

Child Protection Policy for  
Scripture Union Bushwalkers

**EXECUTIVE STATEMENT**

The issue of child abuse is a complex problem that has an impact on all areas of society, including participation in sport and recreation activities.

The Wood Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service, led to increased community awareness of the significant number of child sexual assaults and incidents of abuse which occur. It also highlighted the need for the development and implementation of strategies to protect children from abusive situations.

Protecting children from abuse is a responsibility that we must all undertake. Through the implementation of strategies that assist in preventing child abuse from occurring, **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** has taken a pro-active role in relation to child protection and intervention. These strategies will help to foster a safe and positive environment for children and young people to participate in physical activities.

In addition, the development of a Child Protection Policy provides an excellent risk management tool for developing prevention strategies and for the effective management of child abuse issues in activities undertaken by **Scripture Union Bushwalkers**.

Information contained in this document will create a framework and provide direction for volunteers, leaders, members and parents of children and young people involved in **Scripture Union Bushwalkers**. It will help deliver a consistent approach to child abuse prevention at all levels of the sport and recreation industry.

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President

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Date

**POLICY STATEMENT**

**Scripture Union Bushwalkers** is committed to ensuring that the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children are maintained at all times during their participation in activities run by **Scripture Union Bushwalkers**. **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** aims to promote a safe environment for all children and to assist all volunteers, leaders, and members to recognise child abuse and neglect and follow the appropriate notification procedures when reporting alleged abuse.

**RATIONALE**

The focus of the policy and guidelines is the prevention of child abuse in the sporting environment.

This policy and guidelines promote the care and protection of children participating in **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** and provide information and direction for employees, volunteers, leaders and members of the organisation.

This policy will assist **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** in establishing coordinated strategies for dealing with the problem of child abuse and neglect in a responsible, effective and consistent manner.

### **OBJECTIVES**

Through the development of this policy **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** objectives are to:

1. provide information to assist leaders, members and volunteers in dealing with all forms of child abuse
2. provide comprehensive guidelines relating to risk minimisation and reporting/ notification procedures
3. provide direction to all leaders, members and volunteers regarding their legal responsibilities under child protection legislation
4. promote the adoption of **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** principles for child protection and intervention amongst volunteers, leaders, members and parents of children participating in activities of **Scripture Union Bushwalkers**.

### **SCOPE OF POLICY**

The Child Protection Policy of **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** is applicable to all Committee members, leaders and volunteers of **Scripture Union Bushwalkers**.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF LEGISLATION**

In order to implement the child protection legislation **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** will undertake to:

1. implement strategies and procedures that focus on the best interests of children and meet the requirements of child protection legislation
2. promote a safe and supportive environment for all children and young people participating in activities which come under the umbrella of **Scripture Union Bushwalkers**.
3. increase awareness and emphasise the importance of child protection issues in a sporting environment to all those involved with the activities of **Scripture Union Bushwalkers**. This includes the Committee, leaders, parents and their children.
4. ensure that all Committee members, volunteers and leaders of **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** are aware of their responsibilities arising from recent child protection legislation, in particular, the requirement under the Child Protection (Prohibited

Employment) Act 1998, to inform their employer and/or club if they have been convicted of a serious sex offence.

**EXPECTATIONS**

Committee members, leaders, members and volunteers often have a high level of contact with children in the sporting environment and play a major part in the successful operation of sporting activities.

Leaders and club members are often seen as role models. They have significant influence on the children they come into contact with and therefore have significant responsibilities.

**Scripture Union Bushwalkers** expects that all Committee members, volunteers and leaders who participate in activities under the banner of Scripture Union Bushwalkers will commit to implementing risk management strategies developed by **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** for child protection and intervention.

**POLICY REVIEW**

**Scripture Union Bushwalkers** Child Protection Policy will be reviewed annually and updated in line with any legislative changes that have significant impact on the manner in which child protection and intervention issues are to be dealt with.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
President

## Notification Procedures for Allegations of Child Abuse

### **RATIONALE**

**Scripture Union Bushwalkers** acknowledges that issues regarding child abuse and the reporting of allegations of child abuse is highly sensitive, and should be dealt with in a confidential manner.

**Scripture Union Bushwalkers** has developed these notification procedures to ensure that confidentiality is maintained throughout the process and that consistent procedures for reporting are encouraged.

**Scripture Union Bushwalkers** will be proactive in its role to protect children and encourage an open environment that allows Committee Members, volunteers, leaders and members to be aware of their rights and responsibilities within the club.

### **CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER/S**

To deal appropriately with these issues and to ensure that the confidentiality of all parties involved is maintained, two people within **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** will be designated as Child Protection Officers.

The Child Protection Officers are responsible for reporting any allegations of child abuse that occur in **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** to the local branch of the Department of Community Services (DoCS), and the NSW Police Service.

#### **Child Protection Officers:**

**Name:** Jennifer Sarginson

**Position:** Member

**Email:** [jms@sydney.anglican.asn.au](mailto:jms@sydney.anglican.asn.au)

**Name:** Phillip

**Position:** Secretary

**Email:** [phillip\\_fowler@hotmail.com](mailto:phillip_fowler@hotmail.com)

### **WHAT SHOULD BE REPORTED**

Some incidents **may seem minor**, however, they may in fact reveal more serious concerns of misconduct or a pattern of behaviour that requires further scrutiny. All people associated with **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** should be aware of the indicators for child abuse and sexual abuse so that they may make an informed decision on what to report.

If you have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child participating in any organised activities conducted by **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** is at risk report the matter to the Child Protection Officers.

### **WRITTEN NOTIFICATION**

Verbal notification of alleged child abuse must be followed up in writing within 24 hours to the local Department of Community Services using a child protection notification form.

### **INVESTIGATION**

If an incident of child abuse occurs in **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** it is not the responsibility of persons within **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** to take it upon themselves to determine whether the allegation is true or false. This responsibility belongs with the NSW Department of Community Service and the Judiciary.

Depending on the nature of the allegations and the extent of the situation, the NSW Department of Community Service will determine the manner in which the matter will be investigated. This may involve the NSW Police Service.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All matters regarding allegations of child abuse are to be treated as confidential. The person/s designated as the child protection officer/s are the contact person for any incident involving allegations of child abuse. This is essential for confidentiality. Confidentiality protects all individuals involved:

- the alleged victim
- the alleged offender, and
- the person making the notification.

### **Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998**

Under the **Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998**

**Scripture Union Bushwalkers** is required to:

1. notify the Commission for Children and Young People of the name and other identifying details of any member against whom relevant disciplinary proceedings have been completed by **Scripture Union Bushwalkers** irrespective of the findings (except where the allegation has been proven to be vexatious, mischievous or false)
2. provide details of child abuse allegations/ convictions against employees and leaders to the Commission
3. notify the Commission of any applicants for child-related employment, rejected as a result of risks identified through employment screening processes
4. ensure that records of all information required to be submitted to the Commission for Children and Young People are retained by **Scripture Union Bushwalkers**.

### **Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998**

Under the **Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998** **Scripture Union Bushwalkers**

1. **will not** engage a person in a child-related position without first requiring them to disclose whether or not they are a 'prohibited person'
2. **will not** engage a person that has been identified as a 'prohibited person'.

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