

What can I expect from a children's/youth activity?



We understand that parents/caregivers place a lot of trust in church personnel when they send their child to a church activity. We believe that parents should be able to be confident that their child will be safe and happy when participating in church activities.

We take several steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of your child during church activities. All clergy, religious, employees and volunteers have Working With Children Checks, and we endeavour to ensure anyone who works or volunteers directly with children or young people has received relevant training to help them carry out their role effectively and support the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

In addition, we have developed guidelines for those working or volunteering with children and young people and we encourage parents and children/young people to be familiar with these guidelines so they know what to expect of us. You can request a copy of the 'Best Practice Guidelines for Interacting with Children and Young People' by asking in your parish office, calling the Child Protection Unit, or visiting the Archdiocesan website.

*If you feel that any of these guidelines have been breached or have other concerns about the way church personnel have interacted with your child, please do not hesitate to contact your parish priest or the Child Protection Unit on **8210 8159** for support and to have your concern addressed.*



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- Be asked to give consent for your child to participate in any activity for which you are not present.
- Be informed of the nature of the activity, who will be caring for your child, where your child will be, and of how you can contact the people caring for your child if necessary.
- Be asked for consent if your child is going to be photographed, or if their name is going to be published or displayed.
- Be informed and asked for consent if your child will be transported or will be leaving the premises you drop them off to.
- Be told how to give feedback, ask questions, or raise concerns with the leaders of the activity.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- Be treated with respect at all times.
- Be informed of their right to be safe and feel safe at all times.
- Say 'no' to participating in any activity or part of an activity. Children/young people also have the right to say 'no' to any kind of interactions that they feel uncomfortable with e.g. hugging or holding hands. Children/young people should be informed of their right to decline when being asked to participate in such activities.
- Give their opinion and feedback, and to feel like a valued part of the group.
- Complain or raise concerns, and be informed of who they can talk to if they feel unsafe or have an issue to raise.

A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON SHOULD NOT:

- Be alone with an adult at any time (unless this has been specifically discussed with you beforehand).
- Be treated differently due to their gender, race, background, family situation, sexual orientation or disability (except to accommodate their needs).

CHURCH PERSONNEL SHOULD:

- Treat children/young people and families with respect at all times.
- Consider the varying needs of children/young people and be child/young person focussed in planning activities.
- Welcome input, feedback and questions from both children/young people and parents.
- Observe appropriate boundaries, including not seeking out interaction with children or young people outside of the church activity.
- Work in pairs and avoid being alone with a child or young person at any time.

