



DIOCESE of
PARRAMATTA



Safeguarding

IN YOUTH MINISTRY

2022-2023

A JOINT PROJECT BETWEEN



Office for Safeguarding



CATHOLIC YOUTH | PARRAMATTA



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INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND



Dear Youth Leader

Thank you for accepting this opportunity to share your faith and lead the Youth of your Parish Community. Your participation as part of a Parish Youth Group has shown that you have a strong commitment to your faith and a generous spirit. In your role as Youth Leader, you will be able to rely on these qualities to help you build a vibrant and faith-filled youth ministry in your parish.

As a Youth Leader you are now challenged by other responsibilities to ensure your Youth Ministry is a safe place for those young people who choose to come to your Church Youth Group to deepen their faith.

One of your responsibilities as a Youth Leader is to view your group's activities through a 'Safeguarding Lens'. This means you and your team are expected to:

- Create a safe and inclusive place for all young people in your group
- Ensure all those who facilitate Youth Groups act and speak appropriately when working with children
- Conduct your Youth Ministry within the expectations of the legal requirements of Child Protection / Safeguarding and Diocesan Policies.

What is the purpose of this Handbook?

This "Safeguarding in Youth Ministry" Handbook is designed to help you plan, review and reflect on the activities in your ministry through the eyes of a 'safeguarding lens'.

It will help you to assess the choices you and your team make so that each meeting, event and activity is designed with the goal of putting each child and young person's needs and safety first.

How should this Handbook be used?

All people working with children are required to understand and be compliant with legislative and diocesan expectations. As a result, there are key concepts the law requires you **to know and understand**. In response to these legal requirements the Diocese of Parramatta has created a set of policies and procedures that help you **apply these requirements** as a leader in Parish Ministry. This Handbook will guide you through four key focus areas you are required to **KNOW** and **APPLY** to the activities in your ministry. These Four Key Focus Areas to safeguard the youth in your ministry are:

BOUNDARIES

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS (WWCC)

RISK OF SIGNIFICANT HARM (ROSH)

REPORTABLE CONDUCT (RC)

You will find that each section has been broken down into two categories to help you apply these to your ministry:



NEED TO KNOW

These are the key concepts that NSW Laws require all paid employees and volunteers to know and understand when we work with children.



HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO MY YOUTH MINISTRY?

These tips will help you apply a 'Safeguarding Lens' when planning, organising and reviewing activities in your Youth Ministry.

The Safeguarding lens in Parramatta will be explained in the following two statements – Bishop Vincent's 'Statement of Commitment' and 'The Parramatta Way'.

Thank you for your leadership in Youth Ministry. Should you have other questions as you work through this handbook contact your Parish Priest and / or the Manager, MET Catholic Youth Parramatta.



Safeguarding in Youth Ministry in the Diocese of Parramatta

Any person who works or is engaged in the Parramatta Diocese must have a clear and deep understanding of:

- What child abuse is;
- What appropriate behaviours are when we engage with those in our care and;
- How we must respond if we become aware of a person harming another person

In this, we must ensure that the child safety and safety of those adults at risk is paramount and takes precedence over everything else. Additionally, we must also understand that the Bishop and Trustees are ultimately responsible for ensuring the Diocese is a safe environment

for children and adults at risk. All agencies and ministries are still directly accountable to the Bishop for their implementation of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards and the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian Standards.

Our Bishop, the Most Reverend Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv DD STL, has publicly stated that he and the Diocese of Parramatta has a zero tolerance to abuse of any form. He states that:

“We are committed to ensuring that all children and adults are safe, respected, protected and supported whilst in our care.”





Bishop Vincent's 'Statement of Commitment'

Dear Friends,

The Diocese of Parramatta is committed to being a community of safeguarding that actively promotes the dignity and rights of children and of all persons, particularly those who may be vulnerable.

We have a zero tolerance to abuse of any form. We are committed to ensuring that all children and vulnerable adults under our care are safe, protected and enabled to flourish.

The Diocese of Parramatta offers its unreserved and deepest apologies to survivors of abuse and their families for the hurt and suffering this abuse has caused throughout their lives. We are absolutely committed to ensuring that no child entrusted to our care will ever be harmed again.

The Diocese acknowledges that our past failings have led to irreversible harm being inflicted upon children. Whilst we seek to repair this fundamental breach of trust that was placed in us, we understand that trust is for some people perhaps broken forever.

Our past failings cannot be undone. However, we remain steadfast in our future commitments to ensure our current child protection processes and procedures offer a safeguard from predatory behaviour.

In all of our works, ministries and activities, we respond to the call of the Gospel to protect those who are vulnerable by fostering culture, education, systems, processes and environments where the safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable people is paramount.

- We commit to a culture of safeguarding where leaders at all levels put safeguarding first and where the best interests of children are always paramount.
- We commit to engaging and listening to the voices and experiences of survivors.
- We commit to ensuring all people engaged by the diocese are suitable, supported and skilled for their role, including robust screening processes, supervision, support and ongoing education and training.
- We commit to hearing the voices of our community, to making spaces to listen to children's voices, and to seeking input and feedback from families, the broader community and the rich diversity of the Diocese of Parramatta, including those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and those with a disability.
- We commit to having regularly updated policies and procedures which document our safeguarding practices and are publicly available for transparency and accountability.
- We commit to a complaints management process and policy which is effective and accessible, with a focus on ensuring the complainant is supported through the process.
- We commit to ensuring that all matters requiring a statutory report are reported in a timely manner and that our volunteers and staff are trained to recognise and respond appropriately to disclosures and potential signs of abuse.
- We commit to creating safe spaces, to ensuring our physical and online environments are safe and that seek ongoing input from children and communities about what makes them feel safe.

Look for the information about our other safeguarding information at www.safeguarding.org.au.

Thank you, take care and God bless.

The Parramatta Way of Safeguarding is to...



Act with Justice, and state that we have a zero tolerance for any form of abuse or harm to children or any person

Act with justice and ensure that laws and obligations are upheld, and safety is paramount

And it is to

Love tenderly, as we accept all who come to the Diocese of Parramatta from all walks of life, cultures, and abilities

Love tenderly, as we accept any person for who they are and where they are at in their lives

Love tenderly, as we look after and prioritise children and care for those who may be in a difficult situation or at risk of harm for whatever reason

Love tenderly, as we are servants of the Church, and our role is to walk beside you and support you

And acknowledge

The traditional custodians of the land in which the Diocese of Parramatta sits – the Darug and Gundungurra people

The lifelong trauma of abuse victims and those failures of the Church to protect children and all adults at risk

The diversity of many cultural groups that reside in Parramatta creating a kaleidoscope of diversity and beliefs that are valued and respected

And celebrate the talents and gifts of the community and families of all abilities

And promote

The principles of Catholic social teaching of dignity, respect, association, participation, support for the vulnerable, solidarity, stewardship, subsidiarity, equality and the principle of the common good.

*"This is what the Lord asks of you: only this, to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God."
(Micah 6:8)*

NSW Child Safe Standards

The Australian Human Rights Commission's National Principles for Child Safe Organisations have been widely adopted by COAG and have been adapted by the NSW Office for the Children's Guardian who created the **Ten NSW Child Safe Standards**. The Catholic Church, based on these standards, developed its own set of standards which included working with vulnerable adults or adults at risk.

There are slight differences in language across the principles and the different standards. However, they are largely the same set of standards or principles and are closely aligned to the Royal Commission's conclusions on what

makes institutions 'Child Safe'.

These NSW Child Safe Standards:

- provide an organisation with a framework of practice to help make organisations safer for children. In the Catholic Church it has been extended to include a framework for keeping adults at risk, safe as well.
- provide a benchmark against which organisations can assess their child safe capacity and set performance targets for a best practice approach to child safety.
- are interrelated and work together to articulate a holistic approach to child safety.



HOW MIGHT THESE 10 STANDARDS INFORM MY PLANNING AND PRACTICE IN MY YOUTH MINISTRY?



FOCUS

AREA 1

BOUNDARIES & SAFETY



CONSENT

All people feel safe when their boundaries are respected.

Respect is about treating ourself and others with consideration and dignity.

Activities in Youth Ministry are a great place to model and encourage respectful relationships where all kids can:

- make their own choices about their level of participation
- learn to treat each other fairly and equally
- communicate openly
- feel valued and respected



REMEMBER - Consent is

- Freely given,
- Enthusiastic
- Informed,
- Reversible
- Clear and certain
- Ongoing
- Mutual



CODES OF CONDUCT AND ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS



Engaging safely with others in your Parish/Community is all about boundaries and how we interact with others. Your participants will be asked to consent to behaving positively within your activities.

So, what are boundaries and how do I establish them in my role as a Youth Leader?

Boundaries:

- Boundaries set the relationship. What we know is, that different relationships have different boundaries. Your role as a Youth leader in the relationship is to establish the boundary of how you engage with others.
- When conducting all activities respect the rights of all.
- When engaging with any child or young person your responsibility is to ensure that all participants freely consent to participate.

There are different types of boundaries. These include:

 Need To Know	 How Does THIS Apply To My Youth Ministry?
Physical Boundaries Physical boundaries relate to the appropriateness of physical contact between the professional and others.	Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respecting the personal space of participants in a small group, • avoiding situations where 1:1 contact is possible, and • considering the way a Youth Leader physically greets participants.
Emotional Boundaries Emotional boundaries relate to the relational closeness between the professional and others, including students.	Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spending equal amounts of time spent with all persons, • avoid 1:1 conversations about topics that are overly personal or private, or • be aware of the frequency and type of communication that occurs.
Behavioural Boundaries. Behavioural boundaries relate to the ability of the professional to support students in pro-social behaviour. Adults who maintain behavioural boundaries do not allow or encourage rule-breaking or other behaviours that are disrespectful, oppositional to authorities, or against the law.	Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoiding giving special treatment to individuals, • developing a shared Code of Conduct within group settings so that all are familiar with acceptable behaviours, and • maintaining consistency in the expectations of the Code of Conduct for participants at Youth events.

If you are not sure if you are breaching a boundary, ask your Co-ordinator about the situation – it's important that you seek help.



NEED TO KNOW

Additionally remember the “3 Cs”: Clarity, Consistency, Continuous.

Follow these steps to help you maintain your boundaries when dealing with anyone:

Clarity: Be clear about your role and ask yourself, “Why I am engaging with this person? Am I a leader here?” Act within the Code of Conduct.	Consistency: Be consistent in the way you treat everyone and have regard for all persons you engage with.	Continuous: Always reflect on your behaviour. Ask yourself, “Am I treating everyone the same? What message do people get from my behaviour?”
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HIGH RISK BEHAVIOURS:

It helps if we know what is not acceptable and what can be seen as high-risk behaviours because:

- Often the good behaviours can be the same as unhealthy behaviours.
- We need to be clear about what is high risk – and what is acceptable or not.
- Awareness and knowledge will assist us.

High risk behaviours include behaviours that demonstrate inconsistent work practice. These can include behaviours such as:

- a breach of policy or being inconsistent with direction/instructions; or
- poor performance/practice; or

High risk behaviours may appear or feel uncomfortable. These may be shown in behaviours that may include the following:

- Being peers with people younger than you when you are the Youth Leader
- Sharing secrets with group members that are not part of the whole group
- Being emotionally dependant on a younger person
- Being exclusive with one or two members of your group
- Talking in an inappropriate way about topics such as sex, drug use, pornography, sexting etc
- Focusing on sexual activity
- Being unreasonable with expectations
- Making demands
- Being excessively available to one or two members of your group
- Being reactive/volatile to the person

[Reference: <https://vimeo.com/158382585>
Dr Monica Applewhite]

APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOURS:

What are appropriate behaviours?

Relationships that are productive, appropriate and caring include the following traits:

- Showing compassion
- Being empathetic
- Having genuine interest in all members of the group
- Being available to listen
- Involving other relationships
- Encouraging independence
- Caring for all members of the group
- Being emotionally consistent with all members of the group
- Spends time equally with all members of the group
- Is a strong role model

[Reference: <https://vimeo.com/158382585>
Dr Monica Applewhite]

CODE OF CONDUCT:

‘Codes of Conduct’ establish a standard by which all those involved in Parish Ministry (Leaders, Volunteers and Participants) can conduct themselves. If everyone involved in a ministry behave in ways that are accepted by all as examples of the highest standards of ethical conduct, then our ministries will be places that are safe, supportive, productive and harmonious.

So, what must I do to be safe when I engage with youth?

Understand the Code of Conduct that applies to you. When you become a Youth leader it means that you must adhere to the Code of Conduct in your dealings with others.

You need to be familiar with the Diocese of Parramatta’s Code of Conduct and understand what it involves.

You can view the “Code of Conduct” for Parramatta Diocese at:

<https://thedioceseofparramatta.sharepoint.com/forms-resources/policies/Documents/Code%20of%20Conduct.pdf#search=code%20of%20conduct>

The key elements of this Diocesan Policy need to be reflected in your Youth Group's Code of Conduct.



DEVELOPING CODES OF CONDUCT FOR KIDS WITH KIDS!

Check out the advice for ways to create a Code of Conduct for your Youth Group.

DEVELOPING A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR KIDS DURING OUR YOUTH ACTIVITIES

In Youth Ministry, we should strive to include kids' voices in determining what are acceptable standards of behaviour in our gatherings.

It is important that kids feel 'heard'!

What do kids need for themselves?

- Kids need to feel they are safe and they have meaningful and protective participation.

What do kids need from the adults around them?

- Support
- Advice that comes from active listening
- Understanding
- Someone to protect them

When kids 'own' the Code, they will protect and support it!

A Code of Conduct for Kids will:

- Help to explain their rights and responsibilities when taking part in your ministry's activities.
- Work when Kids develop the code for themselves with your assistance
- Help them develop their own sense of fair play and mutual respect.
- Be protected and supported by kids because they 'own it'.

An effective Code of Conduct for Kids:

- is discussed and debated by kids
- addresses matters that are important to kids in your Youth Group
- is age appropriate
- has been developed collectively
- is in simple language
- is accepted as fair and reasonable by kids and adults
- is widely promoted
- Must be explained and discussed with kids when they first join the organisation

A Code of Conduct for Kids may cover issues like:

- how to treat each other and adults in the group,
- how to deal with problems and accidents,
- how to make choices and decisions.

[EXAMPLE]

- We will be respectful and friendly to everyone and welcome new kids joining the group.
- We will play by the rules.
- We will have a say about activities we take part in.
- We will report any concerns or worries.
- We will not be a bully.
- We will not leave the group without telling an adult where we are going.

Courtesy of: www.kids.nsw.gov.au

MANAGING COMPLEX NEEDS AND CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS

From time to time, children and young people will have difficulties managing their emotions or behaviours. Often these can be managed by giving children space to re-balance / re-focus their mood.

However, sometimes more action needs to be taken.

Remember – children's behaviour is a reflection of the feelings they find difficult to articulate. Even though you may know the child or young person you may not know their full story.

Try these steps to help you respond to these challenging behaviours:

Use the STAR Method [Stop – Think – Assess – Respond]



STOP

Stop current engagement with the child and while maintaining supervision of the child seek the assistance of your supervisor.
Remove yourself from the situation as soon as possible.



THINK

Take some time to **think** about the situation and what might be happening for the child / young person.



ASSESS

Assess the situation carefully.
Recognise the possibility of low self-esteem.



RESPOND

If you feel uncomfortable or unable to manage the situation, call your supervisor.
Respond accordingly

This may involve the following:

If appropriate, consider the use of humour to open communication channels

Give praise directly and indirectly

Develop a support network and take care of yourself.

Treat the child/young person as you would treat others but do not expect them to behave the same way as someone else

Encourage them to reflect on their own behaviour and on that of others

Avoid seeing the person's behaviour as a personal affront

Convey firm and honest expectations that are realistic and flexible

Be yourself – use natural attributes and skills

HOW TO RUN YOUTH GROUPS SAFELY

Areas of safety that you may need to consider in your planning include:

- Expectations on the acceptable use of technology.
- Attendance at Safeguarding Information Sessions
- Ensure the Kids/Youth Code of Conduct is:
 - known and understood by all in Youth Ministry
 - made available to parents / guardians
 - reviewed as required.

Be familiar with resources available from the Office for Safeguarding.

Refer to each Manual for the following:

Youth Ministry Manual	Managing Volunteers Handbook
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know Your Leadership Team• Inducting Youth Leaders• Tips for Supporting Your Team• Risk Assessments• Managing Complex Needs of Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guide for Recruitment of Youth Leaders• [Job Descriptions, Advertising Templates, Questions for Referees]• Exit Interview Questions• Participant Information Form• Monitoring and Supervising Staff, Volunteers and Students• Safety Standards for Youth Groups• Collecting Personal Information (Privacy Policy)

Need more information? Talk to your Parish Office.

They will be able to help you with some of the relevant Diocesan Policies for:

Procedures and practices on:	Refer to Diocesan Policies -
TRANSPORTATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Code of Conduct• Child Protection Policy (within Safeguarding Policy)• Youth Safety Manual
EVENT RISK MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Code of Conduct• Child Protection Policy (within Safeguarding Policy)• Youth Safety Manual• Integrity in Ministry• Integrity in the Services of the Church
ACCEPTABLE USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Code of Conduct• Child Protection Policy (within Safeguarding Policy)• Youth Safety Manual• Acceptable Use of Electronic Communication Systems and Devices Policy• Social Media Policy 2021• Parish Photography and Filming Guidelines for Parishioners

FOCUS

AREA 2

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK (WWCC)



WWCC - NSW CHILD PROTECTION (WORKING WITH CHILDREN) ACT 2012



NEED TO KNOW

YOUTH LEADERS (18+ YEARS)

This Act relates to the requirements of the Working with Children Check (WWCC).

This law is about helping to make children safe and ensuring that people who work or volunteer with children are appropriate and have not harmed children in the past.

One of the ways we help make children safe is that all adult persons (those 18 years or over) must have a valid Working With Children Check (WWCC). This Check lasts for five years even if you move jobs or volunteer in a different place your Check number and details go with you. There is a working WWCC and a volunteer WWCC. The volunteer check is free. The working check costs \$80.00. When you turn 18 (or heading towards 18) you must apply for a check. If you are under 18 you do not require one.

The Check applies to any adult person in child-related work (including voluntary work). That can be defined as:

- providing services for under 18s
- where the work normally involves being face to face with children
- where contact with children is more than incidental to the work.

To find out about the Check or what it involves to apply for a check go to

<https://www.ocg.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check>

To find out the details. It is important for you to understand that if you are 18 years of age or over you will require a valid WWCC for volunteering or working with children.

The Parramatta Diocese must verify your check and you must be “cleared to work with children” before you can commence in your role. Once you have your Working With Children Check Number please provide this number to your Parish Office.

YOUTH LEADERS UNDER 18 YEARS

The Parish Priest is responsible for the Youth Ministry in their parish. Should a Parish Group only have a Youth Leader under 18 years, the Parish should allocate responsibilities for overseeing the Youth Ministry to an adult so it meets legislative and diocesan requirements.

It is advised that Youth Leaders under 18 years in a Parish are:

- mentored by an adult Youth Leader
- Supported in ministry by another Youth Leader within the Diocese
- Events should be supported by an adult/s within their parish who also hold a WWCC.

Begin the process of applying for a WWCC at 17 years and 6 months

Should you find yourself in this position contact your Parish Priest and the Manager, MET Catholic Youth Parramatta.

FOCUS

AREA 3

RISK OF SIGNIFICANT HARM (ROSH)



NEED TO KNOW

Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH) - NSW Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (Referred to as: The Act)

This law informs people who work with children about what is a significant risk of harm to children. This Act identifies what a person who works or volunteers with children must do if they suspect a child or young person is being abused. An adult is a person who is over 18 years of age. In this legislation a child is someone who is 0 to 15 years and a young person is someone who is 16 or 17 years old.

As Youth Leaders you are in a position whereby you develop a familiarity with the children and young people you engage with. You may be able to see changes in behaviour or different patterns of behaviour that may indicate something is happening for the child or young person. This does not mean something is wrong, but you are looking at your participants with a 'safeguarding lens'. If you are concerned or note changes or recurring behaviours that you are unsure about, report it to your supervisor.

Types of Abuse:

In the Act Abuse is defined as:

- **Neglect**
- **Sexual Abuse**
- **Physical Abuse**
- **Psychological Harm**
- **Domestic and Family Violence**

Includes these other forms of abuse:

- **Unborn child** (you believe the unborn child is placed at risk because of the mother's circumstances during pregnancy)
- **Relinquishing care** - where a parent or carer does not want to care for their child anymore

Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) also states that there are other concerns that impact on the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and they include:

- **Carer concern** - this is alcohol and other drugs, mental health issues
- **Danger to self or other** - where the child may have issues that lead them to be a danger to themselves (mental health - suicide, self-harming behaviour)

To identify concerns that you may have about a child or a young person, be aware that there are indicators of abuse and resulting behaviours.

Each abuse type has different indicators and different resulting behaviours. However, what is common is that children and young people find abuse difficult to talk about and often the behaviours of a child or young person is your only indicator.

In your ministry you may not have a lot of contact with the parents or caregivers of a child or young person, so it is critically important that **if you are concerned about a child or young person you must talk to your Parish Priest and/or coordinator.**

Below in this table is a definition of the abuse with some possible indicators of behaviours of children or young people you might become aware of. For further information please refer to the Safeguarding Policy.

https://safeguarding.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Professional-Standards_Safeguarding-Policy_1221.pdf

TYPES OF ABUSE

NEED TO KNOW



NEGLECT

Explanation: A child's or young person's basic needs are not being met or are at risk of not being met. These needs may be in the following areas:

- **Supervision**
- **Medical Care**
- **Nutrition**
- **Shelter**
- **Education**

These needs are considered not met if it can reasonably be expected to have a significant adverse impact on the child or young person's safety, welfare or well-being. This lack of care could be constituted by a single act or omission or a pattern of acts or omissions.

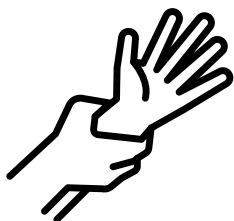


Application: Use your safeguarding lens to watch and listen for behaviours that concern you over time. These might relate to:

Does the appearance of the child or young person look cared for?
Is the child or young person reluctant to go home?

TYPES OF ABUSE

NEED TO KNOW



SEXUAL ABUSE

Explanation: A child or young person has been or is at risk of being sexually abused.

Sexual abuse is sexual activity or behaviour that is imposed, or is likely to be imposed, on a child or young person by another person.

Sexual activity includes the following: sexual acts; exposure to sexually explicit material; inducing or coercing the child or young person to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, sexually explicit conduct for any reason and exposing the child or young person to circumstances where there is risk that they may be sexually abused.



Application: Use your safeguarding lens to watch and listen for behaviours that concern you. These might relate to:

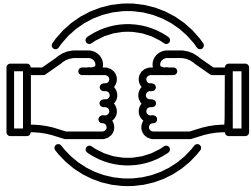
Does a participant share detailed stories or disclose stories of a sexual nature?

Has a participant's behaviour and attitude changed in recent gatherings?

Do participants speak of sharing inappropriate photos?

TYPES OF ABUSE

NEED TO KNOW



PHYSICAL ABUSE

Explanation: A child or young person has been or is at risk of being physically abused.

Physical abuse occurs if a child or young person sustains a non-accidental injury or is being treated in a way that may have or is likely to cause injury. The injury may be inflicted by a parent, carer, other adult or child or young person.



Application: Use your safeguarding lens to watch and listen...

Are there any physical signs that may indicate physical abuse? Eg bruising on the face

Can you see unexplained physical bruising?

Does a child consistently wear jumpers in hot weather?

Are there changes in behaviour that may include signs of bullying and rough play?

TYPES OF ABUSE

NEED TO KNOW

PSYCHOLOGICAL HARM

Explanation: A parent or caregiver acts in such a way towards the child or young person, that the child or young person has suffered or is at risk of suffering from psychological harm. Eg. Rejecting, isolating, terrorising, ignoring or corrupting.

DOMESTIC & FAMILY VIOLENCE

Explanation: The child or young person is living in a household where there has been incidents of domestic violence, and as a consequence, the child or young person has suffered or is at risk of suffering serious physical or psychological harm.



Application: Use your safeguarding lens to watch and listen...

Do you hear a parent speaking aggressively to their child?

Do you see a parent aggressively handling a child?

Are there changes in behaviour that may include signs of withdrawal or not engaging in activities?

Does the child share disturbing stories?

Eg detailed stories about: drug abuse / criminal behaviour / sexual activity

Does the child begin challenging the group's Code of Conduct?

MANDATORY REPORTERS:

Additionally, this Act defines who must report any abuse to the authorities. In this case it is the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ).

A mandatory reporter is defined in Section 27 of the Act as:

(1)

(a) “a person who, in the course of his or her professional work or other paid employment delivers health care, welfare, education, children’s services, residential services, or law enforcement, wholly or partly, to children, and

(b) a person who holds a management position in an organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of health care, welfare, education, children’s services, residential services, or law enforcement, wholly or partly, to children, and

(c) a person in religious ministry, or a person providing religion-based activities to children, and

(d) a registered psychologist providing a professional service as a psychologist.

(2) If:

(a) a person to whom this section applies has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of significant harm, and

(b) those grounds arise during the course of or from the person’s work or role specified in subsection

(1)

it is the duty of the person to report, as soon as practicable.....

In your role as youth leader, you may come across examples of risk or reportable conduct.

This may be because:

- a child has told you, or
- someone else has told you or you see something or
- you believe something because of harmful behaviours by an adult.



These are all reasons that you may need to report something to your Co-ordinator.

If someone tells you directly about abuse, this is known as a **disclosure**

Disclosure requires a response. An easy way to remember how to respond is the 3 R’s –

REASSURE, RECORD AND REPORT (THE “3 RS”)

REASSURE: They did the right thing to tell you. They have a right to be safe and are not in trouble. You will tell someone who can help

RECORD: Record anything you are told or what you observe. Include the date, time, parties involved and sign the record and use the information recorded to report

REPORT: Report the incident immediately or as soon as practicably possible. Add your name and title to the report

It is important that if you have any concern, you must let your Parish Priest /Coordinator know.

This is really important

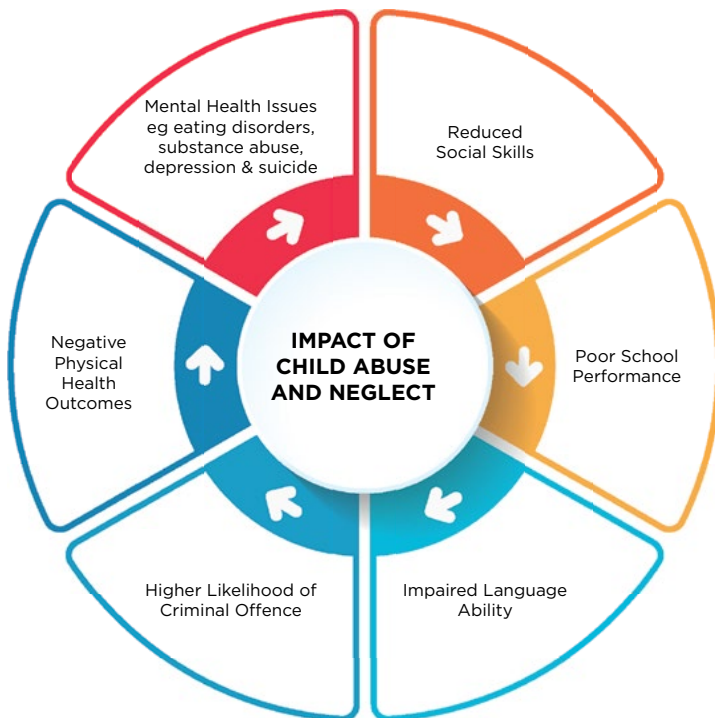
– **it’s not up to you to prove that something is happening**

– **you only need a reasonable belief to act and as leaders we must do that.**

CHECK OUT THE APPENDIX D FOR THE:

MANDATORY REPORTING / RISK OF SIGNIFICANT HARM FLOWCHART FOR THE PROCESS OF MAKING A REPORT.

Research tells us that child abuse and neglect can have a wide range of significant adverse impacts on a child's development and later outcomes. The impacts of abuse are varied. They can be lifelong and can include, but are not limited to:



Mandatory Reporting is a legal requirement and not reporting is a criminal offence (and a Reportable Conduct matter).

You must make a report if you have reasonable grounds to suspect a child or young person is at risk of significant harm.

You will be helped through the process of Mandatory Reporting.

You will not have to do it on your own.

What steps can you take as a Mandatory Reporter?

1. Report to your Parish Priest / Coordinator
2. Contact the Office for Safeguarding (Weekdays 9am-5pm) at: (02) 8838 3419 or visit <https://safeguarding.org.au/complaints-concerns-and-feedback/>
3. Refer to Appendix D for a Flowchart on Mandatory Reporting / Risk of Significant Harm
4. Contact the NSW Department of Communities and Justice at the Child Protection Helpline (24/7) at 132 111 or visit: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/families/Protecting-kids/mandatory-reporters/what-when-to-report/chapters/mandatory-reporter-guide>

FOCUS

AREA 4

REPORTABLE CONDUCT (RC)



NSW CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN ACT 2019

This law encompasses:

Paramountcy Principle – this means putting a child's best interest and protection first.

"The safety, welfare and wellbeing of children, including protecting children from child abuse is the paramount consideration in decision-making under this Act and the regulations and in the operation of the Act and the regulations generally." [s7, Children's Guardian Act 2019 (NSW)]

NSW Child Safe Standards - these are a benchmark against which organisations can assess their child safe capacity. They help an organisation to set performance targets for a best practice approach to child safety.

Reportable Conduct - this is about making sure that organisations follow-up any complaints and concerns about adults who work with or engage with children. It also sets out what is inappropriate behaviour and how organisations must respond and investigate matters of concern.

Consequently, in the Parramatta Diocese it is expected that all children are treated respectfully and compassionately. It is also expected that you demonstrate an interest in all the children and young people in your care.

With physical contact you must:

Ensure that physical contact with children and young people is reasonable for the purpose of their care and management. Physical contact should be appropriate given the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the child.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme is an allegation-based scheme. That means that if a reportable allegation is made to the employee the employee (or volunteer) has engaged in conduct that MAY BE reportable conduct and an investigation will occur.

The volunteer or employee must be employed or engaged at the time the allegation is raised or new information about a previous allegation

An allegation could be made about an employee or volunteer's current and/or past actions.

Disclosures can be made at any time by any person.

If an allegation is made it is important for you to understand that there is a procedure in place to investigate the matter.

The categories of reportable conduct (s20 of the Act)

- Sexual offence
- Sexual misconduct
- Ill treatment of a child
- Neglect of a child
- An assault against a child
- An offence under s43B (failure to protect) or s316A (failure to report) of the Crimes Act 1900;
- Behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child

For any further information Please refer to Appendix I of the *Safeguarding Policy* for more details.



APPENDICES



APPENDIX A: OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Policy name:	Link:
Integrity in the Service of the Church	https://thedioceseofparramatta.sharepoint.com/forms-resources/policies/Documents/Integrity%20in%20the%20Service%20of%20the%20Church.pdf
Parish Photography and filming	https://thedioceseofparramatta.sharepoint.com/forms-resources/policies/Documents/Parish%20Photography%20and%20Filming%20Guidelines%20for%20Parishioners.pdf
Parish Church emergency procedure	https://thedioceseofparramatta.sharepoint.com/forms-resources/policies/Documents/Parish%20Church%20Emergency%20Procedures.pdf
Privacy and Confidentiality	https://thedioceseofparramatta.sharepoint.com/forms-resources/policies/Documents/Privacy%20and%20Confidentiality.pdf
The Three Rs: (Reassure, Record & Report)	https://thedioceseofparramatta.sharepoint.com/forms-resources/policies/Documents/The%203%20Rs.pdf
Vehicle Policy	https://thedioceseofparramatta.sharepoint.com/forms-resources/policies/Documents/Vehicle%20Policy%202021.pdf
Whistle Blower Policy	https://thedioceseofparramatta.sharepoint.com/forms-resources/policies/Documents/Whistleblower%20Policy%20and%20Procedure%202021.pdf
Acceptable use of electronic communications systems and devices	https://thedioceseofparramatta.sharepoint.com/forms-resources/policies/Documents/Acceptable%20Use%20of%20Electronic%20Communication%20Systems%20and%20Devices.pdf

APPENDIX B:

GLOSSARY OF TERMS FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

Safeguarding is about:

Protecting the welfare, safety and human rights of people that are, in some way, connected with our work – particularly people that may be at risk of abuse, harm, neglect or exploitation.

Making sure children, who rely on adults in their lives to keep them safe, are safe by ensuring that their basic needs are met, including having enough food, shelter, medical care and having their emotional needs met. Children need adults to keep them safe.

Ensuring all people, including all adults, are protected from harm, remembering that we have an additional responsibility to consider, in particular, adults who may be vulnerable.

Links for the documents:

National Catholic Standards = <https://www.cpsltd.org.au/safe-church/national-catholic-safeguarding-standards/>

NSW Office of the Children's Guardian Child Safe Standards = <https://www.ocg.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/training-and-resources/child-safe-standards>

Australian Human Rights National Principles for Child Safe Organisations = <https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au/national-principles>

OTHER TERMS FOR YOUTH MINISTRY	DEFINITION
ALLEGATION	<p>A complaint, still to be verified, claiming or asserting that someone has committed an act of abuse against a child.</p> <p>The term is used interchangeably and in combination with 'complaint'.</p>
CHILD/CHILDREN	<p>Individuals under 18 years of age.</p> <p>Can also be a child 0-15 years under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998.</p> <p>In this Act a 'young person' is 16-17 years of age.</p>
CHILD ABUSE	<p>There are different legal definitions of child abuse in Australia.</p> <p>Most commonly the categories of child abuse include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual • Physical • Psychological • Neglect • Ill-treatment • Exploitation, and • Exposure to family violence
GROOMING	<p>Defined as communication with a child where the intention is to meet and commit a sex offence with a child.</p> <p>More generally it can be seen as a process by which the individual manipulates those around them – particularly, but not exclusively the child, to provide opportunities to abuse...</p>
RISK MANAGEMENT	<p>Managing coordinated activities to direct and control an organisation with regards to risk.</p> <p>It is the process of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying risks • Assessing risks, and • Developing strategies to manage those risks

APPENDIX C:

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. I'M A YOUTH LEADER AND I AM STILL BELOW 18: DO I NEED TO HAVE A WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK?

No, you are exempted because of your age and are not required to have a Working with Children Check. Youth leader roles may be assigned to people over the age of 16 years but preferably they will be over 18 years. When a Youth Leader approaches 18 years, they should apply for a WWCC so they have it in place once they are 18 years.

2. AS A VOLUNTEER, DO I HAVE TO GET A WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK?

If you volunteer in child-related work, you will need a Working with Children Check, unless you qualify for an exemption (or you have already obtained a Working with Children Check because you work in child-related employment. A volunteer is someone who does not receive payment for his/her work. Reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses does not constitute payment. To complete your WWCC go to the Office of Children's Guardian Website:

<https://www.ocg.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check>

3. I AM PAID TO WORK AS A PARISH YOUTH COORDINATOR. WHAT FORMS DO I NEED TO COMPLETE?

Please refer to the Diocesan HR Policy around onboarding of staff.

4. HOW OFTEN DO I NEED TO GET A WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK?

The Working with Children Check lasts for five years, is portable and renewable. Please refer to the Office of Children's Guardian Website.

5. A CHILD IN THE YOUTH GROUP HAS JUST DISCLOSED TO ME THAT THEY WERE A VICTIM OF AN ABUSE. I'M VERY BUSY NOW WITH THE YOUTH GROUP ACTIVITY. CAN I REPORT THE INCIDENT LATER AT THE END OF THE MEETING? WHAT IS THE PRIORITY?

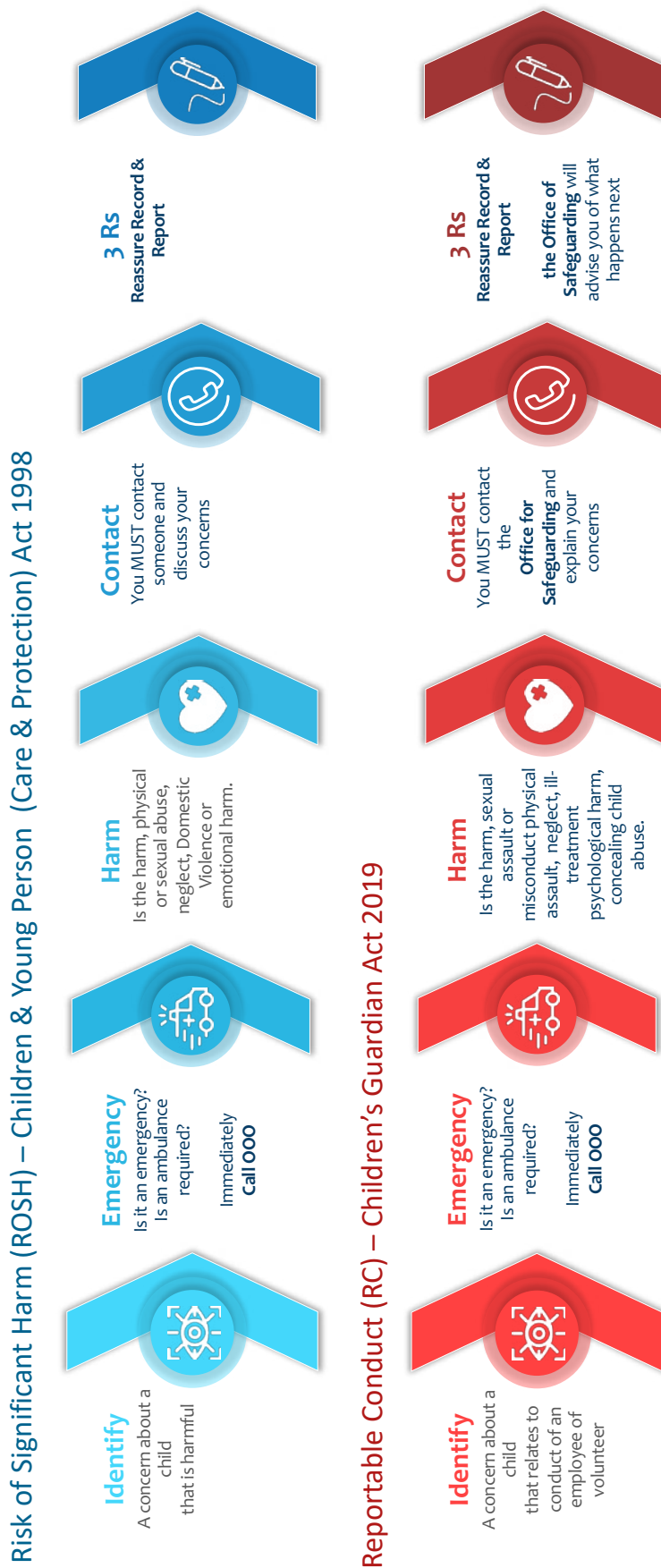
It is important to firstly reassure the child or young person and encourage them to speak with you about their disclosure. Be sensitive to the privacy and emotional state of the person. Arrange to speak privately with the person as soon as possible so that you are able to record details and report as soon as possible. It may be appropriate to seek permission from the child to get support from the adult in charge of this ministry to listen to their disclosure. Each case is different. In some cases it may be necessary to ask someone to stand in for you while you speak privately and be with the person if they are distressed or require your attention immediately. Ensure you follow the procedures in the Office of Safeguarding Policy for child protection reporting requirements.

6. I'M ORGANISING AN OUTING WITH THE YOUTH GROUP AND SOME PARENTS HAVE OFFERED TO COME ALONG AND HELP OUT DURING THE DAY. DO THEY ALSO NEED TO BE CHECKED, IF IT IS JUST A ONE OFF ACTIVITY?

Contact your Parish Priest and /or the Manager of CYP. Ensure the requirements of the Managing Volunteers and Safeguarding Policy are met.

However, it is recommended that the Code of Conduct is also issued, so that the parent is aware of what is expected of him/her from the start.

APPENDIX D: REPORTING FLOWCHART FOR ROSH AND RC



Numbers to Call | In an emergency dial **000** - Office of Safeguarding **8838 3419** - Report to the DCJ Helpline **132 111**

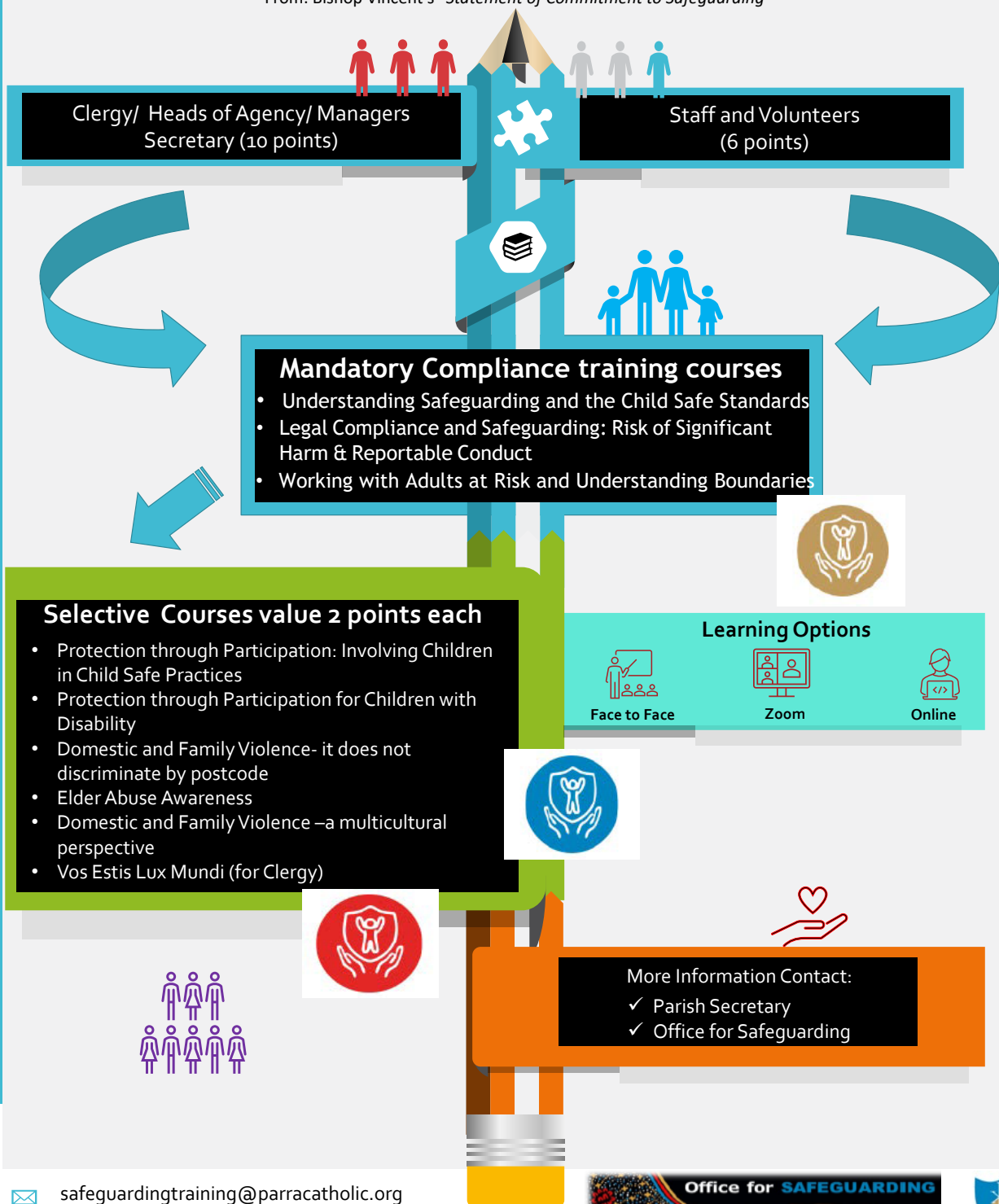
APPENDIX E: PARISH SAFEGUARDING TRAINING REQUIREMENTS INFOGRAPHIC

Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility

Working together to keep our parish community inclusive and safe for all.

Safeguarding Training is our way of "ensuring children and vulnerable adults under our care are safe, protected and enabled to flourish".

From: Bishop Vincent's "Statement of Commitment to Safeguarding"



✉ safeguardingtraining@parracatholic.org
 🔗 <https://learning.safeguarding.org.au/>
 ☎ (02) 8838 3419





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