



Child Protection Policy (CPP)

Effective: 1 September 2014

Replaces: Working with Children (May 2008) Latest Review Date: September 2016

1. PURPOSE

To outline the key responsibilities and obligations of WEC personnel who interact with children and/or are involved in their care and protection. WEC International (Australia) is committed to the protection and safeguarding of every child and the prevention of all forms of abuse – those to whom we minister and our own MKs. We aim to maintain a family-friendly ethos whereby our children feel secure and thrive.

2. OPERATION

This policy has effect from 1 October 2012. It may be changed at the discretion of WEC.

A reference in this policy to WEC's Child Protection Policy includes this policy as amended from time to time. All WEC personnel have a duty to keep themselves informed about this policy and to observe it properly. This policy does not override the law.

2017 – Update of some phrases and words that obfuscate the efficacy of the Policy, as advised by Prof. P Parkinson, AM, MA (Oxf) LLM (III), in consultation with the ALT.

3. SCOPE

The policy applies to all personnel, both workers and volunteers, who are members of or work with WEC International (Australia).

[In the policy, wherever the responsibilities and obligations of "WEC" are described, the term "WEC" means the responsible officials/leaders of WEC International (Australia).]

4. DEFINITIONS

In this policy...

A child is any person under 18 years of age.

The Child Protection Officer (CPO) is the designated person responsible for the implementation of this policy and is the first point of contact in the case of any allegations or suspicions of abuse or other inappropriate conduct towards children.

Harm is any detrimental effect on a child's physical, psychological or emotional well-being, including any risk to their safety, welfare or well-being.

Harm can be caused by:

- physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect;

- lack of medical care;
- sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation;
- witnessing domestic or family violence.

Child abuse

is a term used to describe inappropriate, immoral, unethical or threatening behaviour by an adult or older adolescent toward a minor, or of one child toward another child where there is a difference in power based on age or physical, intellectual or emotional capacity.

Child abuse can be committed with or without the consent of the victim. It can occur in a one-to-one encounter or in a group setting.

Criminal Abuse

Five categories of possible criminal abuse are generally acknowledged: physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and exposure to family violence. We would add spiritual abuse, but this will not normally be categorised as criminal.

Physical abuse includes any act that results in a non-accidental physical injury, intentional or unintentional.

Sexual abuse is a form of child abuse and occurs when a child or young person is pressurised, forced or tricked into taking part in or witnessing any kind of sexual activity with and/or by a person.

Neglect becomes abuse if it is persistent or severe, failure on the part of the responsible carer to provide care for a child or protect from danger.

Emotional abuse is the failure to provide the appropriate emotional and physical security and protection that a child requires for stability and full emotional and social development.

Witnessing domestic/family violence has a serious impact on a child also, even if they are not the actual 'victim'.

Spiritual abuse is an abuse of power, manipulating or coercing someone, often in the name of god or religion.

[See Appendix A for more expanded descriptions.]

5. PRINCIPLES

WEC and its personnel will:

- Seek to protect children from harm and the risk of harm.
- Recognise the detrimental effect of harm on a child.

- Recognise that the welfare and best interests of children is a primary consideration.
- Ensure familiarity with all reporting obligations under the law in respect of acts constituting harm.
- Comply with all reporting obligations under the law in respect of acts constituting harm that must be reported.
- Ensure that behaviour towards, and relationships with, children reflect proper standards of care, are not unlawful, and will not cause harm to children.
- Recognise that sexual acts of an adult with a child will generally always result in harm to the child.
- Respond diligently and promptly to any report of harm, suspected harm or risk of harm to a child.
- Ensure that there is no discrimination or reprisals against any person making a complaint concerning harm (a "Complainant").
- Administer management practices concerning children with respect and in a manner that maintains the dignity of children.
- Act fairly and reasonably towards any person working with WEC who is the subject of allegations of conduct causing harm (a "Respondent").
- Support any person working with WEC who is the subject of a false allegation of conduct causing harm.
- Promptly report any harm, or any reasonable suspicion of harm, to the head of the relevant section of WEC responsible for the activity or location in which the harm, or suspected harm, has occurred.
- Take appropriate disciplinary action against WEC personnel who harm others.
- Undertake risk assessment screening of persons to be engaged in roles involving children.
- Refrain from employing any person who may not lawfully be engaged in roles involving children.
- Comply with reporting obligations relating to disciplinary proceedings involving WEC personnel.
- Conduct appropriate investigations of any report of harm or suspected harm.
- Cooperate fully with all authorities in dealing with allegations of harm

6. OBLIGATIONS

In observing these Principles, WEC International (Australia) and its personnel will be guided by the following obligations.

6.1 Natural Justice

Natural justice must be afforded to persons affected by the implementation of this policy. This will include affording them:

- the right to be heard fairly on any issue;
- the right to be informed about any complaint made;
- the opportunity to present a response to any allegation;
- the right to have decisions made by an unbiased or disinterested decision maker; and
- the right to have any decision based on the evidence and any response presented.

6.2 Process

Procedures will be adopted to facilitate the lodging of complaints and to facilitate the handling of complaints.

6.3 Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be observed with respect to information regarding harm or suspected harm.

Such confidentiality is subject to obligations under the law or in observing the law, including provisions in the Privacy Act 1988 that authorise disclosure.

The obligations of confidentiality are subject to the need to disclose, both internally and externally, any information regarding harm or suspected harm.

The law may require evidence to be given, and relevant documents provided, in relation to actions taken under this policy.

6.4 Crime

Any crime, or suspected crime, will be reported to the relevant authorities, irrespective of when the incident occurred.

6.5 Defamation

The provision of factual information about harm or suspected harm, given in good faith, in compliance with the law or to a person who needs to know that information, is generally

excused from liability for defamation. Fear of being accused of defamation should not be used as an excuse for failure to report harm to the appropriate authorities.

6.6 Promptness

WEC and its personnel will

- Implement proceedings and actions under this policy promptly.
- Keep all Complainants and Respondents adequately informed of the progress of actions resulting from any complaint.

6.7 Protection

In order to avoid or reduce the likelihood of harm, WEC will seek to ensure that all personnel understand and fulfil their obligations under this policy.

6.8 Support

A person who is the subject of harm caused by any WEC personnel will be provided with the necessary support by appropriate means, including professional counselling if it is requested, even if the allegation is still under investigation or is not proven.

WEC will also support the Respondent with professional counselling, if it is requested, for such time as WEC considers appropriate.

6.9 Interviews

Interviews will be conducted in a manner that will respect the rights of those interviewed. At least two WEC personnel must be present at any interview of a Complainant or Respondent.

Where necessary, WEC personnel may co-opt the services of a person with appropriate professional training to assist in the conduct of interviews.

A Respondent may have a person of their choice present at any interview as a support person.

6.10 Public Relations

WEC will seek to ensure that it is able to react quickly to allegations of harm so that accurate and relevant information is promptly available for disclosure to the persons involved.

6.11 Police Action

Where a criminal offence has been committed, or is believed to have been committed, and the victim is still a child, any person who has information that might be of material assistance in apprehending, prosecuting or convicting the offender, must provide that information to the police or other appropriate authority. If the victim is now an adult, in the

interests of fairness to the victim, WEC considers that he/she should be encouraged to make their own complaint to police.

Where any police action is instituted, or is likely, the conduct of any internal disciplinary proceedings must be postponed until that police action is concluded.

WEC will not be precluded from seeking advice from police or others regarding duty of care to other children.

WEC will not be precluded from requiring a Respondent to refrain from engaging in certain activities, attending any premises, or having contact with certain persons or classes of persons, at such times as WEC considers appropriate.

6.12 Insurer

WEC's insurer will be informed, and kept informed, about any matter that may give rise to a claim under any insurance policy.

SCREENING OF WEC PERSONNEL AND VOLUNTEERS

The following points will be applied in dealing with each person.

1. WEC will ask all prospective applicants to declare whether or not they have committed any form of child abuse.
2. All applicants to WEC are to be further checked for their suitability to work in situations where they will have contact with children. Referees will therefore be asked questions concerning that suitability. The applicant will be made aware that referees will be asked questions that cover this area. For example:
 - Is there any reason to be concerned about the applicant's behaviour with children?
 - Has any child, parent or other adult ever made a complaint against the applicant about behaviour with children?
 - Would you have any reservations about placing your own child, or children in the extended family, in the care of the applicant?
 - Were the relationships the applicant formed with children, parents and other adults inappropriate for the roles they were performing?
 - Is the applicant a loner with few or no meaningful adult friendships?
 - Someone who spends a lot of time in hobbies that attract children, to the detriment of developing interests, hobbies and outlets with other adults?
 - Someone who appears restless and moves frequently in jobs, living arrangements or friendships?
 - If you have answered yes to any of the above questions please explain why.

3. Every WEC worker will be required to produce a certificate of police clearance and/or whatever child protection documentation is required in the state where the worker is actively working with children.
4. Any worker who joined WEC before police checking was a routine part of the application process is required to ask for a check should they begin to work in a ministry with children and/or vulnerable adults.
5. Any person found to have a record of past offences against children may not join WEC.

Sadly the reality is that sexual abuse of children is an addictive form of behaviour with high rates of recidivism. The first priority of a CPP is to protect children, not help restore past offenders.

Offences committed as a minor may be viewed differently. In almost all cases the offender was also a victim. If there has been good intervention early enough to change this behaviour and we see a long-term transformed life as an adult we could consider such a person. But the majority of adult offenders began offending as teenagers or even younger, so extreme caution is warranted.

6. If any of our personnel confide that they were a victim of child abuse, WEC will provide and facilitate pastoral support and counselling as appropriate.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

WEC personnel

1. WEC workers need to be familiar with the Australian CPP, which will be part of the orientation process for new workers. Ongoing child protection training and repeat signing of the CPP will form part of the annual appraisal procedure.
2. All need to be aware of good practice and the need to be accountable to others in their work with children.
3. All need to know what some of the warning signs of abuse are [see Appendix B] and what to do in the case of suspicion of abuse or if they hear an allegation.
4. All need to understand that failure to apply the CPP may involve contravention of the law and, if so, may have legal consequences.

Children

1. Children need to be educated in an age-appropriate fashion about the dangers of abuse. At a very young age this should be along the lines of when to say no and

what kind of touch is not acceptable. By the teen years the emotions and consequences of abuse can be discussed.

2. At every age children need to know that there are people who will listen and take them seriously if they have concerns in this area. They need to know to whom they should report if anything happens that troubles them.

GOOD WORKING PRACTICE

The primary purpose of a CPP is child protection. But good practice also serves to help protect staff from potentially compromising situations and from the risk of unfounded allegations. The following measures are recognised as good practice.

1. Maintain visibility to other adults when engaged in activities with children.
2. Avoid being alone with individual children.
3. Always be accountable to other adults regarding your interactions with children.
4. Counselling or other necessarily confidential meetings with children should be done in a room with windows, or the door ajar, and only when another adult is close by, aware that the meeting is occurring and willing to stay in the vicinity until it is completed.
5. Avoid inappropriate use of technology, e.g. the internet, so as to protect children from abuse and exploitation. Measures to protect children and monitor usage should be employed. Avoid personal exchanges with children via texting, social networking, etc.
6. Discipline should be used to teach and correct rather than punish. Avoid shaming, yelling at or belittling a child, or other forms of hostile or rejecting treatment, and as a general rule, anything that could be construed as corporal punishment.
7. Avoid differential treatment of some, to the exclusion of others. Avoid exclusive friendships with children, even if they are totally free of any sexual intent.
8. Healthy, caring touch is valuable to children, but unhealthy touch is abusive. So touch should/must:
 - be in response to the need of the child, not the need of the adult.
 - be open, not secretive.
 - be age-appropriate, generally initiated by the child, and always with the child's permission.
 - always communicate respect, avoiding doing personal tasks for them which they can do themselves.
 - be morally and culturally appropriate.
 - never include behaviour which could be construed as assault.

9. Words should be used to support and encourage a child. Language that belittles or shames, is used to threaten or instil fear, or is sexually suggestive, must be avoided.
10. Parents are responsible for knowing where their children are at all times, so good communication with them is essential and consent forms, where appropriate, must be employed.
11. Child-to-child behaviour must be monitored. Damaging behaviour, e.g. bullying, humiliation, etc., will be handled by the parents of both parties if possible, and other responsible adults if not.
12. Any WEC worker who has a belief on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is likely to be a victim of abuse must report this to the CPO.
13. If the person reporting their concern is not satisfied that the matter has been handled adequately by the CPO, they have the right to go to the state child safety authority.
14. Subsequent action will be in consultation with the national leadership of WEC or, if a national leader is implicated, with a member or members of the Branch Council.

RECEIVING AN ALLEGATION

All cases of suspected child abuse must be responded to in a manner which best ensures the child's immediate and future safety.

1. Accept the child's story calmly, indicate that you are taking it seriously, and avoid ascribing any guilt for the child's involvement. Try to relieve the stress and anxiety that accompany an abuse situation.
2. Assure the child that some others must be told, but that these will be few. Specify who you need to inform.
3. Give the child time; don't push or interrupt. Ask 'open' questions and only necessary ones. Avoid 'closed' and 'leading' questions.
4. Avoid condemning the alleged offender, while taking seriously what you hear. If the charge is false, huge legal and personal problems may ensue.
5. Promptly record the details, along with any observations and impressions that cause concern, passing these on to the CPO immediately.
6. These should include:
 - Your name and the names of the child, his/her parents, and the alleged offender
 - The nature and extent of any injuries
 - The present location of the child

- How the information was obtained
 - Details as spoken by the child, with dates, times, places, specifics of event(s)
 - Date of writing the report
 - Who has been contacted and when
7. Seek pastoral support for yourself.

INVESTIGATING AN ALLEGATION

This should be done preferably within 24-48 hours of the allegation being made, led by the CPO, with one to three others who are appropriately trained and qualified. Apart from the CPO, this team will include one or more people who are not members of WEC. Both genders will be represented. If police are investigating the allegation, WEC will not carry out investigation until the police investigation and subsequent trial, if any, is concluded.

1. This small team will focus initially only on seeking facts.
2. An incident report is to be passed on to the International Child Protection Office (ICPO) for WEC. The ICPO will consult with the CP team on the necessary course of action and can be included in any investigatory team.
3. The sending church, police and appropriate social services should be informed of any substantive allegation or suspicion of abuse.
4. Any investigation must be impartial and seen to be so. Unless the allegations involve the parents or legal guardians, they should be involved as soon as possible, with the proviso that they must not attempt a resolution with the alleged offender as this could compromise any investigation. In assessing the advisability of pursuing an investigation, note that even a 'minor' event could have a major impact on the child.
5. Pending an inquiry, the alleged offender should be suspended from duty. If the allegation involves an older child in an institution they should be relocated away from the alleged victim.
6. Counsel and support will be offered to both the alleged victim and alleged offender during the investigation.
7. All procedures should be followed as discreetly as possible.
8. Records of any interviews must be thoroughly kept. Recordings and exact transcripts of comments along with the dates and times of the interviews should be used if possible. Records are to be backed up and kept indefinitely:
 - in the Australian leadership files
 - with the ICPO
 - in the Area Directors' files

9. Emergency medical attention, when necessary, should be sought immediately. The adult hearing the allegation of abuse is to inform the CPO, who will advise the child's parents and any others they think should be informed, including a doctor.
10. The CPO should take any steps necessary to protect the child and any other children from harm. This may include the immediate removal of the alleged offender from the vicinity of the children.
11. Investigation beyond the initial fact finding incurs costs. If these are not high because a competent investigation group is available to WEC, they can be covered by day-to-day operating funds. If costs begin to rise then a separate fund will be set in place to cover travel costs for independent investigators and WEC personnel involved, and for any medical and counselling support.

IF THE ALLEGATION IS CONSIDERED TRUE

If the investigating team concludes that the allegation is true on the balance of probabilities, taking into account the seriousness of the allegations and the adverse consequences for the livelihood and reputation of the Respondent, then action will be taken according to the gravity of the incident.

1. Disciplinary procedures will be implemented in keeping with the International Guidelines. A worker who has committed an offence that is either criminal and/or seriously immoral or unethical, according to the definitions in Section 1, will be dismissed without the possibility of resignation or future reinstatement.
2. When allegations of abuse carried out overseas are substantiated, and the worker dismissed as a result, WEC Australia will act in line with the legal requirements of both the host and passport countries of the offender.
This will mean action involving the police or social services, and a sex offender's registration in cases of sexual abuse. References for future employers will include the reasons for dismissal from WEC.
3. WEC will inform the leaders of the offender's sending church and any children's organisation with which the person may have links.
4. The child, as well as his or her parents, may need professional medical and psychological care. The CPO and the family will decide on the level of care needed, determined by how the child and the parents have reacted to the problem, how severe the abuse was, and how many times it took place, especially if it was sexual abuse. The WEC ICPO, ADs and Australian leaders will be informed.
5. If possible the offender will be offered counsel and pastoral support to begin a restoration and rehabilitation process.

IF THE ALLEGATION IS CONSIDERED TO BE UNSUBSTANTIATED

1. If the review or investigation indicates that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that abuse has occurred, the CPO will notify the alleged victim, the accused person, Australian leaders, appropriate ADs and ICPO. A Statement of Findings will be given to each, a copy to be kept in their files.
2. The results of the investigation must be immediately reported to the appropriate leaders, who will then take appropriate action to fully reinstate the worker to his/her position.
3. Money should never be paid to anyone who tries to blackmail a worker or in response to any demands for 'compensation'.
4. Ongoing pastoral care and counselling to fully restore the falsely accused person and their family will be given.
5. The underlying reasons for the allegations will need to be determined and appropriate action taken. The child or children involved may need professional support to deal with the issues involved.

IF THE SITUATION IS UNRESOLVED

Sometimes it is very difficult to determine the truth of a child abuse allegation. However, there may be enough evidence to believe that the abuse might well have occurred, or behaviours of the accused person which give rise to reasonable concern about that person's suitability to work with children and young people.

The response of WEC will be guided by the principle that no-one will be permitted to work with children if there is an unacceptable risk that the person may abuse children or young people in the future.

1. The CPO should send confidential letters to the alleged victim and the alleged offender to inform them of the outcome of the investigation. These letters should also be sent to the Australian leaders, ADs and ICPO.
2. The CPO or a delegate will speak personally to the alleged offender, addressing these issues but not limited to them: a review of the CPP together any ongoing relating to the alleged victim if relevant strategies which could be put in place to lessen the possibility of future allegations.
3. If, applying the unacceptable risk principle, it is necessary to reassign the alleged offender, or place limits on the person's ministry, an explanation should be given.

4. The CPO or a delegate will then speak personally to the alleged victim, addressing these issues but not limited to them:
 - reassurance that what they reported was taken seriously and investigated as thoroughly as possible
 - ongoing monitoring of the situation, e.g. arranging to meet with them again a month later, and then following up with other appointments.
5. The allegation and investigative findings must be kept confidential for the sake of all parties and to guard against possible legal action charging WEC with defamation of character.
6. If rumours need to be addressed, any public statements must be extremely cautious. Legal advice should be taken.

FOLLOW UP ACTION BY WEC

WEC Australia and WEC International should conduct a review of policies and procedures to assess whether structural changes are needed to help prevent any similar incidents in the future. This review is to include all aspects of recruitment, training, understanding of good practice by workers, accountability, reporting and investigation procedures.

The WEC ICPO may lead this part of the process. If others lead this review then the WEC ICPO should be informed and consulted at all stages because of the possible mission-wide implications of any such review.

ALLEGATIONS OF HISTORIC ABUSE

Abuse may have occurred before or after the alleged victim joined WEC. In any case fact-finding and investigation will probably be led by the WEC ICPO working with WEC Australia. If it is concluded that the allegation may be true, the police and/or other statutory authorities will need to be informed. WEC Australia will work closely with all of these groups in any investigation procedures.

1. In a case of alleged abuse before joining WEC the procedures outlined in point 6 of Screening of WEC personnel and volunteers should be followed.
2. In a case of alleged historic abuse whilst the family or alleged offender were members of WEC, the alleged victim will need support and, possibly, appropriate counselling.
3. If children could still be at risk from the alleged abuser the police and/or social services are to be informed as appropriate to ensure protective measures are taken.

4. If children could still be at risk from the alleged abuser, the police and/or social services in the worker's sending country will be informed as appropriate, to ensure that measures are taken to protect children in the present.
5. If the police and/or social services lead an investigation no further action is to be taken without their guidance.
6. If the alleged abuser is still working with WEC, any suspension should be undertaken in consultation with the police and/or social services.

The section INVESTIGATING AN ALLEGATION gives procedural guidelines to apply here. Allegations of past abuse are notoriously difficult to prove and research to establish the full facts and responsibilities can be onerous. However, all such allegations are to be taken seriously, and justice for the survivors of abuse must take priority over maintaining the reputation of WEC or past workers.

Statement of Acceptance by Members of WEC International Australia

I, _____, have read and understand the WEC International (Australia) Child Protection Policy in its entirety.

I agree to enforce and abide by all of the provisions of the policy during my time of ministry with WEC and to accept any disciplinary action that may be necessary in the event of an accusation made against me.

Signed _____ Date _____

Appendix A: CATEGORIES OF CHILD ABUSE

Five categories of **possible criminal abuse** are generally acknowledged: physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and exposure to family violence. We would add spiritual abuse, but this would not normally be categorised as criminal.

Physical abuse

includes any act that results in a non-accidental physical injury, intentional or unintentional.

It includes unreasonably severe corporal punishment, excessive slapping/ spanking done in anger, punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, squeezing, administering poisonous substances, burning, holding under water, pulling hair, holding against one's will, or any other action that inflicts injury.

Physical injury does not include the transient redness that sometimes results from acceptable and agreed forms of corporal punishment.

Bullying by other children, with actual physical abuse combined with power and control through intimidation, is probably the most common abusive experience for children. In a minority of cases it can lead to serious psychological problems, even to suicide. A zero tolerance principle will be applied in any children's ministry of WEC.

Sexual abuse

is a form of child abuse and occurs when an adult or young person uses a child sexually - when a child or young person is pressurised, forced or tricked into taking part in or witnessing any kind of sexual activity with and/or by a person. This can include kissing, the touching of genitals or breasts, intercourse or oral sex. Forced exposure to pornographic magazines, internet sites or films is also sexual abuse, as is sexually explicit text messaging (sexting) or other communication.

Most abuse victims know and trust the offenders.

Increasingly women have been convicted of being involved in all forms of abusive behaviour, including sexual abuse.

Child-to-child sexual abuse and sexual activity among children of similar ages should always be taken seriously. The large majority of adult offenders began abusive behaviour while still minors.

Neglect

becomes abuse if it is persistent or severe. It is defined by failure on the part of the responsible carer to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect can be expressed by failure to provide an adequate education for children. For example:

- poor home education; no provision of activities with educational worth for prolonged periods
- doctrinaire commitment to local education that is unsuited to the child's current or future needs
- lack of contact with children in boarding settings because of a 'work or ministry before the family' ethos, leading to a sense of abandonment and, in severe cases, neglect of basic responsibilities towards children.

If this is happening it is important that leaders try to provide support and encouragement to change. In extreme cases, such as the suspension of any meaningful form of education for prolonged periods, there may need to be disciplinary action.

Emotional abuse

is the failure by a responsible carer to provide the appropriate emotional and physical security and protection that a child requires for stability and full emotional and social development, according to their individual potential. Hostility towards or rejection of a child may be demonstrated by unreasonable restriction of movement, patterns of belittling, threatening, deliberately instilling fear, humiliating, blaming or discriminating.

This may be harder to recognise than sexual or physical abuse, or neglect, as the results are not as visible or verifiable. However, extreme cases of emotional abuse are criminal and difficulties in recognition and confirmation should not prevent action.

Unreasonable restriction of movement through overuse of the 'grounding' form of punishment may result in children spending more non-education time grounded than on anything else. This can also stem from fear of allowing children out of the home because of 'safety' concerns. In such cases the intent is the opposite of abusive, but the end result is very restrictive.

Being a witness to family/domestic violence is recognised as suffering abuse. It occurs when a child is present (hearing or seeing) while a parent or sibling is subjected to

physical abuse, sexual abuse or psychological maltreatment, or is visually exposed to the damage caused to persons or property by a family member's violent behaviour.

Spiritual abuse

Is linked to emotional abuse and is be defined as an abuse of power, often done in the name of God or religion, which involves manipulating or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves. Some indicators of spiritual abuse might be a leader who is intimidating and imposes his or her will on other people, perhaps threatening dire consequences or the wrath of God if disobeyed. He or she may say that God has revealed certain things to them and so they know what is right. Those under their leadership are fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose the leader's (or more seriously God's) acceptance and approval. (Definition from the Churches Child Protection Advisory Service document "Safe and Secure - the Manual" Standard 8:8.7)

Appendix B: SIGNS OF ABUSE

Some of the signs listed below may be the result of another disturbance in the child's life, so caution should be exercised if children show some of them.

It should not be automatically assumed that they are the result of abuse.

However, they do indicate a problem that needs to be monitored and dealt with appropriately, not just ignored.

Physical:

- injuries, such as bruises, bites, burns, fractures, inconsistent with a given explanation
- injuries to parts of the body not normally associated with falls or rough games, such as black eyes, unexplained facial bruising, a torn inside-upper lip
- injuries that have not received medical attention
- reluctance to change for, or participate in games or swimming
- repeated urinary tract infections or unexplained abdominal pains
- cuts or scratches which may suggest self harm
- indications of substance abuse

Neglect:

- undernourishment and failure to grow
- constant hunger
- persistent tiredness
- repeatedly begging for, stealing, cajoling or bullying others for food
- regular dirty, ill-groomed appearance, even at the start of a day
- untreated illnesses and listlessness

Sexual:

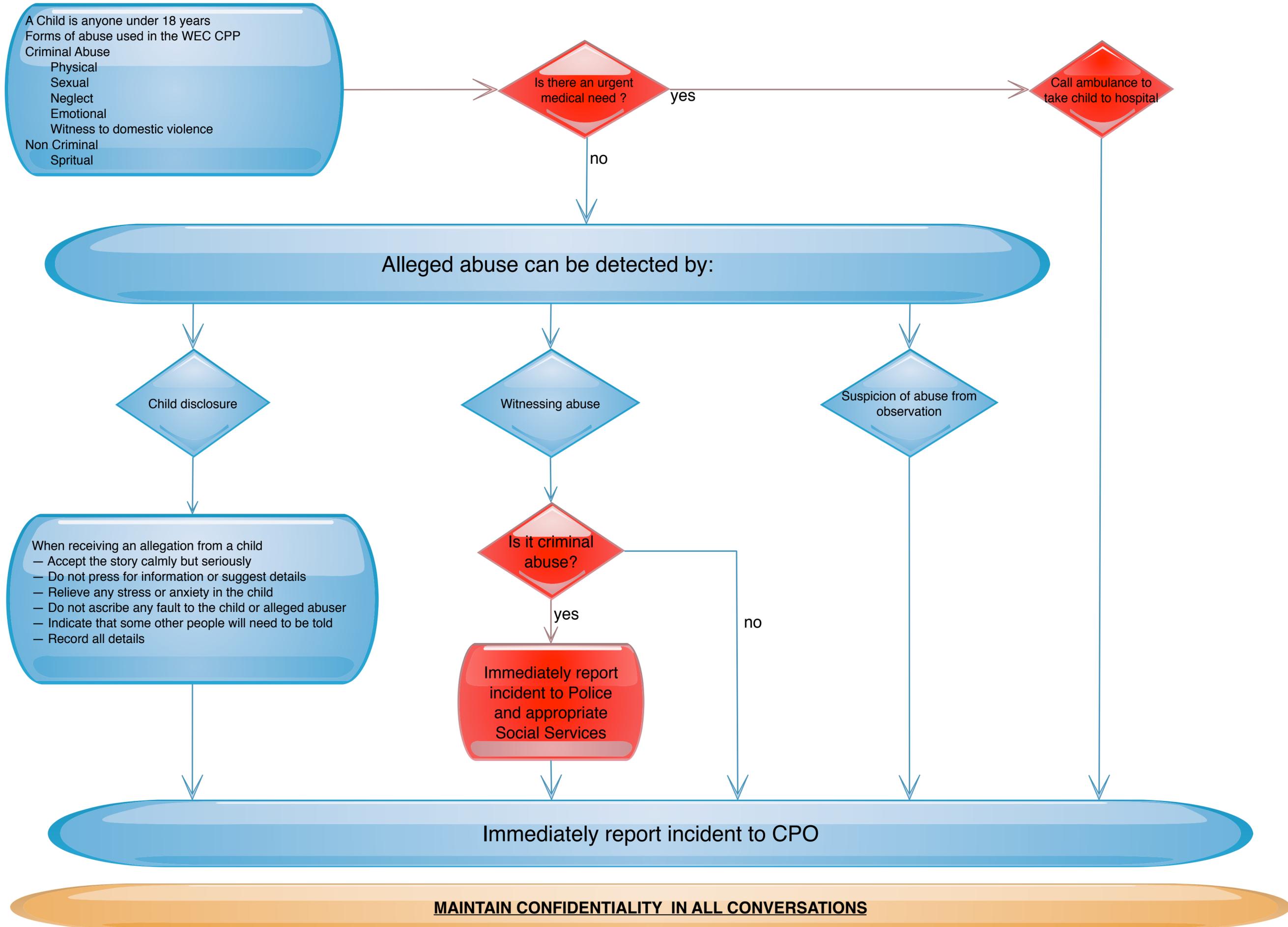
- excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- inappropriate sexual play/language, including sexual pro-activity or seductive behaviour with adults
- severe sleep disturbance
- disturbed eating patterns, such as anorexia or bulimia

- escape attempts, such as running away or refusing to go home
- behavioural changes, such as bedwetting or soiling
- recurrent urinary tract infections

Emotional:

- changes or regression in mood or behaviour, such as withdrawal, or becoming clingy, aggressive or depressed
- nervousness
- obsessions or phobias
- sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- attention-seeking behaviour
- self-harm
- inappropriate relationships
- persistent tiredness

Child Protection Policy - Recognising Abuse



Child Protection Policy - Investigation Process

Child Protection Officer receives allegation of child abuse

Alleged offender suspended from duty (by ALT or RD)

CPO reports incident to: International Child Protection Office and WEC International (Aust.) Insurer

Are the police involved?

YES

Wait for official outcome, including possibility of a criminal trial

NO

CPO gathers team 1 - 3 of both genders within 24-48 hours

CP Team arranges necessary support and counselling for both alleged offender and alleged victim

Report incident to:
- police
- relevant Social Services
- sending church

Copies of all records sent to:
SB Leader
ICPO
Regional Director

CP Team conducts interviews for FACT FINDING. Thorough records to be kept at all times. If Allegation is..

If allegations are substantive

...proven true

...proven false

...unresolved

Disciplinary procedures implemented in keeping with International Guidelines. (by ALT or RD).

CPO notifies alleged victim, accused person, SB Leader, appropriate RDs, leaders, and ICPO.

CPO sends confidential letters to alleged victim and alleged offender to inform them of inconclusive results, following up with personal visits to both parties.

ALL ACTIONS MUST BE DISCREET