



Word of Life

New Zealand

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFETY PLAN

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GENERAL INFORMATION:

Offenders

There are two types of offenders to look for:

- **Opportunist**
Situation became available
- **Groomer**
Work to create the relationship and situation.

Definition of Important Terms

Adult: a person at least 18 years of age.

Applicant: a person who is applying for approval by Word of Life New Zealand/Fiji, as a volunteer or other paid staff.

Child/Minor: a person under 18 years of age.

Child Abuse: harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare which occurs through non-accidental physical or mental injury; sexual abuse, sexual exploitation; sexual harassment; sexual molestation; disseminating, exhibiting, or displaying sexually explicit material to children.

Child Care Provider: all pastors, employees, lay leaders, counselors, and volunteers who work in any capacity with children at or through the various ministries of Word of Life New Zealand/Fiji.

Seasonal employee/volunteer: any person providing any services, care, guidance, assistance, or supervision for any Word of Life New Zealand/Fiji, function, activity, event or program.

Sexual abuse: any sexual exploitation of, the sexual harassment of, or the sexual molestation of a child: and/or disseminating, exhibiting or displaying sexually explicit material to a child, regardless of whether such conduct is with or without the knowledge or consent of the child. It includes sexual behaviors involving touching, such as fondling, penetration, intercourse and rape. It also includes sexual behavior that does not include touching, such as sexually suggestive comments, obscene phone calls, exhibitionism, displaying pornographic materials, and allowing children to witness sexual activity.

Private: Closets, offices or rooms with no windows in doors, bathrooms, vehicles

Public: Community/common area's, offices with windows on doors,

POLICIES

Word of Life New Zealand/Fiji is committed to the protection and safety of the campers and guests who participate in our programs. It is our desire to set forth a plan to make WOL a safe environment for all ages.

Our Goal

- Protect all children at our events or facilities from all forms of abuse, especially sexual abuse.
- Protect our child care providers, staff and volunteers from false allegations of child abuse.
- Protect the future and integrity of our ministry.

1. Touch (What is acceptable touch?)

Appropriate

- Handshakes and high fives
- Short, congratulatory or greeting hugs
- Arm around the shoulders
- Piggybacks with minors

Not Appropriate

- Private back rubs, massages, etc.
- Touching of private parts (no exceptions!)
- Touching a child in anger, disgust, or frustration
- Long frontal hugs with opposite sex
- Sexual embraces
- Minor sitting close on someone's lap
- Kissing
- Any touching that makes a person feel uncomfortable

2. Talk (What is acceptable talk – in person/face to face)

Appropriate

- Verbal praise for achievement or behavior
- Verbal encouragement
- Scripturally based teaching (non-sexual)

Not Appropriate

- Compliments or questions relating to physique or body development
- Sexual jokes, homosexual comments or bathroom humor
- Swearing or vulgar language
- Verbal harassment or abuse
- Individual secrets or special gifts
- Sexual coaching or conversation.

3. Territory (What are acceptable personal boundaries?)

Appropriate

- Public one-on-one interaction (Refer to what public areas are under 'General Information')
- Group or public environments

Not Appropriate

- Sitting or lying on a bed with a minor
- Private one-on-one interactions (Refer to private areas and public areas under 'General Information')

Modesty

- Staff or youth shall never "sit around" or "walk around" without a towel or clothing covering private parts during activities that encourage such behavior (swimming, bathing, dressing, etc.).
- Appropriate clothing and swimwear must be worn at all times.

4. Who are they? (Identify the individuals on property/event)

- Are they with a staff member or leader?
- Are they a leader and student/minor?
- Are they two students/minors?
- Is it a visitor on property?

5. Where are they? (Are they located where you can observe)

- Walking into isolated areas?
- In a building or room not in use at that particular time?
- Is the area considered private or public?

6. What are they doing? (Are their actions appropriate and within the boundaries of our schedule of activities?)

- Sitting and talking in a secluded area at an inappropriate time?
- Are they showing signs of inappropriate behaviour?

General Recommendations

- Ensure all communication is appropriate, spiritual and encouraging for all individuals.
- Consider what you say and do and how it will be perceived. (if unsure, consult another staff member for protection)
- If parents do not want you to personally communicate with their child or they want to be involved with all communication, you must honor their request.
- Communication must be same gender in counseling situations.
- If a subject comes up in a conversation (*Rape, molestation, sexual behavior with partner, etc.*) please do not feel like you need to sort it out. Please see a member of the management team or if there is a counseling coordinator previously appointed for further instruction.

1. Online/Digital Communications (Facebook, snapchat, Instagram, texting, tik tok, etc.)

- Appropriate boundaries should always be observed, particularly when relating to young people. We need to be aware of the ways online forms of communication can be misused and how it can be perceived (even if our intentions are in a good place of care and concern). Guidelines on reporting of suspected child abuse or exploitation of children, youth, elders and vulnerable adults apply in the virtual world as they do in the physical world.
- Only message/text minors/youth within daytime hours or early evening for ministry related matters and be aware that any private communication with a minor/youth can be viewed by management or your supervisor for accountability purposes when needed.
- Consider the necessity of messaging someone of the opposite sex, if there is a topic that needs discussed with a minor, please find someone of the same gender to communicate with that person or use your work email during daytime hours.
- If you are messaged by a minor of the opposite sex, a simple reply saying that you will direct them to someone who can answer that is acceptable, then direct them to a staff member of the same gender.

2. Written Communication (Postcards/Letters)

- Be encouraging, honoring to parents, and edifying to the Lord.
- All personal, written communication must be done in a transparent way.

3. Counseling/Sensitive Subjects

- Professional counseling should be left to the professionals. If you get to a point where you are not sure please come talk to a member of the management team and they can direct to a professional who can help.
- Personal counseling should be encouraging, uplifting and Christ-centered.
- No private, one-on-one situations (When necessary, have a third person).
- Choose appropriate place and setting conversations.
- Office counseling should be in an office with a window on the door.

PROCEDURES:

1. Reporting Abuse

Any unusual incidents or situations that conflict with these policies should be immediately communicated to the Management team, then the key youth leader is to be informed to continue working with the situation.

A. The responsibilities when abuse is disclosed

All allegations of abuse will be taken seriously. The following procedure should be followed if a child or young person discloses any abuse to you.

1. Listen to the child or young person. Allow him/her to tell you only as much as they want. Do not put words into his/her mouth. Under no circumstances should he/she be questioned beyond that which he/she voluntarily discloses. Your job is not to solve the problem or find out whether it is true.
2. Write down what the child or young person says. This should be factual and include the time and date of the disclosure, who was present, and where the conversation took place.
3. Make sure that the child or young person understands that you accept what they say and that they will get help, but do not make any promises that you will not be able to keep i.e. you will be safe now, **don't promise you will not share this information with anyone.**
4. Do not panic or overreact. When young people disclose it is a critical moment for them. They will be watching your reaction as to how you cope with the disclosure. Depending on your reaction they will decide how far their disclosure should go.
5. Do not criticise the child or young person for not disclosing sooner or for allowing the alleged abuse to take place.
6. Do not confront the alleged abuser yourself.
7. Report the alleged abuse to the management team as soon as possible and do not discuss the matter with anyone else.
8. Management team will then disclose this information to the proper authorities, which may include the WOLNZ Board in some cases.
9. Any allegations against any WOL Staff member, "permanent" volunteer, intern or Jr. Staff member, that person is to withhold all ministry duties until allegations have cleared. If found guilty, that person will be immediately dismissed from Word of Life Ministries.

B. Additional procedures when abuse by a parent or caregiver is suspected.

1. The suspicion is reported to the ministry leader/WOL Staff member within 48 hours.
2. The ministry leader/WOL Staff member, together with the informant, reports it to the WOL Director within 48 hours.
3. If child abuse is suspected, the management team will report it to the appropriate outside agency e.g., CPS, the Police or NZCYF Service.
4. The parent will be informed by the police or NZCYF service.

C. Procedure when the suspected abuse has occurred outside the family.

1. The suspicion is reported to the ministry leader/WOL Staff Member within 48 hours.
2. The ministry leader/WOL Staff Member, together with the informant, reports it to the management team within 48 hours.
3. The parents are informed before any further action is taken.
4. In consultation with the parents, the suspected abuse is reported to the Police or NZCYP Service.

D. Procedure when there is an allegation that a WOL staff member/intern has abused a child or young person.

1. The allegation is reported to the management team as soon as possible, within 24 hours.
2. If the person suspected of abuse is the Director or a member of the management team, it is reported to a WOL board member as well as WOL International Regional Director who will then proceed as outlined for the staff member in the following steps.
3. The staff member suspected of abuse may be suspended while an investigation is being done.
4. The management team/Director or Board Member will consult with the appropriate outside support agencies in investigating the allegations e.g., CPS, the Police or NZCYF Service.
5. If the staff member is found guilty of abuse, they will step down from their position and will no longer be permitted to work with Word of Life Ministries. .

2. Staff/Volunteer Hiring

- A. We review each program element to ensure that there are no gaps from our protocol and training.
- B. We will identify all staff, volunteers, and guests/Visitors.
- C. We require applications, reference-checking, and police vetting on each staff member/intern of Word of Life.
- D. We require a *Statement of Commitment* indicating agreement to our plan and police check for staff members and key volunteers involved with Word of Life events.
- E. Any violation of the above policy will be immediate grounds for dismissal with no chance of re-hire. A violation of one of these policies could not only be misunderstood by staff, but result in legal consequences.

Special Policies

1. Media Policy

All Media calls/inquiries are to be treated as important calls and we must ensure that we respond to journalists' enquiry and/or interview requests in a timely manner and informative way.

It is important not to respond to any questions on the initial call.

If you are not the contact person and you are taking the call here is what you should say:

- "I am not the best person to talk to but I will organise for the right person to call you back"
OR
- "I am not an expert in this area, but I can get someone to call you back"

The person taking the call should ask the following questions for the spokesperson if they are not available:

- What is your name?
- What Publication are you calling from?
- When is your deadline?
- What information are you looking for or what is the topic of the interview?
- What is your phone number or the best way for us to get back to you?

Once you have this information, tell the journalist that a spokesperson will call them back before their deadline.

Regardless of the situation, or without the consent of The management team, **do not do the interview yourself**.

Key Spokesperson (or those who are appointed by the spokesperson to do the interview) should:

- Review key messages
- Write out a game plan – what do you want to get across to the journalist?
- If possible, find out why the journalist is wanting this interview.

2. Transgender Policy

Any students that fall into this category, these are the parameters we have set in place as to the stance of Word of Life International standards.

1. They must present themselves as their God Given Birth at the time of birth. In both attire, attitude and actions.
2. They must not come with an agenda or be a disruption. If so, we reserve the right to ask them to leave or not come.
3. They must attend all meetings and be open to WOL's point of view, which is a Biblical view of marriage and human sexuality.
4. If the camper is able to come, written permission from the youth group students and parents so they are aware of the sleeping arrangements. (No other youth groups will sleep in the same room) – And this group must be placed in Cabins with "Private" bathrooms that only that group can use. (i.e. River Cabins at Finlay Park)