

Thank you for entrusting your child/children into our care for a program, activity or event for young people. The safety and well-being of all children is important to the Presbyterian Church of Queensland (PCQ). We are committed to transparency in our interactions with children. The following information is what to expect when your child (Under 18 years) comes to a ministry of a local PCQ Church. Please contact your local church's Ministry Coordinator or Minister if you have any concerns. If you would like to discuss the matter further with other denominational officers please complete the PresSafe Feedback Form available at <https://pressafe.org.au/feedback/>

NB: A 'leader' is someone who has been given oversight of a specific group of young people. They may be a paid staff member, or volunteer. All leaders must have a current positive Blue Card or exemption and undertake annual child safety training.

### PERMISSION

Your permission is required for your child to participate in an age-appropriate ministry and its related activities at your local Presbyterian Church.

Your consent is sought for:

- Your child's attendance at the relevant ministry.
- Acknowledge photographs and images of your child may be taken and published, including via social media platforms. Please advise if you do not want this to occur.
- Method of communicating with your child.
- Transport arrangements.
- Current personal and/or medical information

### PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEO

Leaders will be made aware of your preferences regarding the use of images of your child (including videos). The local church social media platforms are monitored. Leaders will respect your child if they do not wish to be photographed. Personal information of your child will not be made public in any comments. Offensive or embarrassing photographs are prohibited.

### COMMUNICATION

Leaders, particularly those in high-school aged groups, are encouraged to be in contact with young people outside of the program. This is to help young people feel cared for and supported. That said, there are three important principles guiding how we safely communicate with children and young people:

1. **Parental Permission** - we require your permission to contact your child outside of a ministry program, event or activity.
2. **Transparency** - Leaders will be accountable to the Ministry Coordinator for the direct contact they are having with any young person. They are encouraged to transfer any significant or pastoral conversations to an in-person meeting, unless this causes needless discomfort to the young person.
3. **Age Appropriate Means of Communication** - the table below sets out approved means of contact and content of communications with your child.

Leaders **must not** be contacting your child via SnapChat, WhatsApp or any similar platforms where messages are encrypted end-to-end or are automatically erased. Nor must they be making private video calls to your child. Any secretive communication that is clearly meant to avoid your knowledge should be reported to the Ministry Coordinator.

Encourage your children to tell someone if they receive unwanted communication from any person. As part of their safety, help them to know how to take a screenshot or recording of anything that makes them uncomfortable.

Church email addresses will be used wherever possible to send information to you or your child. Where a leader uses their own personal email address, the email recipients should also include their Ministry Coordinator or another leader for transparency. In certain circumstances, they may copy the email to [transparency@pcq.org.au](mailto:transparency@pcq.org.au) (an unmonitored account) If you have any concerns regarding the amount, type, or content of contact with your child, please discuss this with the Ministry Coordinator.

<b>PRESSAFE COMMUNICATION TABLE</b>		<b>v.040620</b>	
<b>Platform</b>	<b>Primary School</b>	<b>+13 up to Grade 10</b>	<b>Grade 10 to &lt;18 years</b>
<b>Phone Calls</b>	Only with a specific request by parent or guardian	Only leaders approved by parent or guardian	Only leaders approved by parent or guardian
<b>Emails</b>	Logistical purposes only for mass communication about upcoming events	Logistics, and transparent encouragement – transfer pastoral matters to a meeting as appropriate.	Logistics, and transparent encouragement - transfer pastoral matters to a meeting as appropriate.
<b>Text SMS</b>	Logistical purposes only for mass communication about upcoming events	Logistics, and transparent encouragement - transfer pastoral matters to a meeting as appropriate.	Logistics, and transparent encouragement - transfer pastoral matters to a meeting as appropriate.
<b>Video Calls</b>	With Parental Permission & Transparency (Groups only)	With Parental Permission & Transparency	With Parental Permission & Transparency
<b>Gaming</b>	Do not participate	Group settings only with parental permission	Group settings only with parental permission
<b>Social Media Facebook, Instagram</b>	Do not participate	Logistics, and transparent encouragement – transfer pastoral matters to a meeting as appropriate. Monitoring of posts	Logistics, and transparent encouragement – transfer pastoral matters to a meeting as appropriate. Monitoring of posts

## **TRANSPORT**

Your permission is required for your child to travel with leaders or helpers. These persons must be appropriately licensed (no learner licensed drivers) with a vehicle fit for purpose, driving according to road conditions and rules. Children are not to travel alone with a leader unless approved by local church leadership (Session) at the specific request of the Parent or Guardian.

## **CHILD BEHAVIOUR**

You and your child will be advised of the expected standard of behaviour of those attending the Children’s Ministry. In general, children are expected to be courteous, follow instructions, be respectful of other children. Any behaviour that is unable to be managed will be referred to the child’s parent.

## **REPORTING UNSAFE BEHAVIOUR OR ACTIONS**

If you or your child need to report any unsafe behaviour or actions of someone involved in the program, please do not hesitate to contact the Ministry Coordinator of the program. If you are unable to do this, contact can be made with the Minister of the Church, or the PCQ Risk Management Officer Helen Underwood 0499 599 741 or [helen.underwood@pcq.org.au](mailto:helen.underwood@pcq.org.au) . Alternatively, contact may be made with Department of Child Safety (1800 177 135) or the Police (131 444).

As a result of our commitment to the safety of children, any disclosures or allegations of harm to a child will be immediately assessed and where necessary referred to the Department of Child Safety or Queensland Police Service.