

Appendix 2 – NCC Code of Conduct

1. Behaviour

All Team Members are expected to maintain a high moral code and model appropriate Christian behaviour, demonstrating to children that they are valued and respected.

How

- Treat all participants with respect and take notice of their reactions to your tone of voice and manner - it is easy to 'love the lovable', but those who are not easy to love often need more love from us.
- Avoid behaviour that gives the impression of favouritism or encourage 'special' relationships with individual children.
- Do not engage in inappropriately rough physical play.
- Always be within view of another Team Member when with a child, including when transporting children to venues.
- Dress modestly.
- Do not show or share sexually suggestive material to a child in any form, including email, text, movie or sound file.
- Ensure any television programmes, videos, music, magazines or displays shown or used as part of the group's activities are suitable in content and appropriate to the age group represented, with due regard to Christian values.
- Do not take someone else's child to your home, or encourage private meetings outside of church activities, unless parental/guardian consent has been obtained.
- Do not behave or allow any participants to behave in any way that could be construed as bullying or harassment.
- Recognise if you are tempted to act inappropriately towards someone in your care, and get counsel from the NCC leadership as to what to do.
- Dealing with difficult behaviour in a child:
 - In the first instance, give a firm but gentle verbal correction which is respectful and age-appropriate.
 - For a younger child a short period of "time out" may be appropriate (one minute for each year of the child's age; not for children under three years of age).
 - When a child is unresponsive or responds unsatisfactorily to reasonable requests to comply with the required standard of behaviour, the matter may be reported to the parent/guardian.
 - In extreme cases, children may be precluded from activities for a period of time until an undertaking is given to behave within acceptable limits. If this decision is made, the parent is to be informed and where possible

included in the negotiations regarding management strategies and restoration to that activity.

2. Language

What we say as Team Members reflects our values. It is vital to communicate in a way that upholds what we believe. It is important to use language that affirms the worth, dignity and significance of the participants.

How

- Do not use profane language.
- Do not use derogatory language towards Team Members or participants – even when meant as sarcasm or as a joke.
- Do not use ‘in jokes’, negative language, put downs or sexist language with other Team Members or with participants.
- Do not talk down or be superior with children or young people, instead speak to them as people of value.
- Where private conversations are necessary, the Team Member and child must remain visible to another Team Member in the group.

3. Physical Contact

Physical touch has an important role in building health relationships, however, physical contact between adults and children can be misconstrued. It is your duty to be alert to such circumstances and ensure you are always be SEEN to be doing the right things as well as knowing that you are.

How

- Allow children and vulnerable people to choose the degree of physical contact they have with you, apart from exceptional circumstances or when needing medical attention.
- Do not initiate close physical contact, this should come from the participant, if at all.
- Touching a child between the neck and the knees should be avoided, although contact with the bony areas of the body such as the shoulder, elbow or head, is generally acceptable (but be aware that this varies between cultures – if in doubt – ask).
- A sideways hug around the shoulders is more acceptable than an arm around the waist.
- There will be occasions where displays of affection are natural. Children must not be shunned if they initiate and demonstrate their need for comfort, bearing in mind the age of the child and the circumstances. Care needs to be exercised that such

situations do not occur in private.

- On no account must any form of corporal or physical punishment be administered.
- The only form of physical restraint appropriate is to protect children from harm. This includes reasonable restraint to stop a fight, to stop bullying or to avoid an accident.
- What is reasonable and lawful will depend on the circumstances and appropriate judgement should be used.
- Do not engage in physical contact that could be perceived as a threat.
- As a general rule, open displays of affection initiated by children in the presence of others are acceptable.
- Team Members must be aware that consistent contact with the same person may give the impression of favouritism, it is unwise and may result in others competing for attention or feeling left out.
- Do not engage in any physical activity that is, or may be construed as sexually stimulating to the Team Member or participant.

4. Program Style

Children or vulnerable people are not always able to sense the risks associated with participating in activities. Adults need to ensure activities are age appropriate and safe.

How

- Set clear boundaries and rules for activities to ensure that participants' safety.
- Be willing to drop or amend an activity if you sense that it is not working safely or is making participants feel angry or isolated.
- Ask your Team Leader to help you plan well.
- Games that require participants to be on their own or out of sight need to be managed carefully.
- Ensure activities do not make participants feel stupid or embarrassed. While competitive games can be fun, if they exploit gender, intellectual or physical differences then they should be avoided.
- Be punctual. Staff and volunteers should stick to timetables to the best of their ability.

5. Cultural Awareness

Cultural differences may affect the degree of participation of children and vulnerable people in activities and games. Team Members need to ensure activities show sensitivity and respect for other cultures and traditions.

How

- No pressure should be applied to participants from other cultures to force participation.
- The family has many forms and leaders must respect a participants' views.
- Team Members need to be sensitive about using words which make assumptions about participants' background, family status or principal caregivers.
- Your team should have zero tolerance for language or activities that discriminate on the basis of gender, race age or ability.

6. Special Needs

Teams need to be inclusive of people with special needs. People with special needs may include very small children and people with intellectual, mental or physical disabilities.

How

- Being inclusive has more to do with a positive attitude and a willingness to learn and make the effort than with a list of do's and don'ts.
- You may need extra help. The number of extra Team Members will depend on the particular needs of the child or vulnerable person – some may need a one on one ratio.
- Privacy and respect are particularly important for participants with special needs who may need help with toileting. Find out as much as you can in advance and when in doubt, ask.
- Activities need to be structured yet flexible to ensure that children with special needs can participate.
- Encourage all children to participate, play and learn together; your attitude and behaviour will have a significant influence on how others react.

7. Toileting

Wherever possible, parents and care givers should see to the toileting needs of their children. However, if it is necessary for Team Members to assist with toileting during a program, this must be done in accordance with the NCC guidance.

How

- Where practicable the parent should be responsible for attending to the child - remind parents and caregivers to take children to the toilet prior to checking the child into the kids' program.
- When crèche staff and volunteers must assist a child, two adult workers must accompany the child and the child should be encouraged to manage him/herself to the fullest possible extent, according to ability.

- Male leaders are not to assist in the toileting of girls.
- At no time should a child be allowed to enter a public toilet alone whilst placed in a kids church/ crèche or other church related activity/program.

8. Ratios

Maintaining an appropriate ratio of adults to children promotes safety and minimises risk. Every program must have a safe number of adult Team Members in relation to the number of participants.

How

There is no fixed ratio which will necessarily satisfy the duty of care in all situations. It will depend on all of the circumstances which will include:

- The age, needs and behavioural history of the children present;
- The skills and experience of the staff and volunteers;
- The environment in which the children are placed;
- The nature of any risks to which the children may be exposed;
- The ready availability of backup if there are difficulties.

The following may be used as a rough 'rule of thumb':

- Under two years of age: 1 Team Member to every 5 children
- Two years to school age: 1 Team Member to every 5 children
- Primary school age: 1 Team Member to every 8 children
- Secondary school age: 1 Team Member to every 10 -15 children

Notwithstanding these minimum ratios, it is recommended that, for children of primary school age or younger, a minimum of two staff or volunteers be present at all times.

9. Privacy

Team Members have an obligation to protect the privacy of the participants.

How

- Do not publish photos or movies of a child, including online, consult with a Team Leader before using any images taken while at NCC.
- Do not disclose private information about participants unless required (e.g. in an emergency).

10. Disclosures of Abuse

During the course of an activity, a child or vulnerable person may disclose information about abuse to a Team Member. Team Members must handle the disclosure

appropriately.

How

- Report any concerns you have that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be at risk of harm or abuse.
- If a child makes a disclosure of abuse to you, use the L-I-S-T-E-N model:
 - **L** – Listen, don't counsel or ask leading questions
 - **I** – 'I believe you. It's not your fault'
 - **S** – Support – reassure the child people will support / protect them
 - **T** – Tell your Team Leader or Children's Pastors as soon as possible
 - **E** – Emergency – if a child is in immediate danger, call 000
 - **N** – Notes – write down what the child told you, using their words