



# Supervision of Participants - children under 18 years in children's ministry

All adult leaders attending church children's ministries (i.e. ministries to persons under 18 years of age) owe a duty of care to the children participating. This means that they must ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent any reasonably foreseeable harm to children. This duty cannot be delegated to external activity providers when activities are held off-site. Session has ultimate responsibility for all children in the care of the church children's ministries.

There cannot be a situation where, if an adult leader is unable to ensure the health and safety of children because of sudden illness or accident, there is not another adult leader on hand. Adult leader supervision will be in place for children at all times.

For events or activities **off-site** [for example, a walk or an event at an external provider, for example, a sports centre] there must be a ratio of 1 adult leader:8 children, with a minimum of 2 adult leaders. The ratio is different for off-site events or activities, as these take place in an unfamiliar environments with variable risk profiles and this practically impacts supervision. For adventure activities at an external location hired by the Session for the ministry programme, ratios will be determined by the external operator of the location. Session will provide additional supervision to any external location staff in order to support the children.

No single or 1 adult leader may take a group of children for an event or activity off-site.

If children are taken on a walk off-site, adult leaders must supervise children crossing any roads and ensure that all children are safely across the road prior to continuing the walk.

Regular head counts of the children must be made by adult leaders during the ministry, in particular during times of movement and transition from one space/location to another. In the case where a head count results in an incorrect number of children and this is not swiftly resolved, the ministry supervisor must be informed as soon as possible so that further action can be taken.

## **Minimum Supervision Requirements: Adult Leaders: Children Ratios**

No matter what size group of children the ministry has, there must always be enough leaders to cope with any accidents and/or critical incidents that may happen. A good guide is a minimum of 2 adult leaders for all ministry programs and a ratio of 1 adult to 10 children for ministry held on-site at the church property.

*This information is available at [www.safechurchpcv.org.au/resources](http://www.safechurchpcv.org.au/resources)*