



Safe Ministry

**in the Anglican Church
Diocese of Sydney**

March 2006

**Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney
Safe Ministry Board
Professional Standards Unit (PSU)
2006 ©**

Related Documents

- **Code for personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry by clergy and church workers *Faithfulness in Service***
- **Screening of church workers**
- **Dealing with Child Abuse Allegations in the Church**
- **Reporting Abuse**
- **Guidelines for parishes regarding child abuse & sexual offenders and persons of suspicion**
- **Pastoral Care & Assistance Scheme**

SAFE MINISTRY

ACTION REQUIRED

- A. Adopt the Safe Ministry Policy.**
- B. Appoint a Safe Ministry Representative.**
- C. Advise name/contact details of Safe Ministry Representative to PSU.**
- D. Give this Circular to the Safe Ministry Representative.**

Introduction

1. In October 2005 Synod passed the Safe Ministry Ordinance 2005 (the Ordinance) which inserted a new Part 7A into the Church Administration Ordinance. The provisions of the Ordinance come into effect on **1st April 2006**.

2. Synod also recommended that all parish councils adopt the following Safe Ministry Policy:

[name of parish] is committed to the physical, emotional and spiritual welfare and safety of all people, particularly within its own community. To ensure the safety of children and vulnerable people in our communities, [name of parish], in conjunction with the Anglican Church of Australia, will -

- *Carefully recruit and train its clergy and church workers,*
- *Adopt and encourage safe ministry practices by its clergy and church workers,*
- *Respond promptly to each concern raised about the behaviour of its clergy and church workers,*
- *Offer pastoral support to any person who has suffered abuse, and*
- *Provide supervision of and pastoral accountability (within the context of the ministries, locations and activities of the parish) to any person (who is a member of a congregation and) who is known to have abused a child or another vulnerable person.*

3. This circular sets out what needs to be undertaken to implement the provisions of the Ordinance.

Definitions

4. In this circular:

Children or **child** means a person under the age of eighteen years;

Minister means the rector, curate-in-charge or senior minister of a parish or parish unit.

SAFE MINISTRY REPRESENTATIVE

- A. Appointed by Minister with Parish Council's concurrence.**
- B. Over 21 years of age.**
- C. Trained in Safe Ministry.**
- D. 12 month, renewable appointment.**

Safe Ministry Representative

5. The safe ministry representative is to be appointed by the Minister with the concurrence of the parish council.

6. A safe ministry representative must -
(a) be or above the age of 21 years;

(b) have satisfactorily completed safe ministry training within the last 3 years or within 3 months after their appointment and every 3 years thereafter while the appointment continues.

7. Where a person appointed as a safe ministry representative has not, without just cause, satisfactorily completed safe ministry training within the last three years or within 3 months after their appointment and every 3 years thereafter while the appointment continues, their appointment is revoked.

8. A person appointed as a Safe Ministry representative is taken to have been appointed for a period of 12 months unless at the time the appointment is made some other period is specified in writing by the Minister. The Minister, with the concurrence of the parish council, may, subject to clause 45, revoke the appointment of a person as a safe ministry representative as he thinks fit.

9. Consideration should be given to appointing a person who has professional training or expertise in child protection issues such as a teacher, children's worker, youth worker or a person with behavioural or social sciences qualifications and experience.

Advise name/contact details of Safe Ministry Representative

10. The Director of the Professional Standards Unit (PSU) should be notified of the name and contact details of the safe ministry representative upon their appointment, at:

psu@sydney.anglican.asn.au

or

☎ 9265 1514.

Give a copy of this Circular to the Safe Ministry Representative

11. The safe ministry representative should have a copy of this circular.

DUTIES OF SAFE MINISTRY REPRESENTATIVE

- A. Assist the Minister to comply with child protection screening.**
- B. Keep safe ministry training records.**
- C. Monitor & report on Safe Ministry systems & practice in the parish.**
- D. Report abuse by clergy or church workers.**

A. Assisting the Minister to comply with the child protection screening legislation.

(ensure compliance by the minister or the minister's delegate with the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 by persons appointed to a children's ministry position within the parish);

12. The Minister has a Statutory responsibility to ensure that the screening under the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 is complied with. The implementation of the compliance can be delegated, but not the Statutory responsibility.

a. Every person appointed to a children's ministry position within the parish must complete and sign a Prohibited Employment Declaration (Working with children check Attachment 4).

b. In addition all persons appointed to a paid children's ministry position must complete an Employment Screening Consent Form (Working with children check Attachment 3). A Screening Request Form (Working with Children Check Attachment 6) must then be sent to the Commission for Children and Young People. Full instructions and forms are available at <http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/check/>

c. These statutory requirements are only part of a prudent screening process. It is strongly recommended that in relation to every person appointed to a children's ministry position:

- i. The applicant's identity is known or confirmed;
- ii. The role, task and expectations of the position are clearly stated;

- iii. They are asked to disclose any matters which may affect their suitability to work with children;
- iv. Background reference checking is undertaken with at least one known person in the applicant's immediate past who has some knowledge of working with children.
- v. When background checking, the role that the applicant is being considered for should be described. The referee should be asked: "Is the person suitable to work with children? Is there anything we need to know?"

B. Keeping safe ministry training records.

(maintain records of the date and place of safe ministry training satisfactorily completed by persons appointed to a children's ministry position within the parish)

13. The Safe Ministry Training records should include in relation to every person in a Children's ministry position:

- (a) Name in full
- (b) Address
- (c) Date and place of Birth
- (d) Position
- (e) Date of appointment/commencement
- (f) Date of training
- (g) Location of training
- (h) Name of Trainer

14. A template in Microsoft Excel can be obtained from psuinfo@sydney.anglican.asn.au

15. The records need to be stored in a secure location. Have a "back-up" copy. Ensure that privacy principles are adhered to. For more information go to:

www.sydney.anglican.asn.au/synod/circulars/privacy.htm

C. Monitoring and reporting on Safe Ministry systems and practice in the parish.

(provide a report, at least annually to the parish council, that includes current policies and practices, and any suggested changes, to ensure the safety of children involved in the activities of the parish and such other matters as may be prescribed by the Safe Ministry Board)

16. Chapter five of the Code *Faithfulness in Service* contains guidelines on matters to consider when seeking to ensure safety for

children involved in the activities of the parish. Working with the leaders of children's ministries, the safe ministry representative should consider how children are kept safe by the systems and practices used in parish activities. A report to the parish council could assess current policies and practices against these guidelines and suggest any changes that might be recommended.

D. Reporting abuse by clergy or church workers.

(report to the Director of Professional Standards, and in the case of a parish office holder appointed under Part 6 to the minister and any applicable delegate of the minister, knowledge or reasonable suspicion that a child who attends or has attended any activity of the parish has suffered child abuse or is at the risk of harm of child abuse from a parish office holder)

17. The Minister has a responsibility as a mandatory reporter to report to the Department of Community Services (DoCS) where there are **reasonable grounds to suspect that there is a child currently at risk of harm** because of:

- a. physical or sexual abuse or ill-treatment,
- b. neglect (basic physical or psychological needs not being met, parent/carer not arranging necessary medical care or parent/carer causing serious psychological harm),
- c. serious physical or psychological harm from a domestic violence incident.

18. Any person has statutory protection if they make a report, including non-mandatory reporters. The church supports and encourages voluntary reporting by all clergy and church workers **where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that there is a child currently at risk of harm.**

19. All parish office holders now have a duty to report knowledge or reasonable suspicion that a child who attends or has attended any activity of the parish has suffered child abuse or is at the risk of harm of child abuse from a parish office holder.

20. A parish office holder is the Minister, another member of the clergy, churchwarden, parish councillor, parish representative for a Synod, parish representative elected or appointed under the Presentation and Exchange Ordinance 1988 or person appointed under Part 6 of the Church Administration Ordinance. It includes all people appointed by the Minister such as Sunday School teachers and all leaders of groups.

21. Parish office holders appointed by the Minister must report to the Minister or any applicable delegate of the Minister.

22. If the concern relates to the Minister himself the report should be made to the Director of the PSU.

23. All parish office holders should report knowledge or reasonable suspicion of sexual misconduct or child abuse by a member of the clergy or a church worker to the Director of the PSU via the *Abuse Report Line* on **1800 77 49 45** or to **abusereport@sydney.anglican.asn.asn**

24. Additional information on *Dealing With Child Abuse allegations in the Church* is available from **psuinfo@sydney.anglican.asn.au**

SAFE MINISTRY TRAINING

- A. All people in children's ministry must undertake training.
- B. Every three years.
- C. 3-month "grace" period to comply.
- D. Minister has discretion to approve temporary non-compliance for "just cause".
- E. *Youthworks Safe Ministry with Children & Young People* is the approved training.

Requirement for Safe Ministry Training

25. The Ordinance establishes a requirement that all people in a **children's ministry position** must undergo regular safe ministry training.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY POSITION

- A. Any position to which a person is appointed under Part 6 of the Church Administration Ordinance, whether paid or unpaid, **i.e. every position in the parish,**
- AND**
- B. that primarily involves contact with children where that contact is not directly supervised.

26. The requirement is that every person in a children's ministry position must have satisfactorily completed safe ministry training within the last 3 years or within 3 months after their appointment and every 3 years thereafter while the appointment continues.

27. Where a person appointed under Part 6 to a children's ministry position has not, without just cause, satisfactorily completed safe ministry

training within the last 3 years or within 3 months after their appointment and every three years thereafter while the appointment continues, their appointment is revoked.

28. Ministers should take into account the following matters in exercising the "just cause" power under the Ordinance to waive the requirement to have undertaken current training whilst in a children's ministry position:

- a. Difficulties that arise in undertaking the training during the first twelve months (from 1st April 2006 to 31st March 2007);
- b. Temporary delays in undertaking training due to short-term unavailability of courses, or personal short-term difficulties in attending training.

YOUTHWORKS TRAINING
SAFE MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN & YOUTH

PART A: LEADING CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Everyone involved in working with children in Sydney Anglican Churches must complete this course. If you have done the full 4-hour "Child Protection Essentials" since 1st April 2003 you do not need to do this course. Everyone must have done this course (or an equivalent) by June 30, 2006.

PART B: PROTECTING CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Everyone involved in working with children in Sydney Anglican Churches must complete this course **every three years**. Everyone must have done this course (or equivalent since 1st April 2003) by June 30, 2006.

All of the Youthworks Ministry Advisors are qualified to assist in providing information and training in Child Protection.

Information: www.youthworks.net

Phone: (02) 8268 3388

training@youthworks.net

29. The Safe Ministry Board (previously Professional Standards Board) has approved the following training as **Safe Ministry Training**:

(a) Initial training on the first occasion of being appointed to a children's ministry position:

- i. *Child Protection Essentials* training (4 hour course) or *Safe Ministry with Children & Young People* training (Part A & B) conducted by a Youthworks advisor;
- ii. Course or training conducted between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2006 the content of which was substantially the same as the *Child Protection Essentials* training package (4 hour course);
- iii. *Child Protection Essentials* training or *Safe Ministry with Children & Young People* (Part A & B) conducted by a person trained and approved by a Youthworks advisor;

(b) Refresher training on subsequent occasions every three years:

- iv. *Safe Ministry with Children & Young People* refresher training (Part B) conducted by a Youthworks advisor;
- v. *Safe Ministry with Children & Young People* refresher training (Part B) conducted by a person trained and approved by a Youthworks advisor;

30. Recognition of other recent equivalent alternative training may be approved by the Director PSU who may refer the request to the Safe Ministry Board.

31. The Archbishop provides training for Ministers. This is coordinated by the PSU through training providers such as Moore Theological College, Ministry Training & Development and Youthworks.

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS AND CONTACTS

Anglican Abuse Report Line

Contact Persons **1800 774 945**
abusereport@sydney.anglican.asn.asn

Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney Professional Standards Unit (PSU)

Director (02) 9265 1514
psu@sydney.anglican.asn.au

Request protocol & other documents (02) 9265 1604
psuinfo@sydney.anglican.asn.au

Chaplain to victims (02) 9265 1500
psuchaplain@sydney.anglican.asn.au

Pastoral Care & Assistance Scheme (02) 9265 1500
careandassist@sydney.anglican.asn.au

Anglican Legal information

Legal Officer, Anglican Church Sydney Diocesan Secretariat (02) 9265 1647
szl@sydney.anglican.asn.au

Anglican Scripture in Schools (SRE) Enquiries (02) 8268 3388
scripture@youthworks.net

Anglican Youthworks Training Resource Line (02) 8268 3388
training@youthworks.net

Anglicare Counselling Agency

Ashfield (02) 9799 9311
Nowra (02) 4423 1018
Penrith (02) 4731 6467
Wollongong (02) 4228 9612

Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP)

Phone (02) 9286 7220
Fax (02) 9286 7201
www.kids.nsw.gov.au

Department of Community Services (DoCS)

Mandatory reporters 133 627
Voluntary reporters 132 111
Fax (02) 9630 7977
www.community.gov.au

Police

Emergency

000

General enquiries

13 1444

www.police.nsw.gov.au

Crime stoppers

1800 332 000

www.crimestoppers.com.au**Sexaholics Anonymous**www.sa.org**TAMAR (Towards a More Appropriate Response)**

Anglican Victims Support and Advocacy

(02) 9484 0174

Boundaries & Ethics Training

(02) 9636 7937

fayehansen@optusnet.com.au