



# Eastward Missionary College Inc

## Music Camp Risk Management Strategy

Eastward Music Camp  
Camp Coordinator - Emmanuel Higgins

### 1.1 Child Protection Policy

Eastward Missionary College Inc, a non-profit association, is committed to the safety and well being of all young people and children who participate in its ministry of youth camps and programs. Our workers and volunteers will treat them with respect and understanding at all times and seek to ensure that they are kept safe from all forms of harm with special attention to harm caused by physical, psychological or emotional abuse or sexual abuse and exploitation. Eastward Missionary College Inc takes very seriously its duty of care to this group.

### 1.2 Scope of Policy

Eastward Missionary College Inc Child Protection Policy is made explicit in its Risk Management Strategy, which applies to all staff and volunteers involved in supporting its ministry of youth camps and programs. The Risk Management Strategy is to be disseminated to all relevant staff or volunteers, who are responsible for upholding its policies and procedures. Staff and volunteers are required to agree to comply with and uphold the Risk Management Strategy.

### 1.3 Code of Conduct

1.3.1 The values and principles of this Code of Conduct are the values and principles of Biblical Christianity and the standards of conduct of staff and volunteers toward young people and children under the age of eighteen should at all times meet or exceed accepted community standards.

1.3.2 All staff and volunteers working at Eastward youth camps should obtain a Working With Children Check (or the equivalent)

1.3.3 Any child, age 10 or 11, attending camp at music camp, should have a parent or guardian present at the camp, unless prior arrangements have been made and agreed to by the parent or guardian.

1.3.4 Any children on the camp grounds, not attending the camp as a camper are to be **fully supervised** by a parent and/or guardian at **ALL** times. These children are **not** the legal responsibility of Eastward Missionary College Inc therefore the responsibility of these children lies solely in the hands of the parents/guardians. However, in saying this, the same Code of Conduct will apply to ALL children at all times during the duration of the camp.

1.3.5 Language used by staff or volunteers towards young people or children should be elevating at all times and should never be:

- Sexually suggestive or coarse;
- Abusive or intimidating;
- Derogatory or insulting; or
- Racist.

1.3.6 Behaviour by staff or volunteers towards young people and children must be of the highest standard at all times and there should never be:

- Unwelcome or unwarranted touching of any nature;
- Encouragement given to any form of precocious sexual behaviour; or
- The administration of physical discipline.

1.3.7 Staff or volunteers will avoid being alone with individual children or young people or conveying them alone in their vehicles and will at all times and in all circumstances, not specifically covered in this Code of Conduct, act in a way that preserves the rights and dignity of young people and children. If a child discloses to staff or volunteers harm done to them or to another young person, it may on occasions be appropriate for staff or volunteers to find a more private place to make the person disclosing the harm more comfortable and less concerned about what they have to say, but within the view of others. What is an appropriate level of privacy will be dictated by the nature of the disclosure and staff and volunteers should act in accordance with this principle.

1.3.8 Professional staff or volunteers, for example, psychologists, teachers or nurses, should uphold their professional codes of conduct at all times in relation to their work with young people and children.

**1.3.9** Staff or volunteers will be alert to bullying, abuse or exploitation by other staff and volunteers, youth, young people or children against young people or children and will report these forms of behaviour that they have observed or that have been reported to them to the Camp Coordinator or Camp Advisor. The first obligation of staff or volunteers is to make detailed notes, make a verbal report to the Camp Coordinator and then to complete the Incident Report Form, obtained from the camp office. The Camp Coordinator will discuss the report with the Camp Advisors, and decide what action is appropriate. All reported incidents or allegations involving illegal forms of behaviour towards young people or children will be referred to the nearest Juvenile Aid Bureau of the NSW Police. The referral will be initiated by the Camp Coordinator but the report given to the police will be given by the person who observed the illegal behaviour or to whom the disclosure was made.

Procedures relating to receiving and reporting disclosures of harm will be included in Section 3 of this Strategy. The Camp Coordinator is responsible for reporting referrals to police to relevant parents or carer as soon as possible after the referral has been made. In no case involving serious allegations referred to police will Eastward Missionary College Inc undertake an investigation, hold its own internal hearing or attempt to mediate a settlement of the matter. The staff member or volunteer who reports witnessing or receiving reports or allegation of illegal behaviour towards a young person or child must then treat the information as confidential.

**1.3.10** Senior Eastward staff will be available to counsel with young people or children who seek to discuss matters of importance with them. The appointed person/s will be made known to camp staff, volunteers and attendees, counsellors and campers on arrival at the camp venue during orientation. Young people or children may wish to contact their parents to discuss matters of importance with them. Staff or volunteers should facilitate contact between young people or children and their parents upon request or in circumstances where this is clearly warranted.

**1.3.11** If staff or volunteers are faced with an ethical dilemma and there is no specific direction available, they should ask themselves the following questions before making a decision on how to respond to the dilemma:

- Will the decision be in the best interest of the young person or child?
- Do I have all relevant information to make an informed, responsible decision?
- Is this action legal?
- Is it consistent with the organization's mission and its Code of Conduct?
- Do I think it is the right thing to do and if not, why not?
- Would other people think it was the right thing to do and if not, why not?
- What will the consequences be for our organization, for my colleagues and for me?
- Can I justify my actions?
- What will happen if this matter becomes public, for example, in the media?

**1.3.12** Eastward Missionary College Inc will gather the following information from participants upon their arrival at the camp venue and make it accessible to all staff or volunteers who have guardian responsibility for each young person or child:

- The name, address and contact numbers of the parent or caregiver, as well as those of an additional person in the event of an emergency;
- How to contact the parent or carer as quickly as possible – for example, by home or work phone, mobile phone or through neighbours; and
- Any relevant medical information in relation to restriction of involvement in physical activities.

**1.3.13** The medical team at camp will consist of qualified first aid officer/s and/or a medical doctor and/or nurse, with first aid equipment easily accessed. The appointed persons will be made known to camp staff, volunteers and attendees, counsellors and campers on arrival at the camp venue during orientation.

**1.3.14** The camp environment will be inspected for potential dangers to the physical well being of staff, volunteers, attendees and young people and children and appropriate actions taken or warnings given, as warranted.

**1.3.15** All physical activities at the camps will be age appropriate and suited to the skill levels of the participants. Each activity will be assessed for levels of risk and appropriate strategies and procedures put in place to manage these risks (see under Procedures, 2.1.3). No young person or child will be pressured into participating in any form of physical activity that they do not wish to participate in or do not feel adequate to do. Activity leaders will deny participation in certain physical activities to young people or children, if they do not believe the activity is appropriate to their age or skill level.

**1.3.16** Where activities are conducted off site, a record will be kept of those participating. A roll call will be conducted before moving off site and a roll call conducted before and after return from the activity. Activity leaders, who will have adequate knowledge and skills to undertake specific activities, will warn of any potential dangers in the activities, ensure that participants are adequately prepared and provide very clear instructions before undertaking any activity. Appropriate supervision will be put in place for all activities and a reporting structure developed and made known to staff, volunteers, attendees, young people and children.

**1.3.17** This Risk Management Strategy is to be made available to parents or carers upon request.

**1.3.18** A breach of this Code of Conduct by staff or volunteers will be viewed seriously by Eastward Missionary College Inc and may result in exclusion from the Eastward camp program. All allegations of illegal actions towards young people or children against staff or volunteers that are upheld by due legal processes will result in exclusion from involvement in any future Eastward programs.

## 2.1 Child Protection Procedures

2.1.1 Staff or volunteers of Eastward's programs will not be permitted to contribute to the program unless they agree to upholding the principles contained in the Eastward Missionary College Inc Risk Management Strategy. It is necessary that each staff member or volunteer be known by and enjoy the confidence of at least one member of the association or will have had a reference check undertaken from the three referees nominated in their application form.

2.1.2 Staff or volunteers will be adequately briefed on their roles and provided with training where this is necessary to the success of their work.

2.1.3 Proposed group activities, aside from meetings, daily meals and other routine aspects of the camp program, are to be assessed for their risks using Eastward's Risk Assessment Form and appropriate adjustments made before plans are finalised and implemented. The completed Risk Assessments Forms are to be submitted to the Camp Coordinator and kept on permanent file in the Risk Management Register.

2.1.4 Incident reports are to be made by activity leaders on the prescribed form and submitted to the Camp Coordinator and kept on permanent file in the Risk Management Register. These reports will be used to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of risk management strategies.

## 3.1 Receiving and Reporting of Disclosures of Harm

3.1.1 You have reasonable grounds to suspect harm if:

- A young person or child tells you they have been harmed;
- Someone else, e.g. another child, parent or staff member or volunteer, tells you that harm has occurred or is likely to occur;
- A young person or child tells you they know someone who has been harmed (it is possible they may be referring to themselves);
- You are concerned at significant changes in the behaviour of a young person or child, or the presence of new unexplained and suspicious injuries; or
- You see the harm happening.

3.1.2 Disclosure of harm may sound like:

- "I think I saw..."
- "Somebody told me that..."
- "I just think you should know..."
- "I'm not sure what I want you to do, but..."

3.1.3 Any disclosure of harm is important and must be acted upon, regardless of whether:

- The harm to a young person or child has been caused by a person from within or without Eastward Missionary College Inc; or
- The young person or child disclosing the harm to you is from within or without Eastward Missionary College Inc.

3.1.4 The following actions may be of help when a disclosure of harm has been made:

- Don't panic or react in a shocked or critical way;
- Tell the person you are glad they have told you;
- Find a more conducive or private place to talk (see 1.3.7 above);
- Reassure the person they have done the right thing in disclosing;
- Don't promise to not tell anyone or keep the disclosure secret;
- Indicate to them that you need to tell someone else who can help them;
- Reassure them that you will only tell someone who will make them safe;
- Always act on the basis that what you have been told is the truth;
- Don't ask leading questions such as "Did X touch you?" or "Did they touch you where your underwear goes?"
- Don't put words in the person's mouth, just let them tell you what happened and, if you need to clarify anything, ask non-leading questions such as:  
"Tell me what happened"  
"What happened then"  
"Can you tell me about that?"
- Remember that unnecessary questions or interviews could cause distress, confusion and interfere with subsequent investigations authorities undertake.
- As soon as possible after a disclosure has been made to you, make notes of what occurred. Include information such as dates, times, location and who is present. Include a detailed account of exactly what the person disclosing said using "I said," "they said" statements, the questions you asked, any comments you made, and your actions following the disclosure.
- If you are taking notes as a disclosure is occurring, explain why you are doing it and why it is important in an age appropriate way, i.e. to ensure an accurate record for any subsequent investigation.

**3.1.5** Following the completion of notes make a verbal report to the Camp Coordinator or Camp Advisor. Immediately obtain from the camp office, and complete, the Incident Report Form, using the notes that you have constructed. Personally deliver this completed form to the Camp Coordinator or Camp Advisor. The Camp Coordinator will, if necessary, establish contact with the police, and provide information to the police.

**3.1.6** The information required by police will include the following:

- The details of any disclosure of harm;
- The name age, and address of the young person or child harmed;
- Where the young person or child is at that point in time;
- Any identifying information regarding the alleged perpetrator of the harm; and
- Your details.