



CHILDREN’S SABBATH SCHOOL AND CHILDREN’S MINISTRIES CHECKLIST

This checklist can be used to ensure all aspects of child safety are considered in the operation of a Children’s Sabbath School or other Children’s Ministries program.

Element	Considerations	Person/Body Responsible
Screening of potential staff – leaders, team members and helpers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Screen all proposed staff with Adsafes prior to appointment by the Nominating Committee of the local Church. Parents who are only accompanying their own child/children to the activity do not require screening or Adsafes compliance. Contact details for Adsafes are at the end of this document. <input type="checkbox"/> Adsafes will approve the proposed list and advise the Church Pastor or discuss with the Pastor the names of persons who represent a heightened child protection risk. The Pastor will guide any decisions of the Nominating Committee in accordance with Adsafes advice. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff who are new to the congregation or serving for the first time (subject to waiting periods) should complete a volunteer information form including the provision of referee details. Referees must be consulted before appointment. <input type="checkbox"/> The Nominating Committee should determine the suitability of the persons being considered for roles which involve working with children. 	<p>Adsafes Responsible Officer (Church Pastor) will compile a list of potential staff. ARO will email the list of names to Adsafes at: info@adsafe.org.au</p> <p>Adsafes Risk Management & Investigations (RMI) Team will screen the names and advise the Church Pastor of the outcome.</p> <p>Nominating Committee will distribute volunteer information forms and consult with referees.</p> <p>Nominating Committee</p>
Waiting Periods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Staff should serve the required waiting periods before commencing their term of service. Newly baptized or transferring members who have indicated a willingness to work with children should serve a waiting period of six months before appointment. Non-members should serve a waiting period of twelve months. This is in accordance with Adsafes Policy (see below for details). 	Nominating Committee
Working with Children Check (or equivalent)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Staff will possess a cleared Working With Children Check (WWCC) or equivalent. <input type="checkbox"/> Details of the WWCC (or equivalent) should be verified with the relevant authority if this is applicable to the jurisdiction. <input type="checkbox"/> The WWCC (or equivalent) number, expiry date and verification date (if applicable) are to be recorded either in the person’s Adsafes e-learning account or elsewhere for ease of reference. 	Local Church Adsafes Compliance Assistant (ACA) to check compliance, verify (if applicable) and record WWCC (or equivalent) details.
Adsafes Training and Code of Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Staff should complete the Adsafes General Awareness Training before commencement of service. The Training is located on the Adsafes e-learning portal at: https://elearning.adsafe.org.au/. Staff may also complete Training via a scheduled Zoom session. Information on sessions is posted on the Training section of the Adsafes website or can be sourced through the local Church Adsafes Compliance Assistant (ACA). 	Adsafes Compliance Assistant (ACA) to monitor and encourage completion of Awareness Training and Code of Conduct.

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	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff should sign (electronically) the Adsafe Code of Conduct before commencement of service. The Code of Conduct is located on the Adsafe e-learning portal at: https://elearning.adsafe.org.au/	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Adsafe will link the e-learning account of the staff member to the account of the Adsafe Compliance Assistant (ACA) at the local Church such that account and compliance details are visible in the ACA's Team View.	Adsafe Safeguarding Team.
Preparation & Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff should receive clarity around their job description and expectations of their role from the Nominating Committee in consultation with the Children's Ministries leader/Sabbath School leader. <input type="checkbox"/> The physical design and fit out of the Sabbath School room or Children's Ministries space should be safe for participants. <input type="checkbox"/> Posters advising children and adults of child-safe practices should be placed in the room/space. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide safeguarding information tips to parents/carers and age-appropriate information for children promoting personal safety.	<p>Nominating Committee and Children's Ministries/Sabbath School leader (if needed).</p> <p>Leader will check safety of space and position appropriate safety posters as provided by Adsafe.</p> <p>Leader will share appropriate information. Check Adsafe resources on website.</p>
Program Operation	<p>Ensure that consideration is given to the following:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Two adults present in the room <input type="checkbox"/> Adhering to suggested adult/child ratios <input type="checkbox"/> Sign in/sign out forms <input type="checkbox"/> Clear guidelines regarding toileting procedures <input type="checkbox"/> If a child needs assistance with personal care, a parent or guardian must accompany the child <input type="checkbox"/> Visibility panels in doors and/or an open-door policy <input type="checkbox"/> Locking of Sabbath School room doors once the room is vacated <input type="checkbox"/> Mitigation of risks of harm with respect to resources and equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Decibel level of noise for young ears <input type="checkbox"/> Managing the presence of visitors and parents in the room	<p>Program leader in conjunction with their team, and other relevant people such as deacons as necessary.</p> <p>Sign-in/sign out forms and suggested adult/child ratios are located on the Adsafe website (see below for links).</p>
Complaints Handling & Notifications – all	<input type="checkbox"/> Allegations of criminal conduct should be reported to Police. <input type="checkbox"/> All adults are required under legislation to report allegations of sexual offences.	All persons working with children need to be aware of these procedures.

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<p>persons working with children</p> <p>Complaints Handling & Notifications – dependent on jurisdiction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> All volunteer and paid staff are required under legislation to take action to protect a child who is likely to experience sexual abuse. <input type="checkbox"/> For advice or guidance on any of the above contact the Adsafe Responsible Officer (local Church Pastor) or Adsafe. <input type="checkbox"/> Persons providing religion-based activities are, in some jurisdictions, subject to Mandatory Reporting legislation. This reporting relates to suspicion of harm, or risk of significant harm to a child or young person including neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, domestic violence and emotional harm any of which is likely to continue without intervention. <input type="checkbox"/> Adults working with children are, in some jurisdictions, subject to Reportable Conduct measures. This means that reports need to be made to the relevant authority if an adult is involved in a sexual offence, sexual misconduct, assault, ill-treatment, neglect, or failure to protect or report offences. These measures relate to all aspects of a person’s life not just when they are working with children. 	<p>Leaders should refer to the Adsafe Child Protection and Vulnerable Person Policy (see below for details) for jurisdiction specific requirements. Contact Adsafe if advice is required.</p>
Taking Disclosures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A child may disclose to a Sabbath School teacher that they have been the victim of abuse. 	Refer to page 4 of this checklist for advice relevant to receiving a disclosure.
Notifications to Adsafe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Any allegations of investigable conduct must be reported to Adsafe as part of the Complaint Handling Process. This allows Adsafe to work with and support leaders, local Churches and Conferences to manage and mitigate risk during and after the event. 	Adsafe Responsible Officer (if appropriate) or the person raising a concern can contact Adsafe either by phone, email or on-line enquiry form.

[Adsafe Contact Details](#)

Phone: 1800 220 468 Monday – Thursday 9.00am-5.00pm; Friday 9.00am – 12.30pm

Email: info@adsafe.org.au

Website: www.adsafe.org.au

Adsafe Child Protection Policies and Code of Conduct: www.adsafe.org.au/safeguarding/policies

Sign in/sign out form: www.adsafe.org.au/safeguarding/resources/forms-and-templates

Adult/Child ratios: www.adsafe.org.au/safeguarding/resources/checklists

RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION OR DISCLOSURE FROM A CHILD

The child sees you as a trusted adult which is an honour, particularly as they are coping with trauma. Affirm them for their courage in sharing the disclosure with you.

DO	DO NOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Remain calm.✓ Listen carefully without interrupting.✓ Establish the safety and well-being of the child.✓ Make detailed notes to document all the information given and received (as soon as possible after the child has disclosed).✓ Support the child and reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you.✓ Explain clearly what will happen next.✓ Report the allegation/disclosure to Police if you believe the child is in immediate danger.✓ Follow your internal complaints and allegations policy – report to Police (if necessary), child protection bodies, local Church Sabbath School Coordinator or Adsafes Responsible Officer (Pastor) or Adsafes Compliance Assistant who will report to Adsafes.✓ Contact Adsafes directly for advice if you are unsure what to do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">× Express panic, shock, anger or disbelief.× Ask too many questions – your questions may jeopardise future Police or child protection investigations.× Ask leading questions.× Dismiss, minimise or challenge the disclosure.× Make promises you cannot keep (including keeping the disclosure a secret).× Confront the alleged perpetrator.