

Te Awamutu Bible Chapel (TABC)

Family Harm Policy

What is Family Harm?	1
Policy Purpose	2
Aim	2
Procedures	3
Reporting and Support	3
Resources	4
Appendix 1	5
Appendix 2	6

What is Family Harm?

Family harm, including intimate partner abuse, is an assault upon the image of God in another human being in the abuser's spouse, intimate partner, or others who are connected by relationships (not strangers) through a pattern of intentionally misusing power, overtly or covertly, in words or actions, to gratify self.

- Family harm usually occurs in a pattern that is typically increasing in frequency and/or intensity
- Family harm is intentional, though the abuser may not be self-aware enough to recognise the intentions of his or her heart. Abuse is never carried out by accident
- Family harm is about the misuse of power to control or manipulate another for selfish gain. It is an act of oppression
- Family harm can involve physical, emotional, verbal, sexual, economic, spiritual, or psychological means
- The goal of family harm is self-gratification - to get what one wants at the expense of another

Family harm, which can be used interchangeably with the terms 'domestic violence', 'domestic abuse', 'intimate partner violence' and 'domestic harm', is widely spread in our society. Sadly, New Zealand has the highest rate of domestic abuse in the OECD and over 80% of incidents go unreported.

It is child abuse for children to witness or hear family harm. Children who have experienced an event, or multiple events, of exposure to family violence from those who are responsible for their care, protection and nurture can suffer complex trauma.

Family harm in any form - physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, or spiritual - is an assault upon the image of God in a fellow human being and is therefore an assault upon God himself. When it is between a husband and a wife and / or intimate partners, it further violates the one-flesh covenantal relationship that God established. Under no circumstance is abuse ever justified. Neither is it ever the fault of the victim.

Family harm severely damages relationships and often destroys the relationship beyond repair. An act of abuse is never an act of Christian love. Christ's self-giving love encourages the full growth of the individual, while family harm seeks to prevent the victim's independence through dominance, violence and fear.

Given this acknowledgment, Te Awamutu Bible Chapel affirms the following:

- Family harm in all its forms is sinful and incompatible with the Christian faith and a Christian way of living
- All abuse is spiritually damaging for both the person being abused and the person who is abusing
- Family harm is a serious problem which occurs in church families as well as in wider society
- Family harm is not primarily an anger problem, a marriage problem, the victim's problem, or even a legal problem, but rather is a sin problem
- Family harm is primarily (though not always) carried out by men, against the very people whom God has given these men to protect and shepherd - women and children
- We will listen to, believe, support, and care for those affected by family harm
- We will urge victims of abuse to consider their own safety and that of affected family members first and to seek help from the church, family harm specialists, professional counselling and legal resources, to bring healing to the individuals and, if possible, to the relationship
- We will work with abusers to access the appropriate support while working to keep all involved safe
- We will work with local family harm support agencies, will learn from them and support them in appropriate ways, and will publicise their work
- We will teach that family harm is a sin
- We will teach what it means to be male and female image-bearers of God, equal in value, dignity and worth
- We will train all pastor/elders and lay leaders in recognising and responding in regard to family harm¹
- We will seek to utilise trained professionals to encourage best practices and keep church members and leadership trained on and informed about the implementation of this family harm policy

Policy Procedure

The Church has a responsibility to protect and care for those in need. We acknowledge that the Church is an open and inclusive environment and will open itself up to potential cases of family harm from those within and outside of the church family.

The purpose of this document is to outline a procedure and relevant support agencies in order to

- a) Care for those who are vulnerable,
- b) Care for those who are helping the vulnerable
- c) Further our care for the community; to share the love of Jesus and his care for his people
- d) Protect the innocent and those in distress

Aim

¹ Please see Appendix 1: Power and Control Wheel

1. To ensure Te Awamutu Bible Chapel is a safe place for all
2. To ensure staff and volunteers have a clear methodology, procedure, and resources for handling family harm in all its forms

We acknowledge the diversity in families and the community that we are in. We respect that every family is individual, and we will work in the best way that is led by them.

Procedures

Family harm situations are complex. We will support the victim to make decisions in their own time with safety as the first priority.

We ensure safety first by:

- Ensuring that those who have experienced family harm can find safety and informed help
- Taking it seriously - ensuring that any disclosures of abuse are taken seriously and not dismissed
- Keeping confidentiality - respecting the need for confidentiality within the bounds of safe ministry practice
- Going at the victim's pace - never pressuring any victim of family harm to forgive, submit to, or restore a relationship with an offender
- Police vetting for all people 18 years of age or older serving in leadership and ministry positions in children's or youth ministry.

Reporting and Support

This outlines the reporting and support chain regarding the witnessing or disclosure of **any** family harm; (e.g. who do you talk to first)

If you feel that the person is in immediate, life-threatening danger call 111

This is reported then to the Lead Pastor of our church if the serious incident happens on Church property. If the incident does not happen on Church property permission will be sought from the victim to do so. If this is not appropriate or safe for the victim it will be reported to the wider Eldership.

This includes any occurrence of family harm known or perpetrated by anyone in a leadership role at Te Awamutu Bible Chapel (Elders, E Team, Staff Ministry Leaders), that is putting the victim/s in any perceived immediate risk of serious harm, physical injury, or death.

For non-life threatening / immediate family harm issues reporting may be to **(with permission from the victim)**;

- An Elder or a Pastor - if this is not appropriate or safe for the victim an alternative will be found within the wider Eldership.
- Specialist Support (health professionals e.g., Women's Refuge, Are You Ok, Counsellors etc)
- New Zealand Police
- Oranga Tamariki for the reporting of child abuse ²

² Please see Appendix 2: TABC Child and Youth Protection Policy

1. All cases of family harm within our church will be treated with strict confidentiality and with the victim's safety as first priority. Any confidential information needed to be documented or retained will be kept in a secure file and only accessed by the Lead Pastor, or if that is a conflict of interest, the Church Counsellor.
2. Both the victims and perpetrators of family harm need help, and both need to be treated with grace and love, as we seek to comfort and strengthen victims and support perpetrators towards a life of love and care for those around them. Victims are our priority in the first instance.
3. Any occurrence of family harm committed by, or known by, anyone in a leadership role at Te Awamutu Bible Chapel that isn't putting the victim/s in any perceived immediate risk of serious harm, physical injury or death, must be reported to an elder of our church as soon as possible. If someone in the Eldership is directly involved, related, or implicated in the family harm, the reporting is to go to the Church Counsellor, with permission from the victim as stated on page 3. It will then be decided whether to contact the police or Oranga Tamariki at that point or begin to work with the people involved using church / community resources in the first instance.

Resources

- Women's Refuge Crisis Line – available 24 hour, seven days a week - 0800 733 843
- Oranga Tamariki – 0508 326 459
- Areyouok.org.nz - 0800 456 450
- Violence Free Waipa – violencefreewaipa.org.nz
- Age Concern – for Elder Abuse – 0800 652 105
- Victim Support - 0800 842 846 - victimsupport.org.nz/get-support/family-violence-and-harm
- Male Victim's Support
- NZ Police - police.govt.nz/advice/family-violence/help



Note: the above wheel is specifically portraying a female as the victim. This is simply because it is more common. Research suggests that **one in three** (33%) of New Zealand women have experienced physical or sexual intimate partner violence (IPV) in their lifetime. When psychological abuse is added (where economic harm sits), it increases to **one in two** (55%)

One in eight men reported being victims of family violence.

nzfvc.org.nz/news/new-research-finds-changes-rates-intimate-partner-violence-nz

whiteribbon.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/fact-sheet-on-gender-and-family-violence.pdf

Te Awamutu Bible Chapel (TABC) Child Protection Policy

1 September 2022

TABC CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Table of Contents

Statement of Commitment	1
Section One: Introduction	2
Purpose	2
Guiding Principles	2
Scope	2
Legislation	2
Review	3
Definitions	3
Section Two: Roles and Responsibilities	5
Roles and Responsibilities of Church Workers	5
Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Person(s)	5
Section Three: Child Protection Procedures	6
Identification of Abuse	6
Responding to Child Abuse/Suspected Abuse	6
Responding to Disclosures	7
Harmful Behaviour by One Child Towards Another	8
Reporting Procedures	8
Keeping the Childs Family Informed and Involved	8
Confidentiality and Information Sharing	9
Child Protection Procedures Flowchart	10
Section Four: Safe Recruitment and Appointment, Training and Support	11
Safe Recruitment and Appointment – Paid and Voluntary Church Workers	11
Police Vetting	11
Training	12
Support	12
Section Five: Safe Working Practices	12
Supervision of Children	14
Childhood Ministries	14
- Crèche Ministry	14
- Primary Ministry	14
- Teen Ministry	15

Trips and Transportation	15
Section Six: Allegations against Church Workers	16
Appendix One: Indicators of Abuse	17
Appendix Two: Child Protection Overview	21
Appendix Three: Contact List	22

Statement of Commitment

Te Awamutu Bible Chapel (TABC) is committed to the prevention of child abuse and to the protection of children.

TABC is committed to supporting and empowering families to act to keep children safe and will themselves ensure that when making any decision affecting a child, the welfare and best interests of the child will be the prime consideration.

Section One

Introduction

Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this Child Protection Policy is to ensure that the TABC operates in such a way as to protect children from harm.

1.2 This Child Protection Policy confirms the commitment of TABC to the protection of children and is designed to assist Church Workers by providing them with practical guidance for identifying and responding to child protection concerns.

1.3 This Child Protection Policy proceeds to:

- outline the standards and principles by which all Church workers must abide
- outline the action to be taken by members where any form of child abuse or neglect is known or suspected
- establish what action is required when allegations are made against Church workers
- outline safe working practices and the expected behaviour of all Church workers

Guiding Principles

1.4 The Chapel should be a place of safety and all forms of child abuse violate the teachings and principles that underlie TABC's belief system.

1.5 TABC recognises that it has a duty of care for the safety, welfare and well-being of children and will act in ways which protect children from all forms of abuse and harm.

1.6 In all matters involving children and child abuse, TABC will be guided by the principle of “*the welfare and best interests of the child*”

Scope

1.7 This policy applies to all Church workers of TABC.

Legislation

1.8 This policy has been written with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in mind and in accordance with the following legislation:

- Care of Children Act 2004
- Children’s Act 2014
- Crimes Act 1961
- Education Act 1989
- Employment Relations Act 2000
- Family Violence Act 2018
- Health and Safety Act 1956
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- Health Information Privacy Code 1994
- Human Rights Act 1993
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- Privacy Act 2020

Review

1.9 This policy will be reviewed annually and updated regularly, to ensure it is kept up to date with changes that may have been made to legislation, related policies, and procedures, and in light of operational experience.

1.10 The overall responsibility for this policy rests with TABC’s designated persons for child protection.

Definitions

1.11 For the purposes of this policy the following definitions apply:

“Child” means any person under 18 years of age.

“Child Abuse” can involve ongoing, repeated, or persistent abuse, or may arise from a single

incident. Child Abuse may take many forms, but it can be categorised into four different types:

- i. Physical Abuse
- ii. Sexual Abuse
- iii. Emotional Abuse
- iv. Neglect

“Child Protection Register” is a record of children who are considered to be suffering, or who are considered to be at risk of suffering, or likely to suffer, abuse or neglect. The register includes information around those child protection concerns, including but not limited to:

- A record of facts, including observations, with time and date
- What was said and by whom, using the person’s words
- What action has been taken, by whom and when
- All decisions, including if the concern does not require notifying Oranga Tamariki or the Police, with the reasons clearly identified and explained.

The Register must be kept up to date and its contents must be confidential other than to authorised enquirers. It must be held securely and separately from other TABC records.

“Church Worker” refers to any person working at, for, or on behalf of, TABC and includes, but is not limited to, persons employed directly by the TABC, irrespective of whether they are paid or voluntary, or whether they are working on a full time, part time, casual, or temporary basis, or in their roles have direct contact with children. For the purposes of this policy “church worker” also refers to the TABC, Pastors and/or Elders and/or trustees and/or ministry leaders and/or ministry helpers

“Designated Person for Child Protection” is a person within TABC who is responsible for the safeguarding of children. This person is required to undergo regular child protection training and is responsible for ensuring that child protection is a key focus within TABC both at a strategic level and on a day-to-day basis. It is strongly recommended that TABC appoints a secondary designated person for child protection who is also trained in child protection, and who can be consulted on child protection matters in the event that the primary designated person for child protection is unavailable, or if the child protection concern relates to that designated person.

As at the date of this policy the Designated Person for Child Protection for TABC is:

Lyndon Frost

As at the date of this Policy the secondary Designated Person for Child Protection for TABC is:

Frank Berkers

“Emotional Abuse” is any act or omission that results in impaired psychological, social, intellectual and/or emotional functioning and development of a child.

“Family Violence” can take many forms and includes not only acts of physical violence, but also intimidating behaviour such as threatening to harm people, pets or property. Children are always affected either emotionally or physically where there is family violence even if they are not personally injured or physically present.

“Neglect” is any act or omission that results in impaired physical functioning, injury and/or development of a child.

“Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children” formally known as Child Youth and Family Services (“CYFS”). Oranga Tamariki is a government ministry dedicated to supporting children in New Zealand whose wellbeing is at significant risk of harm now, or in the future.

“Physical Abuse” is a non-accidental act on a child that results in physical harm. This includes, but is not limited to, beating, hitting, shaking, burning, drowning, suffocating, biting, poisoning or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse also involves the fabrication or inducing of illness.

“Sexual Abuse” is an act or acts that result in the sexual exploitation of a child, whether consensual or not. Sexual abuse can be committed by a relative, a trusted friend, an associate, or someone unknown to the child.

Section Two

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities of Te Awamutu Bible Chapel Church Workers

2.1 TABC recognises that all Church workers have a full and active part to play in protecting children from harm. It is the primary responsibility of Church workers to be vigilant, maintain professional boundaries and safe working practices, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators of neglect and abuse, whether actual or potential, and to report any concerns, suspicions or allegations immediately.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Person(s)

2.2 The designated person for child protection should:

- Be trained in child protection and undergo regular refresher training
- Adopt, implement, comply with, and enforce the TABC Child Protection Policy
- Ensure that child protection is a key focus within TABC and that appropriate protocols, procedures and training are in place
- Ensure that the needs and rights of children come first - the safety and wellbeing of each child is the paramount consideration in all circumstances
- Promote and model appropriate behaviour at all times
- Ensure that all allegations are managed appropriately
- Ensure, and safeguard, clear, confidential, detailed and dated records on all child protection concerns
- Ensure that all members are aware of, have access to, and understand, this Child Protection Policy
- Ensure that all Church workers are recruited and delegated responsibilities in accordance with the guidelines identified in this policy
- Ensure that when child protection concerns arise, no internal investigation occurs without a decision as to whether or not a response from Oranga Tamariki and/or the New Zealand Police is required. This decision is to be made following consultation with a secondary designated person for child protection and/or an Oranga Tamariki duty social worker.
- Consult with the secondary designated person for child protection, or an Oranga Tamariki social worker, regarding all child protection concerns.

Section Three

Child Protection Procedures

3.1 The procedures set out in section three of this policy provide Church workers with guidelines

to assist with identifying and responding appropriately to concerns of abuse and neglect, whether these concerns are their own or are the concerns of a third party.

3.2 The procedures set out below will help Church workers with:

- the identification of abuse
- handling disclosures, whether verbal or behavioural, from a child
- reporting procedures

Identification of Abuse

3.3 TABC Church workers should be alert and aware of the fact that child abuse can occur in many different settings and forms and child protection concerns may come to light in a variety of different ways. These can include, but are not limited to:

- Direct or indirect disclosure by the child;
- Direct or indirect disclosure from someone known to the child;
- Suspicions of abuse by those involved with the child;
- Allegations and/or direct observations or signs displayed in the child's physical or emotional behaviour;
- Direct witnessing of abuse.

3.4 The signs and indicators of abuse to a child may not be immediately obvious or identifiable.

Appendix One of this policy sets out a non-exhaustive list of signs and indicators to help identify abuse.

3.5 If a Church worker is unsure about what might constitute child abuse, they should ask for advice and guidance from the designated person/s for child protection. At any time, Church workers may seek advice directly from Oranga Tamariki (0508 326 459) regarding child protection concerns.

Responding to Child Abuse/Suspected Abuse

3.6 Church workers will respond to allegations of child abuse in a manner which ensures the child's safety is the first and paramount consideration. Refer to the **"Child Protection Procedure Flowchart"** below.

3.7 Where child abuse is known, or suspected, everything possible needs to be done to ensure the ongoing safety of the child concerned, along with the ongoing safety of any other child who

is in close connection to the alleged offender. The child is the primary concern, and all other concerns (including the guilt or innocence of the alleged offender) must be secondary. This does not mean that the alleged offender is to be considered guilty without due investigation, but that the child's concerns and safety come first. In a situation where a Church worker believes that a child is in immediate danger, that worker in consultation with the designated person for child protection, will inform the NZ Police and Oranga Tamariki of their concerns.

3.8 In dealing with an allegation or suspicion of child abuse, TABC will respond with sensitivity, objectivity, confidentiality, fairness and honesty.

3.9 **Appendix Two** of this policy sets out an overview for responding to child abuse.

Responding to Disclosures

3.10 Disclosures of abuse may come directly from a child. It is important that Church workers of TABC take what the child says seriously. This applies irrespective of the setting, or the workers own opinion on what is being said. If there is information disclosed regarding actual or suspected child abuse Church workers need to:

- stay calm
- listen and hear
- give time to the child to say what they want
- reassure them that they were right to tell
- tell the child that they are being taken seriously and that they are not to blame
- explain that they have to pass on what the child has told them as soon as they are aware that the child is making a disclosure
- give an age appropriate explanation to the child of what the child can expect to happen next
- record in writing what was said as soon as possible, using the child's own words where possible.
- Report the concern to the appropriate statutory agency (being the NZ Police and Oranga Tamariki)

Church workers must not:

- make the child repeat the story unnecessarily
- promise to keep secret
- enquire in to the details of the alleged abuse
- ask leading questions

3.11 Under no circumstances should a Church worker of TABC, or the TABC itself, attempt to conduct an investigation or deal with concerns of abuse themselves.

Harmful Behaviour by One Child Towards Another

3.12 It is important to be aware that children can harm other children. These behaviours are outside of what may be considered the normal range, and can extend to bullying, violence or sexual assault. Therefore, when a child alleges inappropriate harmful behaviour by another child then the child protection procedures outlined in this policy must be considered for both children.

Reporting Procedures

3.13 Church workers must report concerns or allegations of child abuse to the designated person for child protection at the first possible opportunity to best ensure the safety of the child. If the designated person for child protection is unavailable, or if it is thought that there is a conflict of interest, or a potential for a conflict of interest, then consultation should occur with the secondary designated person for child protection or an Oranga Tamariki Duty Social Worker. A decision will be made as to whether to formally notify Oranga Tamariki and the NZ Police. If an immediate response is required to ensure the child's safety, contact should be made with the NZ Police and Oranga Tamariki by Church workers directly. In any situation where an immediate response is required, the NZ Police should be called first.

3.14 All concerns or allegations of sexual abuse must be reported to the NZ Police and Oranga Tamariki.

3.15 When reporting an incident the member of TABC should:

- Inform the designated person for child protection as soon as possible
- Record in writing all conversations and actions taken and keep these records securely in a Child Protection Register.

3.16 Effective documentation, including referrals and notifications, must include the following:

- A record of facts, including observations, with time and date

- What was said and by whom, using the person's words
- What action has been taken, by whom and when

3.17 All decisions, including if the concern does not require notifying Oranga Tamariki or the Police, must be recorded in writing and kept securely in a Child Protection Register with the reasons clearly identified and explained.

Keeping the Child's Family Informed and Involved

3.18 Wherever possible, a child's family should participate in the decisions affecting that child and the relationship between the child and their family should be maintained and strengthened.

3.19 Although the parent or caregiver of the child will usually be informed of concerns, there may be times when those with parental responsibility may not be initially informed. This may happen in circumstances when:

- the parent or caregiver is the alleged offender
- it is possible that the child may be intimidated into silence
- there is a strong likelihood that evidence will be destroyed

3.20 When it comes to informing the family and whānau, advice can be sought from Oranga Tamariki.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

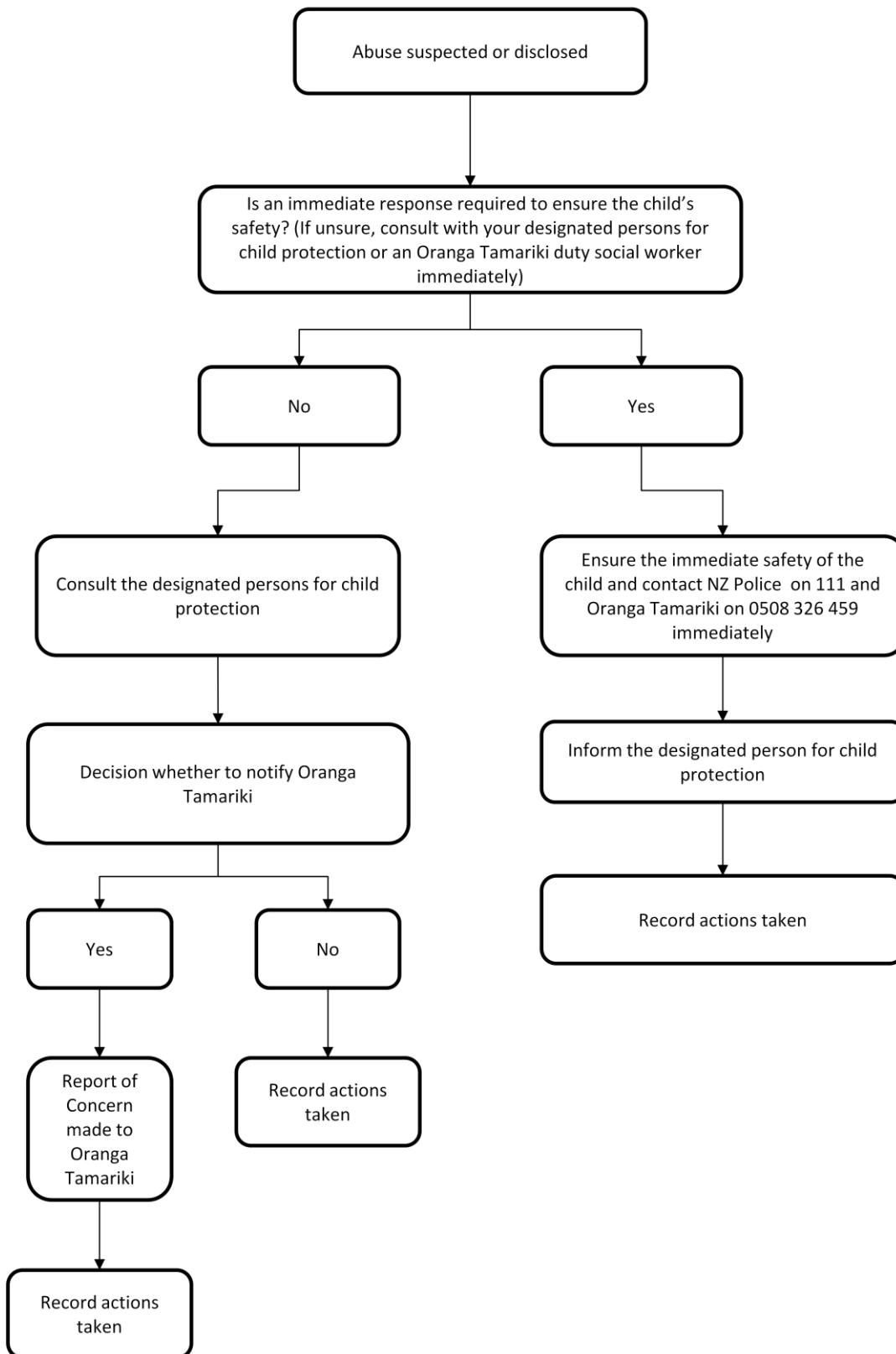
3.21 Under the Privacy Act 2020, the giving of information to protect children is not a breach of confidentiality. Principle 11 of the Privacy Act, 2020, states that the sharing of personal information is allowed if "disclosure of the information is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious threat".

3.22 Under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, if a Church worker raises a legitimate concern in good faith about suspected child abuse, which proves to be unfounded on investigation, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against that Church worker.

3.23 Advice should be sought from Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police before any information

about an allegation that identifies an individual is shared.

Child Protection Procedures Flowchart:



Section Four

Safe Recruitment and Appointment, Training, and Support

Safe Recruitment & Appointment - Paid and Voluntary Church Workers

4.1 TABC has a responsibility to ensure that those entrusted with children are safe to do so. TABC is committed to ensuring robust recruitment and appointment processes are in place, and are followed, which emphasise the importance of child protection, and which ensure that every TABC church worker working with children, either directly or indirectly, is safe and suitable to do so.

4.2 Before making any appointment, TABC will complete a robust safety checking process to ascertain the candidate's suitability and safety to work for, or at, TABC. Depending on the role, this process may include, but is not limited to:

- i. Identity verification check
- ii. Employment verification check
- iii. Reference check
- iv. Professional membership check
- v. Criminal history check
- vi. New Zealand Police vetting check
- vii. Risk assessment
- viii. Formal interviews which include questions on child safeguarding
- ix. Approval by church Pastor and/or ministry leader in consultation with the designated person for child protection

4.3 All new church workers of TABC will be made aware of, and provided with a copy of, the Child Protection Policy as part of the induction process.

Police Vetting

4.4 All church workers, including but not limited to crèche helpers, ministry leaders, ministry helpers, and youth leaders, working with children, either directly or indirectly, must undergo police vetting. Police vetting will be carried out on all church workers over the age of 18 a

minimum of every three (3) years.

4.5 Until such time as the police vetting has been completed, and the results have been received,

all newly appointed TABC church workers working with children will be supervised in their role by a Police vetted church worker and will not be permitted to work alone or carry out any alternative duties.

4.6 In the event of a person under the age of 18 is working as a church worker, that church worker

will not be permitted to work alone with children and must be supervised by a Police vetted church worker at all times.

Training

4.7 All church workers of the TABC will be required to be familiar with, and adhere to, the TABC Child Protection Policy.

4.8 TABC will ensure that everyone in the organisation has adequate and appropriate information about child abuse in order to protect children and to recognise and respond when children are at risk. As a minimum, this will include being provided with an overview of the signs and indicators of abuse, as well as a copy of TABC's Child Protection Policy and the procedure for responding to actual or suspected abuse.

4.9 The Designated Person/s for Child Protection, and all church workers working directly with children should receive in depth, regular, and updated child protection training to ensure that those roles can be carried out safely and effectively.

Support

4.10 It is recognised that dealing with child protection cases and concerns can have an impact on the wellbeing of church workers. TABC will offer appropriate support to any church worker involved with dealing with a child abuse case or concern. This support may include, but is not limited to, counselling services and/or referring the church worker to other appropriate agencies.

4.11 Where practicable, the TABC will assist members of the congregation who are victims of child abuse by ensuring that they have access to the appropriate support care.

Section Five

Safe Working Practices

5.1 A relationship between an adult and a child can never be a relationship between equals. This is because there is a potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable children and therefore adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

5.2 Church workers must, at all times, work for the physical, social, educational, moral and spiritual well-being of the children in their care.

5.3 Clear boundaries are important in maintaining professional behaviour and TABC Child Protection Policy reinforces the need for high standards of behaviour from its members. These boundaries are in place in order to protect children from abuse and at-risk situations, and to protect the TABC, and its Church workers from unwarranted suspicion.

5.4 Church workers should always maintain appropriate boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. Church workers who work with children must act in a way that is considered to be safe practice, and within cultural boundaries. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Avoiding situations where they are alone with a child;
- Ensuring that they are visible to others when with a child;
- Using an open-door policy where possible;
- Avoiding circumstances where their behaviour (both verbal and physical) may be misinterpreted as hostile, suggestive, inappropriate, offensive, or neglectful;
- Not transporting a child alone at any time without parental consent or in an emergency situation;
- Under no circumstances, to transport a child of opposite sex;
- Monitoring visitors to TABC when children are present;
- Not displaying images of children unless they have consent to do so from parents and caregivers;
- Ensuring that all forms of communication with children are transparent and open to scrutiny.

5.5 It is important that in all dealings with children, a balance is struck between the rights of the child and the need for intervention. When physical contact is made with a child this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Church workers

should use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the child for the minimum amount of time necessary.

5.6 Any sexual activity between a Church worker and a child will be reported to the NZ Police.

5.7 Communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, web cams, websites, social networking and blogs. Church workers should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

5.8 Church workers should only share relevant, age appropriate, information. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from a child other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role within TABC.

Supervision of Children

5.9 All efforts are made to ensure that a child safe environment is provided on TABC premises.

5.10 Unless express permission is otherwise given, children visiting TABC premises must be accompanied, and supervised, by a parent or caregiver at all times. The parent or caregiver of any child visiting TABC will be solely responsible for that child. Parents and caregivers will undertake all toileting and changing of their own children.

Childhood Ministries

○ Crèche Ministry

5.11 Crèche services are for children under the age of 5 years and are designed to be provided without the presence of a child's parent or caregiver. Safe working practices will be followed at all times to protect children from the risk of inappropriate behaviour from TABC church workers, and any other adult or child present.

5.12 Where a parent or caregiver is not present, only church workers whose role it is to provide care for a child may do so.

5.13 Any visitors to the crèche must be approved by the appropriate church worker.

5.14 Where possible, open door policies should be used for all spaces and no church workers, or visitors to the crèche, should be left alone with a child.

5.15 Except in emergency situations, no child is to be removed from the crèche by anyone other

than the child's parents or caregivers, without express written permission.

5.16 Except in emergency circumstances, all children will be signed in by a parent or caregiver and should either be signed out by a parent or caregiver, or delivered directly to a parent or caregiver by a church worker at the end of the session unless expressly authorised by the parent or caregiver otherwise.

5.17 The parent or caregiver of the child must provide the crèche with updated contact details.

○ Primary Ministry

5.18 Primary Ministry services are for children aged between 5 and 12 years and are designed to be provided without the presence of a child's parent or caregiver. Safe working practises will be followed at all times to protect children from the risk of inappropriate behaviour from TABC church workers, and any other adult or child present.

5.19 Where a parent or caregiver is not present, only church workers whose role it is to provide care for a child may do so.

5.20 Any visitors to the ministry must be approved by the appropriate church worker.

5.21 Where possible, open-door policies should be used for all spaces and no church workers, or visitors to the ministry, should be left alone with a child.

5.22 Except in emergency situations, no child is to be removed from the ministry by anyone other than the child's parents or caregivers without express written permission.

5.23 Except in emergency circumstances, all children will be signed in by the approved church worker, parent, or caregiver, and should be either signed out by a parent or caregiver or delivered directly to a parent or caregiver at the end of the session unless expressly authorised by the parent or caregiver otherwise.

5.24 The parent or caregiver of the child must provide the ministry with updated contact details.

○ Teen Ministry

5.25 Teen Ministry services are for children aged between 13 and 18 years and are designed to be provided without the presence of a child's parent or caregiver. Safe working practices will be followed at all times to protect children from the risk of inappropriate behaviour from TABC church workers, and any other adult or child present.

5.26 Any visitors to the teen ministry must be approved by the appropriate church worker.

5.27 Where possible, open-door policies should be used for all spaces and no church workers, or visitors to the teen ministry, should be left alone with a child.

5.28 TABC should hold contact details of the child's parent or caregiver in case of emergency.

Trips and Transportation

5.29 Taking children out of TABC physical environment must be carefully planned and preparation is needed to minimise risks and make the activity a positive experience for each child.

5.30 Before any trips parents and caregivers will be informed by written notice of the planned trip and the details of same, including but not limited to:

- The venue;
- The method of transport;
- The date;
- The time.

5.31 Parents and caregivers must give written consent for their child to attend the planned trip or visit.

5.32 Additional helpers and volunteers involved in any TABC trip must be appropriately safety checked prior to the trip taking place.

5.33 TABC will take all precautions to ensure that when transporting children their safety and wellbeing is paramount.

5.34 Only approved and Police vetted church workers will be responsible for transporting children for TABC purposes.

5.35 Children will not be transported alone with a church worker without parental consent

Section Six

Allegations against Church Workers

6.1 Concerns may be raised regarding Church workers. These may be as a result of behaviour within the TABC, or of behaviour within their home environment.

6.2 All Church workers have a responsibility to understand what constitutes appropriate behaviour

towards a child, and to maintain this behaviour at all times.

6.3 Allegations, suspicions or complaints of abuse against Church workers will be taken seriously and reported to the designated person for child protection who will deal with the allegation, suspicion or complaint immediately, sensitively and expediently within the procedures outlined in this policy.

6.4 Any concern of abuse of a child will follow the child protection procedures outlined in this policy. In the event of an allegation of abuse by a Church worker, a report of concern will be made to the Police and Oranga Tamariki.

6.5 When there are suspicions of abuse by a Church worker, both the worker's and the child's rights are to be attended to. This means that the safety of the child is of first concern, and that the Church worker should be encouraged to obtain appropriate professional advice.

6.6 If Church workers become aware of an allegation of abuse, or they form a reasonable suspicion of abuse, by another worker, that worker shall be suspended from all activities of the TABC immediately. A risk assessment must be undertaken without undue delay to determine what level of access that Church worker should have, if any, to the TABC and/or participate in activities of the TABC. In all circumstances the welfare and best interests of all children will be the paramount consideration.

6.7 In all child protection cases, it is important that no internal investigation is to be undertaken, and no evidence is to be gathered, as these might prejudice an official Police or Oranga Tamariki investigation.

6.8 In all child protection cases, TABC will co-operate fully with both Oranga Tamariki and the Police in their investigations and assessments.

Appendix One

Indicators of Abuse

The indicators for child abuse and neglect fall into three general categories:

Physical indicators: Injuries to a child that are severe, occur in a pattern or occur frequently. These injuries range from bruises to broken bones to burns or unusual lacerations and are often unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given

Behavioural indicators: The child's actions, attitudes, and emotions can indicate the possibility of abuse or neglect. Behavioural indicators alone are much less reliable than physical indicators, as a child's behaviour may be the result of a variety of other problems or conditions. When observing changes in behaviour, look for the frequency and pattern of the new behaviour, as well as a child's age and stage of development. For example, it is normal for younger children to be wary of adults, as they may have been taught not to talk to strangers. Look for a combination of physical and behavioural indicators.

Caregiver indicators: Caregivers who abuse, neglect or exploit children are either unable or unwilling to provide care and protection in an appropriate way. Those who are unable to provide care and protection may be physically unable due to their own medical or health condition. They may be overly stressed, tired, or working under the influence of drugs or alcohol which limits their abilities. Caregivers who are unwilling to provide children with the appropriate level of care and protection are more aware that what they are doing is wrong but continue to act in that way. These caregivers may not view the child as someone who has feelings and emotions and often have the need to control others or have displaced aggression towards weaker persons.

The indicators alone do not prove child abuse or neglect. Likewise, the absence of indicators does not exclude the possibility that abuse is occurring. If you have any concerns about the wellbeing of a child or young persons, seek advice from your designated persons for child protection or directly from Oranga Tamariki.

Emotional Abuse Indicators

- Physical Indicators

- Bed wetting or bed soiling with no medical cause

- Frequent psychosomatic complaints (e.g. headaches, nausea, abdominal pains)

- Non-organic failure to thrive

- Pale, emaciated

- Prolonged vomiting and/or diarrhoea

- Malnutrition

- Dressed differently to other children in the family

- Behavioural Indicators:

- Severe developmental lags with obvious physical cause

Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression

Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse

Overly compliant

Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition

Running away from home, avoiding attending at school

Nightmares, poor sleeping patterns

Anti-social behaviours

Lack of self esteem

Obsessive behaviours

Eating disorders

○ Caregiver Indicators:

Labels the child as inferior or publicly humiliates the child (e.g. name calling)

Treats the child differently from siblings or peers in ways that suggest dislike for the child

Actively refuses to help the child

Constantly threatens the child with physical harm or death

Locks the child in a closet or room for extended periods of time

Teaches or reinforces criminal behaviour

Withholds physical and verbal affection

Keeps the child at home in role of servant or surrogate parent

Has unrealistic expectations of child

Involves child in adult issues such as separation or disputes over child's care

Exposes child to situations of arguing and violence in the home

Neglect Indicators

○ Physical Indicators:

Dressed inappropriately for the season or the weather

Often extremely dirty and unwashed

Severe nappy rash or other persistent skin disorders

Inadequately supervised or left unattended frequently or for long periods

May be left in the care of an inappropriate adult

Does not receive adequate medical or dental care

Malnourished - this can be both underweight and overweight

Lacks adequate shelter

Non-organic failure to thrive

○ Behavioural Indicators:

Severe developmental lags without an obvious physical cause

Lack of attachment to parents/caregivers

Indiscriminate attachment to other adults

Poor school attendance and performance

Demanding of affection and attention

Engages in risk taking behaviour such as drug and alcohol abuse

May steal food

Poor social skills

No understanding of basic hygiene

○ Caregiver Indicators:

Puts own need ahead of child's

Fails to provide child's basic needs

Demonstrates little or no interest in child's life - does not attend school activities, social events

Leaves the child alone or inappropriately supervised

Drug and alcohol use

Depression

Physical Abuse Indicators

○ Physical Indicators:

Bruises, welts, cuts and abrasions

Burns - small circular burns, immersion burns, rope burns etc

Fractures and dislocations - skull, facial bones, spinal fractures etc

Multiple fractures at different stages of healing

Fractures in very young children

○ Behavioural Indicators:

Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries

Wary of adults or a particular person

Vacant stare or frozen watchfulness

Cringing or flinching if touched unexpectedly

May be extremely compliant and eager to please

Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries

Runs away from home or is afraid to go home

May regress (e.g. bedwetting)

May indicate general sadness

Could have vision or hearing delay

Is violent to other children or animals

○ Caregiver Indicators:

Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries

May appear unconcerned about child's wellbeing

May state the child is prone to injuries or lies about how they occur

Delays in seeking medical attention

May take the child to multiple medical appointments and seek medical treatment without an obvious need

Sexual Abuse Indicators

○ Physical Indicators:

Unusual or excessive itching or pain in the genital or anal area

Torn, stained or bloody underclothing

Bruises, lacerations, redness, swelling or bleeding in genital, vaginal or anal area

Blood in urine or stools

Sexually transmitted infections

Pregnancy

Discomfort in sitting or fidgeting as unable to sit comfortably

○ Behavioural Indicators:

Age-inappropriate sexual play or language

Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge

Refuses to go home, or to a specific person's home, for no apparent reason

Fear of a certain person

Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression

Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse

Overly compliant

Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition

Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries

Eating disorders

Compulsive behaviours

○ Caregiver Indicators:

May be unusually over-protective of the child

Accuses the child of being sexually provocative

Misuses alcohol or drugs

Invades the child's privacy (e.g. during dressing, in the bathroom)

May favour the victim over other children

Family Violence Indicators

○ Indicators in the Child:

Physical injuries consistent with the indicators of Physical Abuse

Absenteeism from school

Bullying or aggressive behaviour

Complaints of headaches or stomach aches with no apparent medical reason

Talking about or describing violent behaviours

○ Indicators in the Victim:

Physical Injuries including: bruising to chest and abdomen, injuries during pregnancy

Depression and/or anxiety

Inconsistent explanations for injuries

Fearful

Submissive

○ Indicators in the Offender:

Isolates and controls partner and children

Threatens, criticises, intimidates, uses aggressive and physical abuse towards partner and children

Minimises and denies own behaviour, or blames victim for the perpetrator's own behaviour

Appendix Two

Child Protection Overview - Responding to Abuse:

Abuse is "... the harming (whether physically, emotionally, sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person" - Section 2, Oranga Tamariki Act 1989

Child abuse can involve ongoing, repeated or persistent abuse, or it may arise from a single incident. Child Abuse may take many forms, but it can be categorised into four different types:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect

Child abuse can occur in many different settings and forms and may come to light in a variety of different ways. These can include, but are not limited to:

- Direct or indirect disclosure by the child or someone known to the child;
- Suspicions of abuse by those involved with the child;
- Allegations and/or direct observations or signs displayed in the child's physical or emotional behaviour;
- Direct witnessing of abuse.

When disclosures of abuse come directly from a child, it is important that you take what the child says seriously. This applies irrespective of the setting, or your own opinion on what is being said. When a child tells you what has been happening to them, or when you witness or suspect child abuse, it is important that you, as the adult, remain **calm** and **confident**.

RESPOND: Respond to the person (adult or child) – Believe what they tell you and/or what you see.

SAFETY: Ensure the safety of the child. Always take action in the short term to ensure the immediate safety of the child. This will mean contacting Oranga Tamariki (**0508 326 459**) or the Police (**111**) if you think there is an immediate risk to the child.

RECORD: Record immediately all initial statements, observations and concerns to avoid misinterpretations or confusion at a later date.

CONSULT: Do not make decisions alone. Consult with your Child Protection Policy and your designated person for child protection. Oranga Tamariki is always available to give advice.

REPORT: Decide to act on your concerns. If you have told the person you believe is responsible for taking action and they do not act, take further action yourself.

SUPPORT: Seek support for yourself. Responding to a child protection issue can be stressful.

Think “what if I’m right?” Not “what if I’m wrong?”

Appendix Three

Contact List

Your Designated Person for Child Protection

is: **Lyndon Frost**

lyndon@tabiblechapel.org.nz

021 039 7237

Your Secondary Designated Person for Child Protection

is: **Frank Berkers**

frank@tabiblechapel.org.nz

027 372 6548

Ministry for Children - Oranga Tamariki

0508 326 0459

New Zealand Police

111

Child Matters

(07) 838 3370