**Creating a Children’s Code of Conduct**

A Children’s Code of Conduct is an important and useful tool to help children think about their behaviour towards each other and help them to understand appropriate boundaries.

Developing a code can also be a way to include children in decision making about their life together. This could be an excellent exercise to complete at the start of each year of your program. It can then be displayed and referred to when needed.

The code can be adjusted to the children’s ages and developmental stages, and can be written in the language predominantly used in the congregation.

It is important to include the congregation’s support for a Children’s Code of Conduct alongside the children’s commitment.

You might wish to consider:

* Consulting and informing parents of your intention to form a Children’s Code of Conduct prior to discussing it with the children. Children whose parents don’t consent should not be invited to sign.
* Inviting the Culture of Safety Contact Person to help develop it and to introduce themselves to the children.
* Having only one Children’s Code of Conduct for all the children in each program and asking each child to sign it. (That is, you would not create different documents for each age group.)
* Presenting the Children’s Code of Conduct to the congregation or parents of the children in the program so they can encourage its use as well.
* Printing the Code on your congregation’s letterhead and displaying it publicly.

The Children’s Code of Conduct might be expressed this way:

As a child of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Uniting Church, program, or entity), I will:

* Treat people with respect and honesty.
* Listen to what other people have to say.
* Not hurt, abuse, bully or tease anyone else or exclude other children from games and activities.
* Listen to instructions given by an adult leading an activity.
* Ask questions and ask for help if needed.
* Talk to an adult I trust about any behaviour or attention I do not like, or attention or behaviour that makes me afraid or uncomfortable.
* Tell an adult where I am going if I leave the main group.

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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The congregation’s support for the Children’s Code of Conduct might be expressed this way:

* We recognise that children can also abuse others in the ways they act and speak.
* We will provide children with guidance about appropriate and acceptable behaviour.
* We will educate and guide children to manage their behaviour if it is considered harmful to others and/or unacceptable.
* We will encourage children to behave in a respectful, honest and fair way.

Name and title of representative(s) of the congregation/entity

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Children’s Code of Conduct (May 2017 version)