



W A G G A W A G G A
EVANGELICAL CHURCH

WWEC Code of Conduct for volunteers, leaders and staff (non-pastoral)

INTRODUCTION

Wagga Wagga Evangelical Church (WWEC) values the social, relational and interpersonal safety and well being of our people. We value the role of leaders and mentors in the lives of our members by promoting transparent, accountable relationships that promote trust and confidence in our church and our programs. The Code of Conduct is underpinned by a belief that everyone should be treated with respect and dignity. WWEC commits to a standard of ethical behaviour that brings honour and glory to God.

Note - this Code of Conduct is not exhaustive, and does not foresee every set of circumstances that may arise across the variety of church events and activities (hosted by WWEC or other christian organisations). It should be viewed as an educative guide to the principles that help inform what is appropriate conduct by WWEC members. The Code of Conduct should be used in conjunction with WWEC Policies and Procedures. These are located on the WWEC website; wwec.org.au.

CONDUCT IN MINISTRY TO CHILDREN AND YOUTH

In ministry to kids & youth we DO....

- Behave as a positive role model to children and youth.
- Treat all children with respect.
- Use positive and affirming language toward children and youth.
- Refrain from showing favouritism.
- Help provide an open, family friendly environment for children.
- Alert someone if you see an apparent breach of this code.
- Report suspicions of child abuse or neglect to a WWEC Safe Ministry Contact.
- Comply with all relevant WWEC policy, procedures and guidelines.
- Participate in Safe Ministry Training & have a current Working with Children Check.
- When communicating with youth (under 18 years of age);
 - When using Facebook and other social media, communication is transparent and includes another leader in correspondence or personal messaging. Be wise in posts on your own page.
 - When communicating via email, use the email address of the youth's parent(s), otherwise if using the email address of the youth, always copy the email to one of the other youth group leaders who does not live in the same household as you.

DO NOT....

- Engage in negligent dangerous physical play with a child or young person. Physical games that may involve some rough activity are permissible in an organised and supervised manner.
- Touch a child in an age/culturally inappropriate manner.

- Hold, kiss, cuddle, or touch a child, except for age appropriate touch, for example, to comfort distress.
- Spend time alone or remain in a confined or secluded space with a child or young person.
- Show or share sexually suggestive material to a child in any form such as email, text, movie, sound or picture file.
- Wear sexually suggestive clothes or engage in any nudity.
- Use profane language near or around children.
- Assist children (other than your own) to do things of a personal nature that they can do themselves. Note: It is our preference that children not yet at school will be taken to the toilet by their parents during Kids Church if possible. If a leader must take a child to the toilet they will take multiple children with them so they are not alone with any child. Infants and Primary aged children will go to the toilet with a friend of the same gender.
- Use physical means or corporal punishment to discipline or control a child, except to restrain a child from harming themselves or others
- Take a child or young person to your home/residence or have private meetings.
- Travel alone with a child that is not your own (unless a private arrangement is made with their parents)
- Take unauthorised photos, movies or recordings of a child. Note: only photographers, approved by a WWEC staff member, has permission to take photos at selected WWEC events.

CONDUCT IN MINISTRY TO ADULTS

In Ministry to adults we

DO.....

- Treat all people with respect and love, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, language, religion, political/other opinion, disability or other status.
- Model appropriate physical contact. This will depend on a person's age and the ministry you are completing.
- Model appropriate interactions;
 - take into account cultural background and disability
 - dress modestly
 - be wise and responsible in use of social media
- Value Confidentiality. Confidentiality and trust are important to church relationships. Note: There may be times when you may need to seek further guidance. Be discerning about whether the person needs to seek further guidance from a Pastor, Legal services or other specialists. Confidentiality may be broken to ensure the safety of the individual or others.
- Discuss suspected abuse (physical, emotional, financial, spiritual, sexual or neglect) with a WWEC Safe Ministry Contact.
- Comply with all relevant WWEC policy, procedures and guidelines.
- Aim for reconciliation when conflict occurs. Issues relating to grievances (where necessary) will be handled in accordance with the WWEC Procedure - Safe Ministry Management.
- Conduct all WWEC financial matters with honesty and publicly account for all monies handled on behalf of others.
- Actively promote a safe environment where abuse of any nature, bullying, harassment, family or other violence, are neither tolerated nor able to take place.

DO NOT.....

- Engage in behaviour that is intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade others.
- Use crude language or sexual joking.

- Allow allegations/suspected abuse/risk of harm or disclosures to go unreported.
Note: These should be reported to a WWEC Safe Ministry Contact.
- Engage in any form of abusive behaviour; bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, sexual abuse or spiritual abuse. These forms of abusive behaviours are defined in Appendix A.

Appendix A Definitions of abusive behaviours

Type	Definition
Physical Assault	<p>An assault can occur when a person intentionally or recklessly (ie. knows the assault is possible but ignores the risk):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - applies physical force against a child without lawful justification or excuse - such as hitting, striking, kicking, punching or dragging a child (actual physical force); or - causes a child to apprehend the immediate and unlawful use of physical force against them– such as threatening to physically harm a child through words and/or gestures and regardless of whether the person actually intends to apply any force (apprehension of physical force). <p>A physical assault is not serious where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it only involves minor force; and - it did not, and was not ever likely to, result in serious injury. <p>A physical assault is serious where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it results in the child being injured, beyond a type of injury like a minor scratch, bruise or graze; or - it had the potential to result in a serious injury; or - the injury suffered may be minor, but the assault is associated with aggravating circumstances (in this regard, aggravating circumstances might include associated inhumane or demeaning behaviour by the employee, for example kicking a child, pulling a child by grabbing the child around the neck).
Emotional & Psychological Harm	<p>Behaviour that causes significant psychological or emotional harm is conduct that is intentional or reckless (without reasonable excuse), obviously or very clearly unreasonable and which results in significant emotional harm or trauma to a child.</p> <p>For a reportable allegation involving psychological harm, the following elements must be present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an obviously or very clearly unreasonable or serious act or series of acts that the employee knew or ought to have known was unacceptable, and - evidence of psychological harm to the child that is more than transient, including displaying patterns of 'out of character behaviour', regression in behaviour, distress, anxiety, physical symptoms or self-harm, and - an alleged causal link between the employee's conduct and the significant emotional or psychological harm to the child.
Sexual Offence	<p>A sexual offence is an offence of a sexual nature under a law of NSW, another state/territory, or the Commonwealth committed against, with or in the presence of a child, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sexual touching of a child - a child grooming offence; - production, dissemination or possession of child abuse material. <p>An alleged sexual offence does not have to be the subject of criminal investigation or</p>

Type	Definition
	charges for it to be categorised as a reportable allegation of a sexual offence.
Sexual Misconduct	<p>Any conduct with, towards or in the presence of a child that is sexual in nature (but is not a sexual offence) and provides the following (non-exhaustive) examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Descriptions of sexual acts without a legitimate reason to provide the descriptions - Sexual comments, conversation or communications; - Comments to a child that express a desire to act in a sexual manner towards the child, or another child <p>Note - crossing professional boundaries comes within the scope of the scheme to the extent that the alleged conduct meets the definition of sexual misconduct. That is, conduct with, towards or in the presence of a child that is sexual in nature (but is not a sexual offence)</p>
Spiritual Abuse	Controlling or coercive behaviour, aiming to manipulate or pressure individuals, through the misuse of scripture.
Ill-treatment	<p>Conduct towards a child that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unreasonable; and - seriously inappropriate, improper, inhumane or cruel. <p>Ill-treatment can include a range of conduct such as making excessive or degrading demands of a child; a pattern of hostile or degrading comments or behaviour towards a child; and using inappropriate forms of behaviour management towards a child.</p>
Neglect	<p>A significant failure – by a person with parental responsibility for the child, or an authorised carer or an employee if the child is in the employee’s care – to provide adequate and proper food, supervision, nursing, clothing, medical aid or lodging for the child that causes or is likely to cause harm to the child.</p> <p>Neglect can be an ongoing situation of repeated failure by a caregiver to meet a child’s physical or psychological needs, or a single significant incident where a caregiver fails to fulfil a duty or obligation, resulting in actual harm to a child or where the failure is likely to cause harm. Examples of neglect include failing to protect a child from abuse and exposing a child to a harmful environment.</p>
Harassment	<p>Unwelcome conduct, whether intended or not, in relation to another person where the person feels with good reason in all circumstances offended, belittled or threatened. Such behaviour may consist of a single incident or several incidents over a period of time. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - making an unwelcome physical contact with a person - making gestures or using language that could reasonably give offence including continual and unwarranted shouting - making unjustified or unnecessary comments about a person’s capabilities or attributes - putting an open display pictures, posters, graffiti or written materials that could reasonably give offence - making unwelcome communication with a person in any form (eg phone calls, emails, text messages, social networking), and - stalking a person

Type	Definition
Bullying	The repeated seeking out or targeting of a person to cause them distress and humiliation or to exploit them, this may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- exclusion from a peer group- intimidation- extortion