

Youth Ministry 2021

In our Youth Ministry, we are committed to partnering with parents in sharing, teaching and caring for the spiritual life of the youth in our church community. We see Youth Ministry as a vital aspect of our church life. As we take seriously the leadership of teaching our youth, we want to ensure that the youth are a part of a safe environment that cares for their well-being and spiritual growth.

Therefore, at St. David's we adopt the Professional Standards Unit (PSU) of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney policy and guidelines on safe ministry and "Faithfulness in Service". We take seriously implementing and practising safe ministry through all of our youth programs and seek to uphold the standards of the PSU.

Following are important points taken from the PSU Safe ministry blueprint for leaders to be aware and reminded of.

Follow the following links for more information regarding safe ministry and the PSU guidelines.

"Faithfulness in Service"

https://safeministry.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/FaithfulnessInService_May-2018.pdf

Safe Ministry Guidelines and Documents

Youth Ministry leaders:

<https://safeministry.org.au/blueprint-youth-ministry-leaders/>

Head of Youth Ministry:

<https://safeministry.org.au/blueprint-head-of-youth-ministry/>

Legal requirements:

All leaders who are above the age of 18 are required to:

- Have a Working with Children Check (WWCC) Clearance.
 - This needs to be sent to the head of Youth Ministry, to the church office and the Safe Ministry Representative for verification.
- All leaders need to have completed Safe Ministry training, followed by a refresher every three years.
 - Certificates and date of completion must be sent to the Youth Minister, to the church office and the Safe Ministry representative.
- All leaders must read, understand and comply with '*Faithfulness in service*'
- In addition, leaders must sign and agree with the guidelines outlined here and by the PSU.

Safe Ministry Assessment:

- All leaders must complete the required safe ministry assessment and be signed off by the senior minister before commencing their role.
- Clergy and lay ministers are to complete the required PSU Assessment, administered by the PSU.

Youth Ministry code of Conduct:

- Never abuse young people or cultivate relationships in order to initiate or cloak abuse of young people.
- Never become romantically involved with any young person participating in the youth ministry (Years 7-12 or otherwise under the age of 18).
- Never be alone with a young person away from the presence of other adults.
- Never have young people to your home or visit young people in their home when no other adult is present, except with the permission of a parent or guardian.
- Never touch a young person in a manner which is inappropriate given their age, gender or cultural background.
- Never physically discipline a young person.
- Never make drugs, alcohol or cigarettes available to young people.
- Never develop inappropriate special relationships with particular young people that could be seen as involving favouritism or any form of special treatment.
- Never engage in any contact with a young person that is secretive (whether physical or through electronic media or in any other way).

Youth Ministry:

The PSU summarise the code of conduct into a set of Golden rules, which we are to abide by.

- Always have two or more leaders aged 18 years or over present for all youth ministry events.
- Leaders must never be alone with a child/young person during activities and should make sure as far as possible, that other leaders are not left alone with a child/young person.
- If unavoidable, always be in an open space, with doors and windows open, near others to be able to hear conversations and in the view of other adults.
- Be aware of strangers wandering around- a person unknown to the leaders or not a part of the children's ministry should not be allowed access to children.

For further information on the children's ministry code of conduct refer to PSU Safe ministry for youth ministry leaders (5)

Spaces and off-property activities:

- Leaders should always consider the suitability of the space and safety of the space.
- They are to ensure safety measures are in place, before conducting ministry.

For further information, as to safety measures that should be considered refer to PSU Safe ministry for Youth ministry leaders (5. A)

- If you are leaving church property, then you must always have written consent of the parent or guardian before leaving church property.
- You must inform the parents where you are taking their children and the timing of the event.
- Information regarding the physical needs of the child should be attained.

Transportation:

- It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to arrange transportation to and from youth events for their child unless otherwise arranged.

- You must have written permission from a parent or guardian before driving a young person.
- All drivers must hold their green p's or above, be responsible, experienced and not impaired by alcohol or any other mind-altering substance.
- Leaders must not be alone with a young person in a motor vehicle or driving a young person home unaccompanied.

For further information, as to safety measures that should be considered refer to PSU Safe ministry for youth ministry leaders (5. e)

Trips away or sleepovers:

When events involve youth sleeping over, you should ensure that the sleeping accommodation is:

- Segregated between male and females.
- Supervised by more than one person
- Those supervising the youth are of the same gender and do not sleep in close proximity to a young person.

For further information, as to safety measures that should be considered refer to PSU Safe ministry for youth ministry leaders (5. f)

Communication/Meet ups/ Meeting Outside programmed events:

- All communication must be above reproach in terms of content and the way you communicate
- For year 7-9: Parental consent, same gender, meet in groups of 3 minimum (2 kids one leader or one KID two LEADER), in a public place and let ministry leadership know you are doing this. SMS only for logistic purposes, otherwise speak with the parent (e.g., don't forget we are meeting at x at x time).
- For year 10-12: Parental consent, same gender, can meet one to one, in a public place and let ministry leadership know you are doing this. Phone contact is permissible. SMS is permissible and can be used for both logistical and encouragement purposes.
- Don't initiate social media friendships with young people, though you may choose to accept if they initiate.

Type of contact	Years 7–9 Students	Years 10–12 Students
Phonecalls	To be avoided. Preferable to speak with the parent first and ask permission to speak with the young person.	Reasonable phone contact for ministry purposes permissible. Long conversations to be avoided.
Text messages	For logistical purposes only	For logistical purposes and encouragement
Email	For logistical purposes and encouragement only	For logistical purposes and encouragement
Social networking (Facebook, Instagram, etc)	Use your discretion and keep in mind the 10 key principles above.	Use your discretion and keep in mind the 10 key principles above.
Video calls/streaming and chat rooms	Never	Never

For further information, as to safety measures that should be considered refer to PSU Safe ministry for youth ministry leaders (5. G) which include the 10 principles referred to in box above

Social media/online communication:

- See St. David's social media policy

Photographs and videos:

- See St. David's social media policy

Reporting Abuse:

As leaders, youth may disclose, or we may observe signs or cases of abuse.

If any of these two instances occur, it is your responsibility to report the information disclosed or signs you have observed.

Steps for reporting:

- Listen to their story, comfort if they are distressed; let them know you are glad they told and they did the right thing; let them know you are going to help about what to do next and that you will get back to them.
- As soon as possible after the disclosure, write down the details of what was said and report the information to the appropriate authorities.

Who to report to:

Issue or concern	Report to:
General Suspicions	Head ministry leader
Child or young person currently at risk of significant harm	FaCS If possible discuss with your head ministry leader or Senior Minister* first and use the Mandatory Reporters Guide. Police Contact the police first if the situation requires emergency assistance. Professional Standards Unit Contact the PSU where the alleged perpetrator is a church worker.
Knowledge of relevant criminal offences	Police Professional Standards Unit (regarding a church worker)
Child abuse by a church worker**	Senior Minister*/church worker's employer Anglican Abuse Report line (1800 77 49 45) Police

Contact the Professional Standards Unit if you are unsure of what to do in any circumstance or where an allegation is regarding the Senior Minister

* Do not report to the Senior Minister if the allegation is regarding the Senior Minister

** A church worker includes a minister, any ministry volunteer or leader (eg, Sunday School teacher, youth group leader, organist, etc), warden, parish councillor, parish Synod representative.

Do not undertake an investigation, and do not disclose the allegations to the alleged offender at this initial stage.

Head of Youth Ministry: Currently Joshua Bishop

Safe Ministry Rep: Currently Ingrid Scouller

Senior Minister: Jon Kwan