



Planning safe programs

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Related documents:

Safe Ministry with Children policy
Overseeing Ministry with Children Process



Process

Activity leaders are responsible for:

- Completing and submitting program planning sheets for all planned activities to the church council (or their delegate) for approval before the activities are due to take place, including assessing and managing reasonably foreseeable risk
- Consulting with Synod Support Services when planning high-risk activities, and incorporating recommendations into plans
- Ensuring team members are aware of their responsibilities under the approval of the church council
- Conducting activities in line with the approval of the church council.

The church council (or their delegate) is responsible for:

- Assessing, amending and approving program planning sheets (Section B) before the activities are due to take place, noting permission to proceed on the program planning sheet
- Minuting approvals (or endorsing approvals made by the delegate) in church council meeting minutes
- Considering and approving the curriculum to be taught within children's ministries under their oversight
- Ensuring that individuals who are asked to provide transport as part of an organised church activity maintain a high standard of safety and care
- Ensuring appropriate reporting of incidents and accidents
- Delegating tasks under this responsibility appropriately.

Notes:

Certain activities, particularly those that are considered 'high risk', may not automatically be covered under the church's insurance program. The Synod Support Services Risk and Insurance team can provide assistance and guidance in relation to insurance requirements, risk management and/or high-risk activities.

Prior endorsement of activities: provides confirmation of proper processes and approvals in the event of an incident or injury and any subsequent insurance or legal action.

Transport: Drivers must use a registered, insured and roadworthy vehicle. They must hold a current and appropriate open driver's licence for the type of vehicle they are driving, and maintain a zero blood alcohol level so that activities involving children are drug, alcohol and cigarette free. Drivers are responsible for making sure all people in the vehicle are correctly restrained.

For information about child restraints see tmr.qld.gov.au/Safety/Driver-guide/Child-restraints/Child-restraint-laws.aspx.

Leadership ratios: An appropriate ratio of leaders to participants will vary from one activity to another, and consideration must be given during the planning process to the age and abilities of the children, and to the type of activity being conducted. No fewer than two adult leaders must be present at any time with children in approved activities. Where possible a ratio of one worker for every six children in an activity for participants aged five years and over, and one worker for every four children aged below five years, is desirable.



Program planning sheet

CONGREGATION	
PROGRAM	GROUP
LOCATION OF PROGRAM	DAY AND TIME OF ACTIVITIES
CONTACT PERSON	BEST CONTACT METHOD

1. The Venue

Checklist	Comments
Does the venue appear to be clean, free of hazards and in good repair?	
Have I reported any known or identified hazards to the church council or venue owner for remedy?	
Is the physical environment of the venue suitable for the activities and group?	
If the venue is not church property, are we covered by the owner's insurance?	
Do I have a copy of the church council's Emergency Response Plan (ERP)?	
Do leaders and helpers know about the ERP?	

2. Leaders and Helpers

Who will be helping and for what will they be responsible? Attach a separate sheet if necessary.						
Name						
Role						
Appointment approved by church council?						
Checklist	Comments					
Does each person hold a current and valid blue card or exemption card? (Parent helpers are exempt if child is in their group)						
Has the church council approved and appointed each person?						
Has each person signed the Statement of personal commitment ?						
Has each person received training?						
Does each person have appropriate skills and/or qualifications for their role?						
Is there an allocated first aid officer for the activity?						
Have designated drivers agreed to and signed the Driver information form ?						
Is there a minimum of two adult leaders/helpers? (see leadership ratios)						
Are there enough leaders for the expected number of children?						



Who will be responsible to ensure these measures are undertaken?

How will this be communicated to the leaders and helpers?

5. Equipment

Checklist	Comments
What equipment is required?	
Is the equipment in a good state of repair?	
Is the equipment tagged and tested (if appropriate)?	
Is the equipment safe for the group to use for the intended activity?	
What changes should be made to ensure equipment is safe?	
If the equipment does not belong to the church, are we covered by the owner's insurance?	
Have vehicles been approved for use by the church council?	

6. Records

Checklist	Comments
Has someone been allocated to maintain the records of attendees (personal information and permission, attendance etc.)?	
Has it been agreed where (or with whom) records will be securely stored?	

Church council checklist/ approval	1. The Venue	2. Leaders and Helpers	3. Participants	4. Activities	5. Equipment	6. Records



Record of approval

Name of person delegated by Church Council to assess plans and provide approval:	
Comments and conditions:	
Date of approval:	Date of Church Council meeting minute:

Post-activity review

What went well?			
What did not go well?			
What reports need to be completed			
What changes do we need to make for next time?			
Tasks to be done	By whom?	By when?	Date completed
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			

Risk Matrix

		Consequence →				
		1 Minor	2 Considerable	3 Substantial	4 Critical	5 Catastrophic
likelihood ↓	1 Certain	Moderate risk	Significant risk	Significant risk	High risk	High risk
	4 Likely	Moderate risk	Moderate risk	Significant risk	Significant risk	High risk
	3 Possible	Low risk	Moderate risk	Significant risk	Significant risk	Significant risk
	2 Unlikely	Low risk	Low risk	Moderate risk	Moderate risk	Significant risk
	1 Rare	Low risk	Low risk	Moderate risk	Moderate risk	Significant risk

How to use the risk matrix:

1. Make a list of the things that could potentially go wrong during your planned activity.
This is the risk of 'incident'.
2. Consider the likelihood that the incident will actually occur. Refer to the 'likelihood descriptors' (below) to assist you.



3. Consider the consequence if the incident happened. Refer to the 'consequence descriptors' (below) to assist you.
4. Using the matrix (above), align the 'likelihood' (horizontally) and the 'consequence' (vertically) to identify the 'risk' level.
5. Knowing the 'risk', proceed with your planning in accordance with the 'actions to take' section (below).

Likelihood Descriptors

1 Rare	May occur only in exceptional circumstances. It is theoretically possible but increasingly unlikely.
2 Unlikely	Is not likely to occur in normal circumstances. You have heard of it happening somewhere once.
3 Possible	Could occur at some time. You have heard of it happening from time to time.
4 Likely	Will probably occur in some circumstances. It might happen on a handful of occasions in your experience.
1 Certain	Can be expected to occur with some frequency. It is not a surprise when it happens.

Consequence Descriptors

1 Minor	Very minor or no injury occurs, property damage is less than \$100 and there is a very limited chance of reputational impact. It does not make the news.
2 Considerable	First aid is required, minor property damage (greater than \$1000) is sustained and there is only a low reputational impact. There is only very limited news coverage.
3 Substantial	Paramedics or comparable medical treatment is required, moderate property damage (greater than \$10,000) occurs and it may have some reputational impact. This may include public embarrassment and moderate news coverage.
4 Critical	Hospital admission is required, major damage (greater than \$100,000) is sustained and it may have major reputational impact. This may include public embarrassment, high news profile and third party actions.
5 Catastrophic	It may result in a fatality or permanent disability to one or more people, significant damage to property (greater than \$1m) and it may have very severe reputational impact. This may include public embarrassment, high widespread multiple news reports and third party actions.

Actions to Take

High risk	Activity must not proceed as planned. Final approval must be provided by insurer after steps are taken to reduce the risk. Contact Risk and Insurance team for guidance.
Significant risk	Activity can only proceed if more risk control steps are taken to reduce risk. All steps taken must be documented and review of effectiveness of the controls should happen after the event.
Moderate risk	Activity can proceed with risk control steps in place. All steps taken must be documented and review of effectiveness of the controls should happen after the event.
Low risk	Activity can proceed. Routine management procedures should still be in place to minimise the risk of even a minor incident occurring.

Document Review History

Version Number	Date	Reason	Author/reviewer	Consulted	Approved
1.0	22.01.2016	Created to support Safe Ministry with Children policy, and Overseeing safe ministry with children process	Safe Ministry (children) administrator	General counsel Risk & Insurance manager	Associate general secretary
1.1	19.03.2018	Review and update	Safe Ministry, Legislative and Compliance Officer	Senior Risk Consultant	Manager Risk and Compliance
Due	13.03.2019	Annual review cycle			