



Sydney Beth Din &lt;sydneybethdin@gmail.com&gt;

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**Media enquiry**

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Sydney Beth Din &lt;secretary@bethdin.org.au&gt;

6 September 2011 15:58

To: Leasha McKenny &lt;REDACTED&gt;

Dear Leasha,

Please see below the statement from the Sydney Beth Din;

The position of the Sydney Beth Din is very clear as per our joint statement with the Melbourne Beth Din and ORA, and mirrors the position of the RCA. It is not necessary to take advice from a Rabbi before reporting suspected child abuse. While obviously one must take care to avoid reporting false or malicious allegations, uppermost must always be the welfare of potential victims and one must always "err" on the side of seeking justice for an alleged victim and protecting any potential future victims. We rely on the expertise of the police to appropriately investigate any allegations and trust that they will not charge a perpetrator without sufficient evidence nor fail to protect potential victims. Such issues are best handled by the Police not the Rabbinates.

While in the email exchange Rabbi Feldman poses some contrary arguments based on the statement of the Agudah, he appears to clearly state that he does not set policy for the Rabbinates, and acknowledges that from a practical policy perspective he endorses the position of the Rabbinic Courts and Councils as articulated above.

On Mon, Sep 5, 2011 at 12:09 PM, Leasha McKenny &lt;REDACTED&gt; wrote:

Hello,

This is Leasha McKenny, the religious affairs reporter with the Sydney Morning Herald. I am contacting you to confirm that you share the position of NSW Rabbinical Council president, Rabbi Yosef Feldman, that allegations of sexual abuse not immediately known to be "credible" must be first verified by a rabbi before being reported to the secular authorities.

You will find an email thread where he outlines his position here:  
[http://falledmessiah.typepad.com/falled\\_messiahcom/2011/09/a-dialogue-with-rabbi-yosef-feldman-about-child-sexual-abuse-123.html](http://falledmessiah.typepad.com/falled_messiahcom/2011/09/a-dialogue-with-rabbi-yosef-feldman-about-child-sexual-abuse-123.html)

I am interested to know if you endorse his position, or if you take issue with any aspect of it. If you could respond to this request by close of business today, it would be appreciated.

Kind regards,

Leasha McKenny  
02 9282 2372  
[lmckenny@smh.com.au](mailto:lmckenny@smh.com.au)

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Rabbi Eli Schienger  
Secretary  
Sydney Beth Din