ARMIDALE DISTRICT BAPTIST CHURCH
Sharing Christ's Love in Community

Protective Behaviours Policy

'We Care for One Another'

Approved: 12 July 2026

Protective behaviour is the ability of a person to protect themselves physically, emotionally and spiritually. For varying reasons, not all people are able to do this.

As Christian Leaders we will,

1. Encourage people to trust their own feelings

Past abuse may damage a person's ability to recognise and trust their own feelings. For example, if someone gives them a hug they did not ask for, it may make them feel confused or uncomfortable without being able to explain why or being able to let the other person know how it makes them feel.

2. Empower People to Say "NO"

Both adults and children must have permission to say "No" to another person if they feel uncomfortable or threatened.

3. Foster an Environment of Transparency and Confidentiality

Church needs to be a place where people can be trusted with confidential information; however, it should not be a place where children or vulnerable adults are pressured to keep secrets to protect a leader's reputation. A transparent abuse reporting system which is communicated to the whole congregation can achieve this. This Abuse Reporting System can be found in our *2.1 Safe Church Policy* ("Our Church is a Safe Place").

4. Establish and Access Support Networks

A support network's role is to provide open and honest support and emotional respite from abusive behaviours; specific confidential prayer within the network also helps to maintain the person's spiritual wellbeing. Our primary support networks are our Life Groups, Ministry Groups and Leadership Team.

5. Equip People to Recognise Times of Being at Risk of Abuse

It is important that people recognise those times when they are most at risk of abuse, such as family crises, and to have strategies in place that may help to diffuse a potentially abusive situation.

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6. Give People a Say

Abuse can rob someone of their "personhood" – they feel as though they have no say in decisions made about them. It is important that they be allowed to express their opinions and ideas in an environment where they will be valued. This teaches them that they are valued and will, in turn, increase their confidence.

7. Foster Respectful Relationships

Respectful relationships are fostered through being mindful of personal behaviours and the impact of behaviours on others.

We ask that this document be signed by the Staff and all Volunteers working within the church.

Name: ……

Signed: …….. Date: ……..

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