



PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF
VICTORIA



Child Safe Standard 1 and PCV Ministry to Aboriginal Children

The following resource aims to aid child safe Christian ministry to Aboriginal children within the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, within the context of Victorian Child Safe Standard 1 – Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.

As Christians, we thank God as creator, owner and sustainer of all of us and this land we live on. We recognize the Aboriginal peoples of Australia as the first inhabitants of this nation. As we commit to moving forward together, we acknowledge their living culture and care for country: this place in which we all live, work and play. The PCV welcomes all Aboriginal children to our Church and our ministries to children. Under God, we commit to building a brighter future together, as together we seek to know Christ and make him known. In this we are especially mindful of Psalm 133:1: “How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!”

We understand that:

- There is great cultural diversity across the many nations of Aboriginal people in Australia. Hence, local initiatives by organisations are especially helpful to make sure the organisation is welcoming and safe for the Aboriginal children and families who reside in that particular locality.
- Cultural safety means that Aboriginal children are included; treated fairly; respected; are free to talk about, and have acknowledged, their differences and culture; have access to speaking their mother tongue and have a right to visit country to learn about their history, culture and language.
- Organisations which are empathetic, understanding and conscious of the importance of culture, language, and history to Aboriginal children, are important to ensuring that Aboriginal children are culturally safe in the organisation.

As Christians, the PCV recognises the uniqueness of each child as a person made in the image of God, with unique cultural and linguistic backgrounds that are safely expressed and lived out within the unity of the Church in Christ Jesus.

The PCV recognises that Aboriginal families who participate in the children’s ministries of the PCV will be doing so as people who find their identity in Christ Jesus and who also identify as Aboriginal, or who are seeking to find out more about Christianity:

- John 1:12
- 1 Corinthians 12:27

- Galatians 3:27-28

The PCV is committed to actively supporting and facilitating Aboriginal children to be welcomed; included; treated fairly; respected; encouraged to participate in the children's ministries; and, be free to talk about, and have acknowledged, their differences and culture, within the PCV. As part of this commitment, Sessions in individual PCV churches may choose to also implement local initiatives and strategies as they decide, in order to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children.

Making people welcome and practising hospitality to all (including Aboriginal children) is a key biblical value:

- Matthew 25: 42-46
- 1 Timothy 5:10
- Titus 1:8
- 1 Peter 4:9
- Romans 12:13
- Hebrews 13:2
- Galatians 6:10
- Exodus 22:21
- Exodus 23:9
- Leviticus 19:33-34

Racism towards children is unbiblical, sinful and will not be tolerated in the PCV.

- In Galatians 3:28 we are told that regardless of race, *"all are one in Christ Jesus"*.
- In Colossians 3:11-15 the Bible says, *"Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all. Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful."*
- Romans 15:7 says, *"Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God."*

The PCV is committed to address any instances of racism towards children with appropriate consequences and will consider and respond to each instance with seriousness and gravity. Complaints of racism against children under 18 are to be made to the Session of each church or the Safe Church Unit.

Resources:

[Australian Presbyterian World Mission Indigenous Ministries](#)

[PCNSW Gospel, Society and Culture Committee Paper – Reconciliation in Australia](#)

[Australia – Whose Land? Lecture by Rev Dr Peter Adam](#)

[Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship of Australia](#)

[Eternity News - Adopted in Love](#)

[Adopted in Love – Rachel Herweynen](#)

[8 Ways of Aboriginal Learning for Aboriginal children](#)