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PROTECTION AND CARE FOR EVERYONE

Safe Ministry Sunday Fact Sheet

What is Safe Ministry Sunday

An opportunity for church leaders to:

- Raise awareness about Safe Ministry within the whole church community
- Educate the church community about Safe Ministry
- Encourage the church community to be involved in making church a safe place for everyone.

This could occur at the beginning of the year (sometime in February to coincide with the commencement of the children's/youth and other ministries); during a commissioning service for children's and youth leaders; during Child Protection week; during Children's Week; or a day/week that fits in with your church program.

Church leaders have responsibilities to implement the Child Safe Standards amongst other obligations and to take actions that improve the safety of all within our churches. The Office of the Director of Safe Ministry (ODSM) has developed resources to support church leaders to facilitate Safe Ministry Sunday and fulfil various safe ministry responsibilities.

Who is this for and why do it?

Everyone in our churches has a role to play in keeping everyone safe and free from harm.

It shows our church is serious about keeping everyone safe.

This is a great opportunity to focus on safe ministry across the whole church community, including children.

Some of the resources are specifically for children (colouring in sheet and posters). This provides an excellent opening for teaching protective behaviours to children and helps to increase the personal safety of children in our churches.

This will help to meet Child Safe Standard 2[1], *that Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously* which requires organisations to implement strategies to increase protective factors for the children attending parish ministry activities.

[1] The Child Safe Standards are a principle-based framework to help organisations working with children develop strategies and to create a culture that keeps children safe and protects them from harm. Further information about the Child Safe Standards is available on the Office of the Children's Guardian website.

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Safe Ministry Sunday Key Messages

Keeping children and others safe is everyone's responsibility.
Safe Ministry is not just for leaders.
We all have a role in ensuring our church is a safe place for all, particularly for children and other vulnerable people.

What can you do to make church safe for everyone?
Keep watch for anything unsafe.
Speak up to the Safe Ministry Representative, Senior Minister or other leader if you notice any safety concerns.
Always provide a safe place
We can actively prevent harm from occurring. Make sure the way we do ministry and the environment is safe.
Teach children to keep safe
Take opportunities to teach children about protective behaviours through incidental learning and planned activities.

Message from Archbishop Kanishka Raffel

Thanks for taking part in Safe Ministry Sunday. Doing ministry safely matters because every person is made in God's image and is deeply valued by him. God's love and care extends to children, young people, and adults.
Everyone in the church community shares responsibility for safe ministry.
Leaders, volunteers, parents, carers, and congregation members all help to create an environment where people are treated with care, boundaries are respected, concerns are taken seriously, and everyone can participate in church life with confidence and trust.

Archbishop Kanishka Raffel's full video message is available here.

Praying for Safe Ministry

- Give thanks for all those who serve in the church leading our children, youth and ministries with other vulnerable people.
- Pray for the safety of the children and youth whilst they are participating in the programs at church.
- Pray for those who have been harmed in the past, for healing and comfort.
- Pray for wisdom for the Safe Ministry Representative, Senior Minister and others as they seek to improve the safety of the church and implement the Child Safe Standards.

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Resources for Safe Ministry Sunday

The Office of the Director of Safe Ministry has developed resources to support churches to talk about Safe Ministry.

Katrina the Safe Ministry Meerkat

The fictional character, Katrina the Safe Ministry Meerkat has been developed to support the implementation of Safe Ministry Sunday.
The instincts of the Meerkat provide a good example of traits to foster within our church community to increase safety within our churches.
Meerkats are naturally alert, social and protective of their group. They are vigilant with early-warning abilities and are ready to quickly warn others when they spot a potential danger.

Meer
K Keep watch for anything unsafe
A Always provide a safe place
T Teach children to keep safe

The following resources featuring Katrina and the key messages have been developed:

- 2 x Posters
- Colouring in poster for children
- Powerpoint presentation which includes a message from the Archbishop and prayer points for use during services
- Postcard which includes prayer points (colour and greyscale)

Other ideas for Safe Ministry Sunday

- run a parent forum
- hold focus groups on what makes our church a safe place
- launch Child safe statement of commitment
- acknowledge Child Safe champions
- provide a feedback survey for children (show we listen)
- discuss protective behaviours themes/strategies
- advertise key people to speak to about concerns
- include a Rector's message in church newsletter
- run a safe ministry training information session

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Where to get further information

The Safe Ministry website has many resources to support churches to implement safe ministry Resource documents – Safe Ministry

The Safe Ministry Blueprint documents in particular support developing a culture of safe ministry within our churches.

Resources for implementing the 10 Child Safe Standards including Protective behaviours are located Child Safe Standards – Safe Ministry

What to do if I have a concern

If you see something say something.

Speak to the relevant Ministry leader or Senior Minister (unless your concern is about the Ministry leader or Senior Minister) to report safe ministry concerns.

Contact the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry. Details are available here.

Refer to the Safe Ministry Blueprint (page 40) section on reporting for detailed information about reporting to the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry, Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), Office of the Children's Guardian and police.

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