



Seventh-day Adventist Church (Australian Union Conference) Ltd ABN: 24 112 101 783

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Dear Administrators and SP Coordinators

As the year draws to an end, we reflect on what a time of rapid change it has been in relation to the Church's response to safe church issues. 2016 will be an opportunity for our Church to grow as our administration plans and implements a new design for Safe Places. While it's taking shape we are committed to focusing on the protection of the vulnerable.

Here is some vital information that will help us all navigate this season of transition:

- There has been a considerable increase in the number of cases being referred to our service and as a result we have implemented the following priority system for managing cases. This will be based on receiving an official 'Incident Report Form' (attached):
 - Priority 1:** there is a child/ children at current risk of harm
 - Priority 2:** there is a victim who has been identified and willing to be contacted to discuss
 - Priority 3:** Other cases /incident forms
- SPS is not resourced to provide a 24 hour service. We understand that this is difficult work and that each case is unique. All urgent cases should be referred to the police or the child protection hotline in your state. We recommend you put these numbers within easy access. Currently our case managers are both part time. Johanna is 9.30-2.30pm for 3 days per week and Wednesdays all day; and Phil is consulting 2 days per week and the days vary each week.
- Confidentiality is critical as our church is a small community. Safe Place information needs to be guarded; this includes carefully selecting who to include on an email and who to disclose information to on a needs-to-know basis. Please consider those who you are copying in on an email – do they need to be included and for what reason? Please refer to the privacy legislation that is in your state for specifics; this includes non-identifying clients' names (such as using a code).
- We are excited to announce, to assist you in your SP roles, in early 2016:
 - We have a new process for dealing with known offenders in local churches and a robust Safety Agreement process. Training will be provided via *GoToTraining*.
 - We have a solution for training in addition to the eLearning environment. This will strengthen face-to-face training for both the entire Safe Church Training and the face-to-face module for the eLearning environment. 'Train the trainer' will be provided face to face. More about this shortly.

We thank you so much for all you do in your local conferences. Suzanne will be sure to keep you informed on these initiatives on a regular basis throughout 2016.

Wishing you a wonderful Christmas and a blessed New Year from all the team at SPS!

Kind regards

David Robertson

Director Safe Place Services

