

## Youth Policy

Of Taupo Baptist Church

Taupo, New Zealand

### **POLICE VETTING**

Taupo Baptist Church has a commitment to the health and safety of those most vulnerable. Therefore a police check is to be carried out for every employee and volunteer working directly with children and young people. This is to be repeated every 2 years.

Given the responsibility of leadership over these ministries, we also recommend that Pastoral leaders are police checked before being engaged, and that this is repeated every 2 years.

Other roles within the church should be police checked at the discretion of the church leadership.

### **ALCOHOL POLICY**

We believe that as a leadership team we should follow Paul's example in 1 Corinthians 8:9-13. Paul states that if something He did made another Christian stumble, then he shouldn't do it, even if the task itself was not causing him to sin. The Bible is not against anyone drinking. But as leaders we have a responsibility to ensure our behaviour and the example we set does not cause a young person to stumble in their faith.

The Youth Leader's Policy concerning Alcohol is as follows:

1. There will be no alcohol at any youth group event involving young people.
2. In a non-youth group social setting, leaders need to make a choice of conscious as to whether to drink or not. It is expected that all leaders will demonstrate responsible drinking behaviour at all times. This

may involve abstinence. The leader must feel comfortable in their behaviour and their decision. If they are not comfortable drinking alcohol, they should not be drinking.

3. At all times, all leaders will respect any young person's or leader's decision of abstinence from alcohol.
4. There is a zero tolerance policy towards any leader drinking alcohol and then driving a vehicle of young people involved with our youth ministry.
5. If the leader is caught and convicted for driving whilst under the influence of alcohol at any time, they may not be permitted to drive for youth events. This will be at the discretion of the Youth Pastor along with the Senior Pastor and Elders.
6. All leaders are encouraged to not become intoxicated at any time due to the Biblical principle stated in Galatians 5:21
7. Drinking-style games are discouraged at youth group events.

#### DRUGS POLICY

It is expected that no leader will partake in any use of illegal substances or misuse of any mind-altering chemicals. If a leader breaks this policy, the Youth Pastor will ask them to step down from leadership. We advise all our leaders to follow the principle described in 1 Cor 6:19-20.

#### DRIVING POLICY

The safety of our young people must be of prime importance during any activities requiring transportation.

The Youth Leader's Policy concerning Driving is as follows:

1. Any driver must have their full licence before transporting young people. This must be carried with them as required by law.

2. There must be no overloading of vehicles. The law states that the number of seatbelts dictates how many passengers can be carried.
3. The leader will be an example to the young people in their driving behaviour and their attitude towards other drivers.
4. If a leader commits a driving offence with young people in their car, they may not be permitted to transport young people at the discretion of the Youth Pastor along with the Senior Pastor & Elders.
5. When borrowing or hiring vehicles for an event, the leader driving must obey the set policies concerning the use of that vehicle. This may include their age being over 25 years of age.
6. If a driver of a vehicle for a youth group event is involved in any vehicle accident or incident, they will report it appropriately to other Vehicle or Property owners, Insurance Providers and Police as necessary. The Youth Pastor will be informed. Drivers will pay the required insurance excess and/or other costs involved as appropriate.
7. All vehicles used for transporting young people and for youth events need to be safe with current Warrant of Finesses and Registrations.
8. This policy applies for every driver at a youth group event – including those not in a leadership role.

For each event or activity that happens outside of the normal programming, i.e. a trip, a camp or an activity that carry more than normal inherent risks; a Risk Management Plan must be created, written down and communicated appropriately to leaders & participants. It is the responsibility of the Youth Pastor or the Key Leader to fill out the Risk Management Plan and communicate it appropriately. Risks must be identified and eliminated or managed appropriately. The Youth Pastor will keep Risk Management Plans on file.

The safety of our young people must be of prime importance during any activities or events.

The Youth Leader's Policy for Physical Safety is as follows:

For each event or activity that happens outside of the normal programming, i.e. a trip, a camp or an activity that carry more than normal inherent risks; a Risk Management Plan must be created, written down and communicated appropriately to leaders & participants. It is the responsibility of the Youth Pastor or the Key leader to fill out the Risk Management Plan and communicate it appropriately. Risks must be identified and eliminated or managed appropriately. The Youth Pastor will keep Risk Management Plans on file. First Aid kits will be provided, and fire extinguishers will be available where appropriate.

If a young person, another leader, a member of the public, or a parent physically assaults a leader, reasonable self-defence is permitted. However, the force required should be only adequate to cease the physical abuse and not to cause unnecessary injury. The Youth Pastor will be immediately notified. He / she will then notify the Senior Pastor within a 24-hour time frame. If required, the Police will be involved. Debriefing and follow up will be made as necessary.

If a young person, another leader, a member of the public, or a parent verbally assaults a leader, it is expected that the leader respond with integrity and respect. The Youth Pastor will be immediately notified and an appropriate resolution brought about. The Senior Pastor will be informed of the situation within a 24-hour time frame by the Youth Pastor or key leader. Debriefing will be made available as necessary.

There is a zero tolerance policy towards a leader physically assaulting a young person, another leader, a member of the public, or a parent. If such a situation arises, the Youth Pastor along with Church Leadership will use their discretion as to the appropriate course of action.

It is expected that any leader using a recreational firearm will do so in a responsible and law-abiding manner. These firearms include hunting rifles on trips and tramps, BB Guns, and any other legal form of firearms. The holder of the firearm licence is responsible for the proper and careful use of the

gun, and the young people will not be permitted to use the weapons unsupervised. The leader must take full responsibility for any injury which may be caused during the activity.

If injury occurs during any youth group event or activity, it is the responsibility of the leadership team to advocate immediate and appropriate medical treatment to the young person. Any costs associated with acquiring emergency medical assistance must be paid as necessary and will be reimbursed by Taupo Baptist Church. If the Youth Pastor is not present, he/she must be immediately notified. It is the responsibility of the Youth Pastor / Key Leader to contact the young person's parents or caregivers. The Youth Pastor within a 24-hour time frame will inform the Senior Pastor of the situation.

Best practice would say the emergency service should be called primarily by the Youth Pastor / Key Leader, however other leaders or adults should make this call as necessary. Young people should not be in the position to have to call emergency service themselves.

## SEXUAL SAFETY POLICY

Today more so than ever, it is critical that we as leaders take all precautions to avoid incidents of sexual misconduct.

The Youth Leader's Policy concerning Sexual Safety is as follows:

It is expected that all leaders will set adequate personal boundaries to ensure their purity is maintained at all times, in all situations. This includes their personal and working relationships with members of the opposite sex.

Avoid ending up in potentially dangerous situations with young people, even of the same sex. eg. In a young person's bedroom, or in your own bedroom. Remain in places that are in view of others.

When providing transport do not travel with only one young person of the opposite sex as you. Close family is the exception.

In sleeping situations [camps, overnight trips & events], males and females will be reasonably separated – both physically and visually. This includes tents, bunkrooms, bedrooms and larger 'marae style' sleeping arrangements. Married couples and families are exempt in this and will be situated

together if preferable and possible.

Leaders will respect young people's personal space and not touch them in a potentially sexual way.

It is expected that leaders will practice and model distinctly Christian attitudes and actions around relationships and sexuality. Leaders will pursue integrity and purity as singles, those in dating relationships and those who are married. No leader may be involved in pre-marital sex or be involved in a relationship that is not glorifying to God. Pornography is not glorifying to God and must be avoided.

There is a zero tolerance policy towards leaders making sexual advances on a young person.

If a young person makes a sexual advance on a leader, the leader must remove themselves from the situation immediately, and inform the Youth Pastor as soon as possible. The Youth Pastor will then take the form of action required, and the Senior Pastor will be informed. The involved leader will then avoid being alone with the young person in the future.

Extra care will be taken with a young person who has a previous history of being sexually abused. This may require no one-to-one situations due to a lack of trust. Sensitivity to their needs and their fears is required. Plans and strategies will be put in place as necessary.

Extra care and caution will be taken with a young person who has a previous history of sexually abusing other young people. The Policy for Serious Offending will need to be consulted and followed in these circumstances.

Where a complaint is received regarding a leader from a young person, their family or their advocate, the following policy is to be followed:

1. Any complaint is to be notified to the Youth Pastor within 24 hours or sooner if possible. If the complaint is regarding the Youth Pastor it is to be notified to an Elder or the Senior Pastor of Taupo Baptist Church. The Elder will, under the same time frame, refer it to the Senior Pastor.
2. If the allegation involves sexual or physical abuse, or some illegal behaviour, the leader will be asked to step down immediately until a full investigation has taken place. The Taupo Baptist Church Policy concerning

Sexual Harassment/ Abuse and Criminal Offending will be followed in these circumstances.

3. The Youth Pastor in conjunction with the Senior Pastor &/or Elders will conduct a full investigation into the complaint and may request help from appropriate parties.

4. All parties will have the right to a fair hearing of their viewpoint. Where necessary a mediator will be brought in to ensure fair discussion takes place.

5. Proof or admission of guilt may result in the leader being removed from the leadership team. In severe instances the police will be involved in the process.

