

# Code of Conduct

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## Child & Vulnerable People Safety

Staff and volunteers are responsible for keeping a professional role with children and vulnerable people. This means establishing and maintaining clear boundaries which serve to protect everyone from misunderstandings.

This code sets out the minimum acceptable behaviours required of Personnel within CHBC when undertaking child-connected work. The code also highlights unacceptable behaviour or behaviour which must not occur between adults and children.

**A child in this code refers to children up to the age of 18 years.**

## Purpose

Following this code will help to protect children and young people from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from adults. It will also help staff and volunteers to maintain the standard of behaviour expected of them and put them in positions where they are above reproach. Having a Code of Conduct that everyone adheres to also protects the organisation as opportunities for harm are actively reduced.

## Upholding this Code of Conduct

All staff and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to the Child Safety Officer, Church Administrator or Chair of Leadership Team under the Child Safe policies and procedures put in place by Croydon Hills Baptist Church.

Staff and volunteers who breach this Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures, including any breaches involving external workers or volunteers.

All allegations of child abuse will be reported to statutory authorities, such as police or child protection. A report may/will also be made to the Baptist Union of Victoria professional standards unit - but this will not replace or negate the report to obligation to report to statutory authorities.

Croydon Hills Baptist Church condemns all forms of child abuse, discrimination and sexual exploitation. We are committed to creating and maintaining an environment which promotes safety for people involved in our programs including all children, people with a disability, people from a CALD background including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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## Acceptable Behaviours

I Will:

Conduct myself in a manner that is consistent with the values of Croydon Hills Baptist Church according to CHBC's Safe Church Policy.

Treat everyone with respect, regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

Ensure my conduct facilitates a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all children, vulnerable people, parents, staff and volunteers.

Follow and report any concerns of child abuse in accordance with Croydon Hills Baptist Church's child protection policy and procedures.

Keep all information regarding child protection concerns confidential, only discussing information with relevant and appropriate people according to the reporting procedures.

Respect cultural differences.

Encourage open communication between all children, vulnerable people, parents, staff and volunteers, and allow children and vulnerable people to participate in the decisions that affect them.

Be transparent in my actions and whereabouts.

Take responsibility for being accountable and not placing myself in positions where there is a risk of allegations being made. Wherever possible, I will ensure that another adult is present when I am working with or near children.

Self-assess my behaviour, actions, language and relationships with children. Comply with all relevant Australian and local legislation.

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Immediately disclose any information of charges, convictions of abuse and policy non-compliance in accordance with appropriate procedures. This includes disclosing any charges or convictions made against oneself or others.

Avoid favouritism.

Ensure any physical contact with children and vulnerable people is appropriate and in the parameters of the program or event.

Always ensure language is appropriate and not offensive or discriminatory.  
Provide examples of good conduct in daily activities.

Encourage everyone to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.

Recognize that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or vulnerable people.

## **Unacceptable Behaviours**

I Will Not:

Engage in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children or vulnerable people, in person or on social media.

Use inappropriate, offensive, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, culturally inappropriate or discriminatory language when speaking with a child or young person.

Allow allegations, suspected abuse, risk of harm or disclosures to go unreported.

Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for him/herself, such as assistance with toileting or changing clothes. If this is necessary, for example for a child with a disability, I will inform my supervisor first and be as open as possible in my behaviour.

Hit or physically abuse children. This includes refraining from physical punishment or discipline of children.

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Conduct a sexual relationship with a child or vulnerable person or indulge in any form of sexual contact with a child or vulnerable person.

Seek to make contact and/or spend time with any child that I encounter in my role as a representative of Croydon Hills Baptist Church, outside of the designated times and activities set for performing my role as a representative of Croydon Hills Baptist Church, without consent from the child or young persons' parent/guardian.

Condone or participate in behaviour of children that is illegal, unsafe or abusive.

Act in a way that shows unfair and differential treatment of children and vulnerable people.

Release or discuss any personal confidential information about suspected or proven child abuse or protection cases other than with the Child Safety Officer and other parties as designated by them and according to reporting procedures.

Use any computer, mobile phone, or video and digital camera to exploit or harass children. (NextGen Ministries refer to separate Media Policy)

Make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and vulnerable people.

Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive.

Make inappropriate promises to children and young people, particularly in relation to confidentiality.

Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.

Rely on your reputation or that of the organisation to protect you.

I agree to and commit to the following

Read and adhere to the Code of Conduct.

Provide all relevant background checks.

Attend all required training.

Operate within best practices for the ministry.

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## Declaration:

I declare that I have read and understood the questions in this form. I have answered the questions truthfully and completely to the best of my knowledge. Should it be found that any answer that I have given in this form is untrue, I understand that this may be grounds for my application and/or approval to volunteer with Croydon Hills Baptist Church (CHBC) and/or work with children under the age of 18 to be withdrawn.

I hereby agree that, if applicable, CHBC may contact the referees provided by me to establish my suitability for the applied role.

I recognise that I am responsible for my own actions and utilise Child Safe standards and best practices to avoid actions and behaviours that could be in breach of this Code of Conduct and the Child Safe policies of Croydon Hills Baptist Church. I have read and understood Croydon Hills Baptist Church's Child and Vulnerable People Safety Code of Conduct and am aware that Croydon Hills Baptist Church expects me to uphold at all times the standards of behaviour described in the Code of Conduct above. I also understand that disciplinary measures and legal steps will be taken if I am found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct. I understand that in making that report, Croydon Hills Baptist Church may have to inform other authorities, in a confidential manner to meet obligations under Australian law.

By observing these standards, you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to the CHBC Child Safety Officer, Office Administrator or Secretary of Leadership Team

(If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse, phone 000).