

Guidelines for ESTABLISHING A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

Unfortunately in the past, there have been people who have not acted appropriately with children and young people in their care. Because of this, policies and procedures have been created for adults working with children and young people.

It is essential that we care for the children and young people we encounter. We need to analyse situations and prepare so that people experience the best we can offer. It is an LCA requirement that all who are involved in ministry to children and young people complete the Safe Church training requirements and its Child Safety Standards components.

Safe Church

Safe Church is designed to promote high standards of ethical behaviour and care for all, and especially for children and others in vulnerable circumstances.

Please contact your local LCA district office for details of courses available in your state.

Here are some essential things that will help you to develop a good mentoring relationship and will encourage integrity and trust between you, the young person and their parents.

- **Think carefully about where you meet.**
It's important that you meet somewhere the young person will feel comfortable and where they will feel safe. This might be a café or public park. We are all aware of how trust between a younger and older person can be abused.
- **Visit the family.**
This is especially important if you do not know the family well. Give the parents the opportunity to get to know you. They are entrusting you with a very significant role in the life of their child.

- **Be careful about physical contact.**
We often like to show people that we care by giving them a hug but most young people feel uncomfortable with physical contact until they know another person well. Let them initiate the contact and make sure you ask before you give them a hug. When you are praying together always ask before placing your hand on them.
- **Establish from the beginning an expectation of confidentiality.**
Talk together about confidentiality and reassure them that conversations will be kept private. However it is most important that you ensure that the young person understands if they tell you something that causes you concern for their physical or mental safety and well-being that you are obligated to report this information.

