



YouthMETRO Parent/Guardian Information 2024

YouthMETRO is a one-year traineeship focused on preparing and growing youth leaders in local churches. It aims to prepare Trainees to be, think and serve like Jesus, with a specific focus on doing this with and to youth or children.

YouthMETRO traineeships are facilitated by the METRO Committee (METRO) in partnership with Presbyterian Church of Victoria's local churches.

This information is provided to Parents/Guardians of YouthMETRO Trainees who are under 18 years of age.

Enquiries and questions about this information are to be directed to pcvmetro@gmail.com.

What YouthMETRO involves for a Trainee:

- Regular (weekly or fortnightly) meetings one-to-one with an adult trainer.
- Working through the YouthMETRO Manual and assigned books with their trainer. During the year, topics covered & practical experiences provided will include: evangelism, one-to-one discipleship, short talk preparation, leading a Bible study and sharing your faith.
- A regular supervised leadership role in their church, usually leading at youth group or teaching Sunday school.
- Attending a variety of compulsory events throughout the year (see below)
- Optional: leading on a PYV Camp

Under 18 year old Trainees

- Under 18 year old Trainees may undertake the YouthMETRO traineeship.
- Applicants must be in year 10 (and be at least 16 years old) or above, in the year of their traineeship.

Events

There are a number of events that YouthMETRO Trainees are required to attend during their traineeship. Some of these events are run by METRO, others are run by partner organisations.

These event costs are mostly covered by METRO. The only events that may require payment are an accommodation upgrade at Engage Conference, a meal at Graduation/Orientation as well as personal travel costs to & from the events.

Please note these dates are subject to change.

Orientation	18th November, 2023 12:30 to 4:30pm	Introduction to YouthMETRO, meet other Trainees/Trainers, safe church induction, answer questions etc. Includes a meal and graduation of the previous cohort
YouthMETRO Summer Intensive	8-12 January, 2024	Multi-day, overnight event covering theology, evangelism and Safe Church Basic Training. This is usually held at PYV Summer Camp.
Engage Leaders' Conference**	25-28 January, 2024	Multi-day (overnight optional) conference to equip leaders in teaching God's Word. **PLEASE NOTE: Due to event age restrictions, Trainees under the age of 18 cannot attend this event.
MTS Challenge	TBC, 2024	One day event to explore the involvement Trainees may have in God's kingdom building work, as well as catch up with fellow Trainees/Trainers & METRO Committee.
Graduation	November, 2024	Celebration and reflection of the traineeship over a meal

METRO & local church responsibilities

METRO traineeships are a partnership between the METRO Committee and local churches. METRO, on behalf of the PCV Assembly, facilitates the availability of the program by providing the process of coming into the program, the framework & training materials. METRO are responsible for the safety of trainees under 18 years of age at Graduation, Orientation, YouthMETRO Summer Intensive and MTS Challenge. Local church Sessions are responsible for the trainer, the trainee, child safe practices of the trainee/trainer, their ministries, one-to-one meetings, and other activities within their church. METRO cannot be responsible for the ministries that occur within the local church context, including one-to-one meetings.

METRO are responsible for the safety of Trainees under 18 at:

- Orientation
- Graduation
- YouthMETRO Summer Intensive
- MTS Challenge

The local church Session is aware of and will comply with:

- The requirements for a YouthMETRO Trainee.
- The PCV's "Safe Church" Policy, Procedures and Program, [METRO Child Safety Manual](#) and "Working with Children Check" requirements, including but not limited to, as the YouthMETRO Trainee works with children under 18.
- The responsibilities of the Session as outlined above.

Parent/Guardian Consent

Parental or guardian consent must be given prior to a Trainee under the age of 18 years old being accepted into the YouthMETRO Traineeship. Consent is given via the Parent/Guardian completing the online YouthMETRO Parent/Guardian permission form.

In the online Trainee application form, Trainees give the contact details for a Parent/Guardian. METRO Admin will then email the nominated parent the link to the Parent/Guardian permission form. This form is not directly accessible on the METRO website, to ensure METRO has taken reasonable steps to ensure it is the Parent/Guardian completing the form, not the child.

If a trainee completes their application form for YouthMETRO before their 18th birthday, their Parent/Guardian must complete the Parent/Guardian permission form - even if the applicant turns 18 prior to Orientation day.

If a parent/guardian has any concerns about Session's choice of trainer for their child, they are to contact Session before the traineeship commences.

Additional protocols and practices for child Trainees

For Trainees who are under the age of 18, there are additional protocols and practices which need to be adhered to throughout the traineeship by the Trainee, Trainer, church and METRO. This information is provided in this document in order to ensure that Parents/Guardians are fully informed.

- All Trainers must be aged 18 years and above and be Safe Church compliant. A person can only be a Trainer once they have been approved to work with children in the PCV via completing the Safe Church Volunteer Approval Process. For more information on this process please visit www.safechurchpcv.org.au/volunteers.

- In the local church the Trainer and Trainees must comply with the Safe Church procedures in place as they conduct their ministry and activities as part of the traineeship.
- Communication from the Trainer, METRO Committee and METRO Admin Assistant to the Trainee MUST copy in their Parent/Guardian. Trainees will be instructed to immediately inform their Parents/Guardians if the Trainer, METRO Committee or METRO Admin Assistant communicates to them without copying in the Parent/Guardian.
- In line with the Safe Church Code of Conduct, Trainers must never drive a under 18 year old Trainee alone.
- Trainees under the age of 18 must not be left as the sole minder of children in any ministry or activity in the local church, as by definition, they themselves are “children”.

One-to-One Meetings

One-to-one meetings between the Trainer and the Trainee are a key part of the YouthMETRO traineeship and aim to facilitate the mentoring aspect of the traineeship.

One-to-one meetings are conducted only within the boundaries of the Safe Church Policy and Code of Conduct and safe ministry practice, as described below and in the Safe Church PCV guidelines found at www.safechurchpcv.org.au. The Trainers must adhere to the Safe Church Code of Conduct and comply with the Code in their ministry, conduct and activities with the Trainee.

The purpose of one-to-one meetings is to grow the Trainee in their faith, encourage them to follow Jesus Christ and grow in their ministry capability.

Relevant Boundaries:

- The meetings involve one-to-one Bible reading and prayer.
- A Parent/Guardian must be copied in on any online communications between the child and the mentor.
- Mentoring is not counselling and mentoring is not to be used to grow an intimate friendship or relationship between an adult and a child.
- Mentoring meetings only take place at pre-arranged dates/times/locations in public places/places or where Parent/Guardian oversight occurs. – i.e. a Parent/Guardian is present via being nearby and present. Parents/Guardians can give permission for another adult to be present instead of themselves – for example, an adult sibling or another Safe Church compliant leader. This permission must be recorded before the meeting via an email or text from the Parent/Guardian to the Trainer.
- Parents/Guardians must be informed of the date/time/locations of all one-to-one meetings, at least 24 hours before the meeting.
- Sessions must be kept informed by the Trainer of the date/time/locations via regular reporting to Session of these meetings.

Safe Church Basic Training

Due to their leadership position within the church, it is required that all METRO trainees and trainers (regardless of age) complete the PCV Safe Church Basic Training. YouthMETRO trainees who have not yet completed Basic Training can complete it in the morning of Orientation day.

Trainees aged 16-17 will be required to complete Safe Church Basic Training with parental permission, due to the sensitive nature of the content. This permission will be given in the Parental Consent Form.

Gender Policy

Adult Trainers and Trainees under the age of 18 years must be of the same gender. If there is a group of YouthMETRO Trainees, they may complete some or all of their theory content together with a METRO approved trainer who may be of the opposite gender. However the one-to-one meetings will always be with their appointed same gender METRO approved Trainer.

Concerns and Feedback

Parents/Guardians are to contact the local church Session in the first instance with any Safe Church related safe ministry practice concerns or issues related to their child in the METRO programme. Parents/Guardians can also contact the Safe Church Unit if preferred or if they are unable to satisfactorily resolve the concern/issue with the Session.

Parents/Guardians may also contact the Safe Church Unit with any concerns or issues relating to child safety (for example, allegations or concerns of inappropriate conduct, grooming or abuse-related concerns).

Trainees are also able to raise such concerns and issues either to the Session, METRO Committee or the Safe Church Unit, by speaking directly to the local church Session or contacting METRO Committee pcvmetro@gmail.com or the Safe Church Unit via safechurch@pcv.org.au or mobile 0499 090 449.

Parents/Guardians and trainee feedback and input to the METRO programme is welcomed. Please contact the METRO Committee via pcvmetro@gmail.com. A Parent/Guardian survey and a Trainee survey is undertaken at the end of the traineeship.