

Safe Ministry Policy; Children & Young People

Policy:	Safe Ministry Policy; Children & Young People
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Introduction

City Light Church (CLC) takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people entrusted to its care. The church recognises that society does not always value children and young people as God intended. Many children and young people today are the victims of neglect, physical, sexual and emotional abuse. The City Light Church Safe Ministry Policy; Children and Young People (the policy) has been designed to protect children and young people aged 0-18.

As part of its mission, the church is committed to:

- Listening to, relating effectively and valuing children and young people whilst ensuring their protection within City Kids activities;
- Encouraging and supporting parents/carers;
- Ensuring that City Kids leaders are given support and ongoing training;
- Having a system for dealing with concerns about possible abuse;
- Maintaining good links with the statutory authorities.

This policy sets out agreed guidelines relating to the following areas:

Section 1: Best Practice when involved in City Kids (City Kids and Crèche)

Section 2: Responding to allegations of abuse

Section 3: Appointing City Kids leaders

Whilst working with children and young people can be the most exciting and fruitful area of activity for many church members, it is important that there are guidelines in place, which establish values and practices that are common to all leaders. Those responsible for coordinating City Kids need to have confidence and trust that the leaders have a shared code of conduct, which emphasises the need for integrity. This ensures they are functioning in a way that best secures the safety, security and well-being of the children and young people in our care.

We are committed as a church to this policy. A copy of this policy is provided to each City Kids leader when applying to work with children and young people and is available to any parent upon request.

Scope and Application

This policy applies to all members of CLC Balmain and its leaders, and will continue to be reviewed and updated from time to time.

The church and its leaders are also subject to Federal and State legislation and to principles established through common law, including but not limited to:

- *Child and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*
- *Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998*
- *Crimes Act 1900*

Definitions

Abuse means the following conduct towards a child:

- Bullying;
- Emotional abuse;
- Harassment;
- Neglect;
- Physical abuse;
- Sexual abuse and;
- Spiritual abuse

Authorities means the police and the NSW Government, Family and Community Services.

Child or young person means all young people between the ages of 0-18.

Children's Ministry Coordinator refers to the individual responsible for the overall coordination of Children's Ministry at the Campus. The Children's Ministry Coordinator at the Balmain Campus is accountable to the Lead Pastor.

Ministry Coordinator refers the individual who is responsible for the coordination of an individual program for City Kids (e.g., Balmain Crèche, Balmain City Kids).

The church means City Light Church Balmain.

Leader in this document refers to any individual working within the children's ministry. They are accountable to the Coordinator for the ministry they are serving in.

1. Best Practice

1.1. "Caring/Helping" and "Counselling"

Children and youth ministry leaders are by virtue of their role, likely to offer advice and help to children or young persons. For the purposes of clarity within this policy a distinction is made between 'caring/helping' and 'counselling'. Cases requiring counselling should be discussed with the Coordinator who will be able to advise what help is available.

'Caring/helping' is offering basic advice, encouragement and helping to promote a child or young person's development in all aspects of their identity and personhood. 'Caring/helping' should only occur in a group setting. It is not desirable for an adult leader to be alone with a child. Generally, a word of advice or short conversation is all that is needed. However, there may be occasions where the child concerned requires further time and individual attention. If this is within the normal group time, the leader should liaise with their parents and make other leaders aware. Leaders should talk to the child in sight of the other leaders.

Some guidelines to follow in 'caring/helping' are as follows:

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is very important. City Kids leaders who have the confidence of children or young persons are in a unique position. Children and young people may discuss issues and problems in their lives with leaders that they cannot or would not discuss with parents or a school teacher. The child must feel secure the leader will not inappropriately discuss the details of a problem or issue for which they are seeking guidance and help. However, absolute confidentiality must **never** be promised. A leader must reserve the right and the duty to consult the Coordinator / Room Leader and not feel bound by secrecy. If the leaders feels that they must consult the Coordinator / Room Leader this must be explained to the child.

Where advice or help is needed this should be provided by a leader of the same sex as the child and given in a public place. Leaders must avoid being alone with a child.

Wherever possible a leader should seek to develop a good relationship with a young person's parents.

The leader must not give advice in areas where they are neither trained nor qualified (for example offering medical advice). However, they should actively help the child seek the advice that is needed from appropriate sources.

Manipulation

Children and young people can be adept at manipulating adults. Leaders must be aware of, and take steps to minimise the risks posed by manipulation. Leaders may find themselves doing all manner of things, with and for the child, that go beyond their appropriate roles. Three questions leaders involved with helping any child must ask themselves are:

- Am I being manipulated?
- Am I going beyond my responsibilities to this child?
- What does this child really want and is it the same as what they are saying?

Dependence on a leader

The development of an attitude of dependence upon a leader is often the result of a caring/helping relationship. The leader must combat dependence by setting clear boundaries and guidelines in terms of time to be spent with an individual child or young person.

Dependence on a child

This occurs when the leader's own spiritual/emotional/physical needs interfere with the "caring/helping" relationship. This can occur when a leader enjoys the company and attention of a child or young person. This type of dependence can be avoided if:

- The leader speaks to the Coordinator /Room Leader honestly and openly about their feelings towards a child or young person.
- Leaders make themselves accountable to their surrounding team.
- Leaders avoid possible compromising situations, (especially avoiding "caring/helping" with members of the opposite gender).

1.2. Behaviour Management

Fostering safe and appropriate behaviour begins with positive and appropriate relationships with children and young people. Positive relationships are those within which children and young people know they are valued and that they will be listened to and if it is required given wise and careful counsel.

Often a child's behaviour is a reflection of their life circumstances or other things that are going on in their lives at the time. It is important to ensure they have their need to be heard satisfied before a situation is acted upon.

Discipline within City Kids is important, not only for the ordered running of a particular activity, but for the benefit and safety of all those involved. The goal is to manage children's behaviour by being proactive rather than merely reactive. To manage behavior proactively, Leaders will:

- Ensure the lesson content is age-appropriate and engaging. A good guide, is to keep 'sitting and listening time' to 1 minute per year of age (ie., for 3 year olds, keep 'sitting and listening' time to 3minutes). Leaders must have visuals for their teaching.
- State simple and clear room rules for behaviour at the beginning of each lesson.
- Ensure the children understand what procedure will be taken if rules are broken.
- Ensure instructions are clear and simple
- Use and vary their tone of voice to engage the children and help them to focus on important information.
- Build positive and appropriate relationships with the kids.
- Notice and acknowledge when children are relating well and listening/obeying well. Don't compare children to each other but encourage and build them up.
- Be good role models and set a good example. Leaders cannot expect children to observe room rules that they themselves break.
- Be consistent in what they say and should ensure other leaders are aware of what they have said – this avoids manipulation.
- Take care to give quieter and well-behaved children attention as well as those who are more disruptive or louder.

If there is a need to address negative behaviour or correct a child the following principles apply:

- Especially with young children, getting down at their level is helpful in gaining their attention and engaging helpfully with them.
- If more than one person is involved in a situation, then work only with the facts not past experiences or perceptions.
- Leaders must discipline out of love never anger. Remain calm and in control or call for assistance if you are angry.
- All corrective behaviour should be conducted sensitively and with the intent for the child to accept responsibility and to then resume an activity or continue positive relationships.
- It is not acceptable to use physical force to discipline a child unless the child is causing physical harm to themselves or another child. It is then acceptable to use reasonable force to protect those involved.
- A leader must not shout in anger or put down a child.

As these children are young, and our programs are currently onsite with the parents, we will not be removing children from activities, unless their parents are there to sit with them or their behaviour is so disruptive that they or another child is in danger or being hurt. In City Kids, if a child is not keeping one of the rules of City Kids, then the following steps apply:

We will give three “reminders”, and then a parent will be called in to either speak with the child/help them calm down/sit with them/correct their behaviour, as appropriate.

While we are onsite, we will be empowering parents to discipline their own children, so leaders can focus their energy on teaching the children and having fun with them.

The process will go like this:

1. First reminder: State that this is a first reminder, outline the rule that has been broken, explain the desired behaviour,
Eg., “Hey ... I’m giving you a first reminder, that’s not how we behave in the games” or “Hey ... I’m giving you a first reminder, you need to stop talking, as it’s my turn to talk up the front”
2. Second reminder: State that this is a second reminder, outline the rule that has been broken again, explain any unclear rules or expectations, then explain the consequences of the next reminder.
Eg., “Hey... that’s a second reminder, let’s talk through the rules and expectations for during a game” or “Hey ... that’s a second reminder, when a teacher is talking, everyone else needs to be listening. If I need to give you a third reminder, I’m going to need to message your mum or dad to come in and help you.
3. Third Reminder: State that this is a third reminder, and explain you will need to call in a parent to help them.
Eg., “Hey ... that’s a third reminder, so I’m going to message your mum/dad now, and she/he’s going to need to speak with you/sit with you”

The above is not done to embarrass or shame the child, rather it is to help them be clear of the rules and have a chance to join back in well. In addition, sometimes alongside the reminder, it may be helpful for a leader to move near to an excited or distracted child, or to move the child closer to a leader/away from a child who is distracting them.

If a disruption is so significant that the child places them or another individual at risk of harm then the child needs to be separated by one of the leaders, and the parent contacted. It is the parent’s responsibility to discipline and correct the child. Leaders dealing with significant disruptive behaviour should complete an incident report providing details of what occurred (see below).

Expectations for Children

For Children participating in our programmes we would expect the following behaviours and attitudes:

- That they listen to the leaders and follow instructions
- That they be respectful and friendly to everyone and welcome new children joining the group – take turns to talk, use their words and bodies to be kind, not to hurt
- That they play by the rules
- That they are free to raise any concerns or worries with the leaders
- That they will not bully others
- That they will not leave the group without the approval or supervision from the leaders.

1.3. Incident Reports

Leaders must complete incident reports when an incident requires medical attention, where a child places himself/herself or other children at risk and where aggressive or violent behaviour has occurred. Leaders should record:

- the child's name
- the date and time of the incident
- the leaders present and any other witnesses
- a detailed description of what occurred
- any follow up actions.

The incident report is to be given to the Children's Ministry Co-ordinator. It will be kept by the church and will remain securely filed.

1.4. Record Keeping

All parents/guardians of children regularly attending City Kids will be required to fill out a registration form. The registration form will ask for the details of the child or young person and their parent/guardian, important health related information and permission for their child to participate in activities and receive medical attention, if required. A register of children attending the children's ministry programs, as well as a record of leaders will be kept by the church and will remain securely filed.

1.5. Safety

Leaders should familiarise themselves with the following:

- The location of nearest phone, fire extinguishers and fire escapes. Leaders must ensure that routes to fire exits are not obstructed.
- The location of, or provision of, a fully equipped basic first aid kit.

1.6. First Aid

At Balmain, a first aid kit is kept in the kitchen. There is an additional one in the Crèche room.

If possible, leaders with a first aid qualification should administer aid. Leaders should call the parents out of the meeting if first aid is required. Leaders must seek help by medical professionals if the child or young person's injuries are not treatable through basic first aid.

If there is a medical emergency, and the parent is onsite, leaders need to call the parents out of the meeting and call an ambulance on 000 if required. If the accident occurs offsite and a parent is not present, the leader will need to call an ambulance or to take the child or young person to the nearest hospital emergency department as necessary.

A parent/ guardian will be notified if any first aid was administered or if professional medical assistance is required and an Incident Report will be completed.

1.7. Fire Precautions

Leaders are responsible for escorting children out of the building and to the designated assembly point. If safe to do so, leaders should pick up all the sign in/out forms before leaving the building and check all toilets. Once outside, children should be asked to form a line in front of their City Kids or Crèche leader. A tally should then be taken with the day's sign in/out forms.

The fireman attending will be informed if a child is missing.

1.8. Security

Leaders must make sure that the only people permitted to stay in City Kids and Crèche rooms are the leaders assigned to that group. They must not allow other adults to have free access. The church understands that parents/guardians may need to be within the City Kids and Crèche rooms when their child is distressed or unsettled. Leaders must remain present whilst a parent/guardian is in the room. Parents/guardians are to collect their children from the City Kids/Crèche rooms after the main meeting has concluded. Parents and City Kids/Crèche leaders are to follow the Registration and Dismissal Procedures at all times.

A minimum of two adults will be assigned to the City Kids/Crèche room programs.

Only church members will be considered for service within City Kids and Crèche.

All incidents of suspected child abuse must be reported to a Safe Ministry Contact & the Children's Ministry Co-ordinator.

1.9. Supervision

Leaders should avoid being alone with a child. It is acknowledged however that there may be circumstances when this might be necessary or helpful. In these cases, it is advised that doors are left open and that other leaders are in sight and notified.

There should always be at least **two adults present** when running child related church activities. There may be instances where one City Kids leader will run an activity or small group on their own in the back room at the Balmain Campus. This will only occur with the curtain open, as the room is then visible by the church, and only when there are 3 or more children present. A leader must not be alone in a room with only one or two children during a program.

We are committed to the following ratios of adults to children for supervision.

- 1:3 for 0-1 year olds
- 1:5 for 2-6 year olds
- 1:8 for 7-12 year olds
- 1:15 for 13-17 year olds

1.10. Touch

It is a common misunderstanding that all physical contact between children and leaders is prohibited – this is not so. Appropriate physical contact between adults and children can be healthy and acceptable in public places but is discouraged in circumstances where an adult/child is on his/her own. Please follow the guidelines set out below:

- Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should generally be initiated by the child rather than the leader. Where medical attention is required, the leader is permitted to instigate touch.
- Touch should be age appropriate, e.g., it is age appropriate for a toddler to sit on a leaders lap for a short time to be comforted, however it is not for a school-aged child.
- Avoid any physical activity that is or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to the adult or the child.
- Never touch the body of a child in any area normally covered by swimwear.
- Leaders should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to help each other by pointing out anything, which could be misconstrued. Concerns about abuse should always be reported to a Safe Ministry Contact or the Children's Ministry Coordinator.

1.11. Ethical Obligations

Some actions may not be regarded as abuse, but are unacceptable behaviour for leaders. These include:

- Inappropriate conversation of a sexual nature.
- Coarse language, especially that of a sexual nature.
- Suggestive gestures or remarks.
- Jokes of a sexual nature.
- Inappropriate touching.
- Inappropriate literature (e.g. PG, M, MA, R or X rated material used with young children). The age of children is one of the determinants in deciding what is appropriate literature.
- Recording or filming or taking photos without prior consent from parents/guardians.
- Acts of violence committed by a leader in the course of an activity.

Photographs and Filming

Parents must indicate on the City Kids/Creche Registration form (see Appendix E: Forms) if they give consent for their child(ren) to be photographed or filmed. Children must not be photographed or filmed or images of the child used on the church advertising or website without prior consent from the subjects and parents/guardian. Photos and filming should focus on smalls groups rather than an individual.

All children must be appropriately dressed when photographed or filmed.

Alcohol and Drugs

The consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs on church grounds or during an activity is not to be allowed or condoned by any leader. Any child or young person found to be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs is to be counseled and the parents/guardians contacted so the child can be returned home immediately. City Kids leaders will not administer any prescription medication. Parents will be called out of the main meeting if their child requires medication.

1.12. Qualifications for Leaders

To qualify as a City Kids or Crèche leader you must have:

- Successfully completed the membership course (Connect)
- Provided your date of birth and a valid Working With Children Check to the Children's Ministry Co-ordinator at your campus
- Agreed to adhere to this Safe Ministry Policy; Children & Young People.
- Complete Safe Ministry training. This must be completed within 3 months of joining the ministry and updated annually.

1.13. Leader Responsibility

Leaders must be responsible role models both within their roles as leaders and outside this setting. This implies acting within these best practice guidelines whenever a leader is with children even if they are not in any formal role that week. If one leader observes another leader acting in a way that is inappropriate or in a way that could be misconstrued, they must be prepared to speak to them or the Coordinator. The Coordinator should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care that allows all leaders to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.

Leaders are responsible for their actions both to the parents of the children they are working with and to CLC. Leaders should never express negative feelings or sentiments towards particular parents, either publicly or to a particular child or against other leaders.

Whilst parents remain ultimately responsible for their children, leaders caring for children or young people during City Kids and Crèche will operate according to the best practice guidelines set out within this document. If a leader is unsure of what to do in a given situation, they should contact the coordinator of their particular ministry or the Children's Ministry Co-ordinator.

1.14. City Kids

Arrival and Dismissal

CLC takes seriously its responsibility for the welfare of children entrusted to its care during Sunday morning and Sunday afternoon City Kids & Crèche programs. With this in mind we have adopted the following Registration and Dismissal Guidelines.

At Balmain, children are in the church service from the beginning of church at. Children will be instructed when it is time to begin the children's programs by the MC.

Beginning of Program - Arrival

Balmain - parents/carers must accompany their children to the program. Parents must sign the children in on the 'Sign in/out' form, which is located inside the program rooms. A City Kids or Crèche leader will greet visitors during the 'sign in' process. The leader will introduce them to the other leader/s. Leaders are to ensure that everything is filled in correctly, ask if the child has any allergies and seek to answer any questions the visitor may have.

must sign their children in on the weekly sign in sheet. Leaders will take the children all together in the lift up to the City Kids room.

End of Program - Dismissal

At Balmain a parent/carer must collect their child(ren) from the appropriate rooms. Parents are to come in to the room and sign their child/ren out on the 'Sign in/out form'. Children will be released only to a person listed on the Sign in/out form.

There must always be two City Kids or Crèche leaders with any child who is waiting to be picked up by parents/carers. If a parent or carer forgets to collect their child, a leader is to take the Sign in/out form and walk the child to their parent/carer in the main hall for the parent to sign them out there.

Please serve the parents by informing them of how their child(ren) did in the program if they ask. Be gracious and specific with your feedback.

Parent Call-outs

The four things that would require a parent being called out of the main meeting are as follows:

- Inappropriate behavior that doesn't change with warnings e.g. not responding to clear instructions or correction after appropriate warnings.
- Unkindness to other children, e.g. verbal abuse/hitting/screaming
- Illness/general unrest.
- Needing assistance with toileting.

Any of the leaders can initiate a parent call out – in doing so they should send an SMS to the child's parent/guardian. Seek both truth and grace when explaining what has taken place to the parent.

Toilet Procedures

CLC takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children entrusted to its care during Sunday City Kids & Crèche programs. We recognise there will be some children who will need to use the toilet facilities during their time at City Kids or Crèche. With this in mind we have adopted the following policy, which has been designed to protect all children who use these facilities.

- For children who DO NOT require assistance in the bathroom, a leader will accompany the children in pairs or groups to the door of the City Kids room (from which they can see the bathroom easily) and allow the children to enter on their own. Leaders will wait outside for all of the children to exit and then accompany them back to the room, for their safety.
- For children who DO require personal assistance in the toilet facilities or help in pulling up trousers, then parents will be called out of the main meeting.
- Crèche leaders will NOT change the nappies of children, for the protection of both the children and the leaders. In the event of a nappy needing to be changed, leaders will call a parent out of the main meeting. Nappies and wipes are provided for parents who have not brought their own.

2. Suspected Abuse Procedures

The church and all its appointed children's leaders are committed to the protection of children from harm from physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect. As a church we are committed to the following procedure and guidelines. They are to be followed by all leaders in the event of disclosure or suspicion of possible abuse. These procedures are in place to:

- Protect any child who is suffering or at risk of suffering any form of abuse or neglect.
- Give a clear procedure for leaders to follow.

2.1. Definition of Abuse

The definitions of child abuse recommended as criteria throughout New South Wales by the Family and Community Services are as follows: ¹

Neglect

Neglect is when a parent or caregiver cannot regularly give a child the basic things needed for his or her proper growth and development, such as food, clothing, shelter, medical and dental care and enough parenting and care.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is when someone involves a child or young person in a sexual activity by using their power over them or taking advantage of their trust. Often children are bribed or threatened physically and psychologically to make them participate in the activity. Sexual abuse is a crime.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is a non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child caused by a parent, caregiver or any other person. It includes but is not limited to injuries which are caused by excessive discipline, severe beatings or shakings, cigarette burns, attempted strangulation and female genital mutilation.

Injuries include bruising, lacerations or welts, burns, fractures or dislocation of joints.

The application of any unreasonable physical force to a child is a crime in NSW. For example, hitting a child around the head or neck and/or using a stick, belt or other object to discipline or punishing a child (in a manner that is not trivial or negligible) may be considered a crime.

Emotional Abuse or psychological Harm

Serious psychological harm can occur where the behaviour of their parent or caregiver damages the confidence and self-esteem of the child or young person, resulting in serious emotional disturbance or psychological trauma.

Although it is possible for 'one-off' incidents to cause serious harm, in general it is the frequency, persistence and duration of the parental or carer behaviour that is instrumental in defining the consequences for the child or young person.

¹NSW Government, Department of Family and Community Services

This can include a range of behaviours such as excessive criticism, withholding affection, exposure to domestic violence, intimidation or threatening behaviour.

2.2. Signs of Abuse

The following signs of abuse as outlined by the Department of Family and Community Services, may or may not be indicators that abuse and neglect has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.²

Possible Signs of Neglect:

- Low weight for age and/or failure to thrive and develop
- Untreated physical problems e.g. sores, serious nappy rash and urine scalds, significant dental decay
- Poor standards of hygiene i.e. child consistently unwashed
- Poor complexion and hair texture
- Child not adequately supervised for their age
- Scavenging or stealing food and focus on basic survival
- Extended stays at school, public places, other homes
- Longs for or indiscriminately seeks adult affection
- Rocking, sucking, head-banging
- Poor school attendance

Possible Signs of Physical Abuse:

- Bruising to face, head or neck, other bruising and marks which may show the shape of the object that caused it e.g. belt buckle, hand print
- Lacerations and welts
- Drowsiness, vomiting, fits or pooling of blood in the eyes, which may suggest head injury
- Adult bite marks and scratches
- Fractures of bones, especially in children under three years old
- Dislocations, sprains, twisting
- Burns and scalds (including cigarette burns)
- Multiple injuries or bruises
- Explanation of injury offered by the child is not consistent with the injury
- Abdominal pain caused by ruptured internal organs, without a history of major trauma
- Swallowing of poisonous substances, alcohol or other harmful drugs
- General indicators of female genital mutilation e.g. having a 'special operation'

Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Bruising or bleeding in the genital area
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Bruising to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs
- Child or child's friend telling you about it, directly or indirectly
- Describing sexual acts
- Sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate for the child's age
- Going to bed fully clothed
- Regressive behaviour e.g. sudden return to bed-wetting or soiling

² NSW Government, Department of Family and Community Services,
<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/families/Protecting-kids/reporting-child-at-risk/harm-and-neglect>

- Self-destructive behaviour e.g. drug dependency, suicide attempts, self-mutilation
- Child being in contact with a known or suspected paedophile
- Anorexia or over-eating
- Adolescent pregnancy
- Unexplained accumulation of money and gifts
- Persistent running away from home
- Risk taking behaviours - self harm, suicide attempts

Possible Signs of Psychological Abuse

- Constant feelings of worthlessness about life and themselves
- Unable to value others
- Lack of trust in people
- Lack of people skills necessary for daily functioning
- Extreme attention-seeking behaviour
- Is obsessively eager to please or obey adults
- Takes extreme risks, is markedly disruptive, bullying or aggressive
- Is highly self-critical, depressed or anxious
- Suicide threats or attempts
- Persistent running away from home

2.3. What to do if you suspect abuse may have occurred

- 1) You must report your concerns immediately to the Children's Ministry Coordinator. They will speak with a Safe Ministry Contact and the Lead Pastor (Balmain) and assist them where appropriate in dealing with the issue.
- 2) If the suspicions in any way involve the Children's Ministry Coordinator then the report should be made to a Safe Ministry Contact and the Lead Pastor (Balmain) only.
- 3) If the suspicions in any way involve the Lead Pastor (Balmain) then the report should be made to the Safe Ministry Contact and the Eldership Committee, who will take action as appropriate.
- 4) In order to protect the child's rights to confidentiality, you should not discuss your suspicions with anyone other than those nominated above.
- 5) It is of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make direct referrals to the child protection agencies or seek advice from the Department of Family and Community Services, although we hope that members of the church will use the procedure outlined above. If however, you feel that the Children's Ministry Coordinator, Safe Ministry Contact or Lead Pastor (Balmain) has not responded appropriately to your concerns, then it is open to you to contact the Child Protection Helpline direct.

See Appendix D for further charts to help with decision-making

Leaders Suspected of Abuse

Appropriate action will be taken against any leader suspected of abusing a child under their care and they will be removed from the program. CLC acknowledges that child sexual abuse and any other forms of serious abuse causing permanent or fatal injury to a child is a criminal offence. The police will be notified immediately if any such abuse is suspected.

The phone number for the Balmain Police Station: (02) 9556 0624
Glebe Police Station: (02) 9552 8099
Crime Stoppers: 1800 332 000
Child Protection Helpline: 132 111

Any child who has been sexually abused or suffered injury, as a result of abuse will be taken to the local hospital for medical attention. Parents or guardians of the child will be informed of these decisions.

2.4. Role of the Children's Ministry Coordinator

If a child has a physical injury or symptom of neglect or sexual abuse, the Children's Ministry Coordinator will:

- 1) Speak with a Safe Ministry Contact and the Lead Pastor (Balmain) regarding the allegations and work with the Safe Ministry Contact and the Lead Pastor (Balmain) where appropriate to enable the allegation to be dealt with and managed.
- 2) Where emergency medical attention is necessary it will be sought immediately.

2.5. How to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse

It is not easy to give precise guidance, but the following may help:

General Points

- Keep calm, listen carefully and non-judgementally
- Let the child tell their story freely and in their own way
- Look at the child directly
- Acknowledge how difficult it may have been to tell you and reassure the child or young person that it was the right thing to do.
- It is not your job to interview the child or to gather evidence. This is the responsibility of specially trained caseworkers and police officers.
- Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – do not promise confidentiality
- A child may feel they are to blame for the abuse. Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell
- Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen.

Helpful Things You May Say or Show

- I believe you (or showing acceptance of what the child says)
- Thank you for telling me, you did the right thing
- It's not your fault
- I will help you

Do Not Say

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- Never make false promises
- Never make statements such as "I am shocked, don't tell anyone else"

Concluding

- Again reassure the child that they were right to tell you and show acceptance.
- If it is age appropriate, let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.
- Contact the Children's Ministry Coordinator, a Safe Ministry Contact or Pastor. If you cannot reach the Coordinator, Safe Ministry Contact or Pastor and feel the child is at significant risk of further abuse and it is unsafe for them to return home, you might have to consider referring to the Police or the Department of Family and Community Services.
- Consider your own feelings and seek pastoral support if needed.
- Make notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour of the child talking to you), writing down exactly what the child said and when s/he said it, what you said in reply, the child's mood and demeanor and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of the activity). Record dates and times of these events and when you made the record. Keep all hand written notes, even if subsequently typed. Such records should be kept safely for an indefinite period.

3. Appointing City Kids Leaders

CLC is committed to the growth of children. We are also committed to making sure that all leaders within the church are supported and understand the commitment they have made. By formalising the appointment of City Kids and Crèche leaders the church aims to:

- Provide potential leaders with realistic information and expectations concerning time, commitment, behaviour and attitude.
- Provide potential leaders with an understanding that they are vital to the growth of the children and young people and that the church is committed to their support and development.
- Provide a safety net to protect the children and young people from harm.

3.1. The Process

There are at present no legal requirements when working with children or young people in a church environment. However, as a church we have adopted a procedure for appointing future City Kids and Crèche leaders. In appointing leaders, the church will be responsible for the following:

- 1) The potential leader will meet with the Children's Ministry Coordinator for their Campus. Any past experience and attitudes in relation to children's ministry should be discussed. They will be asked if there are any matters that may affect their suitability to work with children or young people. The potential leader will be given a copy of CLC's Safe

Ministry Policy. It will be explained that the policy exists for the welfare of children and leaders.

- 2) The Coordinator will email the potential leader a Welcome email, which details the expectations of leaders, and how the relevant programs runs.
- 3) If agreement is reached the potential leader will be asked to complete Safe Ministry Training, read and sign their agreement to adhere to the City Light Church Safe Ministry Policy & complete their Working With Children Check. They will need to supply their WWCC number and their Date of Birth to the Children's Ministry Co-ordinator to be verified by the church.
- 4) Each approved leader will be given a role within the group and will be accountable and have support from the Coordinator of that program. City Kids and Creche leaders will be given opportunities to meet together with the Coordinator of their program to discuss programs and areas of concern including issues relating to discipline.
- 5) All leaders will complete annual Safe Ministry Training.

Working with Children Check

It is up to the leader to obtain their Working With Children Check by completing the following steps:

Step 1

Apply for a Working With Children check at

<https://wwccheck.cyp.nsw.gov.au/Applicants/Application#>

Please make sure the details you provide are exactly the same as your proof of identity documents. There is no cost for volunteers.

Step 2

Go to the Roads and Maritime services with the application number that you have received and your proof of identity.

For more information on documents required for proof of identity please go to the following website: <https://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/roads/licence/identity/index.html>

Step 3

You will receive your Working With Children's number via email. This may take a few days. Please enter your number into Elvanto once it has been allocated to you and notify the Children's Ministry Coordinator. Alternatively, you may advise the Coordinator directly.

If you already have a number through employment (for example if you are a teacher) or other volunteer activity, you do not need to reapply. Please just advise the church of your number and Date of Birth.

Once the number has been received the church will verify it.

4. Appendices

Appendix A: Practical ideas for keeping discipline

Here are some practical tips for keeping discipline:

1. Remind children of room expectations
2. Change voice tone but try not to shout.
3. Use different clapping patters and ask the children to copy, to get their attention.
4. Separate children who have a tendency to be disruptive when together. These children are often friends, give them a chance, perhaps warn them and only separate if they are disruptive.
5. Have the child sit right in front of you.
6. Get a leader to sit next to the child.
7. Be pro-active yourself and encourage other leaders to be pro-active and not wait to be told to deal with a situation.
8. Calmly take the child aside and talk to them, challenging them to change, whilst encouraging them on their strengths.
9. Pro-actively encourage good behaviour
10. Warn a child that you will speak to their parents – and do so if necessary
11. Call a parent to the room
12. Remember each child is an individual and unique. We need God's wisdom and love to encourage each one to reach their potential and meet their needs.

Dealing with Disruptive Behaviour

Sometimes children can become very upset and disruptive and occasionally their behaviour may be assessed as possibly dangerous to themselves or others.

Behaviour strategies to help with non-compliance in children

Leaders should be aware of a child's medical history and whether the child has a disability or other condition, when assessing the situation, to ensure an appropriate response to the child's behaviour. Does the child understand what is being asked of him? A child's age and competence can affect their ability to recognise and understand danger to themselves, others and property.

Use positive instructions such as, "Please put your feet on the floor," rather than, "Get your feet off the table."

Praise positive behaviour from the child. It is all too easy to ignore good behaviour and only give attention when the child is behaving badly.

Physical Restraint

Physical Restraint is permissible under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998, if in the opinion of the leader a child is behaving in a manner that unless restrained, they are putting themselves in danger (e.g. a small child tries to run out of the building) or if others are in danger (e.g. a fight).

Use of Physical Restraint

Use as a last resort only, to protect the safety of the child and/or others and warn them that physical restraint will be used unless they desist from their behaviour.

Talk to the child first to try to persuade them to do what you are asking. If you need to restrain them continue talking e.g., "I am making sure that you are calm," "I am restraining you so that you do not run away," "I am restraining you so that you do not hurt someone else," "I want you to calm down and come with me," "If you don't stop I will need to call your parents.

Ensure the child will not misinterpret your actions by talking to them as above, by keeping in mind the relative genders of yourself and the child and by calling another adult to be present where possible.

Restrain or hold a child only by the arms or shoulders, with the least force, for the shortest possible time. Restraint should be gradually relaxed to allow the child to regain self-control. Try to avoid risk of damage to clothing, jewellery etc.

Consider the possibility of the child or young person having some kind of weapon.

Consider your own safety. If you feel you, or anyone else would be at risk due to a child's behaviour and you cannot restrain the child safely, remove yourself and anyone else to a safe place as soon as possible.

When the child is calm, try to talk through the issues with them.

In all circumstances, all leaders involved should record as soon as possible, i.e. once the situation is resolved/or immediately after the activity. Parents/guardians and the relevant Coordinator should also be informed.

Appendix B: Legal obligations

Prohibited employment declaration

The Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 mandates the Department of Community Services with the responsibility for the care and protection of children and young people in NSW where there are concerns about their safety, welfare and wellbeing.

Who is a prohibited person?

All people working in, or seeking to work in, child-related employment must declare whether they are a prohibited person. It is an offence for prohibited persons to apply for, undertake or remain in child-related employment.

A prohibited person is a person convicted of committing a serious sex offence, or a 'registrable person'. A 'registrable person' is someone who has been found guilty of the following offences:

- Murder of a child
- Child related personal violence offence
- Serious sexual offences
- Indecency offences (punishable by imprisonment of 12 months or more)
- Kidnapping child
- Prostitution child
- Pornography (possession, distribution or publication)

Attempt, conspiracy or incitement to commit the above offences CLC must ask all leaders or potential leaders if they are a prohibited person. Those identified as a prohibited person, will not be eligible for a child- related position in compliance with the Child protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998.

Mandatory Reporting

A 'mandatory reporter' is any person who delivers health care, welfare, education, children's services, residential services or law enforcement wholly or partly to children (aged under 16) as part of their paid work and includes any person who directly manages or supervises such work. If you are a mandatory reporter with current concerns that a child aged under 16 is at risk of harm, you are required to make a report to the Department Family and Community Services. This is a legal obligation, which carries a penalty if you fail to comply.

CLC requires leaders to follow reporting procedures as outlined in the policy on page 18. Leaders must report their concerns immediately to the Coordinator, who will speak to the Pastor. If there is suspicion the Coordinator is involved then the leader should go directly to the Pastor. However, it is the right of any individual to report their concerns directly to the Department of Family and Community Services.

Reports should be made to the Child Protection Helpline on 132 111.

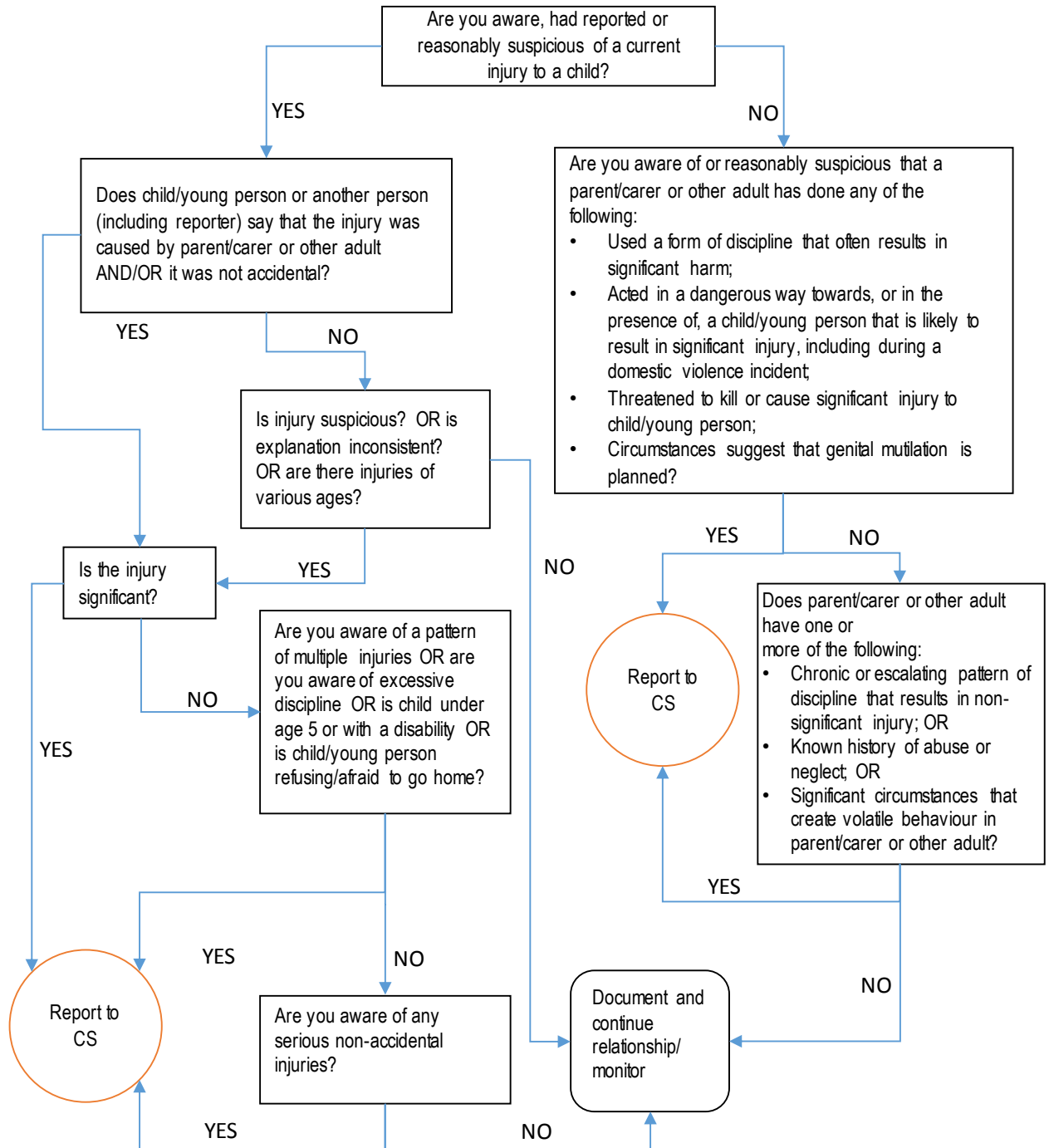
Appendix C: Risk Assessment

Activity	Risks	Ranking	How to Reduce Risk	Priority
Ball games/ running based activities	Injury caused by tripping over obstacles	Low	Ensure there are no obstacles that children can fall over.	1
	Head injuries from the balls	Low Medium	Remove any objects that may cause injury or if the object cannot be moved make sure the kids are aware of the object and that it is not in the boundaries of the game.	2
	Collisions without people or objects		Explain the boundaries of the game to the children and that balls cannot be thrown at people's heads.	3

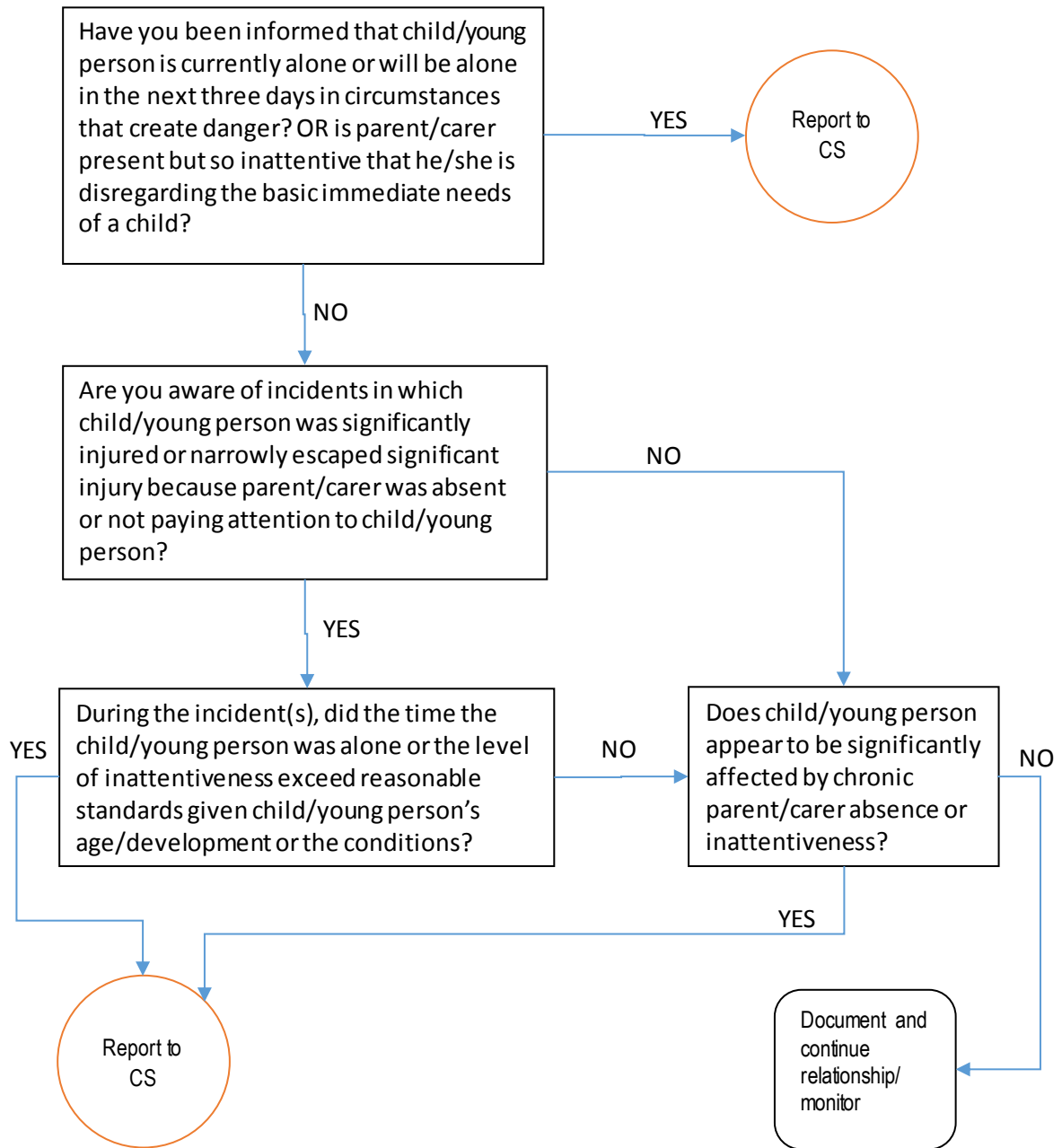
Appendix D: Types of Abuse Tree Chart

NB. CS is Child Services = FACS

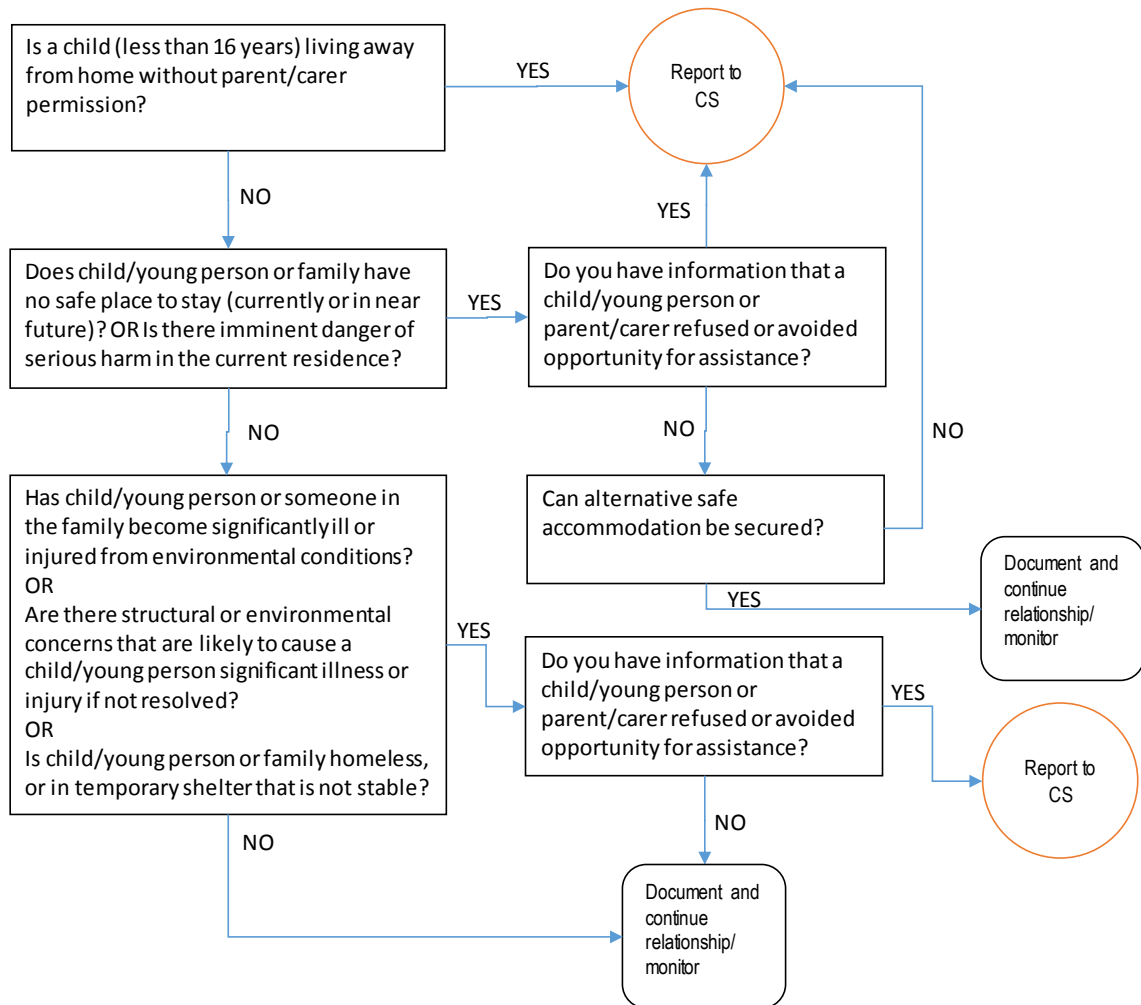
Physical Abuse



Neglect – Supervision



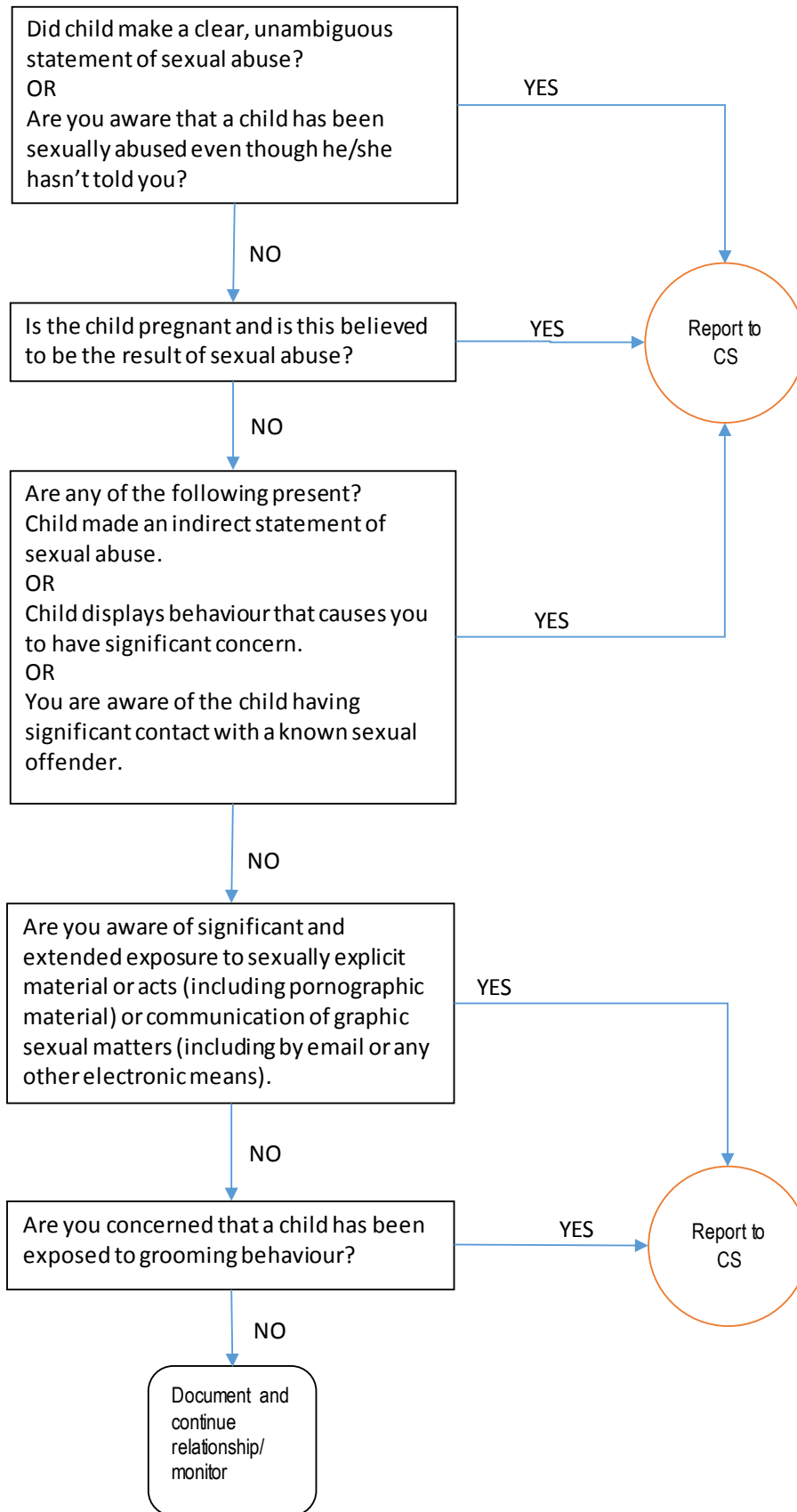
Neglect – Shelter



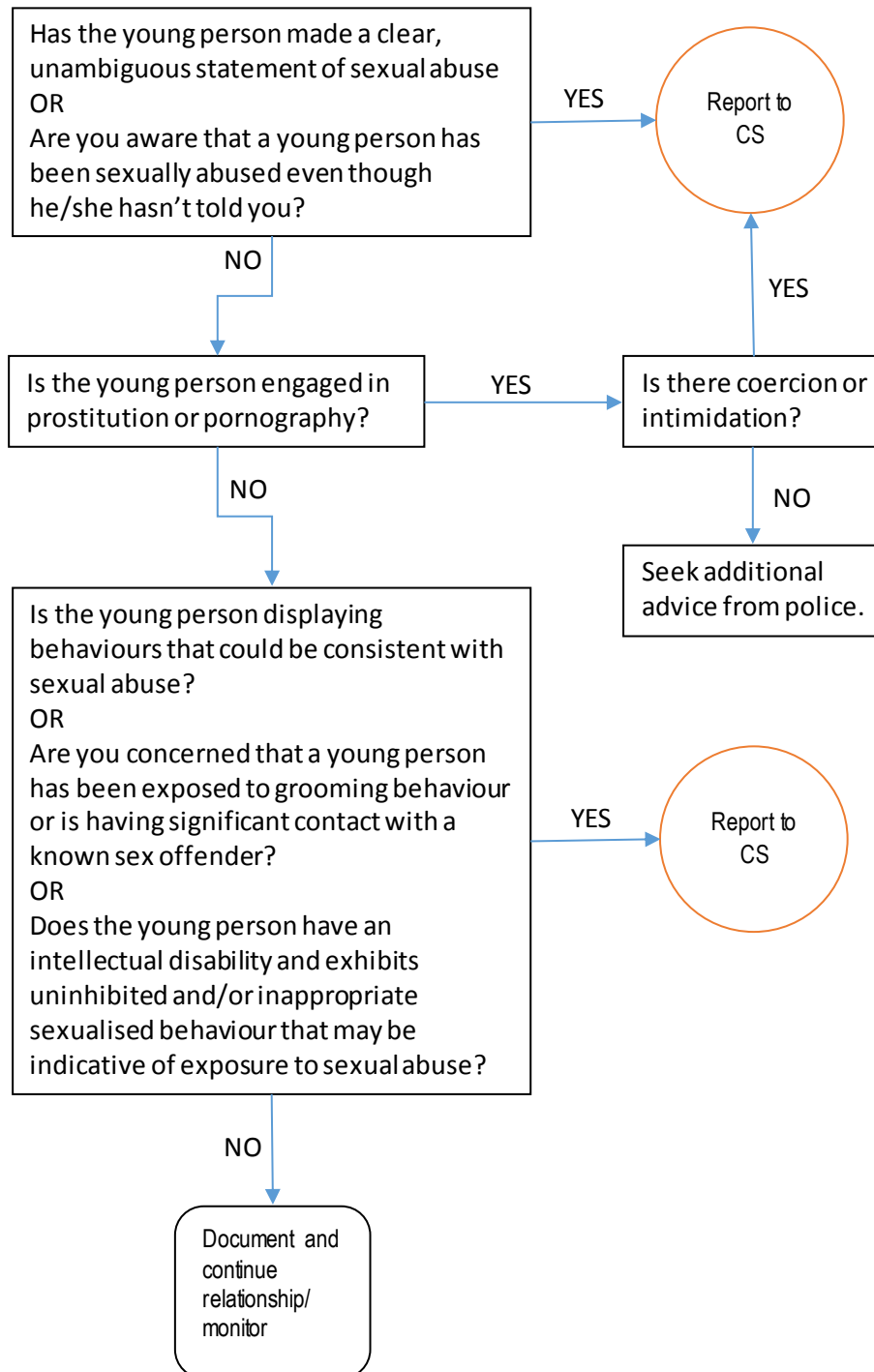
Sexual Abuse (0-15 year olds)

Grooming behaviour is a pattern of behaviour aimed at engaging a young person as a precursor to sexual abuse. Any individual with access to a young person has done at least one of the following examples of grooming behaviour with the young person: manoeuvring to get time alone with young person, buying the young person gifts, taking young person to fun places, building trust with young person, providing drugs or alcohol, or getting a vulnerable young person to feel special and loved. When considering adults who are not previously known to be sexual offenders, only consider these actions as potentially grooming behaviour if there is no acceptable or appropriate alternative explanation. For example, it should not be considered grooming for a relative to buy gifts, take young person to fun places and try to build a trusting relationship with a young person or make him/her feel special.

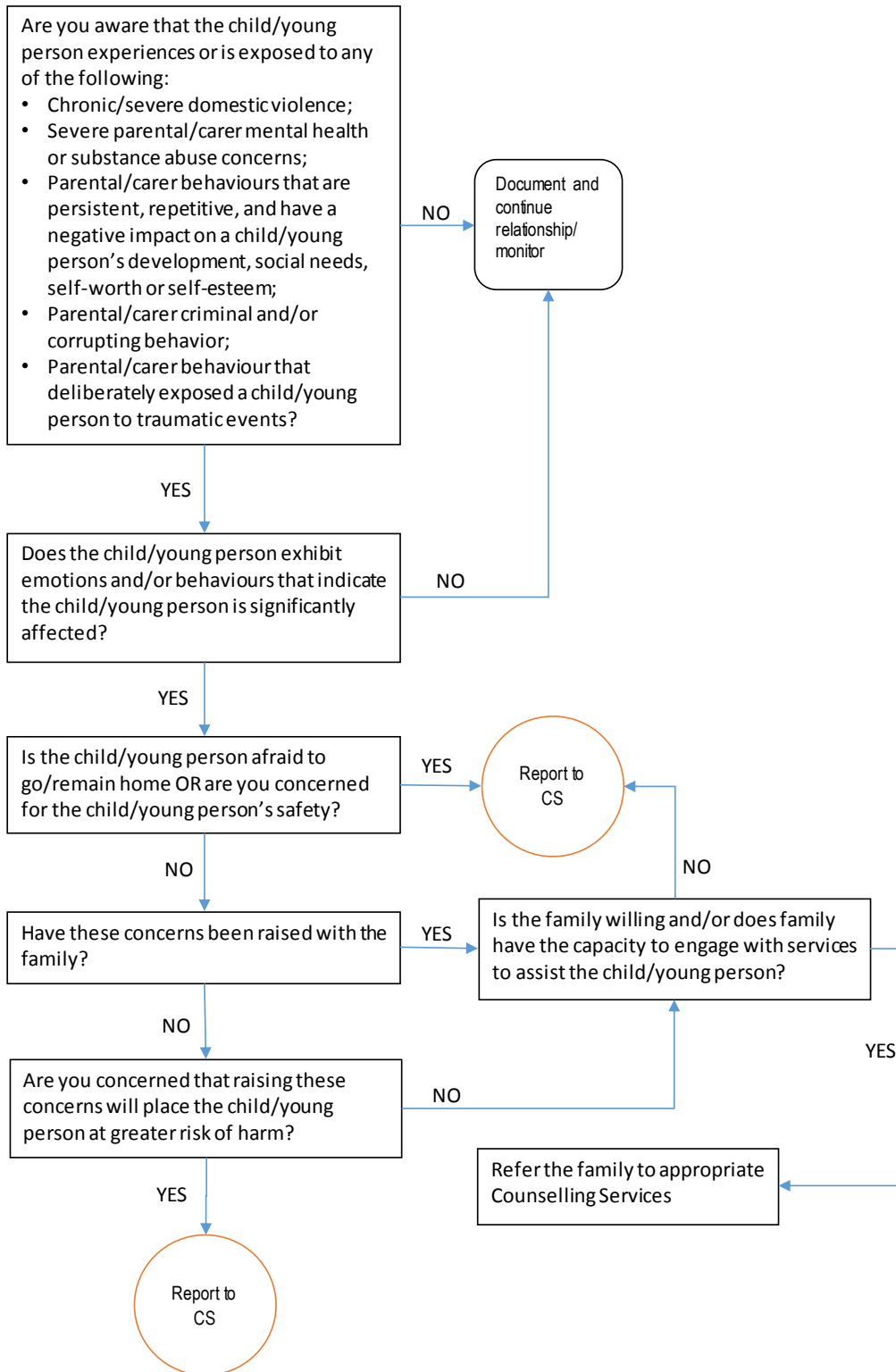
Sexual Abuse (0-15 year olds)



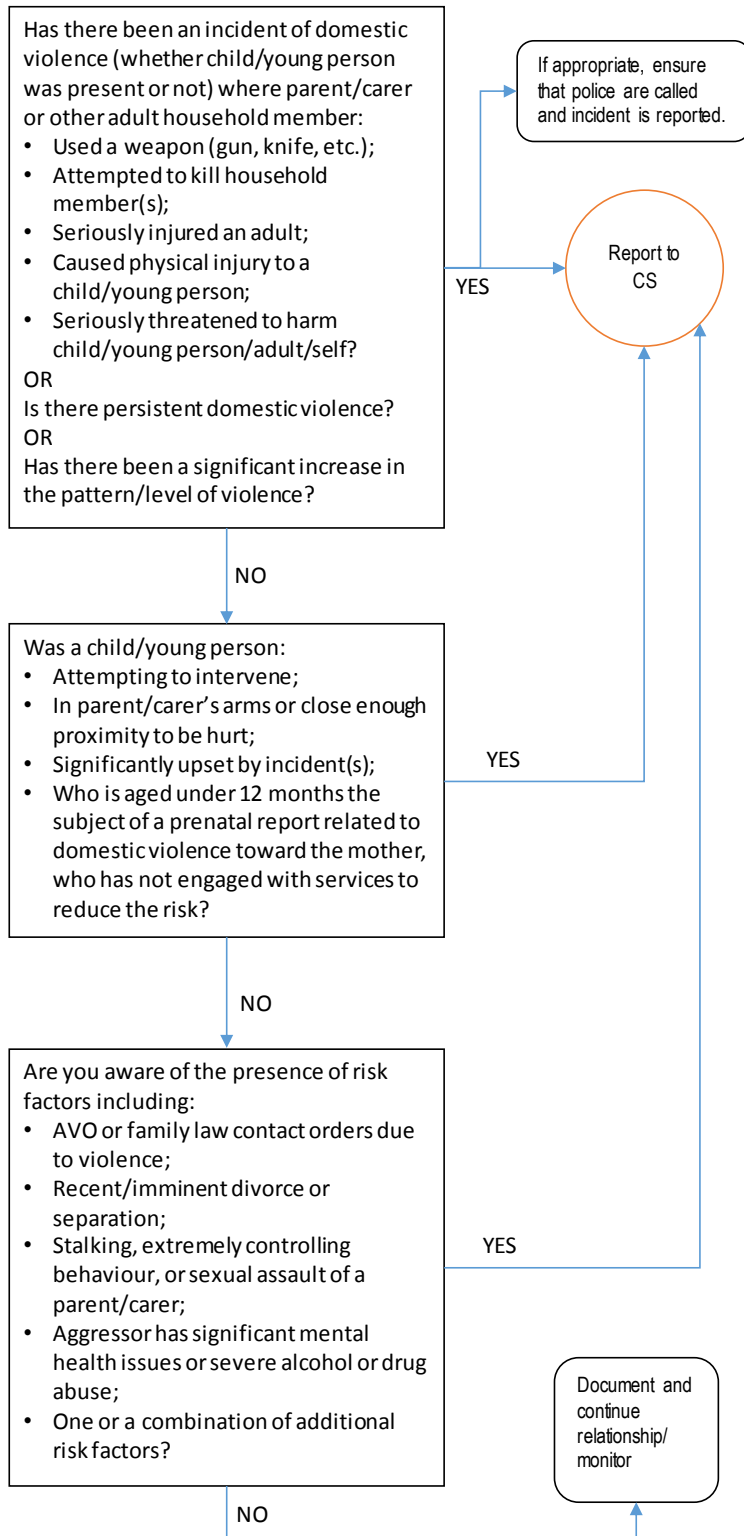
Sexual Abuse (16-17 year olds)



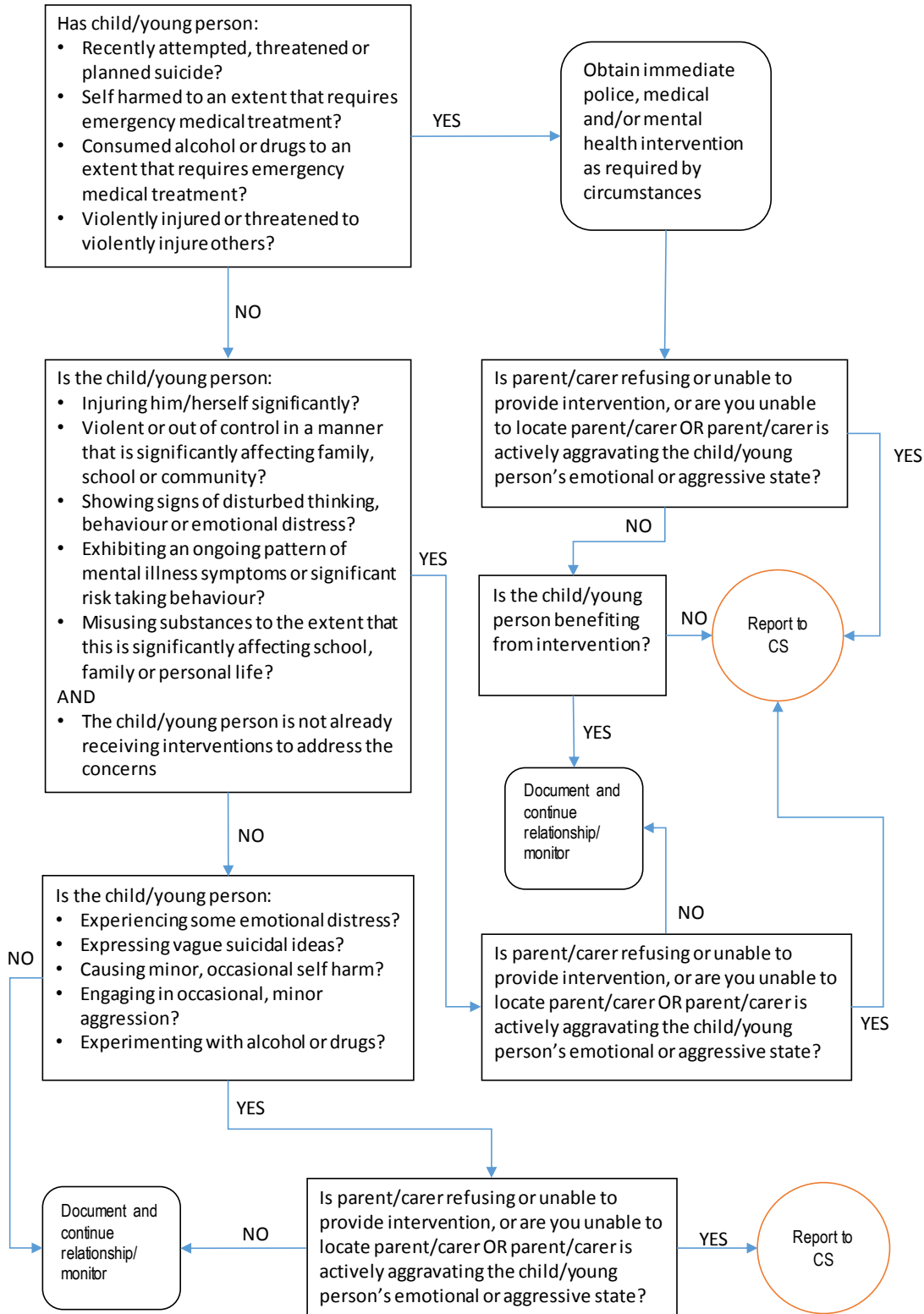
Psychological Harm



Domestic Violence



Danger to Self





City Light Church Complaints & Incidents Record Form

Use this form to record complaints or incidents in the church

If the complaint / Incident involves child abuse (risk of significant harm to a child) the form is to be filled in by a Safe Ministry Contact.

Where an accident or incident has occurred and child abuse is not suspected, the form can be filled in by the Children's Ministry Co-ordinator and a copy provided to the Safe Ministry Contact for review and filing.

This form should be used to:

1. Record a suspicion, allegation or disclosure of child abuse or a complaint of inappropriate behaviour.
2. Record any incidents that occur at City Light Church. These will be assessed and under a Risk Assessment and any resulting actions implemented.

Child Abuse Complaint or Inappropriate behaviour

Incident Report

1. Recorders Name & Position: _____
2. Name of Child or Young Person involved: _____
3. Name of person making Complaint _____
4. Name of the person who the complaint is made against _____
5. Nature of the complaint – include times, date, location and what happened. (This can include observations of the child's behaviour)

6. Details of any injuries and if the child received medical attention:

7. Accurately record what the child said when describing what happened.

8. Details of anyone who saw what happened

9. Does this complaint indicate the possibility of child abuse, i.e. Physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect? The Abuse trees can be used to determine appropriate actions. See following. Yes No

10. If Yes, provide details of your report to Community Services Person Spoken to: _____ Ph: 132 111 Date: _____

11. Does this complaint indicate that an employee or volunteer engaged child abuse resulting from Sexual misconduct Serious physical assault Yes No

12. If Yes, provide details to The Children's Guardian Inform the accused person Enter details through WWCC website. Date: _____ Date: _____

13. If complaint relates to inappropriate behaviour, details of internal discipline process followed. (Make note of any support, counselling that was offered to the person against whom the complaint was made.

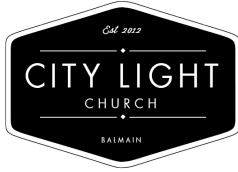
14. Any follow up required? Yes No

15. If Yes, provide details

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

Print Name: _____

Notes: See Tree Charts and guides to recognise abuse to assess appropriate reporting process.



Incident Report Form

This form is to be completed by an adult witness whenever an incident occurs requiring first aid or secondary medical attention (eg. injury leading to child going to a medical centre) or any disruptive behaviour. Once completed it must be given to the Children's Ministry Coordinator.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of group/activity: _____ Adult supervisors: _____

Name of injured person: _____ Age: _____

Names of parents/guardians: _____ Have they been notified? Yes / No

Date of incident: _____ Time of incident: _____

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT

1. Describe the incident – what is presenting issue or disruptive behaviour (use the back of page if necessary): _____

i. Where in the facility/site did it happen? _____

ii. How did the incident happen? What was the person doing when the incident happened? What might have caused the disruptive behaviour? How was the person behaving? _____

iii. What area of the person's body was injured? _____

iv. How did the leader respond? _____

2. Names of leaders supervising at the time of the incident: _____

3. Name(s) of any other witnesses to the incident: _____

4. How did the person respond after the incident? _____

5. Was first aid given or some other action taken? Yes / No If yes, by whom & what was given? _____

6. Follow up actions: _____



City Kids/Crèche Registration Form

This information will be used for the care & protection of your child & will be held securely by CLC

Child's name _____ Preferred Name: _____

Date of birth _____ Male / Female (please circle)

Home Address _____

Postcode _____

Parent / Caregiver information

Parents / Caregivers listed here will both be allowed to collect the child from the programs

Mother/carer(s) name _____

Mother/carer(s) contact number _____

Father/carer(s) name _____

Father/carer(s) contact number _____

Any other caregivers who are authorised to collect the child from the program _____

Allergies _____

Other medical information _____

Special requirements/Comments (fears/dislikes/special comforters etc) _____

Statement of Consent

- I am happy for my child/ren to attend the City Kids/Crèche programs at City Light Church and participate in the planned activities
- I understand that I must collect my child/ren from the appropriate room at the end of the service and sign them out
- I understand that City Kids/Crèche are NUT-FREE ZONES and will not send any nut products with my child/ren to City Kids/Crèche programs
- I consent to photos of my child being taken while they participate in City Kids or Crèche. Photos will be used by CLC for presentations in church.

Signed (Parent/carer/guardian 1) _____
Signature _____ Print name _____ Date _____

Signed (Parent/carer/guardian 2) _____
Signature _____ Print name _____ Date _____