



The Boys' Brigade Australia Safe Environments for Children and Young People MANUAL

PART A.3 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LEADERS.

Values and Principles:

This Code of Conduct is based on the following values:

Respect: Providing fair and just treatment for all; treating all with respect and dignity.

Relationships: Developing healthy and positive relationships amongst Boys, and between Boys and leaders.

Excellence: Providing stimulating and interesting programming relevant to the needs of the individuals within the groups.

Supportive Community: Creating a safe and supportive community in which Boys and Young Men can develop to their full potential – spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually – and take an active role in leadership and in the support of the Church.

Compliance:

This code applies in the following situations:

- All leaders and helpers in activities organised by Boys' Brigade at a Regional, State or National level;
- All leaders and helpers in group activities where the parent organisation does not have an endorsed Code of Conduct;
- All leaders and helpers in group activities where the parent organisation has endorsed this code of conduct.

Note: In Group activities which are conducted as the ministry of a church, and where the Church has an endorsed Code of Conduct for youth ministry leaders, Brigade leaders are bound by the Church Code, of Conduct, but they should also conform to the standards of this Code. Registered Leaders must make a commitment to abide by this Code of Conduct in addition to any Church Code.

[“Leaders and helpers” includes members engaged in the supervision or instruction of others; and parents and visitors involved in any activity in which they have contact with members.]

The requirements for leaders apply at all times. A high standard of personal behaviour is expected of any leader even when they are not in direct contact with members.

A leader should be seen to be actively involved in the life and worship of the local church; have a ‘call’ to leadership and demonstrate servant-style leadership; and live a life which demonstrates an example of an authentic Christian lifestyle and true Christian ‘Manliness’.

Related Documents:

“Preventing Abuse – Protecting those in our care” Boys' Brigade Australia.

“Boys' Brigade Australia Policy Statement 3 - Child Protection Policy” Boys' Brigade Australia, May 2002.

“Safe Environments for Children and Young People” Manual and Leaders Guide Boys' Brigade Australia

Definitions:

Leader: includes all persons in direct or contact leadership roles, or in any supervisory role with members in a one-off or regular basis. It also includes all persons in administrative roles in a Church or other parent organisation, Group or other administrative position within Boys' Brigade at local, state or national level..

Parent: is a child's mother, father or another adult who has the parental responsibility for the child.

Boys' Brigade Group: the children's and youth ministry to Boys and Young Men within a local church or other approved organisation, affiliated with The Boys' Brigade Australia through the State Office, and responsible to the local church or other approved organisation. Leaders are selected, nominated, and under the direction of the parent organisation.

Harm: is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.

Standards:

A Leader shall:

- demonstrate Biblical principles of leadership, including to lead diligently [Romans 12:8]; to be above reproach, worthy of respect and sincere [1 Timothy 3:2,8]; holding to the deep truths of the faith with clear conscience [1 Timothy 3:9]; being shepherds of those "under" them, eager to serve them, not lording it over them and being as example to them [1 Peter 5: 2,3];
- in their relationships with each other and with Boys and families, demonstrate in their lives evidence of the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control [Galatians 5: 22,23] and shall not demonstrate evidence of the sinful nature – eg. hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions [Galatians 5: 19,20];
- ensure their involvement in Boys' Brigade positively contributes to an effective, efficient and accountable ministry within the church;
- not gain any real or apparent benefit or personal advantage from their role as a leader [this refers to things like financial benefits; it does not include the personal growth, knowledge and satisfaction one gains from leadership];
- keep confidences given them by members [excepting reporting of suspected harm to that member], but not expect or ask members to keep confidences about them;
- respect the role of members' families and seek to work in partnership with parents;
- avoid any real or apparent conflict between their own needs and the needs of members in their motivation for service and their actual service;
- respect the personal privacy of members;
- not cause harm to any member, and shall not allow their behaviour to give rise to any emotional advantage in any relationship with members and shall not engage in any exploitive or manipulative behaviour with members;
- be mindful of 'at-risk' situations –camps or residential programs, motor vehicle travel – where an accusation of improper behaviour on the part of the leader could be made. To this end all situations where a leader and a member are alone together and not able to be seen by others must be avoided;
- not possess or provide to members any drugs (including alcohol and cigarettes) or sexual visual material;

- seek always to develop and maintain positive and wholesome relationships with and between members;
- ensure there is never any hint which gives the impression of favouritism, or encourages "special" relationships with individual members;
- gain approval from the parent organisation, from parents and from other Brigade leaders before visiting members at their home, or before inviting members, as a group, to your home;
- avoid inappropriate touching and physical contact with members;
- develop and maintain good quality relationships with other leaders, including both male and female;
- develop good working relationships with church leaders and those involved in other ministries of the church;
- in their communication with members (spoken, written, emails and text messages), always use language which affirms worth, dignity and significance of the individual, and not engage in inappropriate correspondence, both in the type of communication and the frequency of the correspondence;
- perform their role and relate to members in a spirit of honesty and openness; mean what they say; keep their word;
- when possible, involve members in decisions making in matters which effect them;
- treat all members in a fair and just way; in all instances where there is a breach of the accepted behaviour standard, due regard should be given to the principle of natural justice and the individual circumstances. At all times the best interests of the member should be considered;
- in disciplining members, never use abusive language or try to belittle or make fun of them;
- never use any form of physical discipline to control or punish inappropriate behaviour; however this does not include physically restraining a person who is imminent danger of inflicting an injury on himself or another, or is in a situation of danger from which they must be withdrawn;
- provide a safe environment, and maintain safe practices for all activities;
- not accept responsibility for activities beyond personal ability, competency or training;
- respect, and not inappropriately use, any private property or property of the Church or parent organisation;
- be committed to on-going training, personal development and skill maintenance / enhancement;
- be subject to supervision and performance review.

Relationships

Communications

Discipline

General

Breaches of this Code of Conduct:

Any alleged or suspected breach of this Code during a Regional, State or National activity will be dealt with by the State Office of The Boys' Brigade in the State in which the alleged breach is said to have occurred, and in accordance with that State's legislation.

(i) Possible Criminal Breach of this Code:

In all cases where the alleged breach involves a suspicion of harm which may involve an offence against a child, or an illegal activity, the case will be reported by the Boys'

Brigade State Executive Officer to the State Police Service and the Government Department responsible for Child Safety.

If the alleged activity has been reported to another body (eg. a Church) the State Office of The Boys' Brigade must also be advised and informed that a report has been made to the Police. If no report has been made, the State Executive Officer will do so immediately.

[Note: When a disclosure of harm has been made, Boys' Brigade and the Church must respect the interests of the child or young person involved as well as the rights of the alleged perpetrator of the harm. However keep in mind that the needs of the child or young person are paramount.

Boys' Brigade or the parent organisation should clarify with the Police Service or the relevant Government Department;

- who is responsible for informing the child or young person's parents or carers about the disclosure and any action taken, and
- who can provide ongoing support and professional counselling for the child or young person.]

(ii) Possible non-criminal Breach of this Code:

Any alleged or suspected breach of Codes of Conduct during a Group (Church / School based) activity will be dealt with by the Church / School in accordance with the policy and procedures of that Church / School; and also by the Boys' Brigade if the leader is a State Registered leader. The local Church / School is requested to notify the State Office of any situations which may constitute a breach of this code.

Each State Executive of The Boys' Brigade is responsible for the determination of all potential breaches of this Code of Conduct occurring within that State. This responsibility may be delegated to a person or persons who will act on their behalf.

All allegations or complaints must be documented. Any suspicions of harm which may involve an offence against a child, or an illegal activity, should be recorded on the appropriate form in accordance with the guidelines provided and referred to the appropriate authorities without investigation. If the State Executive or their delegate is unable to determine the correct course of action, the decision should be made in consultation with a legal advisor.

The State Executive, or their delegate will:

- determine if the person alleged to be in breach of this code should be excluded from contact with members or from other activities of the group while the incident is investigated;
- determine if the parent organisation to which the leader belongs should be notified of the incident.
- act quickly to determine the validity of the accusation.

If a breach of this Code [not including harm as an offence against a child, or an illegal activity] is proven, the State Executive will:

- ensure a compassionate, honest, and appropriate response is given to anyone who has been effected by the actions of the offender.
- determine if the offender should be excluded from any leadership position [and for what time period].
- implement [or seek the support of the parent organisation to implement] an appropriate, positive disciplinary process – involving counseling, training, support and supervision - so that the person can improve their leadership skills and once again make a positive contribution to the organisation and the Brigade group.

General Note: All leaders should care for each other and be watchful, alerting one another to situations or circumstances where there might be a potential for a breach of this code of conduct.