

Mitchell Christian Fellowship Safe Ministry Policy

Aim

We are committed to the Biblical principle of providing safe ministry programs and actively preventing any kinds of abuse against children, youth and adults at Mitchell Christian Fellowship.¹ Our aim is that everyone within our church will be able to safely participate and contribute in appropriate ministry programs, and that they will be able to safely report any incidents of abuse or safety concerns. We will respond appropriately to all reports in the interest of all those involved.

To build and maintain a safe community for our children and vulnerable adults, we are committed to ensuring that;

1. all leaders are appropriately screened, trained and appointed,
2. all programs are led and run in a safe and appropriate manner,
3. there are clear procedures in place for dealing with incident reports and safety concerns, and
4. the leadership team regularly reviews these policies and processes.

1. Screening, Training & Appointing of Relevant Leaders

All those involved in regular ministry to children and adults on behalf of Mitchell Christian Fellowship (Relevant Leaders), undergo a full screening and training process as outlined below.

1. Relevant leaders will have been regular participants at Mitchell Christian Fellowship for at least six months (or have been given special approval by the church leadership). They will be interviewed and have their potential roles and responsibilities clearly outlined for them.
2. Relevant leaders will have nominated referees to confirm their character. If working with children & youth, they must provide their Working With Children Check number and Date of Birth to be allowed to work with children and young people.
3. Relevant leaders will have recently completed an approved Safe Ministry Training Course which outlines appropriate behaviour as well as training in how to identify and report cases of abuse (e.g. www.SafeMinistryTraining.com.au)
4. Relevant leaders will have committed to the leader's Code of Conduct and behave as followers of Jesus and be willing to be held accountable for their behaviour.

Under normal circumstances a person with a criminal record of child abuse, molestation or similar offences will not be allowed to be directly involved in children's or youth ministry.

2. Appropriate Behaviour and Guidelines for Safe Ministries

To provide for and maintain a safe community for our children and adults where they may grow as followers of Jesus, we will ensure that our programs and events are safe and appropriate for those attending. Careful consideration will be given to things such as the activities chosen, the venue, safe ratios of supervision, appropriate child toileting practices, transportation, work health and safety, parental or guardian permission and confidentiality of records kept.

Guidelines for these safe practice procedures are highlighted and discussed in the Safe Ministry Training Course.

¹ Deuteronomy 6:4-7; Matthew 18:1-6; Mark 10:13-16

To help maintain appropriate standards, we will give all relevant leaders access to ongoing training and adequate supervision in their roles and responsibilities.

3. Personal Complaints and Incident Reporting Procedure

All incident reports or complaints about persons of concern will be immediately reported to, and handled by, the Mitchell Christian Fellowship Safe Ministry Supervisors.

Safe Ministry Supervisors

James John Playfoot – 0409149063 jkplayfoot@gmail.com

[Other supervisors still to be appointed]

The Safe Ministry Supervisors will respond to all incident reports and complaints about persons of concern by following the *Mitchell Christian Fellowship Safe Ministry Incident Response Process*. Any incidents of criminal activity (including child-to-child, adult-to-child and adult-to-adult) will be reported to police. The insurer of Mitchell Christian Fellowship may also be advised of any allegations of abuse. In certain incidents (as outlined in the Response Process) the Safe Ministry Supervisors will appoint an Independent Ministry Investigator (may be from the Council of Overseers) to explore allegations of inappropriate behaviour.

4. Regular Review Periods

It is the responsibility of the church executive (i.e. Board of Elders and/or Council of Overseers) to ensure that this policy and the Incident Response Process is implemented, maintained, and reviewed every two years or as required. This policy is in accordance with the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 No 157.

We welcome any questions or comments about this policy and the ways in which we carry it out.