



PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF
VICTORIA



Wise ministry practices

For Working With Children

In the course of ministering to children under 18 there are common queries raised by leaders. The following material is intended to assist leaders with these queries. It is founded upon what is considered “best practice” according to legislative requirements, government guidelines and commonly used minimum standards adopted by various Christian ministries in Victoria.

The following practices are highly recommended:

- All doors to rooms where ministry to children occurs should have large glass windows in them so the room is visible to those passing by. If this is not the case then leave the door open during ministry activities.
- Have two adults in the room with children during ministry at all times. For example, always schedule two adults to be on crèche duty. In cases where Sunday School classes have one teacher and the class is in their own room make sure the door is either kept open at all times OR alternatively make sure the door has a glass window in it to enable visibility.
- When people under 18 are assisting as junior leaders or helpers in ministry to children always have them rostered on with an adult leader.
- 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.
- When toileting very young children (under 5) the best practice is to text the parent and have them come and toilet their child. If this is not possible then take children in a group to the toilet. Communicate toileting procedure clearly to parents to ensure they are fully aware of how this is handled. Always give parents the option of toileting their own children. Some churches ask parents to toilet their children prior to delivering the child to crèche or Sunday School.
- Never send older primary school aged children to the toilet alone. Always send them in pairs and be mindful of how long they are away from the group. If a long time passes a leader should attend the toilets to ensure the children are safe.
- Using a ‘Sign In-Sign Out’ form is best practice for ministry to children under 5, for example when operating a crèche during a church service. www.safechurchpcv.org.au has downloadable forms that can be used by congregations.
- Remember when food or drink is being offered in ministry to children that leaders must have an accurate list of children with allergies and ensure that these children do not eat or drink food that they are allergic to.
- Always familiarise leaders with the location of the First Aid kit and ensure that the First Aid kit contains everything it should and any medications (such as Ventolin inhalers) are within expiry dates. At least one leader should be qualified in basic First Aid.

This information is available at www.safechurchpcv.org.au/resources