

NARARA VALLEY  
BAPTIST  
CHURCH

Child Abuse Awareness  
Handout

## Introduction

In recent years the community has become aware of the reality of child abuse be it physical, emotional, sexual or neglect. The immediate and ongoing consequences for the victims of such abuse are heartbreaking. At its core there is a betrayal of trust - by a parent, family friend, a doctor, a pastor or whoever.

Children have a right to be safe all the time. It is the aim of Narara Valley Baptist Church to do all that is possible to provide a safe and secure environment for children and youth coming into our care through our various activities.

To help us in achieving this aim we ask firstly that you fill in the application forms for working with children and youth. One of these forms is a legal requirement under the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998, one is required by the Baptist Union and the other is required by the Narara Valley Baptist Church child protection policy instituted in 1998. Secondly, we ask that you read this handout carefully. It will provide a broad outline of what abuse is and some indicators of abuse. **Please retain this booklet for your information.** It will also give guidelines for procedures to ensure your protection from vulnerable situations, as well as protection for the children under care. Thirdly we will undertake to provide periodical training covering in more detail the outlines in this handout.

## What Is Abuse?

There have traditionally been four main areas of abuse, with a fifth added recently. These are physical abuse; emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and exposure to domestic violence. The indicators listed below are NOT always proof of abuse, however, they may be sufficient to warrant further investigation. All indicators and behaviours need to be placed in age and situational context. Training will be provided on this. If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact the Designated Child Protection Officer or Narara Counselling Centre for advice.

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse happens when a physical injury is inflicted on a child by an adult or bigger person. Most physical abuse of children comes from someone in their immediate family. Physical abuse occurs when children are deliberately beaten, shaken, burnt, cut, poisoned, choked, tied up, held under water, or given alcohol or other drugs.

Signs of physical abuse include bruising, welts, burns, bites, scalds, broken bones, sprains, cuts and abrasions, or internal injuries, old or inconsistent injuries in relation to age (eg. bruises on babies who are not mobile), bruising or scars of varying ages, as well as flinching from adults, displays of aggression or withdrawal.

Physical abuse happens across all social and cultural groups in our society.

## **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is behaviour by a parent or carer which destroys children's confidence in themselves. Here are some examples of actions which may result in emotional abuse:

- children constantly told they are not good enough, no good or worthless
- children continually rejected and shown no affection
- children subjected to constant verbal abuse and threats
- children punished by being locked up alone or not allowed to have friends or social activities.

Excessive or unreasonable demands and scapegoating could also be considered emotional abuse. It can also be seen as the failure to provide the psychological nurturing necessary for a child's physical and emotional development. Situations where an adult's behaviour harms the child's wellbeing - for example drug or alcohol abuse- also fall into the category of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse can exist on its own, but often accompanies the other forms of abuse.

Emotional abuse can be difficult to identify because it does not leave any physical injuries. It often goes unrecognised until a child shows signs of emotional problems. Signs can include changes in behaviour, lying and stealing, destructive or violent behaviour, rocking or sucking, being very withdrawn or depressed, being aggressive and constantly seeking attention, low self esteem, poor social skills, inability to trust, sleep disturbances. The same signs can also indicate other forms of child abuse.

## **Sexual Abuse**

The term sexual abuse defines a range of sexual behaviours perpetrated on a child, including sexual assault, sexual ill-treatment and exposure to sexual behaviour. Sexual abuse can range from an offender deliberately watching a child undress, suggestive behaviour or comments, exhibiting his/her genitals to a child, directing a child to perform a sexual act, touching the child sexually, particularly on or near the anus or genitals, masturbating in the child's presence, using the child's body in a sexual way for masturbation, intercourse, anal or oral sex, exposing the child to sexual acts or pornography, penetration of the vagina or anus by a finger, penis or any other object.

Child sexual assault involves an abuse of power and betrayal of trust. When child sexual assault occurs, fear, shame and confusion make it very hard for a child to tell what has happened.

Signs to watch for include sexual knowledge too great for the child's age, soiling, smearing of faeces, excessive sexual talk, forcing other children to play games related to sex and sexuality, touching adults, simulated intercourse, interest in watching bathroom functions, genitals may stand out as a prominent feature in drawings, being overly familiar with strangers.

### **Neglect**

Neglect occurs when a child is harmed because a parent or carer fails to provide adequate supervision, food, shelter, or clothing, or is responsible for unhygienic living conditions. Neglect also applies to homes where dangerous substances such as poisons or alcohol and other drugs are left lying around. Poverty doesn't constitute neglect, although it may be a contributing factor. Some parents do not mean to neglect their children, but this can result from their own problems, such as disability, drug and alcohol problems and other situations which result in the parent not having a child focus.

Things to look for include developmental lags, poor growth, underweight, being left unsupervised for periods of time, stealing food and a child that assumes an adult responsibility and is overly self-sufficient for their age.

In understanding neglect it is particularly important to be sensitive to cultural and social differences. Do not assume a child is neglected just because a family does not live according to your standards.

### **Domestic Violence**

Domestic Violence is violent, abusive or intimidating behaviour carried out by an adult against a partner or former partner to control and dominate that person. Domestic Violence has a profound effect on children and young people and constitutes a form of abuse.

*In homes where domestic violence occurs:*

- 90% of the children witness the violence
- 50 - 70% of the children are also victims of the violence
- there is 15 times the rate of child abuse and neglect found in non- violent families

Domestic violence is a form of emotional abuse of children, and increases the risk of other forms of child maltreatment occurring. Children learn from domestic violence that violence is best way to gain control over someone and that it is OK to use physical force and manipulation to get what you want, even against someone you love.

## What To Do

Reporting abuse is the first step in stopping the abuse. A child who is being abused needs the abuse to stop. As an adult in a position of responsibility, children may come to you to stop this abuse.

If a child or young person chooses to confide in you that abuse has taken place, BELIEVE WHAT YOU ARE TOLD. Be very sensitive to their needs, but also tell them that as an adult in a position of responsibility, you have an obligation to report the matter to the Designated Child Protection Officer. Assure them of confidentiality and that the disclosure will only be made available to the appropriate people. If the child or young person seeks your confidence, you should (in all decency) inform the child AT THIS TIME and before he/she discloses any information to you, that you have a moral (and in some cases, legal) obligation to report the matter.

Children may also choose to alert you to abuse in non-verbal ways. If you suspect abuse talk with the Designated Child Protection Officer, or Narara Counselling Centre, about your concerns. Often children need you to be their voice.

If a child tells you about abuse or neglect, there are some important messages you can give:

- immediately say you believe them
- stress that what has happened is not their fault
- say you are glad they told you
- say you know some grownups do wrong things
- do everything you can to comfort and reassure the child
- seek professional help as soon as possible

Care must be taken not to question the child or plant suggestions in their mind as this may affect any investigations that the Department of Community Services needs to undertake. Contact the Designated Child Protection Officer, (Craig Corkill) as soon as you possibly can for support and advice

You can also approach members of the Child Protection Team and Narara Counselling Centre for advice if you have concerns for any child in your care. Members can advise whether further action needs to be taken and will give whatever support they can in working with a child in your care.

## Avoid Vulnerable Situations

It is important to avoid vulnerable situations wherever possible, but use common sense to make sure the child's needs are met. This is not only for the protection of the child, but for your protection from false allegations. The situations listed here is not exhaustive. Further training will be given in this area.

- Do not be alone with a child out of sight of other people
- When taking small children to the toilet, or nappy changing, do not be alone, if at all possible. If a child needs assistance and it is not possible for another adult to accompany you, then inform another adult of where you are going and then let them know when you return
- Wherever possible, do not drive children home unless you are accompanied by another adult. Make sure you have the parent's permission to drive their child
- Do not initiate close physical contact. As a general rule, open displays of affection initiated by children in the presence of others are acceptable. Exceptions to this would be situations such as a female adolescent initiating affectionate contact with a male youth group leader or male adolescent/female youth group leader.
- No corporal punishment administered, not even in fun. The only form of physical restraint appropriate is to protect child from harm or injury



Thank you for your interest in a ministry team position at Narara Valley Baptist Church (NVBC). Without the participation of volunteers and paid staff NVBC would be unable to provide ministries to both the church family and wider community.

NVBC is a church which affirms the right of people to be respected, valued and to be in a safe environment. NVBC and the community at large, is aware of the tragic reality of various forms of abuse and the major consequences of this for the victims. With this reality in mind, NVBC intends to do all that is possible to provide a safe and secure environment for all who participate in church based activities, and to this end we require all who wish to assist in ministry to complete an application package.

We appreciate you taking the time to do this. This acts as a safeguard for both those we minister to and for you. ***Please note, it is not possible to participate in the care of children/young people, or ministry team membership/church leadership at NVBC without having fully completed the relevant forms.***

Included in the Ministry Application Package are:

- Narara Valley Baptist Church Ministry Application Form;
- Volunteer/Student Declaration (for volunteers) OR
- Application Declaration and Consent (for those applying for paid employment);
- Leadership Covenant - 2 copies, one to be returned, signed and dated (for those applying for ministry leadership positions)

All relevant forms must be completed and the Abuse Awareness Handout reviewed **prior** to working with children or adolescents in any ministry, or as a ministry team member/church leader at Narara Valley Baptist Church. The Volunteer/Student Declaration or Application Declaration and Consent is required under current child protection legislation administered by the Commission for Children and Young People.

If you choose not to complete the relevant forms, no inferences will be drawn, but under the current legislation and NVBC Safe Church Policy, we regret that you will not be able to be involved in a ministry team position within this church.

The Volunteer or Paid Safe Church Administrator will check with the referees and will verify the information provided on the Ministry Application form. Should any problem arise during the review process, you will have an opportunity to meet with the designated Child Protection Officer or Pastoral Team member to discuss the situation.

To ensure that we're increasingly behaving in safe ways, it is essential that EVERYONE (16 years and over) who is involved as a Ministry Team Leader or Growth Group Leader and/or if you minister to 0-18 year olds, commit to attend a Creating Safe Spaces Workshop at the next available Workshop (preferably within the first six (6) months of commencing in ministry). This course sees you accredited for three years.

(Refer to <http://www.ncca.org.au/departments/safe-church/scta/scta-workshop-calendar> for the nearest available Workshop).

**Please complete and return to the Safe Church Administrator, Narara Valley Baptist Church, PO Box 9080, Wyoming, NSW 2250.** The information on these forms is used for child protection, ministry team screening and record keeping purposes only.

Every Blessing

Craig Corkill



### MINISTRY APPLICATION FORM

Completion of this form, the Volunteer/Student Declaration (if working with children or young people) or Application Declaration and Consent (for those seeking paid employment); the Leadership Covenant (for Ministry Leaders positions); and attendance at a Creating Safe Spaces Workshop for EVERYONE (16 years and over) seeking to be involved as a Ministry Team Leader or Growth Group Leader and/or to minister to 0-18 year olds are an essential requirement if you wish to be involved in ministry at Narara Valley Baptist Church. If you choose to not complete this form the official position of Narara Valley Baptist Church is that no inference will be drawn from this decision. THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS USED FOR CHILD PROTECTION and MINISTRY TEAM SCREENING ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

PRESENT ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ MOBILE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any other names by which you are, or have been known, including maiden and/or previous married names.

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever lived interstate/overseas? If so, please list all interstate addresses. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you consider yourself a positive role model for others, including children and young people? Yes/No

What area of ministry/ministry position do you wish to be involved in? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you want to be involved with this ministry? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list other churches you have attended regularly in the past five years. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list previous church work and/or non-church involvement with any ministry for the last five years. Please supply names, addresses and phone numbers of any such organisation, for references.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Names and phone numbers of 2 referees for this application, preferably people from outside Narara Valley Baptist Church who have known you for at least 12 months and are not related to you:

1. NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

2. NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any gifts, calling, training, education or other factors that have prepared you for the ministry you wish to be involved in. (Please supply names, addresses and phone numbers, where applicable for training and education.)

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Because our church cares for those we minister to, and desires to protect them, we ask you to please answer the following questions. You have the option to answer any question Yes or No. If the answer to any question is Yes, the Church reserves the right to reject the application.

Are you currently **under investigation** for any offence relating to violence, drug use/possession, sexual assault/abuse, or any crime involving an adult or minor? Yes/No  
If yes, please ATTACH details on a separate sheet.

Have you ever been **convicted** of any offence relating to violence, drug use/possession, sexual assault/abuse, or any crime involving an adult or minor? Yes/No If yes, please ATTACH details on a separate sheet.

I am/am not aware of any other circumstance which might be relevant in determining my suitability for a position within Narara Valley Baptist Church.

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The information contained in this application is true to the best of my knowledge.

I have **never** been convicted of any offence relating to children or young people, either in NSW or any other state or territory.

I authorise any persons, churches or other organisation listed in this application to provide Narara Valley Baptist Church with any information they may have regarding my character and fitness for children's/youth work or ministry/ leadership position. I release all such and the leadership and members for the time being of Narara Valley Baptist Church from any liability for any damages that may result from such evaluations of myself, and I waive any right that I may have to inspect references provided on my behalf.

I understand that the information provided by me in this application will be checked. I authorise you to contact all the persons or organisations referred to in this application and obtain any information from them that you consider relevant.

I understand the nature of the work I am to do with children and young people and I understand it is my duty to protect the children and young people with whom I come in contact. (Delete if position applied for does not relate to children)

I understand that should I fail to meet the commitments given above I could be asked to withdraw from the ministry position/s in which I am engaged.

If there are any changes to the above information, I undertake to provide these changes immediately.

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
If under 18, a parent or guardian also is required to sign.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/Guardian)

Please return form to: Safe Churches Administrator  
c/- Narara Valley Baptist Church

The information provided in this form will be used solely for the purposes of evaluating suitability for work with the ministries or agencies of Narara Valley Baptist Church and as such will be confidential within the bounds of Pastoral Team, Children's or Youth Ministries and the administrator/s. Applicants will be given the chance to explain any offences/investigations to the Pastoral Team.

OFFICE USE ONLY									
MA	<input type="checkbox"/>	V/S Dec	<input type="checkbox"/>	App/Dec Consent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ref Check Complete	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pastoral Team Review	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ministry Leader contacted	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vol contacted	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leadership Cov	<input type="checkbox"/>	Creating Safe Spaces Workshop	<input type="checkbox"/>		



# VOLUNTEER/STUDENT DECLARATION

An easier way? Complete this form online at [check.kids.nsw.gov.au](http://check.kids.nsw.gov.au)

Volunteers who mentor disadvantaged children or who provide intimate personal care to disabled children should use the Applicant Declaration and Consent rather than the Volunteer/Student Declaration.

## Personal Details:

Name:

Family name: \_\_\_\_\_

First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Other given name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Previous names/aliases:

Family name: \_\_\_\_\_

First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Other given name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Family name: \_\_\_\_\_

First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Other given name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Residential address:

Address Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Address Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact:

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of birth:

Suburb/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

## Identifying document:

If you used one of these documents to verify your identity, please fill in these details

- |                        |   |   |   |
|------------------------|---|---|---|
| <b>Licence Type:</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Driver's License             | <input type="checkbox"/> Firearms License                         |   |
| <b>Issuing Agency:</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Capital Territory | <input type="checkbox"/> New South Wales                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Territory |
|                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Queensland                   | <input type="checkbox"/> South Australia                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Tasmania           |
|                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Victoria                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Western Australia                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Army    |
|                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Commonwealth of Australia    | <input type="checkbox"/> Defence Force Academy                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Navy    |
|                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Australian RAAF              | <input type="checkbox"/> Issued by a country other than Australia | <input type="checkbox"/> Other              |

Licence number: \_\_\_\_\_

Passport Type:  Private  Government  UN Refugee

Issuing Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Passport number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Position details:**

Title of child-related position: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of organisation you are volunteering for: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of this organisation (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

I am a parent or guardian of a participating child (y/n): \_\_\_\_\_

I am a volunteer or student on placement (y/n): \_\_\_\_\_

It is an offence for a prohibited person to apply for, attempt to obtain, undertake or remain in child-related employment, or to sign this declaration. A prohibited person is a person who is convicted of the following (whether in NSW or elsewhere):

- murder of a child
- serious sex offence, including carnal knowledge
- child-related personal violence offence (an offence committed by an adult involving intentionally wounding or causing grievous bodily harm to a child)
- indecency offences punishable by imprisonment of 12 months or more
- kidnapping (unless the offender is or has been the child's parent or carer)
- offences connected with child prostitution
- possession, distribution or publication of child pornography; or
- attempt, conspiracy or incitement to commit the above offences.

A prohibited person includes a Registrable person under the *Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000*.

Details of these offences can be found online at Working With Children Employer Guidelines Fact sheet 1. A conviction includes a finding that the charge for an offence is proven, or that a person is guilty of an offence, even though the court does not proceed to a conviction.

**Declaration:**

- I have read and understood the information above about prohibited persons. I am aware that it is an offence to make a false statement on this form.
- I declare that I am not a prohibited person under the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998*.
- I consent to the Commission for Children and Young People checking my relevant criminal records, to verify these statements. I understand that this information may be referred to the Commission for Children and Young People and/or to NSW Police for law enforcement purposes and for monitoring and auditing compliance with the procedures and standards for the Working With Children Check in accordance with Section 36 (1)(f) of the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998*.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Employer to Complete:**

- I have sighted photo identification for this person

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

**What should I do next?**

Once you have completed your details, you will need to sign the printed form and provide the signed form to your employer/volunteer organisation. You may also wish to retain a copy for your records.



# APPLICANT DECLARATION AND CONSENT

An easier way? Complete this form online at [check.kids.nsw.gov.au](http://check.kids.nsw.gov.au)

### Personal Details:

Family name: \_\_\_\_\_  
First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Other given name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

### Previous names/aliases:

Family name: \_\_\_\_\_  
First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Other given name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

### Residential address:

Address Line 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
Suburb/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_  
Country: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_  
email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

### Place of birth:

Suburb/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Country: \_\_\_\_\_

### Identifying document:

If you used one of these documents to verify your identity, please fill in these details

Licence Type:  Driver's License  Firearms License Licence number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Issuing Agency:  Australian Capital Territory  New South Wales  Northern Territory  
 Queensland  South Australia  Tasmania  
 Victoria  Western Australia  Australian Army  
 Commonwealth of Australia  Defence Force Academy  Australian Navy  
 Australian RAAF  Issued by a country other than Australia  Other  
Passport Type:  Private  Government  UN Refugee  
Issuing Country: \_\_\_\_\_  
Passport number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Position applied for:

Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type: \_\_\_\_\_

It is an offence for a prohibited person to apply for, attempt to obtain, undertake or remain in child-related employment, or to sign this declaration. A prohibited person is a person who is convicted of the following (whether in NSW or elsewhere):

- murder of a child
- serious sex offence, including carnal knowledge
- child-related personal violence offence (an offence committed by an adult involving intentionally wounding or causing grievous bodily harm to a child)
- indecency offences punishable by imprisonment of 12 months or more
- kidnapping (unless the offender is or has been the child's parent or carer)
- offences connected with child prostitution
- possession, distribution or publication of child pornography; or
- attempt, conspiracy or incitement to commit the above offences.

A prohibited person includes a Registrable person under the *Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000*.

A conviction includes a finding that the charge for an offence is proven, or that a person is guilty of an offence, even though the court does not proceed to a conviction. Details of these offences can be found online at Working With Children Employer Guidelines Fact Sheet 1. A conviction includes a finding that the charge for an offence is proven, or that a person is guilty of an offence, even though the court does not proceed to a conviction.

### Declaration and consent

I am the applicant named in this form. All information in this form, and identification documents provided for this application, are true and correct. I understand that if I have provided false or misleading information it may result in a decision not to employ me, or, if already employed, may lead to my dismissal.

I have not omitted any names or aliases that I use or used in the past.

I have read and understood the contents of this form and the relevant information in the Working With Children Employer Guidelines. I declare that I am not a prohibited person under the Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 and I understand that it is an offence for a prohibited person to seek child-related employment.

I am aware that if considered for child-related employment, several checks will be undertaken to ascertain my suitability, including:

1. National criminal record check for charges and/or convictions (including spent convictions) for:

- any sexual offence (including but not limited to, sexual assault, acts of indecency, child pornography, child prostitution and carnal knowledge);
- any child-related personal violence offence;
- any assault, ill treatment or neglect of, or psychological harm to a child and any registrable offence; punishable by imprisonment for 12 months or more.

I understand that this check includes convictions or charges that:

- may have not been heard or finalised by a court; or
- are proven but have not led to a conviction; or
- have been dismissed, withdrawn or discharged by a court.

2. Check for relevant Apprehended Violence Orders taken out by a police officer or other public official for the protection of a children; and

3. Check for relevant employment proceedings notified to the Commission for Children and Young People under the Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998.

I consent to these checks being conducted and consent to the Commission for Children and Young People or an Approved Screening Agency obtaining any relevant record identified by these checks and any additional information relating to that record from sources such as courts, police, prosecutors and past employers to enable a full and informed estimate of risk. I consent to these sources disclosing information relating to that record to the Commission for Children and Young People or Approved Screening Agency.

I acknowledge that:

- the information obtained during the Working With Children background check, including this consent, may be collected and used by and/or disclosed to the Commission for Children and Young People or an Approved Screening Agency for the purposes of the Working With Children Check;
- the Commission for Children and Young People and Approved Screening Agencies may share the information obtained during the Working With Children background check for the purposes of the Working With Children Check;
- the outcome of an estimate of risk will be provided to my prospective employer or their employer-related body;
- details of my relevant records will not be released to my current or prospective employers;
- any information obtained as part of this process may be used by Australian Police Services for law enforcement purposes, including the investigation of any outstanding criminal offences; and
- the information provided may be referred to the Commission for Children and Young People and/or to NSW Police for law enforcement purposes and for monitoring and auditing compliance with the procedures and standards for the Working With Children Check in accordance with Section 36 (1)(f) of the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998*.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What should I do next?** Once you have completed your details, you will need to sign the printed form and provide the signed form to your prospective employer/volunteer organisation. You may also wish to retain a copy for your records.

## WHY A COVENANT?

Christian ministry is a high calling. It is a position based upon the Holy Spirit's gifting and local church's affirmation and calling to a position of delegated authority of the church to serve, encourage, teach and empower God's people.

This is a servant-leadership role.

Jesus told his disciples that they were not to be like the rulers of their day who lorded over others, but rather they were to be servants of others.

Most Christian leaders do serve honourably.

As a result, assumptions about the good character of people who make themselves available for leadership positions are no longer to be the sole basis for the carrying out of Christian ministry.

People who attend Narara Valley Baptist Church need to be confident that they will be cared for, nurtured and encouraged as they grow, and, at the same time, protected from physical, mental or emotional harm. We want everyone who comes to our Church or in some manner interacts with our Church community, to acknowledge them as safe places "in an unsafe world".

The Leadership Covenant provides a clear set of behavioural 'DOs and DON'Ts', to define what is acceptable and what is unacceptable conduct for leaders and ministers in Christian ministry at Narara Valley Baptist Church.

## MORE INFORMATION

This Leadership Covenant is part of a SAFE CHURCH document suite:

- Church Safe Policy
- Creating Safe Spaces Workshop Workbooks
- Creating Safe Spaces Implementation Pack
- Responding to Kids @ Risk Procedure

Remember, you are not on your own in these matters:

For information talk to a member of the Pastoral team

you can also call the Baptist Union 9868-9213

Reporting Suspected Risk of Harm (abuse)

NSW: DoCS Help Line 13 21 11

Counselling help

National: Kids Help Line – 1800 55 1800

Lifeline — 13 11 14

Child Abuse Prevention Service (24 hr) — 02 9716 8000

Family Crisis Centre (24 hr) — 02 9622 0522



# Leadership Covenant

**Narara Valley Baptist Church**



TOWARDS SAFER CHURCHES

Baptist Union NSW is member of the NCCA - Safe Church Training Agreement.

February 2008

FEBRUARY 2010

# Covenant

- a. We minister out of a relationship with God.  
We will maintain a healthy relationship with God by:
- joining regularly in the life and ministry of the Church.
  - studying the Scriptures in private and in groups.
  - praying regularly in private and in fellowship with and for the people and ministries of the Church.
  - giving of our time and finances to the work of the Church, as an expression of your gratitude to God.

b. We serve others in the context of healthy relationships

We will engage in healthy friendships with those to whom we minister by:

- loving and caring for our families; paying attention to the effect of ministry on them.
- treating others with respect; teach and exercise authority respectfully.
- upholding confidential information; we will not disclose to anyone (including spouse), any confidential information without the consent of the person providing the information. (There is an exception where there is a legal obligation or a duty of care issue.)
- being a team player; cooperating with other ministry leaders, there will be areas that overlap and someone else may have the advice that I need.
- using words that build up; do not ridicule or embarrass people.
- avoiding professionally counselling people with whom we have personal relationships.
- making alternative arrangements for pastoral ministry for any person if you begin to develop a romantic relationship with them.

## When the Covenant is damage

What happens when leaders do not follow this covenant?

(i) Occasional/minor violations

Everyone sins and is forgiven (1 John 1:8-9). It stands to reason then, that everyone will breach the covenant. When this happens in an area that is not a breach of civil or criminal law, simply cease the conduct. If this is difficult, the person should see their team leader about receiving help (e.g. counselling). In some cases it may be necessary to step a person aside from their duties whilst this takes place. Deal with such matters confidentially.

(ii) Unknown violations

Not all leaders will understand 'unacceptable' behaviours. Even after explaining the covenant some may be unaware they are exhibiting unacceptable behaviours. Leaders need to be open to correction and humble enough to modify behaviours so as not to discredit the gospel. As above, stepping a person aside from their duties may be necessary.

(iii) Constant violations

There are breaches that are not a breach of civil or criminal law. Where a leader has been made aware of their behaviour and yet refuses to change:

- a) the Ministry Team Leader meets the person for behaviour review meetings. Communicate required behaviour changes (up to 3 meetings).
- b) if the behaviour continues, a small group of church leaders are to arrange a meeting to address the behaviour. Stepping aside is appropriate at this point.
- c) if the behaviour/s continues beyond this meeting, then respectfully, and upholding confidentially, the person will be stood down for a set period. They will be offered help in changing their behaviour via counselling if they are willing.

NB: Written notes of all meetings to be carefully taken and a copy given to all parties.

After having used the above process, you may still need support, please call the Baptist Standards.

(iv) Breaches of the law or allegations of abuse.

Allegations of abuse or serious misconduct are to be referred to Baptist Union of NSW 9868-9213

c. As Christian Leaders we will:

- be accountable to our team, watch out for each other and protect each other's integrity, e.g. when ministering to children have a buddy system in place (never alone with one child).
- obey the law, other than any law that is contrary to the Scriptures.
- not take property belonging to others, including intellectual property (copyright) and knowingly making false, misleading or deceptive statements.
- not engage in bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, sexual abuse or spiritual abuse of any person, including your family.
- not act violently or intentionally provoke violence when engaged in civil disobedience.
- be responsible in our use of addictive substances and services (e.g. prescriptions/ alcohol).
- not use any prohibited substance.
- act with sexual purity. Sexuality is a gift from God and should be enjoyed within the safe environment of a Christian marriage.
- act with financial integrity.
- have in place systems for accountability and transparency in financial matters.
- not engage in tax evasion
- not seek personal advantage or financial gain from your position, other than in wages, recognised allowances and deductions.
- disclose to the church leadership if we are or have been investigated for any criminal offences.

### I have read and understand my responsibility to abide by this covenant

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_