



Letter to Volunteers

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Hello.

As you may be aware, in 2015 we surveyed congregations to understand how useful the Child Safe Church policy, processes and tools were to your ministry, and how effective they were in enabling you to comply with legislative requirements.

The response to the survey was outstanding, with almost every congregation and faith community taking the time to submit comments. Thank you for this, we appreciate your feedback.

The survey revealed what people thought about our current programs and what opportunities there were for improvement. Specifically, we found that:

- The resources were too generic, in that they required some effort to include the requirements of Queensland legislation and to cater for the structure and function of our church.
- Access to information, training and forms was not easy for many.
- There was ambiguity about what is and isn't required in order to meet legislative obligations.
- There was considerable dissatisfaction with the focus on compliance issues, when it should be on ministry and fellowship, and people expressed a desire for a more healthy balance.
- There is some fantastic work happening in ministry with children.

Safe Ministry with Children aims to address some of these issues and to build on our strengths. This reframing of focus comes with the clear intention of supporting your ministry and providing resources which better meet your needs. It spells out the acceptable boundaries which encompass ministry with children, and urges you to maintain and protect those boundaries.

Underpinning our new focus is an evidence base which shows that things can and do go wrong in every organisation, including ours, and that measures can be taken to successfully deter offenders, avoid incidents and interrupt boundary violations.

I look forward to sharing Safe Ministry with Children with you in March, and discussing some of its detail at Synod in Session in May. In the meantime, if you have any queries about the survey or the new resource please contact your presbytery chairperson or email me at childsafe@ucaqld.com.au.

Kind regards,

Lynette Drew

Safe Ministry (children) administrator