

## SAFE PLACES CODE OF CONDUCT (ABRIDGED VERSION)

ACC in NSW & ACT believe providing a safe environment in which children and young people can connect with Christ, is mandated in Scripture (Mark 18:1-5). Therefore the SAFE PLACES CODE OF CONDUCT represents our strong commitment to ethical, fair and safe behaviour in an ACC NSW or ACT ministry environment with particular reference to provisions for safe ministry with children and young people.

The standards set out below have been developed as a guide to appropriate conduct in the ministry environment. The framework on which they are based combines the ACC core values with basic ethical principles and relevant laws and regulations.

This abridged document is an overview of the ACC-NSW SAFE PLACES CODE OF CONDUCT and is designed to be read in conjunction with the expanded version of that document. The Code is supported by other organisational policies and procedures that will be referenced in the five standards. You are encouraged to consult these documents for further detail.

### 1. Stay Connected

- Make every effort to maintain a strong personal relationship with God.
- Attend church regularly even when not serving on a ministry team.

### 2. Be Faithful

- Endeavour to live a life of good character, being faithful in marriage and living free of substance abuse.
- Minister in accordance with the stated Mission & Vision, Core Values and Core Beliefs of the ACC in Australia (*see* SAFE PLACES CODE OF CONDUCT *expanded version* and [www.nswacc.org.au](http://www.nswacc.org.au)).
- Endeavour to pray regularly for the church, its leadership and the people to whom you minister. Be faithful to roster/ministry commitments, training requirements, team meetings and policy requirements.
- Actively seek to lead people to Christ through the ministry you undertake.

### 3. Bring Honour

- Conduct yourself in a way that sets a good example for others and represents the church and Christ well, both inside and outside church programs. This includes respectful language, appropriate dress and behaviour (*see* SAFE PLACES CODE OF CONDUCT, *expanded version*).
- Speak well of the church, its leadership, and congregation members.
- Be a co-operative team member and follow directions given by the ministry leaders and/or pastor (*except in the situation where their directions were to directly contradict* ACC-NSW CHILD

PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES [www.nswacc.org.au](http://www.nswacc.org.au)).

- Advise Church leadership if you are accused or convicted of any criminal offence or if relevant criminal proceedings are pending.
- Avoid any conflict between your private interests and your role within the organisation.
- Carry out the responsibilities of your ministry role with integrity. (*see SAFE PLACES CODE OF CONDUCT expanded version*)

#### **4. Be a Leader of Integrity**

- Make every effort to be aware of and abide by the policy, protocols and procedures that govern the operations of Safe Ministry in the ACC in NSW/ACT.
- Take responsibility and the initiative where and when appropriate to ensure that children and young people are both **valued** and **protected** while in your care.
- Endeavour to deal with personal issues that may affect your ability to lead others.
- Actively seek to strengthen your skills and understanding in the area of ministry in which you serve.
- Act with good stewardship over the resources used within your area of ministry or church. These include financial resources as well as equipment and property.

#### Information and Communication

- Protect the privacy of others. Not all information that may be received in the course of your duties is public.
- Maintain & preserve all official records and ministry documentation as per the requirements of VOLUNTEER CONFIDENTIALITY DECLARATION *within the* MINISTRY APPLICATION FORM (*see* TOWARDS SAFE PLACES IMPLEMENTATION PACK).

#### Ministry Representation

- Do not make public comment or enter into public discussions or debate while acting in your capacity as employees or volunteers of the church or ministry unless this has been sanctioned by the senior minister or ACC State Executive.
- Outside of the established ministry activities, you should maintain accountability for your interactions with others that may be perceived as 'church' related or endorsed (*see* SAFE PLACES CODE OF CONDUCT, *expanded version*).

### Computer and Technology Use

- Abide by the guidelines set out in the local church's technology, internet and email policies in regards to the use of computers and other technology that may be provided for ministry activities.
- Maintain a media culture of the same level of integrity and honour previously outlined. This includes all social media and any form electronic communication and smart phone use.

## **5. Ensure Safe Ministry**

- Volunteers & employees are required to comply with ACC-NSW CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES
- When responsible for the supervision of others, volunteers & employees must act with high regard to the duty of care they have over these people, particularly when it comes to minors.

### Health, Safety & Security

- Complete all security & reference checks and training that is either a requirement of federal or state law or is a stated matter in ACC-NSW CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES ([www.nswacc.org.au](http://www.nswacc.org.au)).
- Assess risks and act appropriately to ensure the safety of all people in your care while serving in your area of ministry (*see SAFE PLACES CODE OF CONDUCT, expanded version & ACC-NSW SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROCEDURES*).

### Appropriate Behaviour

- Conduct yourself in a manner that is considered appropriate with children & young people. Pay particular attention to the following guidelines for appropriate behaviour.
- Do not meet with a child or young person other than your own child/children in an unsupervised (*non-public*) context. This includes:
  - Transport arrangements
  - Pre & post ministry situations,
    - Official children's ministry activities
    - Non-children's ministry activities whether on or off church property
- Avoid 'special' relationships or favouritism with children or young people.
- Don't give personal gifts or invitations without consultation with the children's ministry leader & parental consent.
- Use appropriate language at all times. Swearing /foul language or sexually explicit language is inappropriate.

- Dress should be clean, tidy and appropriate for the activities being undertaken.
- Value a child's expressions of affection but keep your responses appropriate.
- Exercise appropriate physical contact (*see SAFE PLACES CODE OF CONDUCT, expanded version*).
- Avoid all behaviours that can be considered inappropriate or could be identified as placing a child or young person at '**Risk of Harm**' (*see SAFE PLACES CODE OF CONDUCT expanded version*).
- Keep all interactions with children & young people (*in your care*) public. Do not visit or meet with a child or young person privately (*i.e. in an unsupervised context*).
- Respect parents/guardians and their role as primary carers for their children. Avoid usurping their authority in ministry situations.
- Teach children through your behaviour to respond confidently BUT appropriately to unknown adults.
- Immediately report to your ministry leader or pastor any and all:
  - Suspicious behaviour
  - Potentially reportable conduct or conduct that may place a child or young person at risk of harm
  - Any disclosure or awareness of inappropriate behaviour or abuse of a child/ young person, whether on the part of a children's worker or other person
- Participate as requested in any training, counselling or course of action that should either the ACC in NSW/ACT advises as necessary to prevent or address, situations that could/have place(d) children or children's workers at risk.
- Check with your Child Protection Officer if you are unsure of the appropriate action in any given situation.

## **HELPFUL CONTACTS**

### **Safe Places Unit**

Ph: 02 47363000

Email: [safeplacesunit@nswacc.org.au](mailto:safeplacesunit@nswacc.org.au)

### **ACC.NSW State Office**

Ph: 02 9894 1555

Email: [admin@nswacc.org.au](mailto:admin@nswacc.org.au)

All policies referred to in this document are accessible from ACC-NSW Website:

[www.nswacc.org.au](http://www.nswacc.org.au)

Follow the links to the Safe Places Unit.