

Children and Vulnerable People Safeguarding Policy

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1. Purpose

To outline the key responsibilities and obligations of Worldview personnel who interact with children and/or are involved in their care and protection. Worldview is committed to the protection and safeguarding of every child and the prevention of all forms of abuse – those to whom we minister and our own children associated with Worldview. We aim to maintain a family-friendly ethos whereby our children feel secure and thrive.

The principles of the policy also apply to adults who are at risk because they are reliant either wholly or in part on the care given by Worldview personnel and/or residents. The categories of adults at risk include, but are not limited to, the elderly who are frail and dependent on others for aspects of their care, those receiving medical care, people with disabilities (including learning disabilities) that make them dependent on others, the mentally ill, the recently bereaved, and those receiving structured counselling support.

2. Operation

This policy has effect from 02.04.2019 and may be changed at the discretion of the Worldview Board. A reference in this policy to Worldview's Children and Vulnerable People Safeguarding Policy includes this policy as amended from time to time. All Worldview personnel and other residents have a duty to keep themselves informed about this policy and to observe it properly. This policy does not override the law.

3. Scope

The policy applies to all Worldview personnel, which includes Worldview staff, Team Partners and volunteers who are not members of WEC International, as well as students and non-studying spouses.

[In the policy, wherever the responsibilities and obligations of "Worldview" are described, the term "Worldview" means the responsible officials/leaders of Worldview Centre for Intercultural Studies]

4. Definitions

In this policy:

A **child** is any person under 18 years of age.

The **CPO (Child Protection Officer)** is the designated person responsible for the implementation of this policy and is the first point of contact in the case of any allegations or suspicions of abuse or other inappropriate conduct towards children. The Worldview Team

Leader/Principal plus a person (appointed by the Board) of the opposite gender, preferably a non-WECer with experience in children's services, shall be named as the CPO.

Child abuse is a term used to describe inappropriate, immoral, unethical or threatening behaviour by an adult or older adolescent toward a minor, or of one child toward another child where there is a difference in power based on age or physical, intellectual or emotional capacity.

Child abuse can be deemed to be committed with or without the consent of the victim. It can occur in a one-to-one encounter or in a group setting.

Five categories of possible criminal abuse are generally acknowledged: physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and exposure to family violence. We would add spiritual abuse, but this will not normally be categorised as criminal.

- **Physical abuse** includes any act that results in a non-accidental physical injury, intentional or unintentional, such as: Hitting, punching, kicking, marks from belt buckles & fingers, shaking (particularly babies), burning (irons, cigarettes), biting, pulling out hair and alcohol or other drug administration.
- **Sexual abuse** is a form of child abuse and occurs when a child or young person is pressurised, forced or tricked into taking part in or witnessing any kind of sexual activity with and/or by a person. It occurs when a person uses their power and authority to take advantage of another's trust to involve them in sexual activity. It does not necessarily involve genital contact but is any act which erodes the sexual boundary between two persons. It may appear consensual but the validity of consent is negated by the power differential.
- **Neglect** becomes abuse if it is persistent or severe neglect of a child or failure on the part of the responsible carer to protect the child from any kind of danger. It includes any serious omission or commission which jeopardises or impairs a person's development.
- **Emotional abuse** is the chronic failure to provide the appropriate environment which encourages a child's full emotional and social development over time. Behaviors may include: Devaluing, ignoring, rejecting, corrupting, isolating, terrorising or chronic and extreme domestic violence in the child's presence.
- **Witnessing domestic/family violence** has a serious impact on a child also, even if they are not the actual 'victim'.
- **Spiritual abuse** could be defined as an abuse of power, often done in the name of God or religion, which involves manipulating or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves.

[See Appendix A for more expanded descriptions.]

CVPSP is the abbreviated form of Children and Vulnerable People Safeguarding Policy.

Harm is any detrimental effect on a child's physical, psychological, or emotional well being, including any risk to their safety, welfare or well-being.

Harm can be caused by:

- physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect
- lack of medical care
- sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation
- witnessing domestic or family violence

Personnel refers to anyone engaged in an official capacity at Worldview whether as a member of staff or team partners (including invited lecturers and volunteers).

Vulnerable adult(s) refers to an individual over the age of 18 years who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or is unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of age, illness, trauma or disability, or any other reason.

Additional Forms of Abuse of Adults at Risk

- **Financial Abuse:** Examples include, but are not limited to, the theft of money, property or possessions; pressure to make wills or other major financial transfers in favour of an individual or an organisation; being charged excessive amounts for goods or services; or any other form of financial exploitation.
- **Discriminatory Abuse:** This includes, but is not limited to, harassment, unequal treatment, withholding or providing sub-standard services, and the use of derogatory language because of a person's age, cultural background, gender, disability, sexuality, religion or race.
- **Institutional Abuse:** The mistreatment of an adult by an institution or individuals within it. This can be caused by neglect and/or active ill-treatment. Examples include fixed rules and routines to control people, not having access to personal possessions, and people being prevented from doing things they have a right to do.
- **Domestic Abuse:** This is the use of threatening and/or violent behaviour to control others within the family. It can be sexual, physical and psychological and is rarely limited to single incidents, but is normally a repeated pattern of behaviour. Enforced or manipulated isolation of nuclear family members from extended family and friends is a form of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse and violence is more widespread in churches than has previously been acknowledged.

5. The Theology of Safeguarding

Each and every person is fearfully and wonderfully made, knitted together in their mother's womb, and loved by God who knows everything about them (Psalm 139). All are precious and have worth to God. Jesus tells us that we are each called to love others and to treat them with the respect, dignity and love that we would want to receive ourselves (Matthew 22: 39). Therefore, we should strive to be a place of welcome and care for all – whatever their age, abilities, health or history. Our safeguarding commitment is based in Biblical values where we are required to ensure that the children and adults at risk in our care receive the truth in a loving family and Christian community (Eph 6v4, Matt 19 v13-15, Mark 9v37, Col 3v21, 1 Tim 5v8-10 etc). Protection from all forms of harm, as much as it is possible for us to do so, is a basic minimum part of this.

Jesus was not afraid of challenging injustice, ignorance and arrogance. He sought out and spent time with marginalised people and he spoke out for those who had no voice (Matthew 23). Therefore, we should strive to be a place of righteousness and justice to protect from

abuse and deal effectively with any concerns that arise – however costly that may be. There are dire warnings about anyone leading children astray (Luke 17v2) and few things have done more damage to lead child victims astray than abuse.

Safeguarding is the protection of adults at risk and children from harm, abuse or neglect. If we believe that all people are precious in the eyes of God, their creator; that as Christians we should follow the example of Jesus in his compassion and care for others; and that the church should be a sanctuary of safety and peace, then safeguarding should be an automatic part of our practice – as we strive to protect all people from harm, abuse or neglect and to love, care and support all who have been affected by such damaging behaviour.

6. Principles

Worldview and its personnel will:

- Seek to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm and the risk of harm.
- Recognise the detrimental effect of harm on a child or vulnerable adult.
- Recognise that the welfare and best interests of children and vulnerable adults are a primary consideration.
- Ensure familiarity with all reporting obligations under the law in respect of acts constituting harm.
- Comply with all reporting obligations under the law in respect of acts constituting harm which must be reported.
- Ensure that behaviour towards, and relationships with, children and vulnerable adults reflect proper standards of care, are not unlawful, and will not cause harm to them.
- Recognise that sexual acts of an adult with a child or vulnerable adult will generally always result in harm to them.
- Respond diligently and promptly to any report of harm, suspected harm or risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.
- Ensure that there is no discrimination or reprisals against any person making a complaint concerning harm (a "Complainant").
- Administer management practices concerning children or vulnerable adults with respect and in a manner that maintains their dignity
- Act fairly and reasonably towards any person associated with Worldview who is the subject of allegations of conduct causing harm (a "Respondent").
- Support any person associated with Worldview who is the subject of a false allegation of conduct causing harm.
- Promptly report any harm, or any reasonable suspicion of harm, to the head of the relevant section of Worldview responsible for the activity or location in which the harm, or suspected harm, has occurred.
- Take appropriate disciplinary action against Worldview personnel who harm others.
- Undertake risk assessment screening of persons to be engaged in roles involving children or vulnerable adults.
- Refrain from employing any person who may not lawfully be engaged in roles involving children or vulnerable adults.
- Comply with reporting obligations relating to disciplinary proceedings involving Worldview personnel.
- Conduct appropriate investigations of any report of harm or suspected harm.

- Cooperate fully with all authorities in dealing with allegations of harm.

In observing these **Principles**, WEC International and its personnel will be guided by the following obligations.

7. Personnel Requirements

7.1. Screening Of Worldview Staff, Team Partners, Volunteers, Students and Non-Studying Spouses

The following points will be applied in dealing with each person.

1. Many prospective applicants have already been pre-screened by WEC branch personnel. Nonetheless Worldview will require all prospective applicants to declare whether or not they have committed any form of child abuse or other safeguarding offense.
2. All applicants to Worldview are to be further checked for their suitability to work in situations where they will have contact with children. Referees will therefore be asked questions concerning that suitability. The applicant will be made aware that referees will be asked questions that cover this area. For example:

Is there any reason to be concerned about the applicant's behaviour with children?

Has any child, parent or other adult ever made a complaint against the applicant about behaviour with children?

Would you have any reservations about placing your own child, or children in the extended family, in the care of the applicant?

Were the relationships the applicant formed with children, parents and other adults inappropriate for the roles they were performing?

Is the applicant... A loner with few or no meaningful adult friendships? Someone who spends a lot of time in hobbies that attract children, to the detriment of developing interests, hobbies and outlets with other adults? Someone who appears restless and moves frequently in jobs, living arrangements or friendships?

If you have answered yes to any of the above questions please explain why.

3. All associated with Worldview will be required to produce a certificate of police clearance and/or whatever child protection documentation is required in the state where the worker is actively working with children. In relation to their Working With Vulnerable People Card, all Worldview personnel are required to register as either volunteering or being employed by Worldview. This ensures that if any personnel commits a child or vulnerable people related offense, the Dep't of Justice will inform Worldview accordingly. Such persons will be asked to leave Worldview immediately.
4. Any person found to have a record of past offences against children may not join Worldview (Sadly the reality is that sexual abuse of children is an addictive form of

behaviour with high rates of recidivism. The first priority of a CPO is to protect children, not help restore past offenders.)

Offences committed as a minor may be viewed differently. In almost all cases the offender was also a victim. If there has been good intervention early enough to change this behaviour and we see a long-term transformed life as an adult we could consider such a person. But the majority of adult offenders began offending as teenagers or even younger, so extreme caution is warranted.

5. If any of our personnel confide that they were a victim of child abuse, Worldview will provide and facilitate pastoral support and counselling as appropriate.

If children could still be at risk from the alleged abuser, the police and/or social services will be informed as appropriate, to ensure that measures are taken to protect children in the present.

7.2. Education and Training

Worldview personnel

1. Worldview personnel need to be familiar with the Worldview CVPSP, which will be part of the orientation process for new workers. Ongoing child protection training and repeat signing of the CVPSP will form part of the annual appraisal procedure.
2. All need to be aware of good practice and the need to be accountable to others in their work with children.
3. All need to know what the warning signs of abuse are [see Appendix B] and what to do in the case of suspicion of abuse or if they hear an allegation.
4. All need to understand that failure to apply the CVPSP may involve contravention of the law and, if so, may have legal consequences.

Children

1. Children need to be educated in an age-appropriate fashion about the dangers of abuse. At a very young age this should be along the lines of when to say no and what kind of touch is not acceptable. By the teen years the emotions and consequences of abuse can be discussed.
2. At every age children need to know that there are people who will listen and take them seriously if they have concerns in this area. They need to know to whom they should report to if anything happens that troubles them.

Vulnerable Adults

1. Vulnerable adults need to be made aware of assistance available to aid them to live their lives to their best ability. They should also be made aware of difficulties and hazards they might face in order to avoid injury or inconvenience.
2. They also need to be made aware of the CVPSP and who they should report to if anything happens that troubles them.

8. Obligations

8.1. Natural Justice

Natural justice must be afforded to persons affected by the implementation of this policy. This will include affording them:

- the right to be heard fairly on any issue;
- the right to be informed about any complaint made;
- the opportunity to present a response to any allegation;
- the right to have decisions made by an unbiased or disinterested decision maker; and
- the right to have any decision based on the evidence and any response presented.

8.2. Process

Procedures will be adopted to facilitate the lodging of complaints and to facilitate the handling of complaints. (See Point 10 onwards)

8.3. Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be observed with respect to information regarding harm or suspected harm.

Such confidentiality is subject to obligations under the law or in observing the law, including provisions in the Privacy Act 1988 that authorise disclosure.

The obligations of confidentiality are subject to the need to disclose, both internally and externally, any information regarding harm or suspected harm.

The law may require evidence to be given, and relevant documents provided, in relation to actions taken under this policy.

8.4. Crime

Any crime, or suspected crime, will be reported to the relevant authorities, irrespective of when the incident occurred.

8.5. Defamation

The provision of factual information about harm or suspected harm, given in good faith, in compliance with the law or to a person who needs to know that information, is generally excused from liability for defamation. Fear of being accused of defamation should not be used as an excuse for failure to report harm to the appropriate authorities.

8.6. Promptness

Worldview and its personnel will

- implement proceedings and actions under this policy promptly.
- keep all Complainants and Respondents adequately informed of the progress of actions resulting from any complaint.

8.7. Protection

In order to avoid or reduce the likelihood of harm, Worldview will seek to ensure that all personnel understand and fulfil their obligations under this policy.

8.8. Support

A person who is the subject of harm caused by any Worldview personnel will be provided with the necessary support by appropriate means, including professional counselling if it

is requested, even if the allegation is still under investigation or is not proven. Worldview will also support the Respondent with professional counselling, if it is requested, for such time as Worldview considers appropriate.

8.9. Interviews

Interviews will be conducted in a manner that will respect the rights of those interviewed.

At least two Worldview personnel must be present at any interview of a Complainant or Respondent.

Where necessary, Worldview personnel may co-opt the services of a person with appropriate professional training to assist in the conduct of interviews.

A Respondent may have a person of their choice present at any interview as a support person.

8.10. Public Relations

Worldview will seek to ensure that it is able to react quickly to allegations of harm so that accurate and relevant information is promptly available for disclosure to the persons involved.

8.11. Police Action

Where a criminal offence has been committed, or is believed to have been committed, and the victim is still a child, any person who has information that might be of material assistance in apprehending, prosecuting or convicting the offender, must provide that information to the police or other appropriate authority. (For Tasmania, calling the Advice and Referral Line on **1800 000 123** is the preferred method of contact. Alternatively you may use the attached document, "Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and/or neglect" from https://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/children/child_protection_services)

If the victim is now an adult, in the interests of fairness to the victim Worldview considers that he/she should be encouraged to make their own complaint to police.

Where any police action is instituted, or is likely, the conduct of any internal disciplinary proceedings must be postponed until that police action is concluded.

Worldview will not be precluded from seeking advice from police or others regarding duty of care to other children.

Worldview will not be precluded from requiring a Respondent to refrain from engaging in certain activities, attending any premises, or having contact with certain persons or classes of persons, at such times as Worldview considers appropriate.

8.12. Insurer

WEC's insurer will be informed, and kept informed, about any matter that may give rise to a claim under any insurance policy.

9. Supporting Procedures

9.1. Good Working Practice

The primary purpose of a CVPSP is child and vulnerable people protection. But good practice also serves to help protect personnel and other residents from potentially compromising situations and from the risk of unfounded allegations. The following measures are recognised as good practice.

1. Maintain visibility to other adults when engaged in activities with children.

2. Avoid being alone with individual children.
3. Always be accountable to other adults regarding your interactions with children.
4. Counselling or other necessarily confidential meetings with children should be done in a room with windows, or the door ajar, and only when another adult is close by, aware that the meeting is occurring and willing to stay in the vicinity until it is completed.
5. Avoid inappropriate use of technology, e.g. the internet, so as to protect children from abuse and exploitation. Measures to protect children and monitor usage should be employed. Avoid personal exchanges with children via texting, social networking, etc.
6. Discipline should be used to teach and correct rather than punish. Avoid shaming, yelling at or belittling a child, or other forms of hostile or rejecting treatment, and as a general rule, anything which could be construed as corporal punishment.
7. Avoid differential treatment of some, to the exclusion of others. Avoid exclusive friendships with children, even if they are totally free of any sexual intent.
8. Healthy, caring touch is valuable to children, but unhealthy touch is abusive. So touch should/must:
 - be in response to the need of the child, not the need of the adult.
 - be open, not secretive.
 - be age-appropriate, generally initiated by the child, and always with the child's permission.
 - always communicate respect, avoiding doing personal tasks for them which they can do themselves.
 - be morally and culturally appropriate.
 - never include behaviour which could be construed as assault.
9. Words should be used to support and encourage a child. Language which belittles or shames, is used to threaten or instil fear, or is sexually suggestive, must be avoided.
10. Parents are responsible for knowing where their children are at all times, so good communication with them is essential and consent forms, where appropriate, must be employed.
11. Child-to-child behaviour must be monitored. Damaging behaviour, e.g. bullying, humiliation, etc., will be handled by the parents of both parties if possible, and other responsible adults if not.
12. Any Worldview personnel who has a belief on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is likely to be a victim of abuse must report this to the CPO.
13. If the person reporting considers that it has not been handled appropriately by the CPO, they have the right to go over the heads of the CPO and report the matter to the authorities.
14. Subsequent action will be in consultation with the leadership of Worldview or if a leader is implicated, with a member or members of WEC Australia leadership and/or the Worldview Board.

See Appendix C for more details

9.2. When to Report an Incident of Child Abuse

According to Tasmanian legislation, an adult who knows, or believes or suspects on reasonable grounds, that a child is suffering, has suffered or is likely to suffer abuse or neglect has a responsibility to take steps to prevent the occurrence or further occurrence of the abuse or neglect.

Penalties may be incurred if they fail to notify the appropriate authorities if they have reasonable grounds for a belief (not proof!) that a child or young person is in need of protection, because they have suffered, or are likely to suffer significant harm particularly physical or sexual abuse.

Any Worldview personnel or resident who suspects that child abuse as defined in Point 4 above has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur should immediately take the steps outlined in Point 10 below.

10. Handling of Complaints and Allegations

10.1. Receiving An Allegation

All cases of suspected child abuse must be responded to in a manner which best ensures the child's immediate and future safety.

1. Accept the child's story calmly, indicate that you are taking it seriously, and avoid ascribing any guilt for the child's involvement. Try to relieve the stress and anxiety which accompany an abuse situation.
2. Assure the child that some others must be told, but that these will be few. Specify who you need to inform.
3. Give the child time; don't push or interrupt. Ask 'open' questions and only necessary ones. Avoid 'closed' and 'leading' questions.
4. Avoid condemning the alleged offender, while taking seriously what you hear. If the charge is false, huge legal and personal problems may ensue.
5. Promptly record the details, along with any observations and impressions which cause concern, passing these on to the CPO immediately.

These should include:

- your name and the names of the child, his/her parents, and the alleged offender
 - the nature and extent of the injury
 - the present location of the child
 - how the information was obtained
 - details as spoken by the child, with dates, times, places, specifics of event(s)
 - date of writing the report
 - who has been contacted and when
6. Seek pastoral support for yourself.

10.2. Investigating An Allegation

This should be done preferably within 24-48 hours of the allegation being made, led by the CPO, with one to three others with appropriate responsibility. If police are

investigating the allegation, Worldview will not carry out investigation until the police investigation and subsequent trial, if any, is concluded.

1. This small team, comprising both genders, should focus initially only on seeking facts.
2. An incident report is to be passed on to the International Safeguarding Office (ISO) for WEC. The ISO will consult with the CPO on the necessary course of action and can be included in any investigatory team. Area Directors (ADs) should also be informed that an incident is being investigated, however the level of their involvement will depend on many factors as outlined in the WEC International Safeguarding Policy.
3. The sending church, police and appropriate social services should be informed of any substantive allegation or suspicion of abuse.
4. Any investigation must be impartial and seen to be so. Unless the allegations involve the parents or legal guardians, they should be involved as soon as possible, with the proviso that they must not attempt a resolution with the alleged offender as this could compromise any investigation. In assessing the advisability of pursuing an investigation, note that even a 'minor' event could have a major impact on the child.
5. Pending an inquiry, the alleged offender should be suspended from duty. If the allegation involves an older child they should be relocated away from the alleged victim.
6. Counsel and support will be offered to both the alleged victim and alleged offender during the investigation.
7. All procedures should be followed as discreetly as possible.
8. Records of any interviews must be thoroughly kept. Recordings and exact transcripts of comments along with the dates and times of the interviews should be used if possible. Records are to be backed up and kept indefinitely:
 - in the Worldview leadership files
 - in the Australian leadership files
 - with the ISO
 - in the Area Directors' (ADs) filesAll records, including e-mails and message communication, must be stored in separate, confidential files and not mixed with personal records.
9. Emergency medical attention, when necessary, should be sought immediately. The adult hearing the allegation of abuse is to inform the, CPO who will advise the child's parents and any others they think should be informed, including a doctor.
10. The CPO should take any steps necessary to protect the child and any other children from harm. This may include the immediate removal of the alleged offender from the vicinity of the children.
11. Investigation beyond the initial fact finding incurs costs. If these are not high because a competent investigation group is available to Worldview, they can be covered by day-to-day operating funds. If costs begin to rise then a separate fund will be set in place to cover travel costs for independent investigators and Worldview personnel involved, and for any medical and counselling support.

10.3. Where The Allegation Is Proven to be True

- i If the allegation is proven to be true, then action will be taken according to the gravity of the incident. A member who has committed an offence according to the definitions of child abuse in Point 4 (above) that is criminal and/or seriously immoral or unethical will be dismissed without the possibility of resignation or future reinstatement.
- ii Where the allegations of abuse made overseas are substantiated and the member is dismissed as a result, then Worldview and the WEC Australia will act in line with the legal requirements of both the host and passport countries of the perpetrator. This will mean police or social services action and sex offender's registration in cases of sexual abuse. References for future employers will include the reasons for dismissal. Where permitted by law, the agency will also inform the leaders of any other organisation working with children or adults at risk that the person may have links with.
- iii The child, as well as his or her parents, may need professional medical and psychological care. Worldview and WEC Australia's safeguarding team, in consultation with the family, will determine what care is needed. The level of care needed should be determined by how the child and the parents have reacted to the problem, how severe the abuse was, and how many times it took place. The relevant Area Directors also need to be informed.
- iv The offender will be offered counsel and other support to begin a restoration and rehabilitation process if this is possible.

10.4. Where The Allegation Is Proven to be False

- i If the review or investigation indicates that reasonable grounds do not exist to believe that abuse or neglect has occurred, the CPO will notify the alleged victim, accused person, the Worldview Leadership Team, WEC Australia Leadership Team, AD, and the ISO. A Statement of Findings will be given to each and a copy kept in their files.
- ii Where accusations have proven to be false, public disclosure of this fact is vital if the accusation was public knowledge. The results of the investigation should be immediately reported to the closest supervisor who will take appropriate action to fully reinstate the member to their post.
- iii Money should never be paid to anyone who tries to blackmail a member or in response to any demands for "compensation".
- iv Ongoing support and counselling to fully restore the falsely accused and their family will be given.
- v The real reasons for the allegations will need to be determined and appropriate action taken. The child or children involved may well need professional support to deal with different issues.

10.5. If The Situation Is Unresolved

Sometimes it proves impossible to determine the truth of a child abuse allegation.

1. The CPO should send confidential letters to the alleged victim and the alleged offender to inform them of the inconclusive results. These letters should also be sent to the Worldview Leadership Team, Australian leaders, ADs and the ISO.
2. The CPO or a delegate will speak personally to the alleged offender, addressing issues including but not limited to:
 - a review of the CVPSP together
 - Discussion about how the person will relate to the alleged victim
 - strategies which could be put in place to lessen the possibility of future allegations
3. The CPO or a delegate will then speak personally to the alleged victim, addressing issues including but not limited to:
 - reassurance that what they reported has been taken seriously and investigated as thoroughly as possible
 - ongoing monitoring of the situation, e.g. arranging to meet with them again a month later, and then following up with other appointments.
4. The allegation and investigative findings must be kept confidential for the sake of all parties and to guard against possible legal action charging Worldview with defamation of character.
5. If rumours need to be addressed, any public statements must be extremely cautious. Legal advice should be taken.

10.6. Follow-Up Action By Worldview

Worldview, WEC Australia and WEC International should conduct a review of policies and procedures to assess whether structural changes are needed to help prevent any similar incidents in the future. This review is to include all aspects of recruitment, training, understanding of good practice by workers, accountability, reporting and investigation procedures. The WEC ISO may lead this part of the process. If others lead this review then the WEC ISO should be informed and consulted at all stages because of the possible mission-wide implications of any such review.

10.7. Allegations Of Historic Abuse

Abuse may have occurred before or after the alleged victim came to Worldview. In any case fact-finding and investigation will probably be led by the WEC ISO working with Worldview and WEC Australia. If it is concluded that the allegation may be true, the police and/or other statutory authorities will need to be informed. Worldview will work closely with all of these groups in any investigation procedures.

1. In a case of alleged abuse before coming to Worldview the procedures outlined in point of 7.1 relating to the screening of Worldview personnel should be followed.
2. In a case of alleged historic abuse whilst the family or alleged offender were linked with Worldview, the alleged victim will need support and, possibly, appropriate counselling.
3. If children could still be at risk from the alleged abuser the police and/or social services are to be informed as appropriate to ensure protective measures are taken to protect the children.
4. If the police and/or social services lead an investigation no further action is to be taken without their guidance.

5. If the alleged abuser is still associated with Worldview, any suspension should be undertaken in consultation with the police and/or social services.

Point 10.2 dealing with 'Investigating An Allegation' gives procedural guidelines to apply here. Allegations of past abuse are notoriously difficult to prove and research to establish the full facts and responsibilities can be onerous. However, all such allegations are to be taken seriously, and justice for the survivors of abuse must take priority over maintaining the reputation of Worldview or past workers.

Statement of Acceptance

I, _____, have read and understand the Worldview Child Protection Policy in its entirety.

I agree to enforce and abide by all of the provisions of the policy during my time with Worldview and to accept any disciplinary action that may be necessary in the event of an accusation made against me.

Signed _____

Date _____

Appendix A: CATEGORIES OF CHILD ABUSE

Five categories of possible criminal abuse are generally acknowledged: physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and exposure to family violence.

Physical abuse includes any act that results in a non-accidental physical injury, intentional or unintentional.

It includes unreasonably severe corporal punishment, excessive slapping/ spanking done in anger, punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, squeezing, administering poisonous substances, burning, holding under water, pulling hair, holding against one's will, or any other action that inflicts injury.

Physical injury does not include the transient redness that sometimes results from acceptable and agreed forms of corporal punishment.

Bullying by other children, with actual physical abuse combined with power and control through intimidation, is probably the most common abusive experience for children. In a minority of cases it can lead to serious psychological problems, even to suicide. A zero tolerance principle will be applied related to any children linked with Worldview.

Sexual abuse is a form of child abuse and occurs when an adult or young person uses a child sexually - when a child or young person is pressurised, forced or tricked into taking part in or witnessing any kind of sexual activity with and/or by a person. This can include kissing, the touching of genitals or breasts, intercourse or oral sex. Forced exposure to pornographic magazines, internet sites or films is also sexual abuse, as is sexually explicit text messaging (sexting) or other communication.

Most abuse victims know and trust the offenders.

Increasingly women have been convicted of being involved in all forms of abusive behaviour, including sexual abuse.

Child-to-child sexual abuse and sexual activity among children of similar ages should always be taken seriously. The large majority of adult offenders began abusive behaviour while still minors.

Neglect becomes abuse if it is persistent or severe. It is defined by failure on the part of the responsible carer to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

(*'Non-organic failure to thrive'* is a medical term, which implies a baby or child is not receiving enough food due to economic factors, parental neglect or psychosocial problems.)

Neglect can be expressed by failure to provide an adequate education for children. For example:

- poor home education; no provision of activities with educational worth for prolonged periods;
- doctrinaire commitment to local education that is unsuited to the child's current or future needs;

- lack of contact with children in boarding settings because of a 'work or ministry before the family' ethos, leading to a sense of abandonment and, in severe cases, neglect of basic responsibilities towards children.

If this is happening it is important that leaders try to provide support and encouragement to change. In extreme cases, such as the suspension of any meaningful form of education for prolonged periods, there may need to be disciplinary action.

Emotional abuse is the failure by a responsible carer to provide the appropriate emotional and physical security and protection that a child requires for stability and full emotional and social development, according to their individual potential. Hostility towards or rejection of a child may be demonstrated by unreasonable restriction of movement, patterns of belittling, threatening, deliberately instilling fear, humiliating, blaming or discriminating.

This may be harder to recognise than sexual or physical abuse, or neglect, as the results are not as visible or verifiable. However, extreme cases of emotional abuse are criminal and difficulties in recognition and confirmation should not prevent action.

Unreasonable restriction of movement through overuse of the 'grounding' form of punishment may result in children spending more non-education time grounded than on anything else. This can also stem from fear of allowing children out of the home because of 'safety' concerns. In such cases the intent is the opposite of abusive, but the end result is very restrictive.

Related to this could be **Psychological abuse** – 'a form of mistreatment in which there is intent to cause mental or emotional pain or injury'.

Being a **witness to family/domestic violence** is recognised as suffering abuse. It occurs when a child is present (hearing or seeing) while a parent or sibling is subjected to physical abuse, sexual abuse or psychological maltreatment, or is visually exposed to the damage caused to persons or property by a family member's violent behaviour.

Then there is **Spiritual abuse**, although this would not normally be categorised as criminal.

This is linked to emotional abuse, can be defined as an abuse of power, often done in the name of God or religion, which involves manipulating or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves.

Some indicators of spiritual abuse might be a leader who is intimidating and imposes his or her will on other people, perhaps threatening dire consequences or the wrath of God if disobeyed. He or she may say that God has revealed certain things to them and so they know what is right. Those under their leadership are fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose the leader's (or more seriously God's) acceptance and approval. (Definition from the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service document "Safe and Secure - the Manual" Standard 8:8.7)

Appendix B: SIGNS OF ABUSE

Some of the signs listed below may be the result of another disturbance in the child's life, so caution should be exercised if children show some of them. It should not be automatically assumed that they are the result of abuse. However, they do indicate a problem that needs to be monitored and dealt with appropriately, not just ignored.

Physical:

- injuries, such as bruises, bites, burns, fractures, inconsistent with a given explanation
- injuries to parts of the body not normally associated with falls or rough games, such as black eyes, unexplained facial bruising, a torn inside-upper lip
- injuries that have not received medical attention
- reluctance to change for, or participate in games or swimming
- repeated urinary tract infections or unexplained abdominal pains
- cuts or scratches which may suggest self harm
- indications of substance abuse

Neglect:

- undernourishment and failure to grow
- constant hunger
- persistent tiredness
- repeatedly begging for, stealing, cajoling or bullying others for food
- regular dirty, ill-groomed appearance, even at the start of a day
- untreated illnesses and listlessness

Sexual:

- excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- inappropriate sexual play/language, including sexual pro-activity or seductive behaviour with adults
- severe sleep disturbance
- disturbed eating patterns, such as anorexia or bulimia
- escape attempts, such as running away or refusing to go home
- behavioural changes, such as bedwetting or soiling
- recurrent urinary tract infections

Emotional:

- changes or regression in mood or behaviour, such as withdrawal, or becoming clingy, aggressive or depressed
- nervousness
- obsessions or phobias
- sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- attention-seeking behaviour
- self-harm
- inappropriate relationships
- persistent tiredness

Appendix C: GOOD WORK PRACTICES

A. Visibility

All work with children should be planned in a way that minimises risks as far as possible. This plan includes being visible to other adults when working with children. Visibility can be accomplished by planning activities in areas where other adults are present and at a time when other activities are occurring. It can also be accomplished by installing windows in all classrooms and other rooms occupied by children or by keeping doors open.

B. Overcoming Isolation

At least two unrelated adults should be present in work with children unless in a formal context such as a school classroom. Personnel are to avoid being alone with individual children. For example, drop off siblings last in a carpool or provide travel with the member's own children or another unrelated adult.

An adequate number of adults should supervise events away from schools or centres, especially for overnight activities. Recommended guideline ratios are 1:5 for children aged 11+ and 1:3 for younger ones.

The level of supervision and administering of personal care such as using the toilet must be appropriate to the age of the child whilst accepting that a few children have special needs. Where First Aid or a medical procedure that is privacy invasive is to be given, another member of staff of the same sex as the child is to be present, unless emergency requirements prevent it happening. In all areas of life, a child's privacy is to be respected.

C. Accountability

All Branch X personnel are expected to interact with children in a mature, capable, safe, caring and responsible manner, with a high level of accountability. They are responsible for giving and accepting feedback from others to maintain our high level of professionalism and integrity in interactions with children.

- i. Always be accountable to other adults regarding interactions with children.
- ii. Parents should take the prime responsibility for protecting their own children and to educate them appropriately as to how they can protect themselves.
- iii. Parents and/or supervisors are to be notified beforehand of any activities with children, for example, before transporting a child, keeping a child after school, a youth activity or when tutoring a child.
- iv. Counselling or other necessarily confidential meetings with children should be done in a room with windows, or the door ajar, and only when another adult is close by, aware that the meeting is occurring and willing to stay in the vicinity until it is completed.
- v. In an emergency situation, find another unrelated responsible adult to assist in any procedures or transport arrangements. Where this is not possible notify other adults by phone of any planned action.

Personnel and parents are encouraged to periodically and randomly visit areas where children and adults are together.

D. Technology

Care must be taken to avoid inappropriate use of technology so as to protect children from abuse and exploitation, for example, to prevent inappropriate internet content and use.

- i. Proper internet protection should be put on all public computers.
- ii. Parents are strongly encouraged to monitor their children's mobile phones and internet activity.

- iii. Personnel should not telephone or exchange personal e-mail, social network, SMS or text messages with children. There are a few exceptions to this, such as when personnel act in the place of parents as boarding home parents or at an orphanage.
- iv. Parents/Supervisors are strongly encouraged that all films, TV programmes, computer games watched by their children are legally acquired, age appropriate and of a suitable nature
- v. No Branch X run activities will use any media such as films, television shows, music, or internet sites of an unsuitable nature for the children present.
- vi. Parents/Supervisors are strongly encouraged monitor the content of the music children are listening to, and the music videos they are watching, and to ensure that they have been legally acquired.

(Further information in Internet Safety and e-Communications with Children Guidelines Appendix)

E. Discipline

Discipline should be primarily used to teach and correct rather than punish. It should not include excessive corporal punishment, shaming, yelling at or belittling a child or other forms of hostile or rejecting treatment.

F. Differential Treatment

Adults should avoid favouring or showing differential treatment to particular children to the exclusion of and in the presence of others. Adults are not to form exclusive friendships with children, even if they are totally free of any sexual intent.

G. Touch

Because healthy, caring touch is valuable to children but unhealthy touch is abusive, the following guidelines apply:

- i. Touch should be in response to the need of the child and not the need of the adult.
- ii. Touch should be open rather than secretive. For example, a hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- iii. Touch must be age appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the adult. It must be with the child's permission and any resistance from the child should be respected.
- iv. Touch should always communicate respect for the child. Adults should avoid doing things of a personal nature for children that they are able to do for themselves, including dressing, bathing, etc.
- v. Adults and other children should not beat, pinch, push, hold against their will, or otherwise assault children.
- vi. Touch should be morally and culturally appropriate.

The following signs of affection may be appropriate within specific contexts: verbal praise, side hugs (shoulder to shoulder hugs). For smaller children, this may include touching their hands, faces, shoulders and arms, arms around their shoulders, hugs or holding them when others are present.

The following behaviours between personnel and children are inappropriate and are not to be engaged in: touching buttocks, chests, genital areas or thighs; showing affection in isolated areas or when alone with a child; lying on a bed with a child; flirtatious or seductive looks; any form of affection that is unwanted by the child; sexually suggestive or explicit language, showing sexually-suggestive pictures or videos or playing sexually-suggestive games with any child; any behaviour that could be interpreted as sexual in nature.

Team members should monitor each other in the area of physical contact, helping each other by pointing out anything that could be misinterpreted.

H. Verbal Interaction

Words should be used to support and encourage a child, such as praise, positive reinforcement and appropriate jokes. Inappropriate verbal interaction includes the following: shaming, belittling, humiliating or name calling; using harsh language to instil fear, threaten or humiliate the child; cursing or making derogatory remarks about the child, their family and/or their place of origin. Inappropriate verbal interaction also includes negative comments that relate to physique or body development; telling derogatory or sexual jokes; making sexually suggestive comments; telling inappropriate secrets; discussing sexual encounters or desires with children.

I. Parental Involvement

Parents are responsible for knowing where their children are at all times. Therefore, parents should be informed of planned activities (e.g. trips included in the schedule for the school or youth group term) and sign a consent form. Where appropriate, parents should be encouraged to make unannounced visits to activities involving their children.

J. Monitoring Child-to-Child Behaviour

The following actions may involve abuse or inappropriate behaviour of one child to another and are prohibited: bullying; offensive and/or hurtful name-calling; ridicule or humiliation; singling out a child for negative treatment or exclusion; child-to-child inappropriate sexual contact up to and including attempted or actual intercourse; use of sexually explicit language; showing of sexually explicit images; slapping or any other form of hitting; pushing; holding against their will or otherwise assaulting another child.

Child on child abuse accounts for a very high, and growing, proportion of all offences. Because of this vigilance is essential. All reports or reasonable suspicions of child on child abuse are to be treated as seriously as those of adult on child incidents and reported immediately to the Branch X CPO or deputy.