

# SAFE TO GROW

## GOOD PRACTICE FOR THE WHOLE CHURCH

Adoption of the 'Safe to Grow' Policy Statement implies acceptance that it is the responsibility of the whole church (and not simply those working directly with children and young people) to seek to prevent the abuse of children and young people in our churches and in activities connected with them. To that end ALL should adopt the following practice, unless in so doing a greater risk of abuse is generated. Good practice in all aspects of disability and discrimination procedure is also expected.

### **The church leadership should ensure that:**

- As far as possible no one other than a parent/guardian should be alone with a child or young person where their activities cannot be seen. On church premises this may mean leaving doors open, or two groups working together.
- In a 'counselling' situation with a child or young person, where privacy and confidentiality are paramount, try to ensure that another adult knows the interview is taking place and with whom. If possible seek approval from the child or young person for another adult to attend, or in the building and that the child or young person is aware that they are there.
- Ensure that access to the building is safe and well lit.
- Include the following statement in any licence with organisations letting church premises:

*'The licensee confirms that it is familiar with the Home Office Code of Practice 'Safe from Harm', has an understanding of it and undertakes to follow its guidelines in relation to work with those aged 18 or under. '*

### **Members of the church should:**

- Be aware of the contents of the Policy Statement and ensure that they follow its principles 'when with children and young people.
- Advise the children's advocate when they feel anyone (including a leader) is acting in a way which might be, or construed to be, not in accordance with these guidelines and consequently potentially harmful to a child or young person.
- Ensure that as far as practically possible they are not alone with a child or young person where their activities cannot be seen.
- Ensure that language, tone of voice and body language are appropriate.
- Not engage in any of the following:
  - Invading the privacy of children or young people when they are showering or toileting.
  - Sexually provocative games.
  - Making sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or young person. Even in fun.
  - Inappropriate or intrusive touching of any form.

- Any scape-goating, ridiculing or rejecting of a child or young person.
- Ensure that any event or excursion organised involving children or young people has been discussed with the appropriate church leader.
- Not let any child or young person involve them in excessive attention seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.