

Diocese of Waikato and Taranaki

Safeguarding Guidelines & Code of Conduct

Youth

Purpose Statement

This Diocese is committed to ensuring our communities of faith are safe and life-giving for all people. The Diocesan Safeguarding Policy should be read in conjunction with this document, by anyone exercising ministry leadership within the Waikato and Taranaki Diocese.

At all times we will adhere to best practice, to ensure the safety of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Our aim is to achieve this goal through the following;

1. Definitions
2. Recruitment Standards
3. Ara Taiohi Code of Ethics
4. Safe Practice training and courses
5. The role of a Safeguarding Officer
6. Safety and Well-being Code of Conduct
 - a. Boundaries
 - b. Activities
 - c. Program start and finish
 - d. Guidelines for Publishing
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 - f. Emails and Mobile Phones
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1. Definitions

- **Youth**

- Person in Year Nine up to 18 years of age.

- **Youth Ministry Leader (Employed)**

- In a part or full time position employed by the Diocese of Waikato & Taranaki (or an associated Trust affiliated with the Diocese), undertaking youth ministry
- Is the overall leader for that specific ministry, and may oversee other volunteer leaders. Parents, young people and other people from that community would recognise them as ‘the key leader’
- Managed by a vicar, vestry, or ministry body with delegated authority and this is made clear in their position description
- Carries a licence from the Bishop, and understands obligations of such
- Is authorised to do ministry (ie small groups, pastoral) in a 1-1 manner following best practice guidelines.
- Typically may be working more hours, with a larger group, and with a larger team than Youth Ministry Leader (Voluntary)
- Is a member of Korowai Tupu, the Professional Association for Youth Work in Aotearoa

- **Youth Ministry Leader (Voluntary)**

- Is the overall leader for that specific ministry, and may oversee other volunteer leaders. Parents, young people and other people from that community would recognise them as ‘the key leader’
- Managed by a vicar, vestry, or ministry body with delegated authority and this is made clear in their ministry position description
- Carries a licence from the Bishop and understands obligations of such
- Is authorised to do ministry (ie small groups, pastoral) in a 1-1 manner following set guidelines.

- **Youth Leader (Support)**
 - Works with and alongside others in a voluntary capacity, under the authority of a Youth Ministry Leader
 - Is a regularly committed member of a ministry team, and would be at most gatherings or events
 - Is authorised to do ministry (ie small groups, pastoral) in a 1-1 manner following set guidelines and in consultation with the youth leader

- **Youth Ministry Helper**
 - Supports the work of the youth ministry in an ad-hoc way, (ie; parent support providing event transport, providing background support such as meal prep) and is not a regular part of the team of people that young people would think of as their youth leaders.
 - Is NOT authorised to do ministry (ie small groups, pastoral) in a 1-1 manner but MAY assist other leaders who are.

2. **Recruitment**

Appropriate care must be taken for recruiting youth leaders and volunteers. The following is expected of all youth ministry roles

- **Youth Ministry Leader (Employed)**
 - 3 x references from people who have known the applicant for at least 3 years, the others for at least 2 years. At least 2 of these should be from someone the person has worked for (voluntary or paid) in a ministry capacity, and 1 of these should be a vicar, senior pastor or similar. One of these should be from someone of the opposite gender
 - Must undertake screening (as per clergy)
 - Successful Police Check, through the Diocese, before employment can be confirmed
 - Must read and sign Diocesan Code of Conduct prior to beginning role
 - Must participate in supervision and spiritual direction, a minimum of 6 times each per year. Funding for this should be clearly stated in position description
 - Must undertake boundaries and safe guarding training every 3 years
 - Must have read and abide by [Ara Taiohi Code of Ethics](#)

- Must apply for membership to Korowai Tupu within 6 months of beginning their role
- **Youth Ministry Leader (Voluntary)**
 - 3 x references from people, one of whom must have known the applicant for at least 3 years, the others for at least one year. One of these should be a vicar, senior pastor or similar.
 - Clear police check
 - Must read and sign Diocesan Code of Conduct prior to beginning role
 - Must participate in supervision and spiritual direction, a minimum of 6 times each per year. Funding for this should be clearly stated in position description
 - Must undertake boundaries and safe guarding training every 3 years
 - Must have read and abide by [Ara Taiohi Code of Ethics](#)
- **Youth Leader (Support)**
 - 2 x character references from people who have known the applicant; one for a minimum of 3 years, and the others for at least one year.
 - Clear police check
 - Must read and sign Diocesan Code of Conduct prior to beginning role
 - Must undertake boundaries and safeguarding training every 3 years
 - Must have read and abide by [Ara Taiohi Code of Ethics](#)
- **Youth Ministry Helper**
 - Should be known to the community (ie parish) for a minimum of two years prior to being involved, OR provide 2 x character references from people who have known the applicant for at least 3 years.
 - Must read and sign Diocesan Code of Conduct prior to beginning role

3. Ara Taiohi Code of Ethics

Ara Taiohi is the peak body for youth development in Aotearoa. They are a national membership based organisation with over 1600 personal and organisational members representing a diverse range of groups and practitioners that work with young people.

Ara Taiohi have developed a nationally recognised Code of Ethics for Youth work in Aotearoa to ensure that Youth Work is carried out in a safe, skilled, ethical manner. It is one of the ways youth workers hold one another accountable for our practice, and in doing so protects the credibility of Youth Work.

The Code of Ethics also provides youth workers with a frame of reference from which to develop ethical awareness, to create discussion and debate of ethical issues, and to implement good and ethical practice for both youth workers and young people.

Ara Taiohi's Code of Ethics should be read as in conjunction with this document which provides specific guidance to youth workers in our Diocesan context.

The guide can be accessed [here](#).

4. Safe Practice Training

1. Safeguarding Training

The Children's Act 2014, which came into force in July 2016, requires organisations to ensure that those working with children understand the nature of abuse and neglect. All youth ministries should have access to annual training regarding;

- Defining and Identifying Abuse and Neglect
- Dealing with Disclosures of Abuse
- Recording, Reporting and Responding to Suspected Abuse

Safeguarding Children training is offered by the Diocese, and must be refreshed every three years.

2. Boundaries Training

Understanding and respecting boundaries is absolutely critical to healthy ministry. We are committed to ensuring that boundaries training is available to all licence and office holders.

This must be refreshed every three years.

3. Crisis Prevention Training

Crisis prevention training enables youth workers to learn skills to safely de-escalate challenging situations and deal with problem behaviour they may face.

<https://www.crisisprevention.com/en-NZ/Our-Programs/Safety-Intervention>

5. Appointment of a Ministry Unit Safeguarding Officer

Each ministry unit should have a Safeguarding Officer. They should;

- Have an overview of all the ministry activities involving youth
- Have up to date knowledge of the Diocesan safeguarding policy and guidance and ensure leaders of activities are aware of and are implementing the guidance.
- Liaise with the Vicar/Priest/Dean/Vestry/Leadership team over safeguarding issues. If issues are unable to be resolved they should liaise with Diocesan Safeguarding Officer
- Report all concerns or allegations against church officers to the [Ministry Standards Commission Registrar](#).
- Attend Diocesan safeguarding training for MUSO's.
- Ensure safeguarding posters are displayed in all church premises and on the church website.
- Ensure that safety and safeguarding is regularly discussed at ministry team meetings.
- Assist Youth Ministry Leaders in completion of RAMS forms for specific events if required.
- Keep good records of safeguarding concerns, ensure others do this and store securely.
- Conduct an annual safety 'audit' with the Ministry Leaders to ensure best practice is being met, and to discuss how to meet any standards that are not being met. This report should be supplied to a Diocesan Safeguarding Officer and Archdeacon

6. Safety and Wellbeing

The Diocese of Waikato & Taranaki is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children/youth involved in its programmes/events and will act to ensure a safe environment is maintained at all times. The Diocese of Waikato & Taranaki also supports the safety and wellbeing of its Youth workers, leaders and helpers and encourages their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all participants.

A. **Boundaries**

Having healthy boundaries as a person in ministry is crucial for our personal longevity as well as the overall health and effectiveness of our ministry. Our diocese offers comprehensive boundaries training that is a requirement for youth leaders.

Navigating appropriate boundaries for youth workers can be difficult. The youth attending the programme/event may have been taught boundaries that are unacceptable, often youth workers are young, this may be their first time leading in a youth ministry context, they may be unaware of what is expected of them in their role. For the safety of all involved, the following are a broad guide to some circumstances specific to youth work in our context. Youth workers should regularly discuss boundaries in professional supervision.

Physical Contact

- As a general rule, open displays of affection initiated by youth in the presence of others are acceptable. However, always remain visible to other youth workers or leaders and never be alone in a car or other private place.
- Any physical activity that is or may be thought of as sexually stimulating to the youth is inappropriate and must not happen. Youth may not be aware of creating such situations, but it is the responsibility of the Youth worker or leader to be alert to such circumstances and follow the guidelines below:
- **Appropriate physical contact includes**
- A brief modest side hug, initiated by the youth in a public place, as a form of greeting
- Handshakes, high fives

- Normal playful behaviour, which is a typical aspect of structured sports or informal sporting activities. Be alert to the risks involved in contact sports

Inappropriate physical contact includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Forcing affection upon a reluctant youth
- Kissing or coaxing a youth to kiss you
- Extended hugging or tickling
- Touching any area of the body normally covered by a one-piece swimming costume
- Use of any physical contact that may be interpreted as sexual advancement (e.g. intimate touching, fondling of any sort, massages, etc.)
- Patting a youth on the head (culturally inappropriate)

If you are concerned:

Avoid - Stop - Tell someone - Report situation to next level of authority

Romantic Relationships

- It is inappropriate for a Youth worker or leader to pursue a romantic relationship with a participant during the time they are working together. The power imbalance between those in leadership/oversight of the Youth ministry and participants means that such relationships are unethical.
- Youth workers or leaders have a personal responsibility to process and seek consultation on relationship issues with their next level of authority or support networks, including supervision.
- If fellow Youth workers or leaders are in a romantic relationship, the focus must be on the children/youth and public displays of affection must be avoided whilst in their company.

Behaviour and Language - General

Behaviour, attitudes and language of Youth workers, leaders and helpers are just as important as the input during any Youth programme/event.

- Use language and ways of relating that affirm worth, dignity and significance.
- Behaviour that gives the impression of favouritism or encourages 'special' relationships must be avoided.

- Inappropriate gifts that are suggestive of a romantic nature must not be given.
- Correspondence (email, text messaging or social networking) that is suggestive of a romantic nature must be avoided.
- Do not use negative nicknames, 'put downs' or sexist language with other members of the team or with participants.
- Do not be alone with a child/youth, and remain visible to other Youth workers or leaders at all times.

A Guide to Discipline

- On no account must any form of physical punishment (e.g. smacking) be administered, even in fun.
- The only form of appropriate physical restraint is to protect children/youth from harm (e.g. reasonable restraint to stop a fight or to avoid an accident).
- The way programmes/events and activities are approached can make a world of difference in the amount and kind of discipline that needs to be applied. Programmes/ events and activities must be planned and prepared, as well as discussed with others on the team, so that preventative measures can be taken in terms of behaviour management to provide a safe, comfortable, fair place where children/youth can grow and develop holistically.

→ Do

- » Create a loving, caring atmosphere
- » Involve youth and children in making the group's values and rules
- » Focus on positive actions
- » Provide meaningful and age-appropriate activities
- » Be fair and consistent
- » Establish and communicate realistic expectations and boundaries
- » Grant respect to gain respect

Managing inappropriate behaviour proactively by;

- Being aware of the effects of bullying on children/youth and implementing strategies (e.g. supervision, increasing ratios, enforcing rules) to prevent it happening.
- Use various signals to help children/youth stay active on their task (e.g. verbal instructions, a look, a gentle touch on the shoulder, and so on).

- Redirect aggressive behaviour in children/youth (e.g. removing from situation, providing alternative activity).
- Correct inappropriate behaviour in a conversation with the child/youth while letting the child/youth know you care about them.
- For the duration of the activity safely mind objects that become a distraction (e.g. favourite toys and mobile phones).

B. Activities

- Programme/events that include activities or games that require children/youth to act alone or in pairs, independent of Youth workers or leaders, need to be very carefully considered. If, during an activity, it is possible for children/youth to come into contact with strangers, then great care must be exercised. If in doubt, cancel the activity.
- Any activity needs to have defined boundaries that are easily observed or patrolled. Avoid situations where it is possible for the children/youth to become physically isolated. Any games that are played outdoors and over a wide area need extra planning.
- Activities or games should not exploit gender, physical or intellectual differences. Think about the message that children/youth may learn from the way the game or activity is organised and conducted.
- Review visual and audio materials such as videos, DVDs, computer games, lyrics, and so on to ensure that any elements containing violence, sexual activity or negative lifestyles are appropriate for the intended audience. Take into account the age of the youngest person present when reviewing film classifications.
- Children/youth with special needs: Extra care must be taken with children/youth with known disabilities, special medication needs or behavioural issues. The number and kinds of children/youth with special needs that can be safely involved in activities must be considered. Seek training in basic skills for including these children/youth by asking for guidance and advice from experts.

C. Program start and finish

- Programmes/events need to start and finish at the advertised time.

- Leaders should be aware that 2 leaders need to be present from the advertised start and finish time. Leaders arriving late or leaving early may place other leaders in a compromising position. It is recommended leaders show up at least 15 minutes early to any advertised start time as young people will often arrive early.
- Ensure care in releasing children/youth at the end of a program. Responsibility for younger children especially must not be passed to adults who are not known to the children's/youth worker or leader or the child/youth.

D. Guidelines for Publishing Photographic/Film Images and Personal Information of Children/Youth

The Diocese of Waikato & Taranaki has a duty of care for its children/youth and will ensure their protection by exercising diligence and discretion in the selection, editing and publishing of their photographic/film images and personal information. The terms 'publish' or 'publishing' cover all Diocese of Waikato & Taranaki public publishing spaces:

- websites
- social networking sites
- Microsoft PowerPoint (or similar)
- Noticeboards
- printed publications (including magazines, posters, and brochures)
- film footage

This protection extends to all children/youth connected with any programmes and activities run by The Diocese of Waikato & Taranaki,

Risks

The use of photographs, film footage and information on websites and other publishing spaces can pose risks to children and youth, who are vulnerable to:

- 'grooming' by sexual predators that might use published information to identify and contact them in person.
- Revealing schedules and locations of young people who may be involved in legal disputes between parents regarding custody issues.
- misappropriation/distortion of images to create suggestive or pornographic material
- bullying by reference to (or adaptation of) an image/film or published information in a way that might lower self esteem and lead to stress and anxiety

Even when the personal identity (full name and address) of a child/youth is not published, other details—such as specifics relating to his or her location and personal interests—can make them identifiable and thereby vulnerable to predatory individuals looking to ‘groom’ someone for abuse.

There is also the risk that a photo/film can be taken from a website without permission and subsequently used inappropriately and exploitatively by others.

Published photos/film and personal info can potentially be used for purposes of bullying.

Minimise Risks

When assessing risk, the most important factor is the potential for inappropriate use of the images or personal information. To ensure that children/youth are not exploited and that risks posed to them are minimised, the following must be observed:

- **DO** Create a permission slip at the start of the year that gives you permission to post photos of young people on your media sites. Take special note of people who have requested not to share their image on social media
- **DO** Be proactive about naming what you are doing. “I’m taking a photo for our Youth Group Instagram”, and give the option for young people to opt out if they would prefer “If you don’t want to be in the photo just jump to the side!”
- **DO** Ask if you have a photo of a young person that you would like to share online - even if they have signed a permission slip earlier in the year. “I took a great photo of you during our event today, Do you mind if I put it on our instagram?” Young people may be sensitive about images that they might think they don’t look good in.

→ **NEVER** include the full name of a child/youth along with their image:

› If a photo/film is used online, avoid naming the child/youth (a caption such as ‘children enjoyed a Diocese of Waikato & Taranaki Easter camp’ is appropriate; ‘Sarah Smith from Parish X enjoyed the Diocese of Waikato & Taranaki Easter camp’ is not appropriate)

→ **LIMIT** the amount of personal information that accompanies a photo/film. This includes any caption, information in an accompanying articles, recorded sound on film, and subsequent voiceover material:

- never include email or phone contact information

- Remove the ability for people to 'tag' people in photos
- avoid information that would enable potential predators to learn more about a child/youth with a view to 'grooming' them as targets for abuse; e.g. 'Tony likes to play rugby and is in Year * at X Primary School'

→ **ONLY** use images of children/youth in suitable clothing. Images involving such activities as swimming, athletics and 'sleepovers' present a higher risk of inappropriate use. Photographs of these activities should:

- focus on the activity (an entire group playing sports), rather than one person
- show people who are swimming either fully in water or from the shoulders up
- Do not include images of individuals in night attire

→ **CROP** images to exclude sensitive areas of a photograph:

- for example, an image of a group can sometimes be cropped to avoid showing someone who is dressed inappropriately or suggestively

E. Guidelines for Appropriate Use of Social Networking Tools

Globalisation, new technologies (e.g. cell phones and the internet) and associated social change are rapidly changing the world in which children/youth live. Social 'participation' gives children/youth a sense of belonging and of contributing to decisions that affect them.

These guidelines are specifically designed for Youth workers and leaders who use social networking websites (Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, Whatsapp etc) either in a personal or professional capacity.

The reality is social networking tools are likely the most efficient way to communicate to young people, so youth workers will likely need to use social media or messaging tools simply to make contact with young people from their community. The aim of these guidelines is to ensure appropriate practice and safe use of social networking tools.

- All online communication should be done in a way that creates a safe, positive and professional environment.

→ For youth leaders, a good practice is to imagine a co-leader, parent or supervisor reading through a chat or message history. **Is what you've typed, safe, positive and professional?**

The recommended age for signing up for most social networking sites is usually 13 years and over. There is significant research that shows detrimental outcomes for young people using social media at a young age. Youth workers should not engage with young people via social media under 13 years of age if at all possible.

- Where possible avoid individual direct messaging, encourage the use of a group-based chat for general group updates
- If sending individual direct messages, consider adding a second leader to the conversation
- Where a profile (eg: 'X Community Youth Group) is being used to communicate with youth known to a Youth worker or leader, the message box on the profile can be regularly checked by the next level of authority to ensure safe practice. (ie; multiple leaders should have access to the account and message inbox)
- Leaders must actively moderate any 'chat' on any groups or pages that are the official page of a group they lead and must make sure these online spaces are kept free from bullying and any other inappropriate use.
- Youth workers or leaders must not post any content on their personal or work profiles that would be inappropriate for children/youth to know or see. The privacy setting of the site must be set to ensure this content is not accessible to children/youth.
- Where a profile or group may receive friend/membership requests from individuals not already known to the Youth worker or leader, the profiles of the individuals making the request must be checked by the Youth worker before they are accepted.
- Groups or profiles must include a clear message stating who the profile owner is, their affiliation, how to confirm their identity, and who to contact in the case of any concerns about their conduct.
- Youth workers or leaders must make sure youth are aware that adding them as a friend makes information on the youth's profile accessible to the children's/ youth workers or leaders.
- Youth workers or leader must report any concerns about youth's safety to the next level of authority and follow the guidelines mentioned * for responding to suspicion or allegation of emotional or physical abuse in this manual.

F. Guidelines for Appropriate Use of Emails and Mobile Phones

- Youth workers or leaders must be cautious about comments placed in emails, particularly judgements or evaluations about Youth character or competency—such comments may be used as legal evidence.
- Sending illegal, harassing, obscene and/or other threatening messages is prohibited.
- Youth workers or leaders using mobile phones and email to contact youth must not give out the youth's personal/private number/s or email addresses to other persons for any reason.
- Youth workers or leaders need to maintain professional boundaries when using these means of communication. It is recommended that group text/email may be used (having received permission from parents/guardians). Group emails should also give individuals the opportunity to have their contact details removed from the list by including a statement (e.g. If you wish to be removed from this email list, please contact ...).
- Anything that compromises the Youth worker or leader's ability to maintain a safe environment and give their full attention to the supervision of children/youth is discouraged. Unless absolutely necessary, making/taking phone calls or sending and receiving texts during a programme/event is discouraged for these reasons.

G. Ratios

Safe practice for youth work should be a minimum of 1 youth leader to 10 young people, with a minimum of two leaders present for regular gatherings.

- NOTE: Co-ed groups need both male and female children's/youth workers or leaders
- Activities off-site require the completion of an activity specific RAMS form and leader-youth ratios should be examined on a case by base basis

H. Age Gap

A Youth Ministry Leader should be at least three years older than the children they are working with, unless supervised by an older adult.

I. First Aid

Teams must include someone trained in First Aid. The level of First Aid training team members should possess must be considered for each programme/event. This will depend on the nature and location of the programme/event.

- For programmes/events that have activities away from the main site, it is necessary that somebody on the team hold a current First Aid certificate. If a group subdivides from the main group (such as on camps, hikes or outings) for a significant length of time (more than two hours) and distance (more than two km), then it is recommended that each group should have a separate First Aid kit and someone trained in basic First Aid.
- Programmes/events must have access to a well-equipped and constantly-maintained First Aid kit. There are many commercially-available kits on the market. Home-made kits should conform to New Zealand standards—this can be easily checked with reputable organisations such as St John Ambulance New Zealand.
- Do not be alone when administering First Aid. Another person must be present.
- The children's/youth worker needs to be aware of any child's/youth medical needs and limitations and plan activities appropriately. The Individual Record and Consent Form can be referred to as applicable.
- Children/youth workers must notify parents/guardians of any First Aid treatment administered to a child/youth, apart from minor First Aid.

First Aid kits

- Make sure the kit itself is clean
- Do not overstock
- Watch the 'use by' date on the contents
- Dressings and bandages should be clean
- Eye drops and ointments must be replaced if they have been opened

NOTE: For mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, mouth pieces, resuscitation bags or other ventilation devices should be used. (Once only or not re-used until thoroughly disinfected.) Up-to-date training is essential in this area.

J. Transportation of youth

- Drivers must have a full driver's licence and be 18 years old or over.
- Drivers must adhere to road rules, vehicles must be warranted and registered, seat belts used, accidents reported.
- Pre-planning should be done to avoid leaders dropping children home on their own. Consider taking a second leader for the journey, so as to avoid being alone in the car when dropping the last young person off, especially if the last drop-off is a young person of the opposite sex.

- A first aid kit should be available in the vehicle if a larger vehicle (eg minivan) is being used to transport young people to events.

K. Risk Management

- A risk management form should be completed at the beginning of each year that will cover regular youth gatherings.
- Specific RAMS forms should be completed for events outside of the regular gatherings, Or for an onsite-activity that has a risk you cannot completely eliminate by other actions or measures

L. Attendance Rolls

Youth groups should have a sign in - sign out sheet at each event for the purpose of accurately accounting for who is present in the case of an emergency.

At the first instance of a young person attending a group emergency contact details should also be sought.

M. Gifts

Leaders should exercise caution in giving or receiving gifts. While the giving of gifts on special occasions (ie a baptism or confirmation) in a public forum is encouraged, giving personal gifts to young people that could in any way be deemed as showing a form of special treatment, or has the potential to be viewed as a romantic gesture is not permitted

N. Pastoral care meetings

Meeting with young people in a pastoral care capacity is a common task of youth workers. However this also raises challenges to do this in a safe and transparent way. In all cases youth workers should conduct pastoral care meetings in a way that means their integrity can not be questioned.

→ Do

Meet young people in public places (eg.; McDonalds)

Make efforts to match young people with leaders of the same gender for pastoral care

Meet at times appropriate for young people - ie after school, not in the evenings

Agree to meet for a limited number of times and then assess whether to continue

Consider if another leader being present would be suitable. (This may aid in training other leaders in the task of pastoral conversations) Always ask the young person if they would mind another leader being present.

→ **Do not**

Meet anyone in a private location with no-one else present

Visit a young person when they are home alone

Meet too regularly and too often

Avoid favouritism - do not only meet with one or two young people and avoid others

If you have safety concerns for the young person these should be discussed with the ministry lead and the safeguarding lead. If there are concerns about risk of harm to youth it may be necessary to involve appropriate professional bodies (example, Oranga Tamariki or Police).

O. FOOD

Hospitality is an excellent way to create a sense of community. Preparing and sharing a meal together is a great way to connect with young people. Young people love food!

Storage

- Food must be stored correctly (e.g. fresh or frozen foods are refrigerated/frozen at the correct temperature)
- Food given out is safe (e.g. tins are not rusty or badly dented, packages are not broken)
- Food storage areas are kept clean and free from contamination
- Contents of all tins and packages are correctly labelled
- Bulk food that is repackaged is done hygienically and clearly labelled
- Food items to be used by 'use by' date mentioned and discarded after that. 'Best before' date food items are still acceptable for consumption but are best used before that date

Handling

- Food preparation must be carried out in a clean environment
- Food servers should wear gloves
- Food handlers are required to thoroughly wash their hands, even if they choose to wear gloves

- Fresh gloves are to be used after handling meat/poultry/fish
- Proper disposal of waste, including leftover food
- No one should work with food if unwell

Drugs & Alcohol

Drugs and alcohol can be a destructive influence in a community setting. Whilst alcohol may be appropriate at a family event or event for those 18 years and older, it is not recommended for an event that young people or children are attending under a church umbrella. Make sure that the consequences for bringing or consuming drugs or alcohol while at youth events are clearly known and then enforced as the need arises. It is the leaders' decision whether to talk to the parent/guardian about any incidents that do occur. This will not be an issue with some groups but will be important for others.

- It is never appropriate for a leader to have responsibility for children or young people whilst under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

P. Communication with Parents

Communication with parents can be complicated. It is necessary to make it clear with parents how and what you will communicate with them.

Consider if a parents 'group chat' is possible as an efficient way to communicate.

Parents should be communicated with regarding

- Any events outside the normal routine
- Changes to drop off / pick up times
- Key events (eg camps) with details regarding timings, costs, and the nature of event clearly explained

- Where there are events where an element of risk is involved, parents should be given an overview of the risk management plan. (ie, 'We are going on an overnight hike to [x], we have 4 adult leaders coming with us, two are first aid trained, we will be checking the weather report prior to departing and the event may be cancelled if the weather is not satisfactory. A detailed Risk Management plan has been completed which you can view here. Please see the attached form for details for what your young people need to bring with them)

- Do not assume young people pass on information to their parents
- Engaged parents can come to be a great asset to your ministry! Keep them in the loop

Please work through this document with your youth ministry team, and if there are any suggestions for changes that need to be made, or areas that need to be covered, please contact lance@wtanglican.nz