



**NARARAVALLEY**  
BAPTIST CHURCH

# ***The Green Book***

***Policies for Youth Leaders***

***Narara Valley Baptist Church***

***2022, Version 1.5***



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## **Welcome To The Green Book**

Thank you for being part of our youth ministry, and committing to building the Church through working with young people. We believe that what we do has eternal significance, and can launch young people into an abundant life with Jesus.

As we place such a high value on youth ministry and our youth leaders, we need to ensure that what we do keeps both our young people safe, and our youth leaders safe. The 'Green Book' is a resource to help us keep boundaries that ensure what we do is above reproach, has integrity, and has longevity.

Below are guidelines written not to impede relationship building, but to provide a framework for safe relationship to happen in the best way possible.

Together we can make a lasting impact on this generation.

Lewis Jonker

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Jonker', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Youth Pastor, Narara Valley Baptist Church

## Driving

1. No driver is to be alone in a car to, from, or during a program/event with any child or young person of the opposite sex.
2. A driver may only travel alone in the car with a young person of the same sex and only when it is absolutely necessary. For example, dropping the last person home after a program. In this instance you should drop home the young person you have known the longest and where there is an existing relationship with their parents. It is the leader's responsibility to ensure that parents have provided permission for the young person to travel alone with you in the car. A leader should ensure this permission has been granted through:
  - i. An existing relationship with the parents where permission has been provided
  - ii. Have the child/young person call/text the parent for permission and you speak to the parent
  - iii. Call the parent to discuss and receive permission
3. When dropping off a child/young person wait until they have gone inside the house to ensure their safety.
4. Drivers on their 'Red' Provisional license shall avoid transporting children or young people in their vehicle during an official program or event. If it is absolutely necessary you must call their parents and inform them of the situation, and that the driver is on a provisional licence.
5. Drivers on their 'Green' Provisional license shall be allowed to transport children or young people.
6. Drivers are required to obey road rules at all times while participating in official programs or events (this includes obeying the speed limit, ensuring that all passengers are wearing seatbelts, that you are not transporting more people than you have seatbelts and that your driving conduct is generally safe). The driver is responsible for any penalties, including financial penalties incurred whilst transporting children or young people for church events/programs.
7. Driver's vehicles must be registered through the Roads and Traffic Authority with fully operational seat belts available for all individual travellers.

## Physical Contact

1. At times physical contact between leaders and young people may be appropriate. For example, you may hug someone briefly when you see them, avoiding any sexual contact. You may put your hand on someone's shoulder (after asking for permission) when praying for them. You may place your hands on someone's shoulders to lead them away from a dangerous situation or to comfort them.
2. Physical contact of a sexual nature or that may be perceived in a sexual way is not permitted. (eg, close hugs)
3. Leaders should not massage a young person or receive a massage from a young person, even involving non-sexual areas of the body.
4. Leaders should not sit on young people or allow young people to sit on them. Leaders should not sit next to young people allowing them to lean into or rest their head on the leader's shoulder, etc. **Leaders should also not engage in such behaviour.**
5. In any games with physical contact leaders should take particular care to ensure that physical contact remains appropriate, not violent and not sexual. Leaders are also to remember that they are often physically bigger than young people and should take care to avoid any injury to young people.

## Risk Of Harm / Disclosure

When a child or individual discloses abuse, or that they are at risk, or when reasonable grounds have been established, follow these steps:

1. Immediately, or as soon as practicably possible, contact one of the following people
  - i. Youth Pastor
  - ii. Senior Pastor (or chair of elders)
  - iii. Interim Youth Coordinators
  - iv. Church Elder(s)

(see "Appendix 2 - Contact Details")

2. That person will decide if a report needs to be made and will make the report in co-ordination with the churches Child Protection Officer (see "Appendix 2 - Contact Details").
3. If you are concerned for the **immediate** welfare of a child or young person, you should phone the police or Community Services NSW (see "Appendix - Contact Details"). You should also follow the process above, notifying your Supervising Pastor or the church Child Protection Officer.
4. Reportable abuse areas include neglect, physical abuse, emotional and psychological abuse, sexual abuse and witnessing domestic violence.
5. Even **if you are unsure** whether or not the child or young person is at risk, contact one of the people on the above list
6. For more information, see the Safe Church Policy. An reporting flowchart extract from the Safe Church Policy 2015 can be found in "Appendix 1 – Reporting Suspected Risk Of Harm" in this document.

## Friday Nights

1. Remember you are a leader. Any conflict or anything illegal (eg, young person bringing alcohol to the program) must be reported to the Leader in Charge. If you are unsure, it is best to speak to the Leader in Charge then keep the information to yourself.
2. You must never be alone with a young person in a situation that is out of the view of other people.
3. You should do everything possible to support the Leader in Charge in their role.
4. When driving people home from the Friday night youth program as a general rule they should be home no later than 10:30pm unless prearranged with the young person's parents.

## If You Need To Be In Private

### Do it In A Public Setting

This principle encourages a “transparent” approach. If a leader is required to speak with a program participant individually, then it is wise to do so privately in a public setting. For example, moving a few metres away from the rest of the group, but staying within view of all the group, allows a leader to have a private conversation without others hearing what is being said.

When it is necessary to speak to a program participant privately, even in the view of others, then it is wise to inform another leader, if possible the program leader, of the intention to do so. This removes the risk of suspicion by others looking on, that anything inappropriate could be happening. It is also a useful way of setting up a safety net, should it become necessary to bring another leader into the conversation.

## Confidentiality

It is important that our relationships with young people and with other leaders are established with trust and that confidentiality is maintained. When young people know that a leader will keep their information confidential, they are more likely to share situations that are personal and may need help with.

As such:

1. A leader should not share personal information or details regarding a young person, their situation or what a young person has told them, with any other person (including another young person or leader). There are exceptions to this outlined below.
2. A leader should share information with the appropriate Supervising Pastor immediately when there is concern that the young person may harm or kill themselves, may harm or kill another person, is at risk of harm or has disclosed that they have been abused.

## Outside Program Activities

1. Use the above guidelines for all contact with young people outside of specific youth programs and events.
2. A leader should not invite a young person to their home when no one else is present. Also, a leader should not enter a young person's home if their parent(s) or a caregiver over 18 years old is not home. If a prior relationship exists (eg, family friends, relatives), you must inform your Supervising Pastor for transparency and for their approval.
3. Parent or a caregiver over 18 years old should be informed by you if you wish to plan an activity with the young person outside of the scheduled program time – do not rely on the young person to do this, it is your responsibility.
4. Remember driving guidelines. That you must be confident you have the permission of the parents for the young person to be in the car with you, particularly when alone. Leaders should not be alone in the car with a young person of the opposite sex.
5. If a young person requests to meet with you or speak with you outside of a specific program time:
  - i. First, receive parent's permission by speaking with them
  - ii. Second, decide to meet in a public place, for example McDonalds
  - iii. As much as possible, try to do things with groups of young people rather than individuals
  - iv. If you are unsure, have a talk with your Supervising Pastor.

**NOTE:** It is essential that you receive permission from parents regarding the **agreed time** a young person is to be returned home and the **exact location and nature of the activity**.

For example, a parent may give permission for a young person to be with you to go to a regional church event but may not be happy for you to take them to Terrigal or Sydney afterwards for ice cream.

## Fostering Relationships With Parents

It is important that leaders build open and transparent relationships with young people. It is therefore important that leaders build good relationships with the young people they are assisting. These guidelines should be followed to build relationships with parents.

1. The first time a young person is going to be travelling with you in your car you should call the parent and introduce yourself and receive permission.
2. When picking up a young person from home for the first time, you should not wait in the car but go and meet the parents and provide them with your phone number and ensure they have permission to be with you.
3. At least once per month, you should be making contact by phone or in person with parents of young people who you are regularly connecting with, particularly those you are connecting with outside the program.

## Making Appropriate Referrals

Young people often have struggles that we are not equipped to deal with as leaders. These include (but are not limited to) Sexuality and Mental Health.

As leaders we should not engage in counselling or give advice without adequate professional training.

Therefore, we should make appropriate referrals. NVBC can organise free counselling and the youth pastor maybe able to organise older mentors to speak with youth who need extra support.

Topics such as sexuality should not be discussed with young people. If a young person discloses sexuality this should be kept confidential, but the youth leader should be supportive and not counsel that young person.

## Telephone / SMS / Facebook / Social Networking

The use of phone calls, SMS and social media requires leaders to be responsible and make every effort to be open and transparent. We want leaders to be able to connect relationally and safely. A policy cannot be written to address every situation, however leaders should follow these guidelines:

1. Acknowledge that the best form of communication is face to face and the poorest is text, Instagram, and messenger.
2. Text and social media (Facebook messenger, Instagram messenger etc) should be limited to communicating logistics (eg, Connect Group is on today at 4pm. See you there!), and light conversation (eg, Hey mate, hope your footy game goes well today!). History of any chats should be kept. Ensure any text or images are beyond reproach and cannot be misconstrued. **SnapChat is prohibited.**
3. The best place for pastoral issues to be discussed is face to face, at the very least over the telephone. If a young person begins to speak about a serious pastoral care issue on social media or on SMS, it is best to offer to call them, speaking to them on the phone and arranging to meet at an appropriate time to discuss the issue.
4. Leaders should make every effort to make parents aware that they are communicating with their child by text or on social media. This could simply mean casually dropping this information into conversation.
5. All emails to children/young people should have a church email address CC'd into them (use Lewis' as primary). Emails should be generally restricted to purpose only emails, eg. "meet at this place at this time." Pastoral care conversations regarding more personal issues should be face to face.
6. As far as possible, save all emails to and from children/young people.
7. You should not share a young person's personal details (school, address, phone number etc) on social media.
8. Video phoning (Facetime, Skype etc) – leaders should not enter into conversations of this nature with children/young people privately.
9. Photography – The only photography permitted is by a photographer with permission from the ministry leader, do not photograph any child/young person who has asked not to be photographed (this information is on elvanto) – photography should focus on the activity or small group rather than individual – you must not post photos of children/young people on your private Facebook and Instagram without parental permission – do not take photos of children/young people with your mobile phone who you do not have a prior relationship with and have relationship with their parents. Eg, connect group.
10. Leaders are to recognize that they represent our youth ministry, church, and Jesus on social media. All images and text posted on social media should be respectful, and should refrain from nudity, drugs, alcohol, language that may be perceived as offensive, or images that may be perceived as sexual.

## Crisis Calls And Situations Outside Of Program Times

At times a young person may contact you when they are in a difficult situation. A young person may want you to meet with them and assist them even in the middle of the night. As a leader you should make a judgement with the following guidelines in place:

1. Is the young person at immediate risk of harm? If they are unable to guarantee their safety you should call the police and your Supervising Pastor immediately.
2. Does the young person's request for help need responding to immediately? You should listen to the concerns of the young person, and make an appropriate time and place to meet with them if assistance is not required immediately.
3. If the young person is requesting assistance in person, is it safe for you to do so? Your own safety is priority. A leader should not attend a scene or get involved in a situation where you may risk your own safety.
4. If assistance is required immediately you should not go alone to assist the young person. You should first contact your Supervising Pastor and take another leader with you to assist the young person in crisis. You should report back to the Supervising Pastor the outcome of the situation.
5. If the young person is not at risk of immediate harm, but has harmed themselves or threatening to do so (i.e they disclose they are cutting, they say they want to kill themselves but do not have a plan and are in a stable state); contact your Supervising Pastor, and the young person's parents as soon as reasonably possible.

## Alcohol

Alcohol can become a stumbling block for people, and because of that, as leaders we must approach the use of alcohol with care. Below are some guidelines to help you:

1. Youth leaders will refrain from getting drunk. Drinking alcohol is permitted in moderation, and within the right environments.
2. Youth leaders are to refrain from drinking alcohol in environments where young people are present and/or the culture is to drink excessively to get drunk.

Examples:

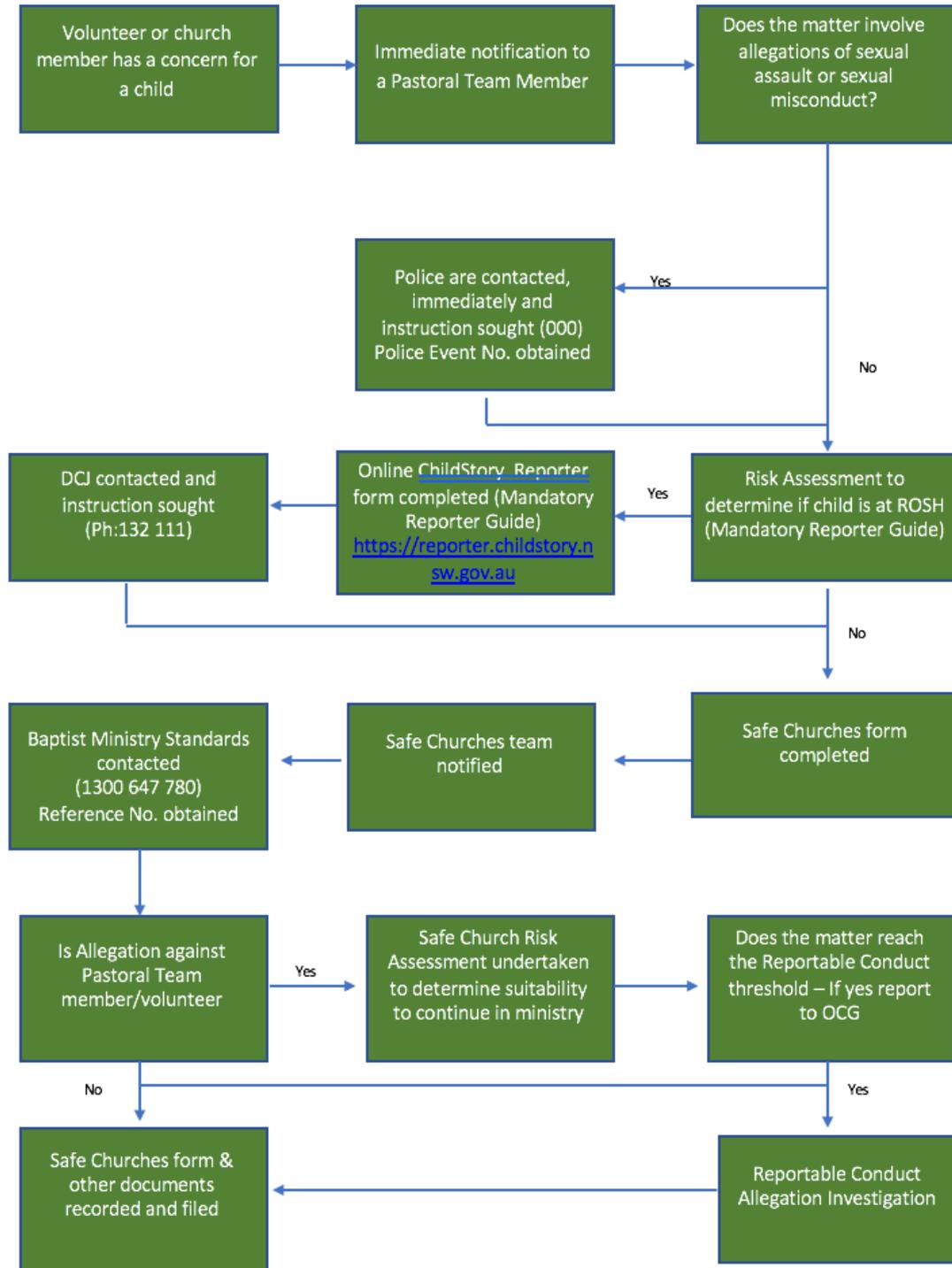
- I. If you are attending an 18th party where people are getting drunk, it is best to refrain from drinking.
- II. If the parents of a young person invite you over to dinner and offer you a glass of wine, it is acceptable to drink

**Appendix 1 – Reporting Suspected Risk Of Harm**

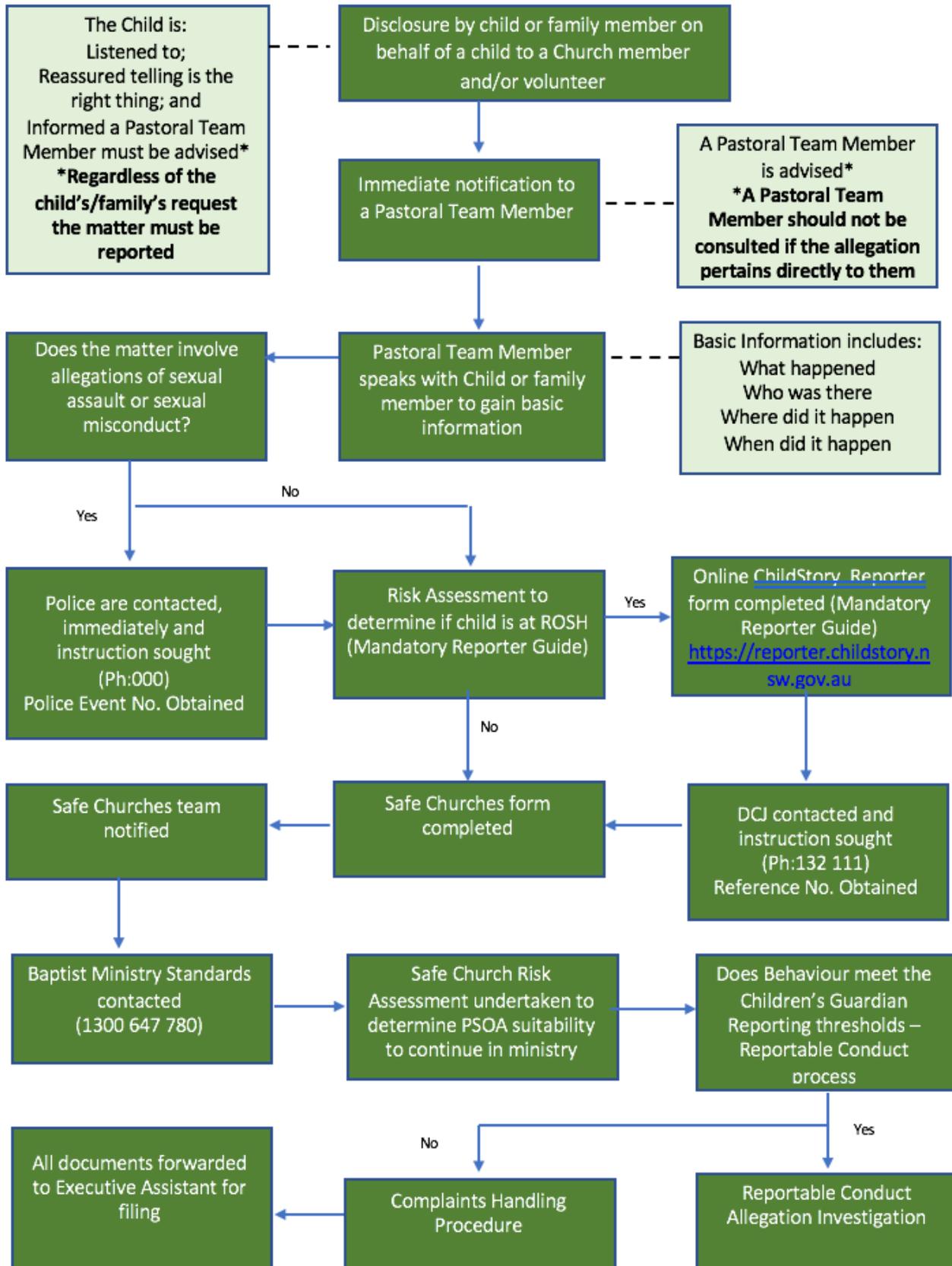
**Reporting Flowchart (Safe Church Policy 2020 extract):**

Report by a Team Member or Leader of suspected risk of harm of a child or young person

**Report of a Concern for a child**



## Allegation of abuse against Pastoral Staff Member or Church Volunteer



The above flow chart is a guide only and advice on the steps to be followed should be sought from the Pastoral Leader or the Safe Church Team

## Appendix 2 – Contact Details

### Positions:

Position	Name	Contact Number
<b>Youth Pastor</b>	Lewis Jonker	0458384807
<b>Senior Pastor / Elder</b>	Bryan Solomons	0419382457
<b>Child Protection Officer</b>	David Hughes	0408497596

### Services:

Service	Contact
<b>Police</b>	000
<b>Community Services NSW</b>	13 36 27
<b>Mandatory Reporters Guide</b>	<a href="http://www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au">http://www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au</a>