



The Salvation Army

AUSTRALIA EASTERN AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA TERRITORY

Office of
The Chief Secretary

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28th July, 1988.

All Officers,
A.C.T. AND NEW SOUTH WALES.

Dear Comrades,

REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE

Further to my directive dated 14th October, 1987 I write to clarify the present position as some changes have been made in government requirements.

From December, 1987, the following are now 'mandatory notifiers' under child protection legislation:

- social workers
- psychologists
- refuge workers
- child care workers
- nurses
- welfare workers
- probation and parole officers
- youth workers
- family support workers
- early childhood teachers employed in children's services
- family court counsellors
- district officers
- child protection workers
- police officers-

Many of our employees and voluntary workers in Corps, Social and welfare work are included in these occupational categories.

It is important that they know that they are now bound by law to notify the Department of Family and Community Services if they have "reasonable grounds to suspect" that a child has been sexually assaulted.

Failure to do so can incur a hefty fine or gaol sentence.

Proof is not necessary - only "reasonable grounds". Even if it is just a slight suspicion, it is important to discuss the matter with a staff member of the Department, as they are trained to be

-2-

able to approach people correctly to ascertain the true position.

The nearest Government Community Welfare Centre of the Department of Family and Community Services is where such reporting should be made. All such centres are listed in the N.S.W. Government sections of the telephone book.

Publications with useful information including 'indicators of child sexual assault', 'reasonable grounds', and 'protecting the child' are freely available from:-

N.S.W. Child Protection Council,
P.O. Box E262,
ST. JAMES. 2000

Titles of their booklets are:

1. "Reporting Child Sexual Assault" - a guide for those whose work brings them into contact with children who are required by law to report child sexual assault.
2. "Child Sexual Assault" - no excuses, never ever.
3. "Child Sexual Assault" - how to talk to children, why the need to know, where to get help.
4. "Child Sexual Assault" - it's often closer to home than you think.

Would you kindly see that employees and volunteers working under your direction are informed of their legal position in this matter? Urge them to discuss with you any such suspicions, and be careful to move in the interests of the child first and foremost, but also minister to the needs of the family and any others involved.

Yours sincerely,

John H. Clinch

per*JHC*.....

John H. Clinch
Colonel
CHIEF SECRETARY.