

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES

The following guidelines of conduct and procedures to follow when working with children and youth in our care have been set down, not only to protect the young people entrusted to our care, but also to safeguard our workers from false accusations.

We need also to be aware of activities that are potentially sexual and can easily be misunderstood by children or youth who have been exposed to sexual activity. These activities should therefore be avoided or at least considered very carefully and never be carried out in the absence of other people.

NB: Even if a child consents to these activities (or even seeks them) they are not an excuse and are totally unacceptable.

It is better to avoid anything potentially sexual such as the following:

- Wrestling, tickling
- Children left unsupervised together may exploit each other
- Frontal hugging, kissing
- Touching except in what is accepted as the safe area, i.e. between shoulder and elbow
- Sharing a bed
- Sharing a shower
- Sexual jokes or connotations

WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN OF THE OPPOSITE SEX:

- Never be involved in their toileting or showering
- Never be in their bathroom, bedroom, bunkroom
- Counselling should be avoided except in full view of another worker
- No kisses or cuddles although a side on hug may be appropriate. It is a good time to explain these things are for special people like Mums and Dads.

WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN OF THE SAME SEX:

- Never be involved in their toileting or showering unless in emergency
- Not being alone in a solitary place
- Not being alone at night or in darkness

WHEN OVERNIGHT CAMPING:

- Children of opposite sex should not share a bedroom after age five
- Not allowing children to get into bed with leader or each other

- No one outside bedroom or bathroom in underwear without a dressing gown or appropriate clothing, e.g. tracksuit
- No phones/cameras in the bathrooms or toilets.
- **If a leader is to sleep in the same cabin as children, the leader must be closest to the exit door, never be alone with a child in the cabin, and a night light be used to avoid complete darkness.**

GENERAL:

- Do not drive one child home alone from camp. If unavoidable, the last child should be seated in the back seat, and preferably be of the same sex.
- No one touches another person without permission
- No one is ever to touch the area covered by a swimming costume except a medical practitioner doing medical examination or with young children needing assistance in bathing or toileting
- Always think in terms of having a witness when doing counselling
- Any physical contact is to be initiated by the young person only. Do not initiate any contact yourself
- Physical contact should be brief, side on, and in no way be sexually suggestive, or resemble sexual contact
- The Hillview Bible Studies have an "open door" and "in view" policy. When talking with young people always leave doors open to the room in which you are in, and try where possible to be in view of at least one other leader.
- If anyone is seen to be compromising these guidelines, notify a leader
- If a child behaves in an unacceptable manner the parent(s) should be notified, or follow procedures in place by Hillview if any further notification of authorities is required.
- Physical contact should only be used in a crisis situation where safety is an issue

SAFETY:

- Before arriving at camp, Leaders will be required to complete our online child-safety training and read the child safe policy code of conduct. A review of this code, and location of risk-assessment forms and procedures will be outlined on the evening of arrival at camp. It is crucial that each leader is clear on their roles and expectations, and when documenting is expected. Listening and knowing who the First Aid go-to person during the first leaders meeting is vital.
- Listening and knowing the Fire Safety Procedure after being briefed in the first leaders meeting is crucial.

The Go to Person for any questions re Child Protection for this camp is: DAVID YOUNG

HANDLING ABUSE DISCLOSURE

There may be times when children or adolescents tell you, directly or indirectly, about abuse in their families or at camp. Remember how very difficult it is for children to talk about their abuse, especially as they may think it will get them or someone close to them, into trouble. Therefore, it is very important for you to handle their disclosure with sensitivity.

If a child tells you that they are being abused (emotionally, physically or sexually);

- (a) Listen to the child immediately. Take the child out of hearing range of others. But not out of sight.
- (b) Do not say that you do not believe them.
- (c) Encourage their confidence to tell.
- (d) Do not question or make suggestions to the child so as to avoid contaminating the evidence.
- (e) Do not promise not to tell!
- (f) Do not express shock or criticise their families.
- (g) Tell them they may have to discuss this with people in authority and that it's OK.
- (h) Reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling, and that you will need to tell someone, so that the person who is hurting them will stop.
- (i) Tell them that the abuse is not their fault and that they are not to blame.
- (j) Report the abuse to those in authority immediately (the child protection go to person at camp). Do not discuss the matter with any other people, apart from the person in charge of child protection at this camp.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND PROMISE BY YOUTH LEADERS

I acknowledge that:

My first priority is to ensure that the well being and safety of all children and young people in my care is protected and to safeguard them from any danger of abuse.

I have read the Hillview Bible Studies Code of Conduct and agree to abide by them. I understand that I may be removed from a ministry position if I do not follow these guidelines.

I also agree, that if an accusation is made against me, I will stand down from my ministry position pending an outcome. This will be done for my own and the child's protection.

It is my promise that:

1. All children and young people in my care will be looked after in an open way.
2. I will not:
 1. Take children alone in a solitary or dark place;
 2. Counsel alone. (if a talk with a child is needed, it will be done in the sight of other people);
 3. Touch in an inappropriate way, or do anything that is potentially sexual;
 4. Take any physical disciplinary action with those in my care; or
 5. Take children home alone from camp activities. (if unavoidable, the last child will be seated in the back seat, and preferably be of the same sex).
3. No child will be withdrawn from camp activities by people unknown to me, without their carer/parent being contacted.
4. I will notify the camp child protection go-to person if I have a camper with me outside the context of the campsite or schedules activities.