

Grace Girls Conference Child Safe Policy

Versions 1.0 Reviewed 10/03/2024

For Review by latest 01/12/2024

Policy to be available on request, and on the Grace Girls Website

This policy outlines the underlying principles that direct our approach to safeguarding vulnerable people involved with the Grace Girls Conference. It applies to all leaders, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Grace Girls Conference. The Grace Girls Conference Coordinator takes responsibility for ensuring these principles are reviewed regularly and embedded in the organisation culture at all levels.

1. Volunteer Discussion Groups Leader requirements:
 - i) Submitted (and verified) WWCC
 - ii) Signed the Grace Girls Code of Conduct (see appendix 1)
 - iii) Provide at least one referee to confirm the suitability of volunteer for working with vulnerable people
 - iv) Prohibition of engagement of any person as a volunteer where there are prior convictions relating to violent or sexually related offences
 - v) Participated in (informal) Child Safe Training Refresher as part of the Discussion Group Leader Training Session

2. Child Safe Practices:
 - i) Vulnerable people are never to be left alone in an unsupervised environment (ie. One-to-one, closed room, no other persons involved):
 - a. With a Grace Girls Conference Volunteer
 - b. With other vulnerable people
 - ii) In unsupervised environments, there are to be at least two Grace Girls Conference volunteers present with a vulnerable person at all times

3. Instances relating to actual, alleged, or reasonable suspicion of sexual abuse:
 - i) Instances regarding any actual, alleged, or the reasonable suspicion of abuse of any kind (including, but not limited to sexual, physical, psychological or spiritual abuse) must be reported to:
 - a. The Grace Girls Conference Coordinator
 - b. Police and/ or other statutory authorities in compliance with mandatory reporting obligations (ie. Child Abuse Report Line)
 - c. The insurer
 - ii) In the event that the Grace Girls Coordinator may be somehow conflicted or lack independence from the circumstances of the actual, alleged or reasonable suspicion of abuse, notwithstanding 3(i)(b-c), the instance must be reported to the Grace Conference Executive Team
 - iii) Any and all details in relation to reports and/or allegations of physical or sexual abuse are to remain private and confidential

4. Process for dealing with alleged perpetrators of sexual abuse:

- i) Where there is an allegation of abuse within the Grace Girls Conference volunteer team:
 - a. The volunteer will be immediately suspended pending investigation, and
 - b. Referred to the authorities listed in 3(i)
- ii) Where a Grace Girls Conference volunteer has been found guilty of committing any form of abuse (including, but not limited to sexual, physical, psychological or spiritual abuse) following investigation and/ or trial:
 - a. The volunteer's involvement with the Grace Girls Conference will be immediately terminated.

Appendix 1:

Grace Girls Leader Code of Conduct:

In the interests of honouring God, upholding the integrity of the Grace Girls Conference, and protecting vulnerable people in our midst the following requirements are to be upheld by Grace Girls Conference volunteers at all times:

1. Alcohol, cigarettes and drugs:
 - a) Alcohol, cigarettes and drugs are not to be consumed at any Grace Girls Conference event

2. Interactions with Conference delegates:
 - a) Grace Girls Conference volunteers are prohibited from being alone (ie one-on-one) in a unsupervised environment with a delegate
 - b) Grace Girls Conference volunteers should avoid being alone in supervised environments with delegates
 - c) Any sort of romantic or physical relationship between a Grace Girls Conference volunteer and a delegate is unacceptable
 - d) Where a Grace Girls Conference volunteer finds themselves attracted to a delegate, or suspects a delegate may be attracted to them, they must make this known to the Grace Girls Conference Coordinator immediately
 - e) Leaders must not contact delegates outside of the Conference without a ministry related reason
 - f) When speaking with delegates, Grace Girls Conference volunteers must not make promises to keep their conversations a secret as any disclosure of abuse or neglect must be reported
 - g) Grace Girls Conference Volunteers should encourage support networks and further counselling where appropriate

3. Physical Conduct:
 - a) Grace Girls Conference Volunteers are to avoid physical touch with delegates
 - b) Any touching between the neck and knees (except in instances of medical or other necessity) is prohibited

4. Language:

Recognising that the way we speak to or about people can impact their sense of belonging, value and safety:

 - a) All negative and critical language should be avoided, including jokes at the expense of others
 - b) All derogatory language when speaking to or about other leaders or delegates should be avoided (including, but not limited to, sarcasm, belittling, swearing, innuendo, and racist or sexist remarks)

5. Social and Digital Media:
 - a) Where possible, the official GraceGirlsSA social media accounts should be used to contact delegates (ie. Instead of Grace Girls Conference volunteers' private accounts)
 - b) Direct messaging between Grace Girls Conference volunteers and delegates should be for ministry purposes only

- c) Grace Girls Conference volunteers are under no obligation to accept delegate friend requests on social media
 - d) Social media site postings should be considered permanent in every instance
 - e) Online representations in any form of Grace Girls Conference Volunteers must accord to appropriate standards of Christian conduct, aligned to this code
6. Money:
- a) Any expenses made for Grace Girls Conference should be reimbursed following the Grace Girls Conference procedure
 - b) Money is never to be accepted from, or offered to, any delegate
7. Child Safe Policies:
- a) Grace Girls Conference Volunteers are required to have read and signed the Grace Girls Conference Child Safe Policy
 - b) Prior to serving at the Conference, Grace Girls Conference volunteers are required to have:
 - a. Submitted (and verified) WWCC
 - b. Signed the Grace Girls Code of Conduct (see appendix 1)
 - c. Provided at least one referee to confirm the suitability of volunteer for working with vulnerable people
 - d. Participated in (informal) Child Safe Training Refresher as part of the Discussion Group Leader Training Session
8. Dress Code:
- a) Grace Girls Conference volunteers must wear clothes that are modest and appropriate to the context