‘Children and young people are our present and our future. They have the right to grow and to develop their full potential physically, emotionally and spiritually. That potential is their families and communities’ responsibility to nurture and fulfil.’ South Australian Catholic Child Protection Council Charter 2006

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**Child Protection Curriculum**

**What is the Child Protection Curriculum?**

The curriculum reflects the principles in the South Australian Catholic Child Protection Council policy for the Care, Wellbeing and Protection of Children and Young People.

It has 2 main themes:

1) **We all have the right to be safe**

   Children and young people are encouraged to think about people and things that keep them safe. For younger children the theme is focused on their needs. For older students the theme is based on a human rights perspective and includes responsibilities.

2) **We can help ourselves to be safe by talking to the people we trust**

   This theme encourages children and young people to identify a wide range of people they trust and can talk to. The curriculum is very explicit in covering the idea that our feelings of trust may be confused, mixed up and can change; someone whom we once trusted may behave in a way that means we don’t trust them anymore and vice versa.

**How is the Program organised?**

The program is divided into four **Focus Areas**.

1) **THE RIGHT TO BE SAFE:**

   Children and young people are encouraged to learn about the various feelings they may have in different situations. They are taught about Early Warning Signs which are external signals and internal messages that help children and young people recognise a situation where they may be at risk of harm.

2) **RELATIONSHIPS:**

   Learners explore a range of relationships and know that relationships can change. Students consider the concept of power, rights and responsibilities in relationships so they can begin to recognise healthy and unhealthy or abusive relationships.

3) **RECOGNISING AND REPORTING ABUSE**

   This Focus Area is covered carefully and according to learners’ developmental level. At all times the strategies of ‘one step removed’ and ‘protective interrupting’ are used so that children and young people do not disclose personal information in a classroom setting.

4) **PROTECTIVE STRATEGIES**

   The Child Protection Curriculum carries the very clear message to all children and young people that adults have a responsibility to protect children. However, there are some things children and young people can do to keep themselves safe. The strategy of ‘persisting until we are safe’ is emphasised strongly.

**For whom is the program intended?**

The program presents a developmental framework arranged in the following groups:

- Early Years Band: Ages 3-5
- Early Years Band Reception to Year 2
- Primary Years Band Year 3-5
- Middle Years Band Year 6-9

Marymount College is currently implementing the Child Protection Curriculum. Every curriculum area taught within a Catholic school should have a religious dimension. A foundational principle of the Catholic Tradition is the belief that All human beings are made in the image and likeness of God.