



# ***Crèche Guidelines for Programs Run By a Church***

***Suggested Criteria***

***Baptist Early Childhood Ministries***

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## Table of Contents

Table of Contents .....	2
Introduction .....	3
1. Competent Carers .....	3
2. Minimum Staff.....	4
3. Adequate records .....	4
4. Safe Environment .....	4
5. A Healthy Environment.....	5
6. Carefully chosen toys and equipment .....	5
Helpful Resources .....	6



## Introduction

Crèches in our churches are intended to provide parents of young children with opportunity for recreation, education, and support in their parenting journey. They are intended to provide the children with a safe, loving and caring environment.

The churches responsibilities include overall safety issues (eg emergency evacuation) as well as relevance of the Children's Services Regulations.

Because these childcare arrangements are not a registered Childcare Provider, the following guidelines apply at all times:

- ★ Childcare is provided while the parent attends activities under the same roofline. The parent cannot leave the premises at any time while their child is being cared for.
- ★ The child remains the parent's responsibility. This should be formally agreed upon and accepted by the parents concerned.
- ★ Clearly state and document who is responsible for the children while in care.
- ★ Allocate the time frame that the crèche is available to the parents.
- ★ Caregivers will assist toilet trained children to use the facilities but the parent will be asked to come back and change nappies if required.
- ★ Caregivers will assist children with morning/ afternoon tea provided by each parent. Parents please do not send nuts, lollies, or chips. Parents are to clearly name all items.
- ★ Caregivers, parents and children must be aware of an emergency evacuation procedure. We encourage you to practice this evacuation twice a year.

## 1. Competent Carers

Warm, understanding adults who have a positive attitude towards young children, are sensitive to their needs, and exhibit flexibility and reliability.

An Early Childhood trained person would be an advantage. Because the safety of children in our care must be a top priority, do not consider someone who has a problem with abuse\* either with their child or other people's children.

\*Abuse includes physical, emotional, mental or sexual.

It is highly recommended that that there be at least one crèche worker, who is on site, who is aware of the rudimentary *Duty of Care*, *Occupational Health and Safety*, and *Child Protection* requirements. In any case, all persons acting as a crèche caregiver should be provided with appropriate training, including an opportunity to read the *BUV Duty of Care* document ( 'Duty of Care Policy – Our Church is a Safe Place') so the recommendations contained in it can be followed.

Each caregiver will require a current police check and a Working With Children Check.

## 2. Minimum Staff

Have at least 2 adults with children at all times to allow for an emergency – one with suitable experience and at least one person over 18 years. The recommended adult/ child ratio is 0-2 years 1:3, 2-3 years 1:4; 3-5 years 1:8.

## 3. Adequate records

- ★ It is important to know the exact number of children present at all times. Parents are to sign each child in at the start of each session, and out at the end of the session in an attendance book. Caregivers will not allow your child to leave with anyone other than the person who signed them in.
- ★ Nametags on the children is recommended
- ★ Each parent is required to fill out an enrolment form prior to their child's first attendance – information in this form will only be shared with the caregiver's team to enable them to provide safe, personal care for each child.
- ★ An accident form must be completed by the leader when an accident happens, and then signed by the parent of the child.
- ★ First Aid must be administered by the parent , unless it is a 'life or death' situation. Within the enrolment form, permission needs to be given by each parent that allows in an emergency the caregiver to seek medical, hospital or ambulance service for a child. Your churches duty of care is that a first aid kit is readily available for use if needed. Any medicine must be given by the parent.

## 4. Safe Environment

### *Factors to consider*

- ★ Smoke detectors installed
- ★ Fire extinguishes serviced regularly
- ★ Phone available for emergencies, and list of emergency numbers
- ★ First Aid kit up to date
- ★ Accident book available – see point 3
- ★ Urns, kettles and cords totally out of children's reach
- ★ Have a 'no hot drinks' policy – adults can be encouraged to have juice, water or iced tea/ coffee instead of hot coffee or tea.
- ★ Power points covered by safety caps
- ★ Guards for heaters and fans
- ★ Detergents and disinfectants in a safe place
- ★ Low level glass protected (if not safety glass)
- ★ Car park checked for safety of young children
- ★ Toys cleaned regularly, checked for sharp edges and broken pieces
- ★ Children to be supervised at ALL times by an adult.
- ★ Outside play area guidelines
  - Outside area has a fence (minimum height 1.5 meters) with a childproof self closing gate.
  - Suitable surfaces eg impact absorbing material under play equipment.
  - Sandpit is well drained with safe surrounds and shade cover.
  - A Sunsmart policy and shade is provided for outside play areas.

## 5. A Healthy Environment

### *Factors to consider*

- \* Hand washing including paper towelling and a bin.
- \* Nappy changing area (separate area to playroom eg in disabled toilets) including change mat or table and disinfectant. Nappies are to be taken home by the parent.
- \* Adult toilets may require a moveable child size seat and / or a stable step.
- \* Adequate space for the number of children being cared for – preferably 3 square metres per child.
- \* A policy regarding sick children – eg ‘Crèche is no place for a sick child’

## 6. Carefully chosen toys and equipment

- \* Unbreakable plates and cups.
- \* Basic equipment including tables, chairs a mat and equipment required for sleeping (if needed).
- \* Sturdy, well chosen toys and materials for activities.
- \* Adequate storage for toys and equipment.

### **Some activity and equipment ideas**

#### *Creative:*

Play dough, paste and brushes, thick crayons and paper, blackboard and chalk.

#### *Dramatic Play:*

Dress-ups eg hats, bags, scarves. Home corner eg small table and chairs, dolls beds, prams, blankets, washable dolls, large mirror, plastic tea set.

#### *Constructional:*

Blocks, wooden puzzles with large pieces, Lego, interlocking blocks, small plastic trucks, farm animals, etc

#### *Especially for toddlers:*

Peg tin, posting boxes, Duplo, cotton reels and plastic string for threading, soft balls, push and pull along toys, stacking beakers.

#### *Quiet area:*

Books for children to enjoy individually and at story time – on a bookshelf.  
Cardboard books for toddlers.

#### *Music:*

Tape recorder and suitable tapes or CD's.



## Helpful Resources

- ★ 'Nursery Smart Pages - A guide for Nursery Directors and Caregivers' – Gospel Lights Little Blessings (available through Koorong / Word for approximately \$35.00)
- ★ BUV Duty of Care Forms, Guidelines and checklists , as well as the complete booklet 'Duty of Care Policy – Our Church is a Safe Place', on the Baptist Union of Victoria website [www.buv.com.au](http://www.buv.com.au)

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