



**Under 18s**  
**Parent Handbook**  
*All you need to know and more.*

## **WELCOME**

Civic Church is a fresh, enjoyable, irreligious and ultra-relevant expression of the Christian Church. Under the leadership of Co-Senior Pastors Gerard and Ange Alchin, the church runs a variety of ministries for young people (any person aged under 18 years).

These include:

### **CIVIC KIDS**

Is church for children (birth to grade six) which runs every Sunday at the same time as the adult service. Civic Kids caters to specific age groups. For 0-12 months, we have a team of nurturing and attentive carers tending to babies in our specialised nursery area, within the main Civic complex. For our 1-3.5 year olds, we have a warm, caring environment with lots of free play, music and stories. For our children from 3.5-5 years and our primary school age, we have lots of fun interactive games, activities, praise and worship, and teaching about biblical truths.

### **CIVIC YOUTH**

Civic Youth is a dynamic Friday night program for young people in Grades 7-12. Running at the Hub from 6:30pm on Friday nights during the school term, it is an exciting program with its main purpose to build teamwork, self-worth, self-esteem, give purpose and a positive life message, with Christ being at the centre of it all. Our program is a mix of praise and worship, teaching from God's Word, entertainment and games. We regularly give our young people the opportunity to make a personal decision to follow Jesus and his teachings.

### **THRIVE**

Thrive is a one hour small groups program for primary school aged children. It is designed to encourage peer connection and positive discussions in a fun and engaging environment.

### **PASTORAL CARE**

Civic Church takes the pastoral care needs of children seriously and encourages young people to tackle life's issues from a positive, Biblical perspective. As a parent/guardian, your permission will be sought before a worker catches up with your child.

For more information, please see the Pastoral Care Section in this handbook.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Civic Church is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who use its services. This handbook is designed as an introduction to the Child and Youth Protection (CYP) Policies and Procedures, Code of Conduct for Working with Children and Young People and other support documents.

Further information about our Child Protection policies and the programs and activities available for children and young people are available via our website at [civic.church](http://civic.church) or by phoning 07 4631 5800.

### **1 Child Safety and Protection**

#### **1.1 Enrolment Forms**

Parents/guardians of all young people attending any supervised young peoples's program are required to complete an Under 18s Enrolment Form. If a young person is visiting for the first time or on a one-off basis a Visitor Form may be completed. Information contained on these forms is important to your child's safety and it is your responsibility to keep it up to date.

#### **1.2 Check In**

- All persons present at children's and youth programs must be checked in and out. This includes parents, guardians, visitors, young people and workers.
- To protect your child, only parents, guardians and those listed by them on the enrolment form may check children out of programs. If the people you want to collect your children change you will need to complete a new form.
- Young people twelve years old or over may check themselves in and out of programs when their parent / guardian has given permission on their enrolment form. Generally, they will only be permitted to check out after the program is finished.
- Where there is a bus service available for a program a separate permission form is required before young people can utilise this service.

#### **1.3 Visitors**

Visitors, including parents / guardians, must sign in, wear the identification and comply with the Code of Conduct for Visitors when visiting young people's programs. Due to child safety requirements visitors will be supervised and entry to programs is at the discretion of the Service Coordinator.

#### **1.4 Special Events and Excursions**

At various times throughout the year Civic Church may run special events and excursions for young people. These are planned carefully to ensure your child's safety and it is very important that you follow any RSVP instructions and return permission forms on time.

#### **1.5 Skate Equipment – Civic Youth**

Civic Youth has available professionally built skate equipment for skateboarding, scooters, and inline skates. We believe that this activity will provide enjoyment for those wanting to participate, but their safety is paramount and we want to assure you that we take every precaution to ensure that it happens. Additionally, young people will only be permitted to use this equipment with a parent/guardian completing the appropriate section of the enrollment form or a separate skate permission form. Some

of the measures Civic takes to ensure your young person can enjoy this activity safely include:

#### Safety Equipment:

If your young person wants to use these facilities, it is a requirement that they wear an Australian Standard helmet. Civic Youth will have safety equipment available in various sizes if your young person does not own any to bring along with them.

#### Instruction:

At all times whilst this activity is taking place, Civic leaders supervise the environment to ensure that safety is prioritised.

### 1.6 Volunteer Workers and Staff

Civic Church is committed to child safety and all staff and volunteers, over the age of 18, working in the children's and youth ministries are required to hold current Blue Cards or exemption notices. You will see that workers wear identification and, in larger programs, highly visible shirts. Civic Church provides regular training for workers in various areas of child safety.

### 1.7 Personal Care

Civic Church has strict guidelines surrounding personal care practices to protect both children and workers. Personal care includes toileting or nappy changing, showering or bathing and dressing or undressing children. Your assistance in toileting young children before activities is appreciated and you may be contacted during programs to attend to your child's needs. Children who are not toilet trained may only be checked into a program when a parent or guardian remains onsite. ie Child checked in to Civic Kids while parent attends church service. (For more information see the CYP documents.)

### 1.8 Pastoral Care

Civic Church respects the role of parents in their children's lives and workers will not make appointments with your children without your consent. Pastoral care for young people will always take place in plain sight of other people and the worker involved will be the same gender as your child unless you, or another appropriate adult, takes part in the visit.

While pastoral care is private when caring for children, workers will ensure they respect your role as parent and will inform you of information shared with them if they believe that is in your child's best interest.

## **2 Risk Management**

### 2.1 Workplace Health and Safety

Civic Church works hard to provide safe environments and programs for both young people and workers. Toys, playground and other equipment have been purchased for use by specific age groups. Your assistance in keeping the environment safe by enforcing any age restrictions or other requirements is appreciated. (For further information, see Civic Group Australia Limited as trustee for Civic Church Work, Health and Safety Policy.)

### 2.2 First Aid

Civic Church provides First Aid Kits and First Aid training for Service Coordinators. A First Aid officer is

on duty during all children's programs. You will be notified of any incidents involving your child and may be required to sign to acknowledge you have been notified.

### 2.3 Infection Control

Infection control is the process of preventing the spread of disease among workers and children. It is achieved through good hygiene and cleaning practices and through the exclusion of those with contagious illnesses. The church follows the National Health and Medical Research Council guidelines on exclusion when deciding whether a child or young person needs to be excluded from a particular activity. (For further information, see the CYP documents)

### 2.4 Medication

Where possible parents are encouraged to schedule their child's medication so that administration is not required during programs. When it is required the only medications that can be administered by workers are oral (eg. tablets or liquids), inhaled (eg. asthma puffers) or topical (eg. creams). Exception applies for emergency situation where an adrenaline autoinjector (e.g. EpiPen) is required to be administered.

Civic Church will follow parent/guardian direction for young people with an adrenaline autoinjector (e.g. Epi-pen), asthma puffers and any other medication approved by the Service Coordinator if the young person will carry their device/medication on their person or if the device/medication will be appropriately stored.

A completed Medication Authorisation Form must be completed before any medication can be administered by workers and/or for any medication that a young person brings that can only be obtained from a pharmacy. (For further information see the CYP documents)

### 2.5 Emergency Procedures

All workers within young peoples programs have been inducted into the church evacuation and lock down procedures and Service Coordinators have been trained in the use of fire extinguishers.

### 2.6 Sun Protection

Sun protection is an important part of any young persons safety. If outdoor activities are being planned then you may be asked to provide a hat for your child, broad brimmed or legionnaires hats are preferred over caps.

Broad spectrum 30+ sunscreen is supplied if you have given permission on your child's enrolment form. (For further information see the CYP documents)

## 3 Handling Disclosures and Suspicions of Harm

Civic Church considers any case of disclosure or any cases of suspicions of harm to be serious and they will be treated in a prompt and professional manner. It is our policy that all suspicions or disclosures of harm will be reported to the relevant authorities.

## **4 Code of Conduct for Children and Young People**

All children and young people have a right to feel safe and enjoy programs in a positive environment. Civic Church's Code of Conduct for Children and Young People will allow all parties to enjoy the program and gain maximum benefit from it. This code is general and will be modified by Service Coordinators to suit the age group and activity being conducted.

### **4.1 Actions**

- Follow the guidelines set for all activities so that everyone can enjoy them safely.
- Keep their hands and feet to themselves.
- Stay in the area set aside for their activity. i.e. Keep out of the storerooms, offices and other people's belongings.
- Do not attempt to leave the program or facilities until checked out.
- Observe the dress requirements for each program.
- Wear shoes to all programs.
- Children and young people are not allowed outside the building where the program is being held unless supervised by a worker.
- Mobile phones must be turned off or onto silent during the program.
- Children and young people shall not wear clothing that has offensive, foul or derogatory slogans.
- Clothing worn by children and young people should be modest in nature.
- Children and young people shall not be rude or practice obscene gestures.

### **4.2 Speech**

- Be encouraging – no put downs or foul language.
- Use manners – avoid interrupting others. Say please, thank you and excuse me.

### **4.3 Attitude**

- Respect the property and use equipment properly. Deliberate misuse of or damage to equipment or facilities will not be tolerated.
- Respect all people including those different to themselves.

### **4.4 Breach of the Code of Conduct for Children and Young People**

Where a young person's actions breach this code of conduct actions taken will be in line with Civic Church's Behaviour Management Strategy.

## **5 Behaviour Management**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Civic Church recognises that behaviour management starts before young people arrive for a program and commit to a strategy that involves training for workers, clear expectations for young people, appropriate consequences for behaviour and support for those dealing with ongoing negative behaviour.

Civic Church recognises that consistent boundaries and appropriate consequences keep young people safe and help them develop appropriate self-management. Where a young person's negative behaviour continues after reminders and redirection further consequences are necessary. Depending on the age

of the young person appropriate consequences may be:

- Sitting out for a portion of a game or activity.
- Having an item confiscated.
- Going on 'time out' - generally one minute per year of age.
- Missing out on another activity.
- Joining a different team or group.

If these strategies fail or the behaviour is serious, you may be contacted and asked to arrange for your young person to leave the program session. In all cases where your young person is asked to leave, the Service Coordinator will offer a meeting at a later date to discuss the incident and strategies for them to return to the program.

Where a young person is identified as having high behaviour support needs, the Service Coordinator will arrange for a meeting with the young person's parent/s or guardian/s and workers to formulate a strategy for the young person's involvement in the program.

Workers should never respond to young people by:

- Raising their voice in anger or acting in a threatening manner.
- Ridiculing, belittling or 'shaming' them.
- Threatening them with inappropriate consequences.
- Grabbing or hitting them.
- Using force with them, other than restraining them to prevent injury to themselves or others.

## **6 Collection of Under 18's After a Program**

It is Civic Church policy that no worker will transport or take any child or young person by any form of transport away from a designated program location without the written permission from a parent or guardian. However, in the event that a child is not collected at the conclusion of a program;

- Contact will be made to the parent or guardian. Where they are uncontactable, workers will make contact with those listed as authorised to collect or emergency contacts as stated on the enrolment form.
- In the event of unforeseen circumstances, emergency situation or where contact can not be made with any of the above, workers will arrange transport for the child. Follow up with the parent/guardian will happen to confirm they understand what happened and discuss options to minimise the situation occurring again.
- In some circumstances or repeated instances, the local police will be contacted to collect your child from the program and remain under their supervision and further action.

Failure to collect your child at the conclusion of a program may be seen as negligent and therefore may be reportable to the Department of Communities or the Police.

For more information, see the our CYP documents.

## **7 Breach of the Child and Youth Protection Policy, Procedures and Associated Policies**

Civic Church take breaches to the Child and Youth Protection Policy and associated policies and procedures seriously. If you notice something that concerns you please speak to the Service Coordinator.

## 8 Privacy Officer

Civic Church has a designated Privacy Officer who is responsible for storing, correcting and giving people access to personal information collected about them. The Privacy Officer is also responsible for making decisions that could affect the privacy of individual Church members and adherents.

Individuals who wish to discuss any known or suspected privacy breaches or to discuss any privacy-related issues should contact the info desk and ask to speak to the Privacy Officer.

If you have any further questions about our privacy policy, please call us on 07 4631 5800 or send an email to: [info@civic.church](mailto:info@civic.church).

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