

FATHER'S DAY

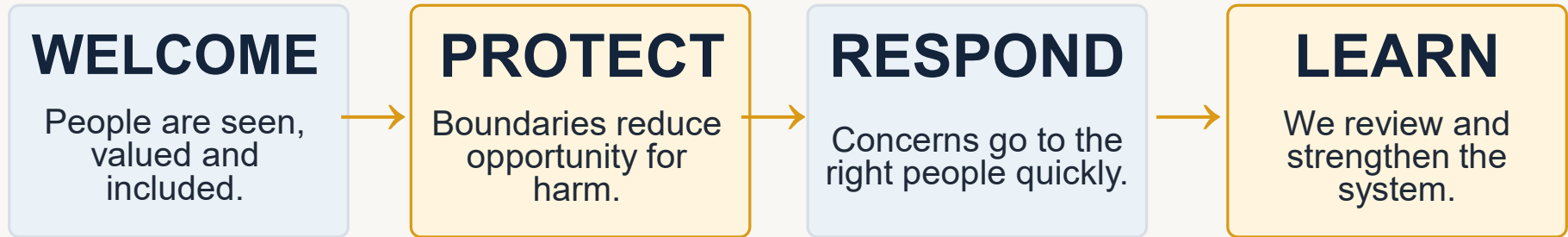
- God the Father – Surely the greatest Father of all
- Fathers – Lead and set the tone
 - Protect
- ***Today's Message: Love Protects***
- ***An introduction to Safe Spaces***
- ***(Today may be triggering – See someone to debrief and pray with you if you need to.)***

VISION CAST **A SAFE HARBOUR**

A safe harbour welcomes people in — and keeps people safe.

VISION CAST

Welcome. Protect. Respond.



A safe church is not suspicious of everyone. It is prepared for everyone.

LOOK BACK

Love One Another — what did visible love look like?

SPEAK LIFE

HELP WISELY

FORGIVE

GO DIRECT

GO LOW

BUILD COURAGE

MAKE SPACE

FIGHT FOR UNITY

**SPUR ONE
ANOTHER ON**

**LOVE THAT DOES NOT PROTECT THE
VULNERABLE IS INCOMPLETE LOVE.**

CHURCH SAFE SPACES

LOVE PROTECTS THE VULNERABLE

Matthew 18

Children • vulnerable
people • proper process



CHURCH SAFE SPACES

Opening Prayer

- Lord, put the vulnerable in the centre of our concern.
- Give us courage to act when safety is at risk.
- Give us wisdom to use the right process.
- Guard our tongues from gossip and speculation or maliciousness.
- Make us a church where people are safe, heard and loved.

TODAY'S BIG IDEA – Two-sided coin

**LOVE PROTECTS THE VULNERABLE —
AND USES THE RIGHT PROCESS.**

Care without process can fail.
Process without care can fail.

Matthew 18: 1-7

Who Is the Greatest?

18 At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” ² And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them ³ and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

⁵ “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, ⁶ but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

Temptations to Sin

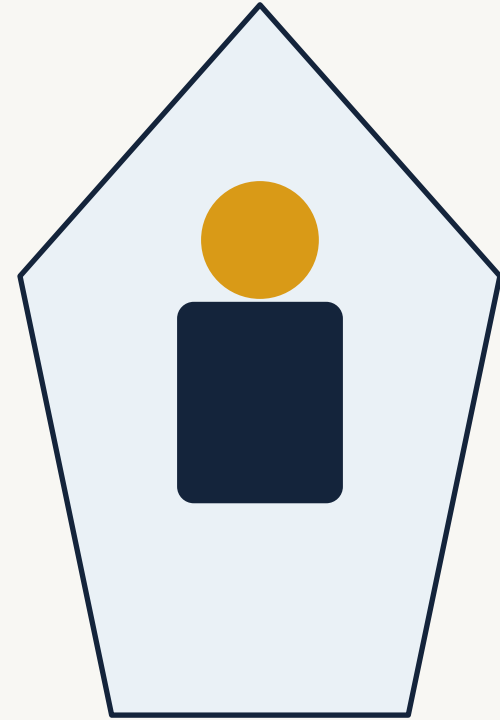
⁷ “Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes!

MATTHEW 18:1–2

Jesus Puts a Child in the Centre

The disciples were debating greatness.

Jesus called a child to Him and placed the child “in the midst of them.”



**Before Jesus answers their question,
He changes who is standing in the middle.**

MATTHEW 18

Greatness Reframed

THE DISCIPLES ASK

Who is greatest?
Who matters most?
Who has status?

JESUS SHOWS

Pay attention to the small.
Receive the dependent.
Do not use power to harm.

Jesus changes the question from status to responsibility.

MATTHEW 18:5

Welcome Is More Than a Smile

“Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.”

Welcoming includes creating an environment where children can be safe, heard and taken seriously.

WELCOME → PROTECT

MATTHEW 18:6

Jesus Takes Harm Seriously

Jesus uses shocking language about causing “little ones” to stumble.

The point is not to frighten children.

The point is to frighten adults away from treating harm casually.

**THEIR SAFETY MATTERS TO JESUS.
SO IT MUST MATTER TO US.**

Let the Children Come

“Let the little children come to me; do not hinder them.”

MARK 10:14

A church that welcomes children to Jesus must also work hard to make the journey safe.

WELCOME THEM. LISTEN TO THEM. PROTECT THEM.

SCRIPTURE'S WIDER CARE

The Vulnerable Matter to God

JAMES 1:27

Pure religion includes caring for orphans and widows in their distress.

PSALM 82:3–4

Defend the weak and fatherless.
Uphold the cause of the poor and oppressed.

Child-safety law is specific. Christian responsibility to protect the vulnerable is wider.

WHO MAY BE VULNERABLE?

Look Beyond the Obvious

- Children and young people
- Frail or isolated older people
- People living with disability or cognitive impairment
- People in crisis, grief, trauma or dependency
- Anyone whose circumstances reduce their power to protect themselves

Vulnerability deserves attention — never exploitation.

TAKE NOTE

Power Creates Responsibility

**THE MORE POWER I HOLD,
THE MORE RESPONSIBILITY I CARRY.**

Christian leadership uses power to serve,
protect, listen and act responsibly.

Remember – GO LOW!

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 3

Families Are Part of Child Safety

Tasmania's Child and Youth Safe Standards say families and communities should be informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.



Tasmanian Child and Youth Safe Standards — Standard 3

OUR CHURCH EXPECTATION

Parents Remain Parents

When children are NOT signed into or formally entrusted to a children's ministry or event:

PARENTS / CARERS REMAIN RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPERVISION.

Safe Spaces supports parents. It does not replace ordinary parental responsibility.

WHEN MINISTRY TAKES RESPONSIBILITY

Follow the Safeguards

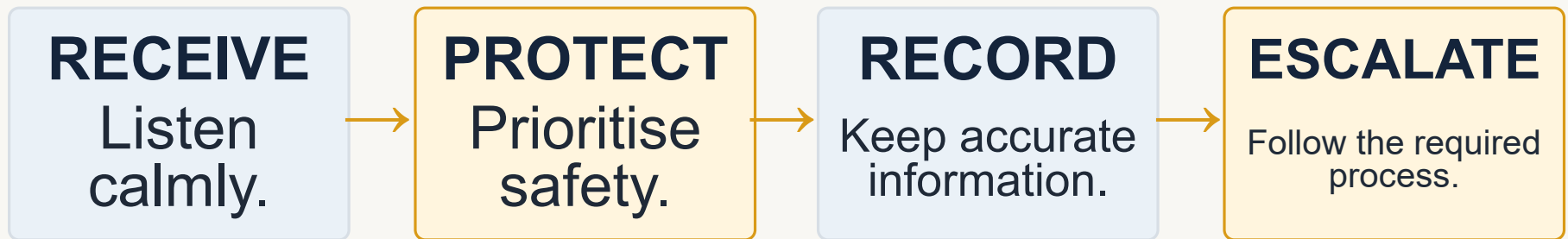
- Use approved leaders and appropriate supervision.
- Follow ministry boundaries and sign-in / handover procedures.
- Keep physical and online environments safe.
- Report and Record concerns through the designated pathway.
- Do not invent shortcuts because “we know everyone here.”

A SAFE CULTURE IS BUILT BEFORE A CRISIS.

WE ARE PREPARED

Trained Safe Spaces People

Our ministry team includes many trained people who know the Safe Spaces pathway.



- Their role is not to create drama.
- Their role is not to investigate.
- Their role is to respond properly.

TAKE NOTE

Good Intentions Are Not a Safeguard

“But I meant well” cannot repair preventable harm.

TRAINING

BOUNDARIES

SUPERVISION

REPORTING

RECORDS

REVIEW

LOOK BACK

Remember “No Triangles”?

ORDINARY CONFLICT:

Bear with one another

Talk to them— Not about them.

Matthew 18 taught us to stop creating
gossip triangles.

MATTHEW 18:15

For Ordinary Personal Conflict

“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone.”

For normal interpersonal conflict, Jesus teaches direct, responsible redress — not sideways gossip.

GO DIRECT.

BUT SAFEGUARDING IS DIFFERENT

Do Not Misuse Matthew 18

A child-safety or serious vulnerable-person concern is **NOT simply an ordinary dispute between two adults.**

Do not send a child, victim, parent or the reporter to privately confront an alleged perpetrator as the first step.

USE THE SAFEGUARDING PATHWAY.

TWO DIFFERENT PATHWAYS

Know Which One You Are In

ORDINARY CONFLICT

Personal offence or disagreement.

Go direct
appropriately.
Seek reconciliation.
Avoid gossip.

SAFETY CONCERN

Possible abuse,
grooming, serious
misconduct or risk.

Protect.
Report direct to Safe
Spaces.
Follow procedure.
Avoid Gossip!

ORDINARY CONFLICT? **GO** DIRECT.

SAFETY CONCERN? **REPORT** DIRECT.

REPORT IT. DON'T RETELL IT.

Tell the people who need to know — not everyone who wants to know.

At this moment the Safe Spaces Committee consists of

- Pastor Bob
- Heidi Brown
- Natalie Mckitrick
- Erik Mckitrick

THE CATCHPHRASE - Repeated

**REPORT IT.
DON'T RETELL IT.**

Tell the people who *need* to know —
not everyone who you want to know.

WHY CONFIDENTIALITY MATTERS

Confidentiality Is Protection

- Protects the child or vulnerable person from unnecessary exposure.
- Protects reporters and witnesses from pressure or retaliation.
- Protects families from rumours and factions.
- **Protects the integrity of evidence, memory and investigation.**
- Protects people from being publicly judged before facts are established.

CONFIDENTIALITY IS NOT SILENCE. IT IS RESPONSIBLE SHARING.

GOSSIP IS NOT SAFEGUARDING

Retelling Can Cause More Harm

EXPOSE A
VICTIM

CONTAMINATE
MEMORIES

DISTORT FACTS

PUNISH
BEFORE FACTS

CREATE
FACTIONS

UNDERMINE
INVESTIGATION

**A SAFETY CONCERN BELONGS WITH THE
SAFE SPACES TEAM — NOT THE GRAPEVINE.**

KNOW YOUR ROLE

Do Not Investigate It Yourself

YOUR ROLE

Notice.
Make immediate
safety the priority.
Report accurately.
Preserve what you
know.

TRAINED / AUTHORISED ROLE

Assess the
pathway.
Escalate any
reported breach
Notify any required
authorities.
Assist authorities as
required.

**DON'T INTERROGATE. DON'T COMPARE
STORIES. DON'T BUILD A CASE IN THE PEWS.**

A STORY FROM MY POLICING DAYS

When Protection Was Too Weak

As a young policeman, I remember before there were dedicated domestic violence and child abuse laws.

Far too often it was treated as a private family problem. It was horrible

Before dedicated laws, the legal and cultural system frequently failed victims.

I wanted stronger protection — and I still do.

CHANGE WAS NEEDED

Protection Needs Teeth

**Better laws and stronger intervention
gave police more ability to act before
violence became worse.**

**That direction was right and necessary but still
falls short.**

**CHILD SAFETY IN CHURCHES
NEEDS THE SAME COURAGE:
See risk • act early • report properly**

BUT POWER MUST BE USED WELL

Strong Tools Require Responsible Hands

Later I also saw powerful legal processes misused or badly handled.

OR JUST A 'TICK A BOX' 

That did NOT mean the protection was wrong.

It meant protection had to be strong AND disciplined — so real victims were helped and truth was not damaged.

THE LESSON

Strong Protection + Good Process

STRONG PROTECTION

- Take concerns seriously.
- Act for immediate safety.
- Support the child / vulnerable person.
- Report promptly.

GOOD PROCESS

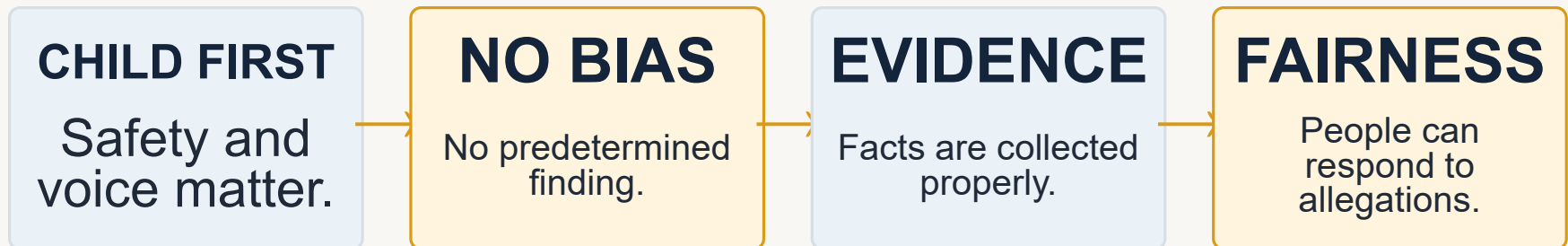
- Use trained people.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Avoid bias.
- Escalate as required
- Let them Gather evidence properly.
- Do not pre-judge.
- Use the system properly

WE NEED BOTH.

SAFE SPACES

Child-Centred — And Properly Investigated

Tasmania's framework expects complaints to be child-focused and reportable-conduct investigations to be impartial, confidential and procedurally fair.



A REPORT STARTS A PROCESS. IT IS NOT THE VERDICT.

TAKE NOTE

An Allegation Is Serious

So we NEVER dismiss a concern because it is uncomfortable.

And because an allegation carries enormous consequences, we NEVER turn it into gossip, entertainment or a weapon.

TAKE IT SERIOUSLY. TAKE IT THROUGH THE RIGHT CHANNEL.

THE GOSPEL FITS THE MESSAGE

Jesus Used His Power to Serve

“The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve...”

Mark 10:45

Jesus never used strength to exploit the weak.

The strong One gave Himself for us.

POWER IN JESUS' HANDS BECAME SERVICE.

THE GOSPEL

At the Cross, Power Became Sacrificial Love

- Our sin separates us from God.
- Jesus came near instead of leaving us helpless.
- He bore our sin and died for us.
- God raised Him from the dead as proof.
- Forgiveness and new life are offered through repentance and faith in Jesus.

**PEOPLE SAVED BY JESUS LEARN TO
USE POWER LIKE JESUS.**

PRACTICAL RESPONSES

What Do I Do If I Am Concerned?

- 1 MAKE SAFETY FIRST** If there is immediate danger, act for safety and contact emergency services as required.
- 2 TELL SAFE SPACES** Take the concern to a trained Safe Spaces person promptly.
- 3 RECORD ACCURATELY** Write what was seen, heard or disclosed — not rumours or conclusions.
- 4 FOLLOW THE PATH** Use the church and legal reporting procedure.
- 5 DON'T INVESTIGATE OR GOSSIP** Let trained / authorised people do their role....
- 6 IF DISSATISFIED** Call: Tasmanian Strong Families, Safe Kids — Advice and Referral Line 131 444 or Tas Police yourself!

Prevention is better than Cure!

Wake Up

This is the real important bit!

What can we do to prevent this from ever been a problem?

Some Key Guidelines Going Forward when engaging children:

1. Never be alone with a child!!!
2. If you find yourself alone call over someone to help you.
(Record it)
3. Do not initiate any 'Tom Foolery', tickles, etc.
4. “***Hugs are for Families***”

Other Guidelines

- **Never share/show anything on your phone.** Send it to a parent/guardian to show the child.
- High Five, Fist Bumps or 'Wiggles Fingers' where possible instead of the lap or a cuddle.
- Do a '**Canoe Hug**' if you can't disengage. (imagine you are both in canoes trying to hug)
- Always leave the child feeling welcome, loved, and not scared that they have done anything wrong by initiating contact.

OBEY & REPORT

This Week's Challenge

ONE ACTION

Learn the name of at least TWO trained Safe Spaces people and **your** role in this procedure

ONE PERSON

Tell your scuba buddy the phrases:

**“Report it. Don’t retell it.”
& “Hugs are for Families.”**

ONE FOLLOW-UP

Next time ask each other:

“Do I know what to do if someone vulnerable needs help?”

KNOW THE PATH BEFORE YOU NEED IT.

PASS IT ON

Who Wasn't Here?

Who could benefit from ONE thing you learned today about keeping vulnerable people safe?

Tell them before next time.

Useful truth should keep moving — but confidential information must not.

PASS ON THE PRINCIPLE. NOT THE PRIVATE DETAILS.

WHAT DO I NEED TO REMEMBER?

Take Note — Church Safe Spaces

- How we treat the vulnerable matters to Jesus.
- Love protects the vulnerable — and uses the right process.
- Ordinary conflict? Go direct. - Safety concern? Report direct.
- Report it. Don't retell it.
- Strong protection + good process.
- Take it seriously. Take it through the right channel.

PROTECT • REPORT • DON'T RETELL • FOLLOW THE PROCESS

CHURCH SAFE SPACES

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus,

make us a church where children and vulnerable people are welcomed and safe.

Give us courage to report concerns, wisdom to follow the right process, and self-control to guard confidential information.

Teach us to use whatever power we have to serve, protect and seek truth in love.

LOVE PROTECTS.

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Go to this website to get these slides

<https://reboot.meetgodathome.com/follow-jesus>



PS: As always there are easter eggs at the end of the slide show if you want more information.