria is 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.

As part of our commitment to reconciliation and in recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First People of Australia, Crossway calls for all entities and campuses, including those in States where it is not specifically required, to apply this Standard.

3. NEW SOUTH WALES CHILD RELATED REPORTING LEGISLATIVE DIFFERENCES

3.1 Reportable Conduct

Compared to the five types of reportable conduct listed in the Victorian Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005, the NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme is governed by the Children's Guardian Act 2019 and is administered by the Office of the Children's Guardian.

Reportable conduct in NSW differs slightly in definition compared to Victoria and includes offences under the NSW Crimes Act 1900. NSW Reportable Conduct includes:

- a sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of a child
- sexual misconduct against, with or in the presence of a child
- ill-treatment of a child
- neglect of a child
- an assault against a child
- an offence of failing to reduce or remove risk of a child becoming victim of child abuse by another worker, or of concealing a child abuse offence (Section 43B or 31A of the Crimes Act 1900)
- behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child.

3.2 Reporting

When an allegation is made in NSW, anyone who has information must inform the Head of Relevant Entity ("HRE"), and the HRE must notify the Office of the Children's Guardian within 7 business days. In Victoria, the HRE has to notify the Commission for Children and Young People ("CCYP") of a reportable allegation within 3 business days. Both States require a report to be submitted within 30 days.

The HRE for Crossway in both Victoria and NSW is the Senior Pastor.

3.3 Mandatory Reporting

The definition of mandatory reporters in NSW is significantly expanded compared to Victoria and includes anyone in religious ministry or providing religion-based activities to children. This includes Kids and Youth leaders.

In NSW, the Mandatory Reporters Guide must be completed before a report is made to the Department of Communities and Justice Child Protection Hotline (132 111).

NSW has a different threshold for reporting as it includes mandatory reporting of a child or young person at risk of significant harm.

NSW also has a broader number of categories of concern that must be reported, compared to Victoria. These include current concerns for safety, welfare or wellbeing due to:

- physical, psychological, medical or educational needs not being met
- risk of physical or sexual abuse
- incidents of domestic violence in the household

- parent or caregiver acting in such a way as to risk causing psychological harm

3.4 Reporting to Police

Failure to Report

NSW's Failure to Report obligations relate to children or young people under the age of 18, compared to under the age of 16 in Victoria's Failure to Disclose obligations.

All adults are required to report information to police if they know, believe or reasonably ought to know that a child under the age of 18 has been abused, unless they have a reasonable excuse.

In NSW, valid excuses include that the offence has already been reported to the Police Child Protection Helpline as part of mandatory reporting obligations, or the Office of the Children's Guardian as part of Reportable Conduct obligations. Reporting as part of Reportable Conduct is not included as a reasonable excuse for not reporting a sexual offence against a child under 16 in Victoria.

Failure to Protect

In NSW, adults working in an institution doing child-related work will commit an offence if they know another adult working there poses a serious risk of abusing a child and they fail to reduce or remove that risk if they have the power to do so. This obligation includes all adults doing child-related work, including pastors, elders, church leaders and those in charge of ministries eg. youth leaders.

In Victoria, a person in a position of authority who becomes aware that an adult associated with their organisation poses a risk of sexual authority to a child under their care, authority or supervision, must take all reasonable steps to remove or reduce the risk.

Crossway maintains that child protection is everyone's responsibility and any child or adult can and should report any suspected, alleged or risk of harm to a child or young person. Child-friendly reporting channels are available on the Crossway website (www.crossway.org.au).

4. REVIEW

This Supplement shall remain in effect until the Principal Policy is next reviewed, at which point the contents of Supplement shall be integrated into the Principal Policy.

Appendix 1: New South Wales Child Safe Reporting Process

During the course of your work or volunteering, you may observe, hear or be informed about suspected child abuse (sexual, physical, emotional, psychological, neglect or grooming)."

Who Can Report?

STAFF
+
VOLUNTEER

CHILD

PARENT
+
BYSTANDER

What To Report?

Any child safety concerns, including:

- disclosure or risk of abuse, harm or neglect
- allegation, suspicion, observation or risk of significant harm
- breach of Code of Conduct
- environmental safety issues.

CALL 000 IF A CHILD IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER

How?

Use choice of: face-to-face verbal report, written report, letter, email, phone conversation or meeting, as soon as possible.

Who?

Child Protection Officers, Relevant Supervisor, Executive Team or Senior Pastor if complaint is to be made against a senior officer.

What Happens Next?

The Child Protection Officers, Senior Pastor or Executive Team will:

- offer support to the child, the parents, the person who reports and the accused staff member or volunteer
- initiate internal processes to ensure the safety of the child, clarify the nature of the complaint and commence disciplinary process (if required)
- decide, in accordance with legal requirements and duty of care, whether the matter should/must be reported to the police, Child Protection or the Office of the Children's Guardian and make a report as soon as possible, if required.

Outcome:

Investigation; outcome decided; relevant staff, volunteers, parents and child notified of outcome of investigation; policies, procedures updated where necessary.

Contacts:

Emergency **000**
Department of Communities and Justice Child Protection Hotline **132 111**
Office of the Children's Guardian **(02) 8219 3800**