



8th January, 2014

Dear Parent,

Re: Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Sexual Abuse

I wanted to take this opportunity to write to you to inform you of The Salvation Army's involvement in the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Sexual Abuse. The Royal Commission will hold a public hearing commencing 28th January 2014 focusing on four boys homes during the period from 1965-1977:

- Akira Salvation Army Home for Boys, Indooroopilly, Qld
- Riverview Training Farm (known as Endeavour Training Farm), Riverview Qld
- Bexley Boys' Home, Bexley, NSW
- Gill Memorial Home, Goulburn, NSW

During our operation of these homes, there were children who experienced significant abuse. This is a source of great shame for The Salvation Army and we deeply regret any harm that came to anyone while they were in our care. We continue to improve our processes so that children will never be placed in situations like this again and we welcome the recommendations from the Royal Commission in to how we can further protect children in our care.

The Salvation Army no longer operates children's homes and was absent from providing foster care for a lengthy period of time. Our involvement in Foster Care was reestablished as Young Hope in late 2012. Young Hope has been very intentional in establishing systems and practices aimed to eliminate the potential for such abuse to occur again.

All of Young Hope's current systems and processes are approved by, and compliant with, all requirements of the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian, NSW Ombudsman, Family and Community Services and all legislation governing out of home care in NSW. Without meeting these requirements, we would be unable to operate in NSW.

I understand that this may be an incredibly challenging time to hear of these failures whilst having a child in the care of our organisation. Our staff and Carers share in those feelings of disappointment and heartbreak. We understand that during this time you may feel upset and have questions about the safety of your child whilst in the care of The Salvation Army. All of these responses are completely normal.



I want you to know that we are here to support you during that time. If you may have questions or wish to air your grievances and concerns please feel free to contact our Operations Manager Meera Panicker, or myself at any time. Should you require counselling support in response to the matters raised in the Royal Commission, we would be happy to provide you the appropriate referrals.

Above all I want you to know that The Salvation Army and Young Hope are committed to providing nurturing, safe and consistent care environments for children. Whenever there is any question in relation to the safety of a care environment, we will proceed with the course of action that ensures the wellbeing and best interests of children is upheld at all times as designated by the state of NSW, and that those who offend against children are appropriately and lawfully dealt with.

Thank you for your understanding and grace in these difficult days ahead. We take very seriously our commitment to provide a safe and nurturing environment for your child. We will continue to work into the future to ensure that their care experience is a safe and consistent one that brings life and freedom, and that our communication with you continues to be open and transparent.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle White". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Captain Michelle White
Director