

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Hawkins, Ross](#)
Cc: [Laurent, Kristen](#); [McNally, Bronwyn](#); [REDACTED]
Subject: School Chaplaincy ACT's model of care
Date: Tuesday, 19 February 2019 4:57:43 PM
Attachments: [School Chaplaincy ACT Paper 2019.pdf](#)

Dear Ross (and Kristen and Bronwyn)

I thought perhaps it might help you, as you advise the Minister, to have a paper setting out how we see our chaplains' work - and, in particular, how the spiritual dimension of the role complements the excellent support available through other roles in schools. Of course, in all cases, this is approached in a respectful, inclusive, and non-coercive manner, with which you would be very familiar from the 26 years of successful chaplaincy services in the ACT.

Please see the paper attached.

I would be very happy to discuss any aspect of it with you, if you require.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | Chief Executive Officer



switchboard 1300 478 753 | direct [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] | www.suqld.org.au
Level 1, 126 Barry Pde, Fortitude Valley QLD 4006 | PO Box 1167, Eagle Farm QLD 4009
follow twitter.com/suqld | like facebook.com/suqld | watch youtube.com/suqld

Email Signature Footer Image



"SU QLD... bringing hope to a young generation"

Scripture Union Queensland is a member of the worldwide Scripture Union International community.

The information contained in this email is confidential and may be privileged. It is intended solely for the addressee. If you receive this email by mistake please promptly inform us by reply email and then delete the email. There is no warranty that this email is error or virus free. Check any attachments for viruses before opening. This email may be a private communication, and if so, does not represent the views of SU QLD.

School Chaplaincy ACT's Contribution to Wellbeing in Schools

Introduction

Chaplains have been serving the students, staff and families of schools in the ACT for more than 25 years, making a valuable contribution to the social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing in those school communities. They have played a vital role in complementing other school-based wellbeing support services in two important ways:

1. Chaplains fit well with other wellbeing supports by promoting social, emotional *and spiritual* wellbeing services, alongside other support services that do not specifically focus on spirituality as an important aspect of wellbeing.
2. Chaplains provide services that focus on accessible wellbeing promotion, prevention and early intervention (PPEI) activities, complementing other services designed more for reactive and long-term wellbeing intervention activities.

In the recent independent evaluation of the National School Chaplaincy Programme Evaluation commissioned by the Australian government Department of Education and Training, school chaplaincy services were considered to be “most effective in supporting the social and emotional wellbeing of students” (Kantar, 2017, p.14). More specifically, principals and parents said that the services made a significant contribution to the provision of on-going support for individuals; assisting students in dealing with crisis/loss situations (e.g. – family breakdown, death); creating a caring learning environment; modelling and teaching moral values; and contributing towards the morale of the school.

When asked to identify the positive aspects of having a school chaplain, students themselves identified that the program provided:

- an accessible figure for them to talk to and confide in (24%);
- someone who provided help and support with problems (22%);
- someone who guided students to help them ‘figure things out’ (13%);
- someone to encourage students ‘in their faith’ (13%); and
- someone who students can trust to talk to other than a teacher or parent (11%) (p.9).

Alongside dealing with peer and family issues, chaplains deal with issues relating to behaviour, anger management, grief and loss, sense of purpose, self-esteem, self-image, social inclusion, bullying and harassment (p.17). These were addressed across a broad, flexible range of activities that included breakfast clubs, food programmes, lunchtime activities, one-on-one conversations for students, staff and parents and social and emotional wellbeing programs (p.14).

This recent, independent evidence demonstrates that school chaplains have long been providing an accessible and complementary wellbeing service to schools that has been highly valued by students, staff and parents for its distinctive social, emotional and spiritual approach to wellbeing.

School Chaplaincy ACT's approach to wellbeing has two essential elements to it:

1. A spiritual-ecological approach; and
2. A promotion, prevention and early intervention focus.

A Spiritual-Ecological Approach

School Chaplaincy ACT takes a 'spiritual-ecological' approach to the wellbeing of children and young people. Broadly speaking, ecological approaches explore the various influences on a person's development within the context or 'ecology' of the complex system of relationships, networks and systems that make up their everyday life (Hoffnung et al., 2013).

Beyond the individual as a physical, psychological, emotional, social and spiritual entity in themselves, a child or young person's ecology is understood to consist of their friends and family; their school, social groups and local community networks; and broader socio-economic, political and cultural influences (Health and Aged Care, 2000).

School Chaplaincy ACT's spiritual-ecological approach acknowledges a number of domains of influence on a child and young person's life. These are:

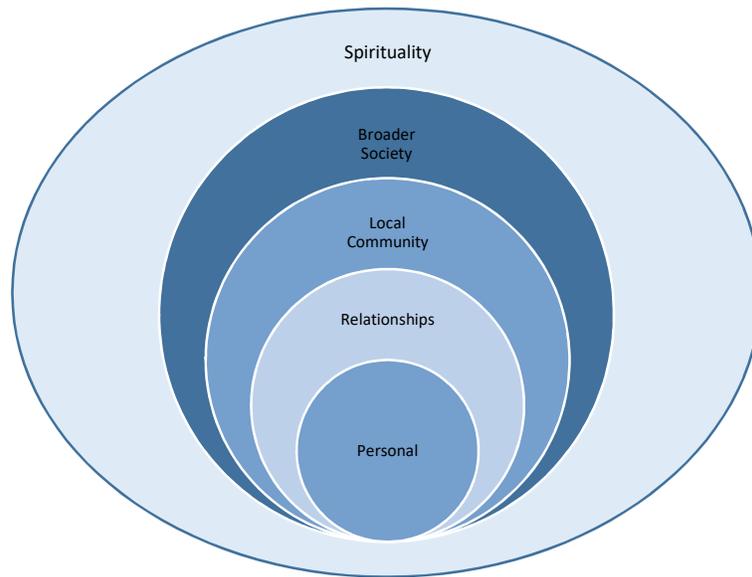
- *Personal* – The personal factors that influence wellbeing, including a range of physical, psychological, emotional, social and spiritual characteristics that are considered to lie within the individual themselves.
- *Relational* - The key relationships of influence for children and young people, including those with their families, friends, peers and adults outside of their family that take an interest in them.
- *Communal* - The local community influences, including a child and young person's engagement with school, their participation in local groups and networks and life within a safe, positive local neighbourhood.
- *Societal* - The broader social, economic, cultural and political influences on a child and young person's life that are often linked to a person's socioeconomic status. These influences include levels of educational attainment, employment and income, cultural identification (ethnic and otherwise) and levels of personal agency and political participation.

Many secular ecological approaches to child and youth wellbeing give little attention to the spiritual dimension of life, but a key feature of School Chaplaincy ACT's approach is that it gives emphasis to spirituality.

School Chaplaincy ACT places a high value on the child or young person's personal spirituality, that is, their personal spiritual health, beliefs, values and practices and how these impact upon their overall wellbeing, while also acknowledging and valuing spirituality as it is expressed in the relational, communal and societal domains of their lives.

In education and wellbeing circles, there has been an increasing awareness of the importance of spirituality in the lives of children and young people and of the links between positive spirituality, development and wellbeing (MCEETYA, 2008; VicHealth, 1999). While interest in spirituality has grown, clear definitions of spirituality are often vague or contested. Despite that, common themes associated with spirituality include: a sense of meaning and purpose; a sense of connectedness to self, others, nature and the divine; a search for hope, harmony and wholeness; a sense that there is more to life than what we can see in the material world; and a belief in a higher being or beings (Cornah, 2006).

Spirituality is not supposed to be something strange or foreign, but something essential and integrative, pulling the various facets of our lives together in useful, meaningful ways. (Stuart and Nash, 2002).



School Chaplaincy ACT's Spiritual-Ecological Approach to Wellbeing

Positive spirituality has been shown to contribute to good health, mental health and long life, as well as aid recovery from general health and mental health issues. Research also shows that spiritual and religious practices like experiences of divine support and guidance; prayer and meditation; church attendance; engaging with sacred symbols and texts; acting out pro-social and pro-health behaviours; and participation in the life of religious communities also contribute to a person's health, mental health and general wellbeing (Cornah, 2006; Kaldor, Hughes, Castle and Bellamy, 2004).

The importance of spirituality to child and youth wellbeing has been recognised for many years in various international declarations and conventions. Article 14 of the United Nations' Convention of the Rights of the Child says that children have the right to their beliefs and to practice their religion of choice. The role of parents in providing religious and spiritual guidance is also acknowledged, as is a child's right to develop their own views as they mature (OHCHR, 1989; Children's Week, 2013).

In Australia, we have a unique spiritual landscape that has changed much over recent time and continues to change today. In terms of the outworking of spirituality, Australia has a clear 'Christian' heritage and an emerging 'multi-faith' flavour.

Current discourses around 'hard secularism' promote the exclusion or limitation of religion and spirituality from public life (Sempell, 2012). These cultural mindsets encourage spiritual fragmentation in our nation's people and a societal context that fails to value the positive influence that spirituality can bring to people's personal and communal lives.

Alternative conceptualisations of ‘pluralist secularism’ encourage the participation of the full range of religions, spiritualities and world views, but without promoting any one particular set of beliefs and practices above others (Roberts, 2008).

School Chaplaincy ACT affirms that pluralist understanding of secularism that is consistent with a modern democratic, pluralistic and ethno-diverse vision of Australia; one that affirms a ‘freedom of religion’ rather than a ‘freedom from religion’.

This is also the vision for education in the Melbourne Declaration on Educational goals, reflected in s.7 of the Education Act 2004 when it declares that every ACT child has the right to a ‘high quality education’, which includes the principle that school education should ‘*recognise the social, religious, physical, intellectual and emotional needs of all students*’. This is a right all children should enjoy, including those who attend government schools.

It is also the approach adopted in European human rights, as a neutral pluralistic option:

‘Neutrality requires a pluralist approach on the part of the State, not a secularist one. It encourages respect for all world views rather than a preference for one. ... A preference for secularism over alternative world views – whether religious, philosophical or otherwise—is not a neutral option.’ (Lautsi v. Italy 18 March 2011, per Judge Power)

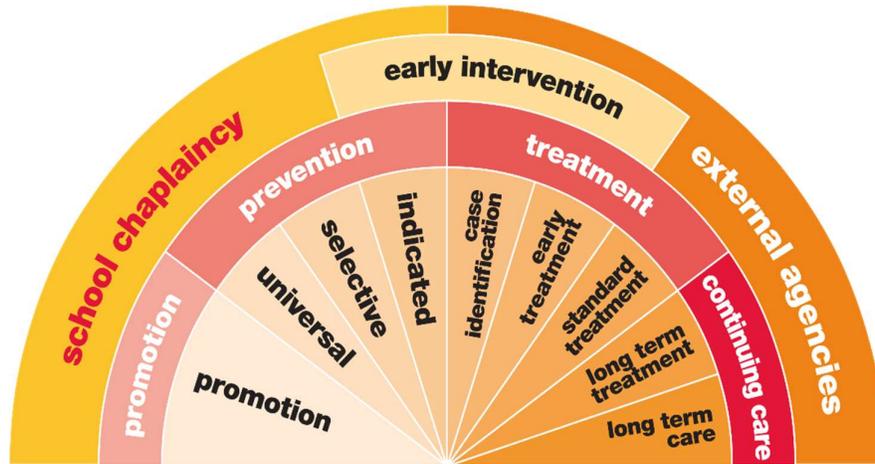
School Chaplaincy ACT affirms a cultural environment that promotes – at the choice of a student or parent, consistent with the operation of both human rights, and the national school chaplaincy program - the integration of spirituality into everyday life, as well as our shared public life, allowing Australians, where they so choose, to increasingly benefit from what spirituality has to offer in these spaces (Berger, 2012; Roberts, 2008).

In practice, this means that school chaplains work with children and young people respecting their views and choices, and in such a way as to prioritise attending to the spiritual dimension of their personal lives, so that they might benefit from our best efforts to promote their wellbeing in society.

A Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention Approach

School Chaplaincy ACT takes a ‘prevention approach’ that focuses on “promotion, prevention and early intervention” or “PPEI” activities (Health and Aged Care, 2000, p.19). In this approach, ‘promotion’ in mental health is any action taken to promote wellbeing by promoting protective factors. It is concerned with children and young people who are currently going well in life, those who are ‘at risk’ of experiencing wellbeing issues and those who are already experiencing wellbeing issues (Health and Aged Care, 2000; Sanson, Havighurst and Zubrick, 2011).

The terms ‘promotion’ and ‘prevention’ are used almost interchangeably, but ‘prevention’ is more focused on the reduction of risk factors when there is some perceived risk (Bland, Renouf and Tullgren, 2009; Health and Aged Care, 2000). ‘Early intervention’ activities focus on children and young people who have high risk factors and/or low protective factors present in their life, are demonstrating early signs and symptoms of wellbeing issues and those who have been experiencing more obvious wellbeing issues and problems.



School Chaplaincy as Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention

PPEI approaches focus their attention on circumstances where there are either no signs or early signs of wellbeing issues. Collectively as ‘PPEI’, these approaches seek to prevent the onset or reduce the development of negative wellbeing issues (Health and Aged Care, 2000). Head and Redmond argue that social research, professional experience, policy practice, economic reasoning, moral reasoning and common sense all support a focus on PPEI in relation to wellbeing issues (2011). There is strong evidence to suggest that focusing on PPEI in mental health and wellbeing engagement, as opposed to focusing on high cost and sometimes ineffective treatment approaches, will improve mental health and wellbeing outcomes for all Australians, including children and young people. (Head and Redmond, 2011; Health and Aged Care, 2000; Sanson, Havighurst and Zubrick, 2011).

In practice, this means that school chaplains are often engaged in a range of activities different to those of other helping professionals in schools. They often provide flexible, accessible, informal PPEI services for individuals and groups that are not readily provided by more formal school-based mental health provision services.

In this way, school-based psychologists or counsellors work in a space that typically is different from school chaplains when it comes to wellbeing services in schools. The day-to-day work of the chaplain sits on a different part of the mental health intervention spectrum, complementing the other supports available to students.

Conclusion

The Education Act 2004 gives every ACT child the right to a ‘high quality education’, which includes the principle that school education should ‘*recognise the social, religious, physical, intellectual and emotional needs of all students*’ – a holistic vision, which should include support for spiritual dimensions of a child’s development, including children who attend government schools.

The spiritual focus of the school chaplaincy wellbeing promotion role, combined with the children’s and youth work skills of chaplains, means that school chaplaincy services:

- help students develop friendships, peer groups and social and relational skills - particularly for those who are marginalised;
- are a key element in meeting the spiritual/religious needs of students – in the practice and expression of religion, which a basic human right for children – whatever the faith perspective of a student or their family, without proselytising or judgement, and in a respectful, inclusive way; and
- help schools to have a spiritual dimension to their emotional support of students – and positive spirituality has long been accepted as both a protective factor and preventive factor in to a holistic model of student wellbeing.

In this way, chaplaincy services in ACT government schools have made a significant contribution to achieving the principles of high quality education required by the Education Act.

School chaplains should continue to play a vital role in the ongoing promotion of social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of students, staff and families connected to ACT schools – far from being inconsistent with the Education Act, but as an outworking of it.

Bibliography

Berger, P. L. (2012). 'Further Thoughts on Religion and Modernity'. In *Society*, 49(3), pp313-316.

Bland, R., Renouf, N. and Tullgren, A. (2009). *Social Work Practice in Mental Health: An Introduction*. Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin.

Children's Week 2013. (2013). Retrieved October 21, 2013, from <http://nswchildrensweek.org.au/about-childrens-week/#.UItO4vTGSo>

Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care. (2000). *Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention for Mental Health – A Monograph*. Canberra: Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care.

Consedine, J. (2002). 'Spirituality and Social Justice'. In Stuart, B. and Nash, M. (Eds). *Spirituality and Social Care*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Cornah, D. (2006). *The Impact of Spirituality on Mental Health: A Review of the Literature*. London: Mental Health Foundation.

Head, B. W. and Redmond, G. (2011). 'Making Prevention Work in Human Services for Children and Youth'. In *Australian Review of Public Affairs*. 10(1), 5-22.

Hoffnung, M., Hoffnung, R., Seifert, K., Burton Smith, R., Hine, A. Ward, L. et al. (2013). *Lifespan Development: A Topical Approach (First Australasian Edition)*. Brisbane: John Wiley & Sons Australia.

Kaldor, P., Hughes, P., Castle, K. and Bellamy, J. (2004). *Spirituality and Wellbeing in Australia: NCLS Occasional Paper 6*. Sydney South: NCLS Research.

Kantar Public Australia. (2017). *National School Chaplaincy Programme Evaluation*. Millers Point: Kantar, at https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/nscp_evaluation_report_-_kantar.pdf.

Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs. (2008). *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*. Melbourne: MCEETYA.

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (1989). *Convention of the Rights of the Child*. Retrieved on October 21, 2013, from www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx

Roberts, T. (2008). 'Toward Secular Diaspora: Relocating Religion and Politics'. In Jacobsen, J. R. and Pellegrine, A. (Eds). *Secularisms*. London: Duke University Press.

Sanson, A. V., Havighurst, S. S and Zubrick, S. R. (2011). 'The Science of Prevention for Children and Youth'. In *Australian Review of Public Affairs*, 10(1) 79-93.

Sempell, A. (2012). 'God, Society and Secularism'. In *St Mark's Review*. 221(3), pp56-65.

Stuart, B. and Nash, M. (2002). Introduction. In Stuart, B. & Nash, M. (Eds). *Spirituality and Social Care*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

From: [McNally, Bronwyn](#)
To: [Tranda, Michelle](#)
Cc: [Laurent, Kristen](#)
Subject: FW: Chaplaincy ACT- Chaplains hourly rate
Date: Wednesday, 20 February 2019 10:51:00 AM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Michelle just checking in if you need more information regarding the Chaplains?

Kristen and I have mapped out some timeframes and we will need to have a clear plan of how we will employ former chaplains and test with the Minsters' Office by the end of term 1.

Do you foresee any issues with this deadline?

Thanks for your help.

Bronwyn

Bronwyn McNally | Research and Policy Executive Officer
 Phone: +61 6205 7619 | Email: bronwyn.mcnally@act.gov.au
 Student Wellbeing | Education | ACT Government
 Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning | 51 Fremantle Drive, Stirling | GPO Box 158
 Canberra ACT 2601

www.education.act.gov.au | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Google+](#)

 This email, and any attachments, may be confidential and also privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and delete all copies of this transmission along with any attachments immediately. You should not copy or use it for any purpose, nor disclose its contents to any other person.

From: McNally, Bronwyn
Sent: Monday, 18 February 2019 3:21 PM
To: Tranda, Michelle <Michelle.TRANDA@act.gov.au>
Cc: Spinks, Jacinta <Jacinta.Spinks@act.gov.au>
Subject: Chaplaincy ACT- Chaplains hourly rate

UNCLASSIFIED

Hello Michelle

Please see information below regarding the current hourly costs of employing Chaplains. The total cost of the grant that schools receive through the funding is \$20,280. As you will see from the email below, Chaplaincy ACT uses community funds to supplement this program.

Don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

Bronwyn McNally | Research and Policy Executive Officer
 Phone: +61 6205 7619 | Email: bronwyn.mcnally@act.gov.au
 Student Wellbeing | Education | ACT Government
 Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning | 51 Fremantle Drive, Stirling | GPO Box 158
 Canberra ACT 2601

www.education.act.gov.au | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Google+](#)

 This email, and any attachments, may be confidential and also privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and delete all copies of this transmission along with any attachments immediately. You should not copy or use it for any purpose, nor disclose its contents to any other person.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 25 June 2018 1:15 PM
To: McNally, Bronwyn <Bronwyn.McNally@act.gov.au>; [REDACTED]
Subject: schools with extra hours due to community funding

Dear Bronwyn,

In 2017 in addition to the \$420 000 supplied by the National School Chaplaincy Program, \$120 000 was raised in community support for our chaplains. This shows the considerable community buy-in into the school chaplaincy program.

Scripture Union QLD has determined the chaplaincy service expense rate for chaplains is \$36.40 per hour. This includes

Employment On-costs Include:

- Superannuation
- Work Cover
- Leave Entitlements (personal leave, sick leave, long service leave, other contractual leave entitlements)
- Professional Supervision Allowance
- In-Service and Professional Development

Administration Fees:

The ACT National School Chaplaincy Program Guidelines allow funding recipients to use up to 20% of total annual funding for administrative costs, including

- Field Support services
- Local Field Management
- Payroll processing
- HR Management
- Insurances
- Audit and Compliance services
- Financial services
- Systems Development
- Resources Development

Our chaplains all work 12 hours per week. So that means the annual expense rate is \$22 714 for a 12 hour per week chaplain.

So **to maintain 12 hours per week, every** chaplain needs community funding of \$2 714 pa above the NSCP grant.

Bronwyn, you asked how many schools have *increased hours* due to community funding:

Of the 21 schools we serve, **11 have increased hours above 12 hours per week.** Ten of those 11 are from community donations. [REDACTED]

In the past, we have understood that school boards and P&Cs of ACT government schools were not allowed to put money into increased chaplaincy hours. So we have not asked schools directly. If the Directorate advised us we were allowed to ask for extra hours, then we would actively ask.

Please don't hesitate to ask for any further information.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED] | Field Development Manager - ACT



mobile 0407 118 387 | direct [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | www.scact.org.au

PO Box 33, Erindale Centre ACT 2903

The information contained in this email is confidential and may be privileged. It is intended solely for the addressee. If you receive this email by mistake please promptly inform us by reply email and then delete the email. There is no warranty that this email is error or virus free. Check any attachments for viruses before opening. This email may be a private communication, and if so, does not represent the views of SC ACT.

From: [Brighton, Meg](#)
To: [Hawkins, Ross](#)
Subject: Re: draft email text to Principals re Chaplains.
Date: Thursday, 21 February 2019 9:25:34 AM

Dear Ross

Given the MPI the Office asked for this to be held until after MPI today (to ensure clarity of any issues that arise during the discussion).

Can you also get some one to call principals this morning (DSIs?) to reaffirm that they should speak to chaplains and confirm they will have ongoing work if they need it. This is important for wellbeing.

meg

Meg Brighton | Deputy Director-General Education Directorate | ACT Government
T: +61 2 6205 9458 | E: meg.brighton@act.gov.au
Level 6, 220 Northbourne Ave Braddon | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601 |
www.education.act.gov.au

From: Brighton, Meg <meg.brighton@act.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2019 9:01 am
To: Brighton, Meg; Hawkins, Ross
Subject: Re: draft email text to Principals re Chaplains.
Ross

Just add....that we will work closely with you to ensure smooth transition for those staff seeking to remain in welfare role with your school - or something similar.

Mid year is realistic (unless office said something different to you)

Meg Brighton | Deputy Director-General Education Directorate | ACT Government
T: +61 2 6205 9458 | E: meg.brighton@act.gov.au
Level 6, 220 Northbourne Ave Braddon | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601 |
www.education.act.gov.au

From: McGarvey, Caitlin <caitlin.mcgarvey@act.gov.au> on behalf of Brighton, Meg <meg.brighton@act.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2019 8:59 am
To: Brighton, Meg
Subject: FW: draft email text to Principals re Chaplains.

UNCLASSIFIED

Caitlin McGarvey | Executive Support Officer to

Meg Brighton, Deputy Director-General

Education Directorate | ACT Government

T: +61 2 6205 2360 | E: Caitlin.McGarvey@act.gov.au

Level 6, 220 Northbourne Ave Braddon | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601 |

www.education.act.gov.au

From: Hawkins, Ross

Sent: Monday, 18 February 2019 10:18 AM

To: Brighton, Meg <Meg.Brighton@act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: draft email text to Principals re Chaplains.

UNCLASSIFIED

Meg – This is the note I am planning on sending this out to principals today.

Are you ok with us not transitioning until the mid-point of the year. I think this timing works best from an operational perspective (we will need to ensure the deed reflects this so that the \$ scale down as well). This will also help provide certainty to schools and current chaplains.

Thanks

R

Dear principals

Further to my communication last week I would like to provide you with a brief update on the transition from the National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP). EDU met with Scripture Union QLD on 13 February to discuss the participation of public schools in the program. While Scripture Union were disappointed with the decision, they are committed to working with EDU to make the transition as smooth as possible.

The Education Support Office is exploring a mechanism for schools to directly employ chaplains on a secular basis should schools choose to pursue this option. This will assist you in providing certainty to chaplains who wish to continue to work with school communities on a secular basis. In the meantime current chaplaincy arrangements will remain in place for terms 1 and 2. We will continue to work closely with Scripture Union, chaplains and schools to ensure a smooth transition and minimise potential disruption to students and the school community.

I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate the decision to transition from the NSCP was to ensure the alignment of education supports in public schools with the Education Act. We know chaplains funded through the NSCP are valued for the work they do with students, staff and families and I hope you will reassure chaplains of this in any conversations you may have with them about the transition.

I will keep you updated as we progress.

Regards

Vandyk, Thomas

From: Laurent, Kristen
Sent: Thursday, 21 February 2019 9:40 AM
To: King, Ashley
Subject: RE: min19-226 SCHOOL CHAPLIANS Matter of Public Importance - 21/2/19 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Thanks

From: King, Ashley
Sent: Thursday, 21 February 2019 9:32 AM
To: Seton, Sam <Sam.Seton@act.gov.au>; Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>
Cc: EDUMCR <EDUMCR@act.gov.au>; EDU Student Engagement Director's Office <EDUDSEOffice@act.gov.au>; Taber, Emma <Emma.Taber@act.gov.au>; Brighton, Meg <Meg.Brighton@act.gov.au>; McGarvey, Caitlin <Caitlin.McGarvey@act.gov.au>; Fleck, Katrina <Katrina.Fleck@act.gov.au>; Hawkins, Ross <Ross.Hawkins@act.gov.au>; Sturgiss, Kim <Kim.Sturgiss@act.gov.au>; Stewart, Ell <Ell.Stewart@act.gov.au>; Abbott, Janet <Janet.Abbott@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: min19-226 SCHOOL CHAPLIANS Matter of Public Importance - 21/2/19 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi Kristen

Some further direction for inclusion:

- Information concerning wellbeing teams and the support they provide
- Breakfast clubs happen anyway without need for chaplains, examples
- Social justice investment, bursaries etc Govt not requiring support from religious bodies

ashley

From: King, Ashley
Sent: Thursday, 21 February 2019 8:59 AM
To: Seton, Sam <Sam.Seton@act.gov.au>; Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>
Cc: EDUMCR <EDUMCR@act.gov.au>; EDU Student Engagement Director's Office <EDUDSEOffice@act.gov.au>; Taber, Emma <Emma.Taber@act.gov.au>; Brighton, Meg <Meg.Brighton@act.gov.au>; McGarvey, Caitlin <Caitlin.McGarvey@act.gov.au>; Fleck, Katrina <Katrina.Fleck@act.gov.au>; Hawkins, Ross <Ross.Hawkins@act.gov.au>; Sturgiss, Kim <Kim.Sturgiss@act.gov.au>
Subject: min19-226 SCHOOL CHAPLIANS Matter of Public Importance - 21/2/19 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]
Importance: High

Hi

The office has requested a speech for the below MPI today.

- Supportive of chaplains in non gov schools
- Supportive of social workers in gov schools
- Employment is not in keeping with secular requirements of govt schools employing through religious providers

It will need to be cleared and with the office by noon.

Thanks

Ashley

Mr Ashley King
Education Directorate Liaison Officer
Phone + 61 2 6205 0291 | Email: EduDLO@act.gov.au
Office of Yvette Berry MLA
Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development

From: Junakovic, Georgia
Sent: Thursday, 21 February 2019 8:44 AM
To: #CMTEDD Internal Assembly Business <#CMTEDDInternalAssemblyBusiness@act.gov.au>; #CMTEDD, ALO Network <#CMTEDDALONetwork@act.gov.au>; #LA_EXEC DLOS <#LA_EXEC DLOS@act.gov.au>; #CMTEDD, Cabinet and Policy <#CMTEDDCabinetandPolicy@act.gov.au>; #CMTEDD, Assembly Business <#CMTEDDAssemblyBusiness@act.gov.au>
Subject: Matter of Public Importance - 21/2/19
Importance: High

Good Morning

The MPI for today is from Mr Coe MLA on:

'The importance of school chaplains'

Education will be taking the lead on this matter with input from other directorates as required.

Please contact Education DLO on x50291.

Georgia

Georgia Junakovic | Manager | Assembly and Government Business Coordination | Policy and Cabinet Division
Phone: 6207 0148 | Email: georgia.junakovic@act.gov.au
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development | ACT Government
Level 5 Canberra Nara Centre | GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601 | act.gov.au

**Please note I do not work Mondays.*

Vandyk, Thomas

From: Laurent, Kristen
Sent: Thursday, 21 February 2019 11:46 AM
To: Hawkins, Ross
Subject: MPI
Attachments: MPI - The Importance of school Chaplains.docx

UNCLASSIFIED

The Importance of school Chaplains

Thank you for putting this matter of public importance forward today.

Student wellbeing is a key priority for the ACT Government. This is reflected in the Future of Education Strategy which advocates for a holistic view of students as people recognising that basic welfare and wellbeing needs – things like nutritious food and physical and mental health support – provide the basis on which learning can occur.

We know that Student wellbeing and learning are intrinsically linked. We therefore have a wide range of strong structures and supports in place to promote the building of learning communities that promote student wellbeing where educators, parents and students work together.

In 2018 the ACT, along with other states and territories, was invited to participation in an extension of the National School Chaplaincy Program - a Commonwealth-funded initiative to support the emotional wellbeing of the students and the broader school community through the provision of pastoral care services.

I have given a lot of consideration to the appropriateness of faith-based chaplains in public schools. Education in ACT government schools is required to be non-sectarian, secular education. This is consistent with our legislation; *The Education Act 2004 (ACT)*. As such, the incorporation of faith-based chaplains in ACT public schools is not aligned with the Act.

Before agreeing to enter into the new program, I wrote to the Commonwealth Minister for Education Dan Tehan, requesting the inclusion of secular wellbeing workers into the program. This request was denied. In recognition of the faith basis of many ACT non-government schools, I decided to enter into the agreement to enable Catholic and Independent schools to continue to participate in the program.

The incorporation of faith-based chaplains has always been incompatible with the operation of our government schools.

The landscape for provision of student wellbeing support has changed significantly since this program was introduced in 2007. In the ACT over recent years we have made substantial investment in strengthening student wellbeing support.

In the environment of increased need for mental health support for students, ACT Government committed to resource 20 additional psychologists by 2020. These psychologists play an important role in supporting students and school communities during times of grief and loss. Ten additional

commenced in February 2019, and a further five psychologists will start in 2020. We have also developed and strengthened our Network Student Engagement Teams – these are multidisciplinary teams that work with school leaders to build the capacity of schools and teaching teams to support the participation and engagement of students. These team include close to 100 staff including senior school psychologists, social workers, inclusion officers specialising in disability and behaviour support, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, specialist teachers including hearing and vision and support at preschool. These teams support all our schools every day.

In recognising this investment and the maturing landscape of student wellbeing support in our schools, it is time to realign the wellbeing supports provided by faith-based chaplains under the National School Chaplaincy program to a secular provision to align with the *Education Act*.

As a result of this realignment, the 22 ACT government schools who had chaplains in 2018 will transition out of the program during 2019.

Providing effective support for student wellbeing does not require faith-based workers.

Every school is resourced to provide the learning and wellbeing supports needed for their students which includes access to broader directorate and community support structures.

Every school has a student wellbeing team. These teams are made of key personnel including executive teachers, school psychologist and other key members of staff, who can provide appropriate supports to schools and their communities. This may include also youth workers, social workers, community development workers, allied health workers or school youth health nurses. Schools have flexibility in how these teams operate to ensure they meet the unique needs of their school community. These wellbeing teams look at the needs of individual students over time. Every school has a school psychologist. Every high school school has access to a youth support worker and every school has both male and female safe and supportive schools officer to work with students, families and staff on issues relating to bullying and harassment. The expansion of the school youth health nurse program we will have a youth nurse in every high school by the end of this year to support primary health promotion.

Not every school has a chaplain. Across our 88 schools there is evidence of great wellbeing initiatives taking place on a day-to-day basis that provide social and emotional support to students, parents and staff. This includes collaborative partnerships between schools, government and community service providers. For example, a number of schools have established ongoing connections with providers such as PCYC, YWCA and Menslink to deliver information and supports that meet the

needs of each community. This serves to enhance wellbeing, reliance and connections throughout the community.

Where the Directorate recognises that particular expertise or strategy is required to promote wellbeing for particular students, proactive approaches are developed. For example, Education funds the Safe and Inclusive Schools initiative, to ensure that schools can access support if and when they need to assist them to build inclusive and welcoming environments for all students, including students who are LGBTQI.

Many schools offer breakfast programs to ensure students have had a healthy start to the day and are ready to take on their learning. One strategy used at Kingsford Smith School to ensure individual student needs are met is to identify students who need additional supports. A staff member does a personal check-in every morning with the student around a range of factors which may include physical and emotional needs. This includes providing the student with breakfast if they haven't already eaten.

As you can see there are numerous options for schools to cater for the wellbeing needs of their school community, and resourcing and support to enable this. This does not rely on the single role of a school chaplain but of a team of dedicated people with diverse experience and expertise working in collaborative partnerships.

I do acknowledge, however, that a number of schools and school communities value the role their chaplain plays in their schools. Schools will therefore be supported to directly employ these workers on a secular basis going forward. This has been clearly communicated to the relevant schools and to the chaplaincy providers that engage chaplains for our schools.

I have written to Scripture Union to advise of my position and provide reassurance that we will work with their organisation, schools and chaplains to ensure a smooth transition for all parties. I want to be clear that for those communities that value the contribution of the individual currently delivering the chaplaincy role in their school, there will be an opportunity for them to continue working with us to continue to support the school and community. We will be working with providers, schools and chaplains to manage this transition process throughout 2019.

I want to be clear to this place that the safety and wellbeing of students in our schools are of the utmost importance to this government. We have invested heavily in ensuring these supports are in

place. We are clear on our future direction and will continue to do all we can to ensure that students within our system benefit from learning in safe and supportive school environments.

From: [King, Ashley](#)
To: [Hawkins, Ross](#); [Seton, Sam](#); [Laurent, Kristen](#)
Cc: [EDUMCR](#); [EDU Student Engagement Director's Office](#); [Taber, Emma](#); [Brighton, Meg](#); [McGarvey, Caitlin](#); [Fleck, Katrina](#); [Sturgiss, Kim](#); [Stewart, Ell](#); [Abbott, Janet](#)
Subject: RE: min19-226 SCHOOL CHAPLIANS Matter of Public Importance - 21/2/19 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]
Date: Thursday, 21 February 2019 12:36:46 PM

Many thanks to all involved.
 ashley

From: Hawkins, Ross
Sent: Thursday, 21 February 2019 12:14 PM
To: King, Ashley <Ashley.King@act.gov.au>; Seton, Sam <Sam.Seton@act.gov.au>; Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>
Cc: EDUMCR <EDUMCR@act.gov.au>; EDU Student Engagement Director's Office <EDUDSEOffice@act.gov.au>; Taber, Emma <Emma.Taber@act.gov.au>; Brighton, Meg <Meg.Brighton@act.gov.au>; McGarvey, Caitlin <Caitlin.McGarvey@act.gov.au>; Fleck, Katrina <Katrina.Fleck@act.gov.au>; Sturgiss, Kim <Kim.Sturgiss@act.gov.au>; Stewart, Ell <Ell.Stewart@act.gov.au>; Abbott, Janet <Janet.Abbott@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: min19-226 SCHOOL CHAPLIANS Matter of Public Importance - 21/2/19 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Ash – We have weaved in some information on specific schools with breakfast clubs. Please see revised paragraph:

Many schools offer breakfast programs to ensure students have had a healthy start to the day and are ready to take on their learning. Charles condor primary school offer a breakfast club sponsored by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], Gilmore Primary, provides its students with a school funded breakfast club run from the library for students with identified needs. One strategy used at Kingsford Smith School to ensure individual student needs are met is to identify students who need additional supports. A staff member does a personal check-in every morning with the student around a range of factors which may include physical and emotional needs. This includes providing the student with breakfast if they haven't already eaten.

Thanks
 Ross

From: Hawkins, Ross
Sent: Thursday, 21 February 2019 12:01 PM
To: King, Ashley <Ashley.King@act.gov.au>; Seton, Sam <Sam.Seton@act.gov.au>; Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>
Cc: EDUMCR <EDUMCR@act.gov.au>; EDU Student Engagement Director's Office <EDUDSEOffice@act.gov.au>; Taber, Emma <Emma.Taber@act.gov.au>; Brighton, Meg <Meg.Brighton@act.gov.au>; McGarvey, Caitlin <Caitlin.McGarvey@act.gov.au>; Fleck, Katrina <Katrina.Fleck@act.gov.au>; Sturgiss, Kim <Kim.Sturgiss@act.gov.au>; Stewart, Ell <Ell.Stewart@act.gov.au>; Abbott, Janet <Janet.Abbott@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: min19-226 SCHOOL CHAPLIANS Matter of Public Importance - 21/2/19 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Dear MCR / Ash,
 Please see attached.

We are just confirm the schools with breakfast clubs (and no chaplain) – I will email this through

separately in 10 minutes.

Thanks

Ross

From: King, Ashley

Sent: Thursday, 21 February 2019 9:32 AM

To: Seton, Sam <Sam.Seton@act.gov.au>; Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>

Cc: EDUMCR <EDUMCR@act.gov.au>; EDU Student Engagement Director's Office <EDUDSEOffice@act.gov.au>; Taber, Emma <Emma.Taber@act.gov.au>; Brighton, Meg <Meg.Brighton@act.gov.au>; McGarvey, Caitlin <Caitlin.McGarvey@act.gov.au>; Fleck, Katrina <Katrina.Fleck@act.gov.au>; Hawkins, Ross <Ross.Hawkins@act.gov.au>; Sturgiss, Kim <Kim.Sturgiss@act.gov.au>; Stewart, Ell <Ell.Stewart@act.gov.au>; Abbott, Janet <Janet.Abbott@act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: min19-226 SCHOOL CHAPLIANS Matter of Public Importance - 21/2/19
[SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi Kristen

Some further direction for inclusion:

- Information concerning wellbeing teams and the support they provide
- Breakfast clubs happen anyway without need for chaplains, examples
- Social justice investment, bursaries etc Govt not requiring support from religious bodies

ashley

From: King, Ashley

Sent: Thursday, 21 February 2019 8:59 AM

To: Seton, Sam <Sam.Seton@act.gov.au>; Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>

Cc: EDUMCR <EDUMCR@act.gov.au>; EDU Student Engagement Director's Office <EDUDSEOffice@act.gov.au>; Taber, Emma <Emma.Taber@act.gov.au>; Brighton, Meg <Meg.Brighton@act.gov.au>; McGarvey, Caitlin <Caitlin.McGarvey@act.gov.au>; Fleck, Katrina <Katrina.Fleck@act.gov.au>; Hawkins, Ross <Ross.Hawkins@act.gov.au>; Sturgiss, Kim <Kim.Sturgiss@act.gov.au>

Subject: min19-226 SCHOOL CHAPLIANS Matter of Public Importance - 21/2/19
[SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Importance: High

Hi

The office has requested a speech for the below MPI today.

- Supportive of chaplains in non gov schools
- Supportive of social workers in gov schools
- Employment is not in keeping with secular requirements of govt schools employing through religious providers

It will need to be cleared and with the office by noon.

Thanks

Ashley

Mr Ashley King

Education Directorate Liaison Officer

Phone + 61 2 6205 0291 | Email: EduDLO@act.gov.au

Office of Yvette Berry MLA

Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development

From: Junakovic, Georgia

Sent: Thursday, 21 February 2019 8:44 AM

To: #CMTEDD Internal Assembly Business <#CMTEDDInternalAssemblyBusiness@act.gov.au>; #CMTEDD, ALO Network <#CMTEDDALONetwork@act.gov.au>; #LA_EXEC DLOS <#LA_EXECDLOS@act.gov.au>; #CMTEDD, Cabinet and Policy <#CMTEDDCabinetandPolicy@act.gov.au>; #CMTEDD, Assembly Business <#CMTEDDAssemblyBusiness@act.gov.au>

Subject: Matter of Public Importance - 21/2/19

Importance: High

Good Morning

The MPI for today is from Mr Coe MLA on:

'The importance of school chaplains'

Education will be taking the lead on this matter with input from other directorates as required.

Please contact Education DLO on x50291.

Georgia

Georgia Junakovic | Manager | Assembly and Government Business Coordination | Policy and Cabinet Division

Phone: 6207 0148 | Email: georgia.junakovic@act.gov.au

Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development | ACT Government

Level 5 Canberra Nara Centre | GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601 | act.gov.au

**Please note I do not work Mondays.*

From: [Laurent, Kristen](#)
To: [Hawkins, Ross](#); [Sturgiss, Kim](#)
Cc: [McNally, Bronwyn](#)
Subject: RE: Chaplains
Date: Thursday, 21 February 2019 3:55:00 PM

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Ross

Modified wording for your clearance as discussed so Kim can send this afternoon:

Dear principals

Further to my communication last week I would like to provide you with a brief update on the transition from the National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP). EDU have met with Scripture Union QLD to discuss the participation of public schools in the program. While Scripture Union were disappointed with the decision, they are committed to working with EDU to make the transition as smooth as possible. This matter has also been raised in the Legislative Assembly today so information about the changes are now in the broader public domain.

The Education Support Office is exploring a mechanism for schools to directly employ chaplains on a secular basis should schools choose to pursue this option. This will assist you in providing certainty to chaplains who wish to continue to work with school communities on a secular basis. In the meantime current chaplaincy arrangements will remain in place for terms 1 and 2. We will continue to work closely with Scripture Union, chaplains and schools to ensure a smooth transition and minimise potential disruption to students and the school community.

I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate the decision to transition from the NSCP was to ensure the alignment of education supports in public schools with the Education Act. We know chaplains funded through the NSCP are valued for the work they do with students, staff and families and I hope you will reassure chaplains of this in any conversations you may have with them about the transition.

We will continue to work closely with you to ensure the smooth transition for those staff seeking to remain in welfare role with your school.

I will keep you updated as we progress.

Kristen

From: Hawkins, Ross
Sent: Thursday, 21 February 2019 9:09 AM
To: Sturgiss, Kim <Kim.Sturgiss@act.gov.au>
Cc: Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>
Subject: Chaplains

UNCLASSIFIED

Kim – Please can we get this out this morning.

Thanks

Ross

Dear principals

Further to my communication last week I would like to provide you with a brief update on the transition from the National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP). EDU have met with Scripture Union QLD to discuss the participation of public schools in the program. While Scripture Union were disappointed with the decision, they are committed to working with EDU to make the transition as smooth as possible.

The Education Support Office is exploring a mechanism for schools to directly employ chaplains on a secular basis should schools choose to pursue this option. This will assist you in providing certainty to chaplains who wish to continue to work with school communities on a secular basis. In the meantime current chaplaincy arrangements will remain in place for terms 1 and 2. We will continue to work closely with Scripture Union, chaplains and schools to ensure a smooth transition and minimise potential disruption to students and the school community.

I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate the decision to transition from the NSCP was to ensure the alignment of education supports in public schools with the Education Act. We know chaplains funded through the NSCP are valued for the work they do with students, staff and families and I hope you will reassure chaplains of this in any conversations you may have with them about the transition.

We will continue to work closely with you to ensure the smooth transition for those staff seeking to remain in welfare role with your school.

I will keep you updated as we progress.

Regards

From: [Paillas, Stephen](#)
To: [Brighton, Meg](#); [Ceramidas, Joshua](#)
Cc: [EDU Cabinet, Liaison Officer](#); [Hawkins, Ross](#)
Subject: RE: URGENT: School chaplaincy abandoned by ACT government
Date: Friday, 22 February 2019 12:06:39 PM

Thanks Meg, please let us know if any media enquiries come your way.
Claire Johnston is covering for Megan Cursley for the next week so between her and us we'll coordinate with the minister.

From: Brighton, Meg
Sent: Friday, 22 February 2019 11:37 AM
To: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>
Cc: EDU Cabinet, Liaison Officer <EDUCabinet@act.gov.au>; Paillas, Stephen <Stephen.Paillas@act.gov.au>; Hawkins, Ross <Ross.Hawkins@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: URGENT: School chaplaincy abandoned by ACT government

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Dear Josh

School Chaplaincy ACT has distributed this email this morning

Meg

Meg Brighton | Deputy Director-General **Education Directorate** | ACT Government

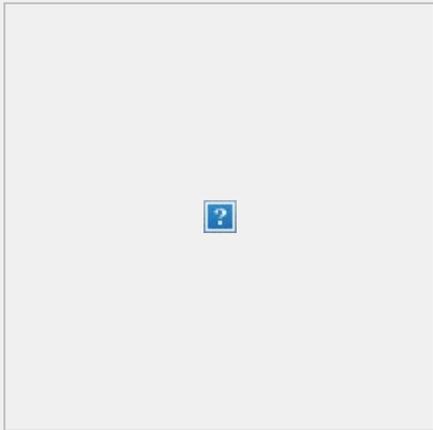
T: [+61 2 6205 9458](tel:+61262059458) | E: meg.brighton@act.gov.au

Level 6, [220 Northbourne Ave](#) Braddon | GPO [Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601](#) |

www.education.act.gov.au

On Fri, 22 Feb 2019 at 07:00, [REDACTED] CEO School Chaplaincy ACT <info@scact.org.au> wrote:

Sign our statement of support for school chaplaincy in ACT schools



Dear xxxx,

As you may have seen in the media today, **the ACT Government has announced it will abandon the school chaplaincy program in ACT government schools at the end of 2019.**

As you can imagine, this news will be devastating for school communities and the children and parents whose lives have

been powerfully impacted by the care, compassion and spiritual support of their school chaplain.

At this time, **we need you to join your voice with ours**, and the tens of thousands of Australians who value the social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of our next generation. The National School Chaplaincy Association has created a Statement of Support page.

Please add your name to our Statement of Support and take a stand for our children.

[**Sign our Statement**](#)

Thank you for your vital support,

Kind regards,


CEO, School Chaplaincy ACT

[Preferences](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)

From: [Laurent, Kristen](#)
To: [McNally, Bronwyn](#)
Subject: FW: Chaplains
Date: Friday, 22 February 2019 3:18:00 PM

UNCLASSIFIED

From: Hawkins, Ross
Sent: Friday, 22 February 2019 3:17 PM
To: Beecher, Gai (ACTEDU) <Gai.Beecher@ed.act.edu.au>; McCarthy, David (ACTEDU) <David.McCarthy@ed.act.edu.au>; Coman, Lara (ACTEDU) <Lara.Coman@ed.act.edu.au>; McCourt, Bruce (ACTEDU) <Bruce.McCourt@ed.act.edu.au>; Alexander, Sally (ACTEDU) <Sally.Alexander@ed.act.edu.au>; Lawson, Gary (ACTEDU) <Gary.Lawson@ed.act.edu.au>; Bruce, Murray (ACTEDU) <Murray.Bruce@ed.act.edu.au>; Mison, Andy (ACTEDU) <Andy.Mison@ed.act.edu.au>; Parker, Simon (ACTEDU) <Simon.Parker@ed.act.edu.au>; Murkins, Julie (ACTEDU) <Julie.Murkins@ed.act.edu.au>; Chapman, Allison (ACTEDU) <Allison.Chapman@ed.act.edu.au>; Battenally, Michael (ACTEDU) <Michael.Battenally@ed.act.edu.au>; Marshall, Kate (ACTEDU) <Kate.Marshall@ed.act.edu.au>; Stewart, Kristine (ACTEDU) <Kristine.Stewart@ed.act.edu.au>; Wilson, Anna (ACTEDU) <Anna.Wilson@ed.act.edu.au>; Clark, Kerri (ACTEDU) <Kerri.Clark@ed.act.edu.au>; Matthews, Rachel (ACTEDU) <Rachel.Matthews@ed.act.edu.au>; Read, Lana (ACTEDU) <Lana.Read@ed.act.edu.au>; Barrett, Gerard (ACTEDU) <Gerard.Barrett@ed.act.edu.au>; Manders, John (ACTEDU) <John.Manders@ed.act.edu.au>; Hall, Michael (ACTEDU) <Michael.Hall@ed.act.edu.au>; Collins, Steven (ACTEDU) <Steven.Collins@ed.act.edu.au>
Cc: Smith, KateL <KateL.Smith@act.gov.au>; Norton, Sue <Sue.Norton@act.gov.au>; Willis, Kris <Kris.Willis@act.gov.au>; Cooper, Julie <Julie.Cooper@act.gov.au>; Hamilton, Judith <Judith.Hamilton@act.gov.au>; Huxley, Mark <Mark.Huxley@act.gov.au>; Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>; Seton, Sam <Sam.Seton@act.gov.au>
Subject: Chaplains

UNCLASSIFIED

Dear Principals

Further to my communication last week I would like to provide you with a brief update on the transition from the National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP). EDU have met with Scripture Union QLD to discuss the participation of public schools in the program. While Scripture Union were disappointed with the decision, they are committed to working with EDU to make the transition as smooth as possible. This matter was also raised in the Legislative Assembly yesterday so information about the changes are now in the broader public domain.

The Education Support Office is exploring a mechanism for schools to directly employ chaplains on a secular basis should schools choose to pursue this option. This will assist you in providing certainty to chaplains who wish to continue to work with school communities on a secular basis. In the meantime current chaplaincy arrangements will remain in place for terms 1 and 2. We will continue to work closely with Scripture Union, chaplains and schools to ensure a smooth transition and minimise potential disruption to students and the school community.

I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate the decision to transition from the NSCP was to ensure the alignment of education supports in public schools with the Education Act. We know chaplains funded through the NSCP are valued for the work they do with students, staff and families and I hope you will reassure chaplains of this in any conversations you may have with them about the transition.

We will continue to work closely with you to ensure the smooth transition for those staff seeking to remain in welfare role with your school.

I will keep you updated as we progress.

Thanks

Ross

Ross Hawkins | Executive Director, Service Design and Delivery | **Education Directorate** | ACT Government

Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601

T: [+61 2 6205 7719](tel:+61262057719) | M: 0409871248 | E: Ross.hawkins@act.gov.au

From: [Laurent, Kristen](#)
To: [Hawkins, Ross](#)
Cc: [Shun Wah, Jane](#)
Subject: Wellbeing in schools
Date: Friday, 22 February 2019 3:51:09 PM
Attachments: [Wellbeing in ACT Public schools examples.docx](#)

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Ross

Jane and Colette have pulled together some further information about wellbeing supports in schools, including examples from a number of schools that show how schools are providing multiple opportunities that support student wellbeing and engagement.

Kristen

Promoting Student Wellbeing in ACT Public schools

- The ACT Government is committed to providing positive and engaging learning environments where young people feel connected, respected, and are fully engaged in education.
- Promotion of student wellbeing in the ACT is a contemporary model based on a range of people working collaboratively, using a range of knowledge, resources and skills to support our students.
- Schools take a community approach, which includes proactive initiatives within schools and partnering with other services and community to promote the health and wellbeing of students.
- ACT schools aim to build **positive school cultures** through strong teacher – student relationships and promoting positive school values. A strong foundation of support from teaching staff is further strengthened through the input of executive staff, including year coordinators, school psychologists and in secondary schools pastoral care/ wellbeing coordinators and youth workers. Some schools also employ community liaison workers and Indigenous Education officers who play a particular role to work with the to ensure schools are inclusive and understanding of the needs of their local community.
- Many high schools have benefited from having a **School Youth Health Nurse** on site. Evaluation has indicated that the program has been very successful, integrating the SYHNs into the school communities to conduct health promotion activities and provide support and referral for young people seeking help for issues relating to mental health, drug and alcohol use, sexual health and relationships. SYHNs engage with students and teachers to provide individual and group work, including respectful relationships education.
- The Education Directorate’s multidisciplinary **Network Student Engagement Teams (NSET)** are also accessible and help to build the capacity of schools to provide responses that are individualised to the needs of schools or particular students. **Social workers** are an invaluable part of this team and the work they undertake with families is invaluable in increasing communication and engagement between school and families and linking students into additional services they may need.
- In colleges **Transition and Career Officers** provide career and training advice to students with a particular focus for students at risk of leaving school.
- The model is aimed at providing an effective service committed to education and capacity building, early intervention and prevention to ensure students’ wellbeing.
- Many schools also partner with **Community organisations** to expand the range of supports and proactive programs available to their students. For example, many schools run breakfasts clubs, usually through a partnership with the local community, including local churches.

School Examples:

Duffy Primary School has recently worked closely with Woden Community Services to support the transition of their year six students to high schools. We know this transition point can be challenging for some students and families. The Directorate also runs transition networks to support the work of schools to assist student wellbeing during key transition points.

Wanniassa High School report a range of wellbeing initiatives through:

- the Berry Street model to inform their practice, which ensures wellbeing is prioritised. For example, they take a case management approach to ensure students who require additional support for their wellbeing are supported.
- employing 2 youth workers who run their Student Engagement Centre, a quiet space where student can attend and talk to a staff member such as a youth worker when needed
- partnering with YWCA, who in 2018 were based from the school on a Thursday and ran a Drop-In service to facilitate access to appropriate services and resources to promote the health and wellbeing of students. They also ran programs such as Y-Aspire, a leadership program for year

7 and 8 girls which focuses on helping them to build strong connections to schooling through an integrated learning program. Topics covered throughout the program include identity, skills and skill building, body confidence, relationships and careers.

- partnering with PCYC, which has facilitated access to programs run by the organisation and the ability to deliver groups as required, for example "Face your Anger".

Gungahlin College report they target student wellbeing through initiatives such as:

- Pastoral care in 8 houses each has coordinator.
- Breakfast club which will expand from 1 to 3 days a week
- 'Little library spaces' small stations around the school where students can gather, swap books, meet others.
- Partnerships with Community Organisations, for example,
 - o Y.engage –youth engagement program run by Northside Community Service where youth workers come to the school or take students off campus
 - o St. Vincent DePaul,
- An annual *Connect day* involving yr 11 workshops all day focus on connection and wellbeing.
- Tutoring for students by ex-students
- Optional Workshops to build student to student connection around interests such as writing and reading.
- Clubs such as the LGBTQI club – lots of students attend for different reasons, do activities in the community (bowling, movies) and sometimes just have lunch together.

Florey Primary prioritise wellbeing through

- Employing a Community Coordinator who runs
 - o sing and read for pre-preschools
 - o Cyclabilities program which helps with low muscle tone and social skills for selected students
 - o Cool Kids mental health program is planned for this year, not yet started.
- Social emotional learning play area outside with toys for lunch & recess etc.
- Welcome school bus – students can go there at play times, senior students check in
- UR FaB program – Run by CAHMS for year 1 & 2 - working with parents
- Paint and play on Fridays – for families with children – in partnership with Belconnen Community Services – for pre-pre-schoolers with emphasis on early literacy
- Culture club – for any student, encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to join, a community member comes in and works with students.
- Lunch clubs – choir has started, others will come in winter
- o Before school clubs such as the running club.

Gilmore Primary has a Family Engagement coordinator who coordinates

- o Breakfast club – every day
- o Mentorship program. 'Older' people from outside of school, working with students for example, reading
- Bungee – Mindful program with yr 2-3 and Mindup mindfulness curriculum every fortnight.
- Lunchtime Clubs, eg. bike club.

Miles Franklin Primary also runs

- Lunch time groups
 - o Knit, stitch, crochet mindfulness club
 - o Choir
 - o Ukulele
- Community partnerships, for example
 - o Menslink
 - o Belconnen Community Services, through the Bungee program had an artist in school
 - o Companion House – work with students
- Students run some lunch time clubs (supported by a staff member) – e.g. house captains run sporting clubs, other clubs bring community tog e.g. Green team.

While *Caroline Chisholm School* has a school chaplain, they have many wellbeing initiatives in place quite distinct to the chaplains work.

- Community members attend the high school to run yarnning circles with the students.
- Fortnightly lessons place a regular focus on social and emotional skills and wellbeing.
- The school has a designated well-being area where students can use during break time and lesson time, with a teacher endorsed exit card. Youth workers and the school psychologist have a presence in the area. Students can also run particular groups there with a wellbeing focus.
- The school ensure that food is available, not just for breakfast club, but at any time.

Forrest Primary School

- There are many programs running in ACT public schools that focus on strengthening connection to Indigenous culture . An after school club is run by parents and staff with input from students, staff and parents/carers.
- The club organises an Arts and Environmental program to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to connect with their mob, country, local history and heritage.
- Afternoon tea and transport are provided, and younger siblings are also invited to participate.

Monash Primary recognises the importance of pastoral care and wellbeing and the positive impact this has on learning. Monash has

- A *Learning Support Assistant* who is specifically tasked to support emotional regulation and social skills. She provides support for friendship issues and will develop social stories for students needing support with issues such as transitions
- *Breakfast clubs* are run every morning with the help of [REDACTED]
- Cool Little Kids, with a mental health focus is planned for this year.
- *Lunchtime clubs* to provide choices for active vs quiet play, provide structure for students who are more comfortable in a facilitated setting.
- *Sensory spaces* to provide students with a quiet space to deescalate or proactively access as needed.

From: [Barrett, Gerard](#)
To: [Hawkins, Ross](#)
Subject: RE: Chaplains
Date: Friday, 22 February 2019 5:24:59 PM
Attachments: [image002.jpg](#)

Thanks Ross.

The original letter from Natalie said the transition would be staggered over the whole of 2019. Does the reference to terms 1 and 2 below imply a shorter transition period?

Regards,

Gerard

Gerard Barrett

Principal

UC Senior Secondary College Lake Ginninderra

P 61 2 6142 0222 | E gerard.barrett@ed.act.edu.au | W www.lakeonline.act.edu.au



From: Hawkins, Ross [mailto:Ross.Hawkins@act.gov.au]

Sent: Friday, 22 February 2019 3:17 PM

To: Beecher, Gai <Gai.Beecher@ed.act.edu.au>; McCarthy, David <David.McCarthy@ed.act.edu.au>; Coman, Lara <Lara.Coman@ed.act.edu.au>; McCourt, Bruce <Bruce.McCourt@ed.act.edu.au>; Alexander, Sally <Sally.Alexander@ed.act.edu.au>; Lawson, Gary <Gary.Lawson@ed.act.edu.au>; Bruce, Murray <Murray.Bruce@ed.act.edu.au>; Mison, Andy <Andy.Mison@ed.act.edu.au>; Parker, Simon <Simon.Parker@ed.act.edu.au>; Murkins, Julie <Julie.Murkins@ed.act.edu.au>; Chapman, Allison <Allison.Chapman@ed.act.edu.au>; Battenally, Michael <Michael.Battenally@ed.act.edu.au>; Marshall, Kate <Kate.Marshall@ed.act.edu.au>; Stewart, Kristine <Kristine.Stewart@ed.act.edu.au>; Wilson, Anna <Anna.Wilson@ed.act.edu.au>; Clark, Kerri <Kerri.Clark@ed.act.edu.au>; Matthews, Rachel <Rachel.Matthews@ed.act.edu.au>; Read, Lana <Lana.Read@ed.act.edu.au>; Barrett, Gerard <Gerard.Barrett@ed.act.edu.au>; Manders, John <John.Manders@ed.act.edu.au>; Hall, Michael <Michael.Hall@ed.act.edu.au>; Collins, Steven <Steven.Collins@ed.act.edu.au>

Cc: Smith, KateL (ACTGOV) <KateL.Smith@act.gov.au>; Norton, Sue (ACTGOV) <Sue.Norton@act.gov.au>; Willis, Kris (ACTGOV) <Kris.Willis@act.gov.au>; Cooper, Julie (ACTGOV) <Julie.Cooper@act.gov.au>; Hamilton, Judith (ACTGOV) <Judith.Hamilton@act.gov.au>; Huxley, Mark (ACTGOV) <Mark.Huxley@act.gov.au>; Laurent, Kristen (ACTGOV) <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>; Seton, Sam (ACTGOV) <Sam.Seton@act.gov.au>

Subject: Chaplains

UNCLASSIFIED

Dear Principals

Further to my communication last week I would like to provide you with a brief update on the transition from the National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP). EDU have met with Scripture Union QLD to discuss the participation of public schools in the program. While Scripture Union were disappointed with the decision, they are committed to working with EDU to make the transition as smooth as possible. This matter was also raised in the Legislative Assembly yesterday so information about the changes are now in the broader public domain.

The Education Support Office is exploring a mechanism for schools to directly employ chaplains on a secular basis should schools choose to pursue this option. This will assist you in providing

certainty to chaplains who wish to continue to work with school communities on a secular basis. In the meantime current chaplaincy arrangements will remain in place for terms 1 and 2. We will continue to work closely with Scripture Union, chaplains and schools to ensure a smooth transition and minimise potential disruption to students and the school community.

I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate the decision to transition from the NSCP was to ensure the alignment of education supports in public schools with the Education Act. We know chaplains funded through the NSCP are valued for the work they do with students, staff and families and I hope you will reassure chaplains of this in any conversations you may have with them about the transition.

We will continue to work closely with you to ensure the smooth transition for those staff seeking to remain in welfare role with your school.

I will keep you updated as we progress.

Thanks

Ross

Ross Hawkins | Executive Director, Service Design and Delivery | **Education Directorate** | ACT Government

Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601

T: [+61 2 6205 7719](tel:+61262057719) | M: 0409871248 | E: Ross.hawkins@act.gov.au

This email, and any attachments, may be confidential and also privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and delete all copies of this transmission along with any attachments immediately. You should not copy or use it for any purpose, nor disclose its contents to any other person.

From: [Laurent, Kristen](#)
To: [Sloane, Brenton](#)
Cc: [Doman, Claudia](#); [EDU Media](#); [McNally, Bronwyn](#); [Hawkins, Ross](#); [Sturgiss, Kim](#)
Subject: RE: School chaplains [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Date: Monday, 25 February 2019 11:20:53 AM
Attachments: [Media request number of schools by sector.xlsx](#)

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Brenton

I have attached the list of schools by sector. There are 22 schools who are continuing on from 2018 and will be transitioning off the program during 2019:

1 early childhood school

8 primary schools

7 secondary schools

4 colleges

2 P-10 schools

Regards

Kristen Laurent | Senior Manager, Policy and Projects

Phone: 6207 2327 | Email: kristen.laurent@act.gov.au

Inclusion and Engagement | Education | ACT Government

Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning | Fremantle Drive, Stirling | www.act.gov.au**From:** Sloane, Brenton**Sent:** Monday, 25 February 2019 10:54 AM**To:** Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>**Cc:** Doman, Claudia <Claudia.Doman@act.gov.au>; EDU Media <EDU.Media@act.gov.au>**Subject:** FW: School chaplains [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Kristen,

As discussed over the phone, please see the below email.

Can you flick me the breakdown to answer the 'how many' question?

Cheers,

Brenton Sloane | Senior Communications Officer**Media and Communications | Education | ACT Government**P: (02) 6205 4196 | M: 0431 252 698 | E: brenton.sloane@act.gov.au

Level 6, 220 Northbourne Avenue | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601

www.education.act.gov.au | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Google+](#)**From:** Johnston, ClaireV**Sent:** Monday, 25 February 2019 10:48 AM**To:** Sloane, Brenton <Brenton.Sloane@act.gov.au>; Doman, Claudia <Claudia.Doman@act.gov.au>**Subject:** FW: School chaplains

Hi guys

Can you work on some answers for this one too?

Cheers

Claire

From: [REDACTED]**Sent:** Monday, 25 February 2019 10:14 AM**To:** Johnston, ClaireV <ClaireV.Johnston@act.gov.au>**Subject:** Fwd: School chaplains

Hi Claire,

Megan is away and I need a response from Minister Berry.

Can I also know how many schools currently have chaplains and whether they are primary, high schools or colleges?

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

Logo



----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Mon, Feb 25, 2019 at 9:57 AM
Subject: School chaplains
To: Cursley, Megan <Megan.Cursley@act.gov.au>

Hi Megan,

Can you provide a statement on the Minister's decision on school chaplains?

When did the Minister and in what context did the Minister announce this?

School	Sector
Amaroo School	P-10
Belconnen HS	Secondary
Black Mountain School	Secondary
Calwell HS	Secondary
Campbell High School	Secondary
Caroline Chisholm	
Erindale College	College
Gordon PS	Primary
Hawker College	College
Isabella Plains Early Childhood School	P-2
Lake Tuggeranong College	College
Malkara Specialist School	Primary
Melba Copeland Secondary School	Secondary
Mt Stromlo HS	Secondary
Ngunnawal PS	Primary
Richardson PS	Primary
Theodore PS	Primary
Torrens PS	Primary
UC High School Kaleen	Secondary
UC Lake Ginninderra College	College
Wanniassa Hills PS	Primary
Wanniassa School Jnr Campus	Primary

Vandyk, Thomas

From: Laurent, Kristen
Sent: Sunday, 10 March 2019 6:48 PM
To: Laurent, Kristen
Subject: Discussion with Commonwealth

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Discussion with Commonwealth

Monday, 25 February 2019
 1:07 PM

ACT position

- Minister's position that requirement for chaplains to be affiliated with a religious organisation is incompatible with the ACT Education Act that requires public schools to provide non-sectarian, secular education.
- Provision of student welfare does not require religious affiliation.
- Schools being provided with the option to directly employ the individual currently in the school chaplain role on a secular basis. Costs will be met by schools.
- Currently planning for staged transition of schools from the program during second semester. Have advised Scripture Union and schools that there will be no transition in Semester 1 to provide some certainty for schools and chaplains and minimise disruption of any planned pastoral care activities during this period.
- Shifting landscape in the ACT since the agreement was first introduced - significant investment in school psychs and NSET. Expansion of School Youth Health Nurse program to all ACT high schools. Better equipped now to provide student welfare support.
- Chaplaincy only in 22 schools but evidence of effective wellbeing support across all schools

Plans for the program post 2019

- EDU will continue to administer the program on behalf of the non-government school sectors
- i.e. will convene cross sectoral panel to assess applications for participation beyond 2019

Timeline

- Min letter to Tehan in October requesting agreement include option of secular workers
- Min phone discussion with Tehan after this letter
- Min letter entering into project agreement and flagging she would continue to consider the suitability of religious chaplains being employed in Act Government schools.
- Letter from Min to Scripture Union
- Meeting with Scripture Union
- Letter from Directorate to two providers - Scripture Union and Young Life
- Communication with relevant principals

From: [McNally, Bronwyn](#)
To: [Hawkins, Ross](#)
Cc: [Laurent, Kristen](#)
Subject: Media-Chaplaincy
Date: Monday, 25 February 2019 3:28:16 PM

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Ross

Some links regarding the reporting of transition from NSCP.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-02-23/religious-chaplains-banned-in-act-government-schools/10842950>

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/act/disappointing-act-school-chaplain-ban-cops-federal-criticism-20190224-p50zx9.html?ref=rss>

<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/national/act/disappointing-act-school-chaplain-ban-cops-federal-criticism-20190224-p50zx9.html>

666 ABC Radio this morning

<https://www.abc.net.au/radio/canberra/programs/mornings/mornings/10823540>

ACT Labour, Chris Steel and Yvette Berry also had posts on their FB page stating *Our public schools must remain secular. That's why we're replacing chaplains with qualified youth worker and social workers.*

Bronwyn McNally | Research and Policy Executive Officer

Phone: +61 6205 7619 | Email: bronwyn.mcnally@act.gov.au

Student Wellbeing | Education | ACT Government

Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning | 51 Fremantle Drive, Stirling | GPO Box 158
Canberra ACT 2601

www.education.act.gov.au | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Google+](#)

This email, and any attachments, may be confidential and also privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and delete all copies of this transmission along with any attachments immediately. You should not copy or use it for any purpose, nor disclose its contents to any other person.

From: [Laurent, Kristen](#)
To: [Hawkins, Ross](#); [Brighton, Meg](#)
Cc: [Spinks, Jacinta](#); [McNally, Bronwyn](#)
Subject: FW: FOR ACTION: Letter to Chaplains
Date: Monday, 25 February 2019 3:35:00 PM
Attachments: [DET13 229 - Brief - MOU School Chaplaincy.doc](#)
[DET13 229 ACT Draft MOU \(incorporating legal advice\) 18 Jan 2013.docx](#)
[NSCSWP Guidelines July 2012.pdf](#)

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Hi Meg and Ross

The National School Chaplaincy and Welfare Program that preceded the 2015-2018 Agreement was governed by the attached MO between the ACT Education and Commonwealth and the associated Guidelines.

- The major changes to the Program included: a new title for the Program; choice of support worker; minimum qualification requirements for funded school chaplains/student welfare workers; improved complaints handling mechanisms; an increase in the maximum grant for schools in remote locations; and minimum standards for Funding Recipients.
- From 1 January 2012, schools funded under the Program were able to choose the services of a school chaplain to provide pastoral care services and/or select the services of a non faith-based, or secular, student welfare worker.

I spoke with [REDACTED] from the Commonwealth today to provide some clarity in relation to the ACT position and plans for transition. It seems they had been unclear from media coverage whether we had been seeking to utilise the agreement funding for secular workers – I was clear that once schools transition from the program they would cease using NSCP funding and would be covering the cost of direct employment.

Regards

Kristen Laurent | Senior Manager, Policy and Projects
Phone: 6207 2327 | Email: kristen.laurent@act.gov.au
Inclusion and Engagement | Education | ACT Government
Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning | Fremantle Drive, Stirling | www.act.gov.au

From: McNally, Bronwyn
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 12:14 PM
To: Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: FOR ACTION: Letter to Chaplains

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Hi there we can't find this on TRIM with the identifier but here is an unsigned copy of the MOU and the accompanying brief that was in the trim folder on the G Drive.

Bronwyn McNally | Research and Policy Executive Officer
Phone: +61 6205 7619 | Email: bronwyn.mcnally@act.gov.au
Student Wellbeing | Education | ACT Government
Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning | 51 Fremantle Drive, Stirling | GPO Box 158
Canberra ACT 2601

www.education.act.gov.au | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Google+](#)

This email, and any attachments, may be confidential and also privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and delete all copies of this transmission along with any attachments immediately. You should not copy or use it for any purpose, nor disclose its contents to any other person.

From: Laurent, Kristen
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 11:41 AM
To: McNally, Bronwyn <Bronwyn.McNally@act.gov.au>
Cc: Shun Wah, Jane <Jane.ShunWah@act.gov.au>; Spinks, Jacinta <Jacinta.Spinks@act.gov.au>
Subject: FOR ACTION: Letter to Chaplains
Importance: High

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Hi Bron

Ross would like letters prepared for school chaplains. This could go directly to chaplains if we have names and email addresses or we could provide to schools to pass on. Can you please make this a priority today? Also, we've been asked to track down a copy of the 2010-2014 agreement under the Labor Government when secular workers were allowed. Jacinta is chasing but no luck so far.

Thanks

Kristen



File Ref: /

Director-General

NATIONAL SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY AND STUDENT WELFARE PROGRAM MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE ACT EDUCATION AND TRAINING DIRECTORATE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE RELATIONS

Recommendation

That you:

- sign the attached Memorandum of Understanding (Attachment A) between the ACT Education and Training Directorate and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

AGREED/NOT AGREED/PLEASE DISCUSS

- particularly note point 9. Dispute Resolution of the Memorandum of Understanding as it relates to your position as Director-General.

NOTED/PLEASE DISCUSS

Diane Joseph

Director's Name: Beth Mitchell

/ /

Phone: 57029

Background

The National School Chaplaincy Program was introduced in 2007 as a voluntary program that assists school communities to support the spiritual, social, and emotional wellbeing of their students. This included support and guidance about ethics, values, relationships and spirituality; the provision of pastoral care; and enhancing engagement with the broader community.

In August 2010, the Australian Government announced that a further \$222 million would be provided so that existing schools funded under the National School Chaplaincy Program could have their funding extended to the end of 2014. In addition these funds will support up to 1,000 additional schools, including those in rural, remote and disadvantaged locations to access support under the Program.

A national consultation process was undertaken during 2010 which led the Hon Peter Garrett MP, Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth to make changes to the program Guidelines. The new National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Program (the Program) was announced in September 2011 and commenced in January 2012.

The major changes to the Program include: a new title for the Program; choice of support worker; minimum qualification requirements for funded school chaplains/student welfare workers; improved complaints handling mechanisms; an increase in the maximum grant for schools in remote locations; and minimum standards for Funding Recipients.

From 1 January 2012, schools funded under the Program are now able to choose the services of a school chaplain to provide pastoral care services and/or select the services of a non faith-based, or secular, student welfare worker.

Issues

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was prepared by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). The stated intention of the MoU is, through a collaborative framework, to help the Directorate and DEEWR progress in the Australian Capital Territory, the objectives outlined in the *Melbourne Declaration on the Educational Goals for Young Australians* (the *Melbourne Declaration*) as they relate to the emotional and spiritual wellbeing of young Australians and may be achieved through the NSCSWP.

The organisation and accountability of the Program has traditionally been between DEEWR, the school and the provider. It is clear that there are issues that arise, for example in the child protection area, where collaboration and support from other areas of the Directorate are important in looking after the best interests of the child and the reputation of the Directorate and the Program.

The MoU recommends that governance arrangements will be formalised through an Inter-Agency Group made up of senior officers from each of the Parties. The Inter-Agency Group will discuss:

- operational and strategic matters relating to the management of the NSCSWP in public schools;
- the interaction between the NSCSWP and other student wellbeing initiatives in public schools; and
- any issues, trends or patterns relating to the management of the NSCSWP in public schools.

Any dispute arising in relation to this MoU will be dealt with informally, at officer level, by the Parties. In the event that a solution cannot be reached, the dispute will be referred to the Director-General, Australian Capital Territory Education and Training Directorate and the NSCSWP Branch Manager, DEEWR to be addressed.

Consultation with Finance and Corporate Support and Funding Implications

Nil. Any meeting costs can be met within the branch's budget.

Consultations

Legal Liaison
Employee Relations

Media

There is no anticipated negative media impact.

Stephen Gniel
Executive Director
Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement
March 2013

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN the AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY EDUCATION and TRAINING
DIRECTORATE
and the
SECRETARY of the DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT and WORKPLACE
RELATIONS
in relation to the
NATIONAL SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY and STUDENT WELFARE PROGRAM

1. Parties to this Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) is made between the Director General of the Australian Capital Territory Education and Training Directorate, of 220 Northbourne Ave, Braddon, in the Australian Capital Territory ('ETD ') and the

Secretary of the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, of 50 Marcus Clarke Street, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory ('DEEWR') hereafter known as 'the Parties' and individually as 'a Party'.

2. Preamble

- 2.1 This MOU has been developed in recognition of the common objectives which are shared by the Parties and which are aimed at providing a collaborative framework for the Parties to work together in relation to the National School Chaplaincy and Student Welfare Program (NSCSWP).
- 2.2 This MOU will assist each Party to progress in the Australian Capital Territory, the objectives outlined in the *Melbourne Declaration on the Educational Goals for Young Australians* (the *Melbourne Declaration*) as they relate to the emotional and spiritual wellbeing of young Australians and may be achieved through the NSCSWP.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 This MOU is not intended to change the current authority of either Party with respect to the delivery of NSCSWP services. Rather this MOU will increase cooperation and improve each Party's capacity to fulfil their existing responsibilities in the provision of student wellbeing support in Australian Capital Territory public schools, as it relates to the delivery of the NSCSWP.

4. No Intention to Create Legal Obligation

- 4.1 This MOU is an expression of the intention of the Parties which is binding in honour only. It is not intended that this MOU give rise to any legal relationship, right, duties or consequences or be the subject of litigation.

5. Duration

- 5.1 This MOU will start on the date on which it is signed by the last Party to do so and will end on 31 December 2014.
- 5.2 The Parties may negotiate to extend this MOU, the term of extension to be agreed in writing.

6. Purpose and Principles

- 6.1 This MOU formalises the principles of cooperation, information sharing and collaboration between the Parties and signifies the intention of the Parties to work in partnership to achieve Commonwealth and Australian Capital Territory Government objectives to support the emotional and spiritual wellbeing of students as expressed in the *Melbourne Declaration*.
- 6.2 The Parties agree they will use their best endeavours to:
- (a) share responsibility for achieving the aims of this MOU;
 - (b) commit to a shared understanding of and support for the MOU;
 - (c) utilise mutually beneficial cooperation, collaboration and consensus;
 - (d) demonstrate a willingness to share information and facilitate monitoring and evaluation;
 - (e) cooperate to quickly resolve complaints relating to the delivery of the NSCSWP in Australian Capital Territory public schools, acknowledging requirements under legislation, and
 - (f) achieve effective delivery of the NSCSWP, including consistent application of policies and associated practices that affect the delivery of the NSCSWP and are of common interest to the Parties.
 - (g) work together to reduce duplication and overlap in Territory and Commonwealth requirements in the delivery of the program.

7. Aims and Outcomes

- 7.1 The aims of the MOU will be to achieve:
- (a) a better understanding and potential coordination of the Parties' practices and procedures where they impact on the management of the NSCSWP;
 - (b) coordinated responses to issues that may threaten the reputation of the NSCSWP and the operation of student wellbeing services in Australian Capital Territory public schools;
 - (c) coordinated responses to the management of relationships with program providers, particularly where they seek to work across levels of government; and

- (d) clear lines of accountability in relation to the management of the NSCSWP and Australian Capital Territory public schools and the management of complaints about the program.

8. Governance

- 8.1 The governance arrangements will be formalised through an Inter-Agency Group made up of senior officers from each of the Parties, including other State/Territory education authorities with which DEEWR has entered into an MOU in relation to the NSCSWP.
- 8.2 The purpose of the Inter-Agency Group will be to discuss:
 - (a) operational and strategic matters relating to the management of the NSCSWP in public schools;
 - (b) the interaction between the NSCSWP and other student wellbeing initiatives in public schools; and
 - (c) any issues, trends or patterns relating to the management of the NSCSWP in public schools.
- 8.3 The Terms of Reference of the Inter Agency Group will include:
 - a) providing for meetings to be held at least twice annually; and
 - b) providing for the sharing of data across jurisdictions in relation to the management of the NSCSWP and in particular about complaints about the NSCSWP.
- 8.4 Operational responsibilities of the Inter-Agency Group will include:
 - (a) each Party using reasonable endeavours to exchange information appropriately, taking account of each other's operational requirements, legal, commercial and contractual obligations and privacy issues; and
 - (b) that DEEWR will use reasonable endeavours to notify other Parties when making direct contact with public schools on any matters in relation to the NSCSWP that do not relate to standard program management practices.

9. Dispute Resolution

The Parties agree that any dispute arising in relation to this MOU will be dealt with informally, at officer level, by the Parties. In the event that a solution cannot be reached, the dispute will be referred to the Director General, Australian Capital Territory Education and Training Directorate and the NSCSWP Branch Manager, DEEWR to be addressed.

10. Compliance with laws and government policies

The Parties will comply with all relevant statutes, regulations, by-laws and requirements of any Commonwealth, state, territory or local authority in connection with their responsibilities and actions pursuant to this MOU.

11. Variation

Either Party may request to vary this MOU in writing. All variations must be agreed in writing and signed by the Parties, and will come into effect on the date the last Party signs the amended MOU.

12. Termination

Either Party may terminate this MOU for any reason by giving the other Party 14 days notice.

13. Contact between the Parties

13.1 The Parties will identify an appropriate level contact person at the senior officer level through the Inter-Agency group. The Inter-Agency group will be the central point of contact for all formal communication.

13.2 Notices between senior contact officers must be provided in writing.

13.3 A notice from one senior contact officer to another must give the other senior contact officer at least 14 days to respond.

14. Specific program management arrangements

This Section outlines the specific ways in which the NSCSWP will operate in Australian Capital Territory public schools.

14.1 The Parties agree that, to ensure consistency in the management of arrangements at the school level, the chaplain/student welfare worker will be bound by the NSCSWP Code of Conduct and relevant ETD requirements (including requirements regulating activities within schools and policies or guidelines for volunteers and visitors within schools) at all times while working as a chaplain/student welfare worker in Australian Capital Territory public schools.

14.2 Any alleged breaches of these requirements may be jointly investigated by the Parties in consultation with the employing Funding Recipient and subject to the principles of the NSCSWP Complaints Protocol. As a principle all complaints or breaches of requirements are investigated at the lowest relevant level.

14.3 The agreement between the Commonwealth and Funding Recipients providing NSCSWP services in Australian Capital Territory schools identifies the minimum standards applicable to the delivery of chaplaincy services in Australian Capital Territory public schools. This agreement covers the following key areas:

- (a) Insurances to be maintained.
- (b) Working with Children and Criminal Screening.
- (c) The role of school Principals.
- (d) Feedback and complaint procedures.
- (e) Participation/voluntary nature of the program.
- (f) Consent arrangements
- (g) Minimum Qualifications requirements
- (h) NSCSWP Service Agreement Requirements.

Through this MOU the ETD recognises and acknowledges the scope of the NSCSWP and associated administrative guidelines implicit in the operation of the program.

Signed on behalf of the Australian Capital Territory Education and Training Directorate by

Diane Joseph

Director General of the Australian Capital Territory Education and Training Directorate

Date

Signed on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by

Lisa Paul AO PSM

Secretary of the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

Date

From: [Brighton, Meg](#)
To: [Laurent, Kristen](#); [Hawkins, Ross](#)
Cc: [Spinks, Jacinta](#); [McNally, Bronwyn](#)
Subject: Re: FOR ACTION: Letter to Chaplains
Date: Monday, 25 February 2019 4:47:04 PM

Thank you

Do we have the records on numbers of those engaged to deliver the services and their transition to the new agreement?

Meg

Meg Brighton | Deputy Director-General Education Directorate | ACT Government
 T: +61 2 6205 9458 | E: meg.brighton@act.gov.au
 Level 6, 220 Northbourne Ave Braddon | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601 |
www.education.act.gov.au

From: Laurent, Kristen <kristen.laurent@act.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, February 25, 2019 3:35 pm
To: Hawkins, Ross; Brighton, Meg
Cc: Spinks, Jacinta; McNally, Bronwyn
Subject: FW: FOR ACTION: Letter to Chaplains

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Hi Meg and Ross

The National School Chaplaincy and Welfare Program that preceded the 2015-2018 Agreement was governed by the attached MO between the ACT Education and Commonwealth and the associated Guidelines.

- The major changes to the Program included: a new title for the Program; choice of support worker; minimum qualification requirements for funded school chaplains/student welfare workers; improved complaints handling mechanisms; an increase in the maximum grant for schools in remote locations; and minimum standards for Funding Recipients.
- From 1 January 2012, schools funded under the Program were able to choose the services of a school chaplain to provide pastoral care services and/or select the services of a non faith-based, or secular, student welfare worker.

I spoke with [REDACTED] from the Commonwealth today to provide some clarity in relation to the ACT position and plans for transition. It seems they had been unclear from media coverage whether we had been seeking to utilise the agreement funding for secular workers – I was clear that once schools transition from the program they would cease using NSCP funding and would be covering the cost of direct employment.

Regards

Kristen Laurent | Senior Manager, Policy and Projects
 Phone: 6207 2327 | Email: kristen.laurent@act.gov.au
 Inclusion and Engagement | Education | ACT Government
 Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning | Fremantle Drive, Stirling | www.act.gov.au

From: McNally, Bronwyn
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 12:14 PM
To: Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: FOR ACTION: Letter to Chaplains

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Hi there we can't find this on TRIM with the identifier but here is an unsigned copy of the MOU and the accompanying brief that was in the trim folder on the G Drive.

Bronwyn McNally | Research and Policy Executive Officer

Phone: +61 6205 7619 | Email: bronwyn.mcnally@act.gov.au

Student Wellbeing | Education | ACT Government

Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning | 51 Fremantle Drive, Stirling | GPO Box 158
Canberra ACT 2601

www.education.act.gov.au | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Google+](#)

This email, and any attachments, may be confidential and also privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and delete all copies of this transmission along with any attachments immediately. You should not copy or use it for any purpose, nor disclose its contents to any other person.

From: Laurent, Kristen

Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 11:41 AM

To: McNally, Bronwyn <Bronwyn.McNally@act.gov.au>

Cc: Shun Wah, Jane <Jane.ShunWah@act.gov.au>; Spinks, Jacinta <Jacinta.Spinks@act.gov.au>

Subject: FOR ACTION: Letter to Chaplains

Importance: High

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Hi Bron

Ross would like letters prepared for school chaplains. This could go directly to chaplains if we have names and email addresses or we could provide to schools to pass on. Can you please make this a priority today? Also, we've been asked to track down a copy of the 2010-2014 agreement under the Labor Government when secular workers were allowed. Jacinta is chasing but no luck so far.

Thanks

Kristen

From: [Hughes, Rebecca](#) on behalf of [DGEDUoffice](#)
To: [Brighton, Meg](#); [Hawkins, Ross](#); [Laurent, Kristen](#)
Cc: [Fleck, Katrina](#)
Subject: FYI: P&C Council's latest media release [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Date: Monday, 25 February 2019 6:22:57 PM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)
[Chaplains MR.pdf](#)
[image002.jpg](#)

UNCLASSIFIED

From: King, Ashley **On Behalf Of** Education DLO
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 3:48 PM
To: Howson, Natalie <Natalie.Howson@act.gov.au>
Cc: DGEDUoffice <DGEDUoffice@act.gov.au>; EDU Media <EDU.Media@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: P&C Council's latest media release [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
FYI
Ashley
Mr Ashley King
Education Directorate Liaison Officer
Phone + 61 2 6205 0291 | Email: EduDLO@act.gov.au
Office of Yvette Berry MLA
Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development

From: BERRY
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 3:41 PM
To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: P&C Council's latest media release
Please see the attached correspondence relating to Education. For appropriate action/response
Cheers,
Grace

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 1:35 PM
To: ACT P&C Council Contact <contact@actparents.org.au>
Subject: P&C Council's latest media release
For your information, the latest media release from Council: Public school parents welcome
move away from chaplains

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations

The parent voice on public education

www.actparents.org.au | Tel: 02 6241 5759 | Tweet: [@ParentVoiceACT](https://twitter.com/ParentVoiceACT) | Find us on [Facebook](#)

From: [Laurent, Kristen](#)
To: [Hawkins, Ross](#)
Cc: [McNally, Bronwyn](#)
Subject: FW: List of chaplains in EDU schools.
Date: Monday, 25 February 2019 8:24:30 PM
Attachments: [EDU letter to Chaplains.docx](#)
[image002.jpg](#)

UNCLASSIFIED Sensitive

Hi Ross

Bronwyn has drafted the letter to chaplains for your consideration. Please see the request below from Chaplaincy ACT. In a separate email (attached) they have also asked if we could supply the Deed of Variation before we notify chaplains of transition from the NSCP. They would like to be able to read that and know its contents before the next step is considered and would like to be able to send the invoice as soon as possible.

We won't have all the answers chaplains are looking for by 6 March but maybe we should still accept the offer to meet with the chaplains to hear their concerns in relation to the transition.

Your thoughts?

Kristen

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 5:46 PM

To: McNally, Bronwyn <Bronwyn.McNally@act.gov.au>; [REDACTED]

Cc: Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>

Subject: Re: List of chaplains in EDU schools.

Hello again Bronwyn,

May I also ask for a copy of the letter to the chaplains a week before it goes out? Or could you come to our chaplains inservice meeting on 6 March to discuss the offer? I think a face to face meeting would be a much better option.

You will appreciate that they are very stressed at the moment, and they do not necessarily want to accept the offer. Some may want to, some may not. It may not be clearly understood what the Directorate is offering. They will have many questions e.g. number of hours, pay scale, their options to stay as chaplains until the end of the year. They will have noted that there is a difference of opinion between the Chief Minister and the Education Minister on this issue.

Thanks for considering,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | Field Development Manager - ACT



switchboard 1300 478 753 | direct [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] | www.scact.org.au

PO Box 33, Erindale Centre ACT 2903
 like [facebook.com/chaplaincyact](https://www.facebook.com/chaplaincyact)

The information contained in this email is confidential and may be privileged. It is intended solely for the addressee. If you receive this email by mistake please promptly inform us by reply email and then delete the email. There is no warranty that this email is error or virus free. Check any attachments for viruses before opening. This email may be a private communication, and if so, does not represent the views of School Chaplaincy ACT.

On Mon, 25 Feb 2019 at 15:56, McNally, Bronwyn <Bronwyn.McNally@act.gov.au> wrote:

UNCLASSIFIED

Hello [REDACTED]

We are wanting to write to Chaplains tomorrow (via school principals) and provide them with information about of the transition from the NSCP. The information will cover things we have previously discussed with you, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] at our meeting and we will provide you with a copy of the letter for your information.

The letter will confirm that NSCP services will remain unchanged for terms 1 and 2, the intention behind the approach regarding the option for direct employment and that EDU will work closely with schools and Chaplaincy ACT to minimise potential disruption to school programs.

To assist with this communication could you please provide me with an up to date list of the names of chaplains that are currently in ACT schools and which school they work in?

I would also like to let you know we will be getting the Variation to the Deed of Grant out to you this week for signing. Many thanks for your continued patience as we worked this through.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you would like to discuss.

Kind regards

Bronwyn

Bronwyn McNally | Research and Policy Executive Officer

Phone: +61 6205 7619 | Email: bronwyn.mcnally@act.gov.au

Student Wellbeing | Education | ACT Government

Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning | 51 Fremantle Drive, Stirling | GPO Box 158
Canberra ACT 2601

www.education.act.gov.au | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Google+](#)

This email, and any attachments, may be confidential and also privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and delete all copies of this transmission along with any attachments immediately. You should not copy or use it for any purpose, nor disclose its contents to any other person.



Dear

I am writing to you to provide you with some information about the decision to transition ACT public schools out of the National School Chaplaincy Program. (NSCP)

As you are aware, the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development has made the decision to transition ACT public schools away from the NSCP in 2019. This decision was made to align supports in schools with the *Education Act 2004* to ensure education in ACT schools occurs within a secular context. The ACT Government is committed to supporting the wellbeing of children and young people and has made significant investment in student wellbeing in recent years. This investment means that schools are well positioned to meet the broad range of student wellbeing needs through a holistic approach.

We recognise this decision was unexpected and you may be feeling uncertain about what this means for you. The decision was not a reflection on the quality of services chaplains funded under the program currently provide. In light of the value many chaplains add to the wellbeing supports of a school community, the Directorate is working towards an offer of direct employment to enable schools to engage chaplains funded under the NSCP to continue to provide wellbeing supports on a secular basis.

There is now information about the Minister's decision in the public domain and as often happens when the media reports an issue, some of the nuances surrounding the situation is lost. Principals and Chaplaincy ACT have been advised that NSCP services will remain in place for Term 1 and 2 of this year. I would like to assure you that the Directorate will work closely with Chaplaincy ACT and schools to carefully plan the transition on a school by school basis.

It is important that any transition activities planned minimises potential disruption to students and the school community and this process is done in consultation with school chaplains. I will ensure Chaplaincy ACT, schools and chaplains remain updated as we progress throughout the year.

Yours sincerely

Ross Hawkins
Executive Director
Service Design and Delivery

Izzard, Belinda

From: King, Ashley on behalf of Education DLO
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 8:34 AM
To: EDU Student Engagement Director's Office
Cc: EDUMCR; Hawkins, Ross; Sturgiss, Kim; McGarvey, Caitlin; Fleck, Katrina; Brighton, Meg
Subject: [REDACTED] Letter Support for School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hello

Title/Question	Letter Support for School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
Action	Ministerial Response please
Responsibility	SE
Response type	Letter
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	EGM SDD 7/3/19 MO 13/3/19
Clearance	EGM SDD
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
X50291

-----Original Message-----

From: BERRY
 Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 4:28 PM
 To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
 Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>
 Subject: FW: School Chaplains

Please see the attached correspondence relating to Education. For appropriate action/response

Cheers,
Grace

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
 Sent: Friday, 22 February 2019 9:12 PM
 To: yvette.berry@act.alp.org.au
 Subject: School Chaplains

Dear Ms Berry

As an ALP member in ACT, I am disappointed in the desire to withdraw chaplains from ACT schools. Given recent comments and decisions I feel ACT Labor has issues with religion and faith.

Chaplains in Government schools are under clear guidelines and add a depth for students beyond secular mindsets. Many Australians are people of faith, and a variety of faiths at that. Having someone at the school who is willing to listen to students and not inadvertently dismiss issues because of lack of spiritual awareness, is important.

Non religious or Non faith people, in my experience, blunder and accidentally offend in their attempts to appear understanding of something of which they simply lack experience or genuine understanding.

People of faith, even if a different faith, grasp the cultural aspects and pressures of students struggling with conflicting world views. Australia is a diverse country and ACT has such a diverse cultural group, not all are atheists. Many are from cultures where faith is an integral part of life. Removing the helpers who can help is a shame. Teachers in state schools are not always able to support students with some cultural and faith issues, and it is something many state teachers are concerned about doing as it can be seen as over stepping their roles. But chaplains have a chance of meeting student's needs in an inclusive manner. This help can open a students to learning opportunities. Chaplains can support students with social emotional challenges and this also supports teachers, other students in the class and the individual student as well.

I do not understand why you wish to remove this support from schools, teachers and students. Most cultures recognise people have physical, emotional and spiritual needs. Chaplains do not proselytise their own doctrine. But are supportive, aware and sensitive to the needs of many students.

Your anti religion stand appears personal. I believe you have an obligation to think beyond your personal views and popular shallow views are recognise the values others in ACT have and the importance of faith and religion has to them and their culture.

Thank You



From: [King, Ashley](#) on behalf of [Education DLO](#)
To: [EDU Student Engagement Director's Office](#)
Cc: [EDUMCR](#); [Hawkins, Ross](#); [Sturgiss, Kim](#); [McGarvey, Caitlin](#); [Fleck, Katrina](#); [Brighton, Meg](#)
Subject: [REDACTED] Support For School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED] [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]
Date: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 8:39:29 AM

Hello

Title/Question	Support For School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
Action	Ministerial Response please
Responsibility	SE
Response type	Letter
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	EGM SDD 7/3/19 MO 13/3/19
Clearance	EGM SDD
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
X50291

From: BERRY

Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 4:28 PM

To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>

Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>

Subject: FW: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 230219 - 1322873 - [REDACTED]

Please see the attached correspondence relating to Education. For appropriate action/response

Cheers,
Grace

From: minister@act.gov.au [<mailto:minister@act.gov.au>]

Sent: Saturday, 23 February 2019 12:13 PM

To: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>

Subject: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 230219 - 1322873 - [REDACTED]



Yvette Berry, MLA

The following correspondence has been submitted via the Contact my Minister website.

The constituent has indicated that they would like a response to their correspondence.

School Chapliacy

Dear Minister I write to communicate my disappointment with your decision to restrict the employment conditions of chaplains at ACT schools. The school my [REDACTED], has recognised the chaplaincy program as

an important part of the school's strategy to "Invest in a safe and supportive learning environment". Your decision threatens the fundamental basis behind the success of the program and therefore undermines the success of the chaplain at [REDACTED] and other public schools through the ACT. I request that you reverse this decision to ensure the continuation of the benefit they provide our children. If you would like to discuss this with me further please contact me [REDACTED] or by reply email. Kind regards [REDACTED]

Correspondence Reference # 230219 - 1322873

Submission date: 23 Feb 2019 12:13pm

Contact Information

[REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]

Postcode:2607

From: [King, Ashley](#) on behalf of [Education DLO](#)
To: [EDU Student Engagement Director's Office](#)
Cc: [EDUMCR](#); [Hawkins, Ross](#); [Sturgiss, Kim](#); [McGarvey, Caitlin](#); [Fleck, Katrina](#); [Brighton, Meg](#)
Subject: [REDACTED] Support for Ending School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED] [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]
Date: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 8:46:59 AM

Hello

Title/Question	Support for Ending School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
Action	Ministerial Response please
Responsibility	SE
Response type	letter
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	EGM SDD 7/3/19 MO 13/32/19
Clearance	EGM SDD
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
X50291

From: BERRY
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 4:28 PM
To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: An end to chaplins, hurrah!

Please see the attached correspondence relating to Education. For appropriate action/response

Cheers,
Grace

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 23 February 2019 12:29 PM
To: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>
Subject: An end to chaplins, hurrah!

Hi Yvette

I am a child welfare advocate, having visited India twice to undertake my advocacy. As an atheist I've always thought the Abbot Chaplins policy and concept of counselling an interesting starter-for-ten, poorly conceived. Counsellors remember have been in short supply in the school system in recent times...

I am a [REDACTED] NSW resident, but felt compelled to contact you to congratulate you and support your policy stance. Well done and socially progressive too!!,
 Once the religious furore has died down why don't we employ a degree qualified, non-religious social worker/youth worker, as I think this is an important support position within all schools, for all the reasons I'm sure you're across.
 Please influence your federal Labor colleagues.

Thanks & regards

[REDACTED]

From: [King, Ashley](#) on behalf of [Education DLO](#)
To: [EDU Student Engagement Director's Office](#)
Cc: [EDUMCR](#); [Hawkins, Ross](#); [Sturgiss, Kim](#); [McGarvey, Caitlin](#); [Fleck, Katrina](#); [Brighton, Meg](#)
Subject: [REDACTED] Support for School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED] [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]
Date: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 8:54:30 AM

Hello

Title/Question	Support for School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
Action	Ministerial Response please
Responsibility	SE
Response type	Letter
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	EGM SDD 7/3/19 MO 13/3/19
Clearance	EGM SDD
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
X50291

From: BERRY

Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 4:28 PM

To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>

Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>

Subject: FW: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 230219 - 1322888 - [REDACTED]

Please see the attached correspondence relating to Education. For appropriate action/response

Cheers,
Grace

From: minister@act.gov.au [<mailto:minister@act.gov.au>]

Sent: Saturday, 23 February 2019 4:02 PM

To: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>

Subject: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 230219 - 1322888 - [REDACTED]



Yvette Berry, MLA

The following correspondence has been submitted via the Contact my Minister website.

The constituent has indicated that they would like a response to their correspondence.

Disappointment in Chaplains being Banned from ACT Schools

Dear Minister, I wish to expressed my disappointment in your recent announcement to ban chaplains in schools in the ACT. I am a long life labor voter and this announcement and another reason why I'm so disappointment with all

politics in the country. This yet another announcement that doesn't unit community but creates more pain and disillusionment. I note the current federal labor policy regarding chaplains in schools is fair because it gives the school and community choice between a chaplain and a social worker. My school Chaplin did a lot for me and my school, he built community and transferred our school with working bees and social events. The Chaplin program is one of the very few good this John Howard did for state schools. Give the schools the freedom to choose. Please reconsider this decision. Kind Regards [REDACTED]

Correspondence Reference # 230219 - 1322888

Submission date: 23 Feb 2019 4:01pm

Contact Information

[REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]

Izzard, Belinda

From: King, Ashley on behalf of Education DLO
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 9:03 AM
To: EDU Student Engagement Director's Office
Cc: EDUMCR; Hawkins, Ross; Sturgiss, Kim; McGarvey, Caitlin; Fleck, Katrina; Brighton, Meg
Subject: [REDACTED] Support for Ending School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hello

Title/Question	Support for Ending School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
Action	Ministerial Response please
Responsibility	SE
Response type	letter
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	EGM SDD 7/3/19 MO 13/3/19
Clearance	EGM SDD
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
 X50291

From: BERRY
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 4:28 PM
To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 240219 - 1322956 - [REDACTED]

Please see the attached correspondence relating to Education. For appropriate action/response

Cheers,
 Grace

From: minister@act.gov.au [<mailto:minister@act.gov.au>]
Sent: Sunday, 24 February 2019 6:41 PM
To: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>
Subject: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 240219 - 1322956 - [REDACTED]



Yvette Berry, MLA

The following correspondence has been submitted via the Contact my Minister website.

The constituent has indicated that they do not require a response to their correspondence.

Chaplains

Hi Minister, as a parent of kids in school in Canberra I fully support your decision to ban chaplains in schools. They have no place in a secular environment. I know you will get some pretty active lobbying from the religious groups but I hope you stand strong and don't relent on this matter. Thanks, [REDACTED]

Correspondence Reference # 240219 - 1322956

Submission date: 24 Feb 2019 6:41pm

Contact Information

[REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]

Postcode:2615

Izzard, Belinda

From: King, Ashley on behalf of Education DLO
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 9:11 AM
To: EDU Student Engagement Director's Office
Cc: EDUMCR; Hawkins, Ross; Sturgiss, Kim; McGarvey, Caitlin; Fleck, Katrina; Brighton, Meg
Subject: [REDACTED] Support for Ending of School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hello

Title/Question	Support for Ending of School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
Action	Ministerial Response please
Responsibility	SE
Response type	Letter
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	EGM SDD 7/3/19 MO 13/3/19
Clearance	EGM SDD
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
X50291

From: BERRY
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 4:28 PM
To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Removing Chaplains

Please see the attached correspondence relating to Education. For appropriate action/response

Cheers,
Grace

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 23 February 2019 11:30 PM
To: yvette.berry@act.alp.org.au
Subject: Removing Chaplains

Dear Yvette,

Thank you so much for getting the ball rolling on this matter and I look forward to the day when they are all gone. I can't believe anyone can justify the hundreds of millions spent nationwide on chaplains.

Congratulations, I think you're great and obviously very smart too.

Regards

[REDACTED]

Get Outlook for Android

Izzard, Belinda

From: King, Ashley on behalf of Education DLO
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 9:24 AM
To: EDU Student Engagement Director's Office
Cc: EDUMCR; Hawkins, Ross; Sturgiss, Kim; McGarvey, Caitlin; Fleck, Katrina; Brighton, Meg
Subject: [REDACTED] Support for Ending School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hello

Title/Question	Support for Ending School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
Action	Ministerial Response please
Responsibility	SE
Response type	Letter
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	EGM SDD 7/3/19 MO 13/3/19
Clearance	EGM SDD
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
X50291

-----Original Message-----

From: BERRY
 Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 4:28 PM
 To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
 Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>
 Subject: FW: I support your chaplain decision

Please see the attached correspondence relating to Education. For appropriate action/response

Cheers,
Grace

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
 Sent: Sunday, 24 February 2019 8:11 PM
 To: yvette.berry@act.alp.org.au
 Subject: I support your chaplain decision

Hi Yvette,

I was reading the article in the CT on the government's decision RE: chaplains in public schools and wanted to send a quick note of support. It's a sensible position and is another step in moving us into the 21st century proper.

For reference, I've gone through the public school system here [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]

Regards,



Izzard, Belinda

From: King, Ashley on behalf of Education DLO
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 10:00 AM
To: EDU Student Engagement Director's Office
Cc: EDUMCR; Hawkins, Ross; Sturgiss, Kim; McGarvey, Caitlin; Fleck, Katrina; Brighton, Meg
Subject: [REDACTED] Info Only Support for Ending School Chaplaincy Program Anon [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi

Title/Question	Info Only Support for Ending School Chaplaincy Program Anon
Action	Nil
Responsibility	SE
Response type	Nil
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	N/A
Clearance	nil
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
X50291

From: BERRY
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 4:28 PM
To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 240219 - 1322964

Please see the attached correspondence relating to Education. For appropriate action/response

Cheers,
Grace

From: minister@act.gov.au [<mailto:minister@act.gov.au>]
Sent: Sunday, 24 February 2019 8:37 PM
To: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>
Subject: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 240219 - 1322964



Yvette Berry, MLA

The following correspondence has been submitted via the Contact my Minister website.

The constituent has indicated that they do not require a response to their correspondence.

Canberra times story on chaplains

Hi Yvette, i hadn't heard about the chaplaincy issue until this evening, but wanted to let you know that [REDACTED] here in the ACT and I'm very happy with your decision and the stance you've taken. Your request for funding for secular support was great, and your response to that refusal is great. Very happy also that you've been fair enough to offer employment to current chaplains if theyre happy to drop the religious aspect of their work. A big part of our decision to keep our kids in public schools is to keep them away from religious teachings, and this means that we have a real hope of doing that. Thanks!

Correspondence Reference # 240219 - 1322964

Submission date: 24 Feb 2019 8:36pm

Contact Information

No details provided

From: [King, Ashley](#) on behalf of [Education DLO](#)
To: [EDU Student Engagement Director's Office](#)
Cc: [Hawkins, Ross](#); [Sturgiss, Kim](#); [EDUMCR](#); [McGarvey, Caitlin](#); [Fleck, Katrina](#); [Brighton, Meg](#)
Subject: [REDACTED] Support for School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED] [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]
Date: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 10:06:49 AM

Hi

Title/Question	Support for School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
Action	Ministerial Response please
Responsibility	SE
Response type	letter
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	EGM SDD 7/3/19 MO 13/3/19
Clearance	EGM SDD
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
X50291

From: BERRY

Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 4:28 PM

To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>

Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>

Subject: FW: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 240219 - 1322965 - [REDACTED]

Please see the attached correspondence relating to Education. For appropriate action/response

Cheers,
Grace

From: minister@act.gov.au [<mailto:minister@act.gov.au>]

Sent: Sunday, 24 February 2019 9:03 PM

To: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>

Subject: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 240219 - 1322965 - [REDACTED]



Yvette Berry, MLA

The following correspondence has been submitted via the Contact my Minister website.

The constituent has indicated that they would like a response to their correspondence.

Banning of ACT public school chaplains

Dear Minister, I am extremely concerned and dismayed at the recent announcement to ban chaplains. At my school, we have an absolutely amazing chaplain who supports not only the students, but parents and teachers as well.

From: [King, Ashley](#) on behalf of [Education DLO](#)
To: [EDU Student Engagement Director's Office](#)
Cc: [EDUMCR](#); [Hawkins, Ross](#); [Sturgiss, Kim](#); [McGarvey, Caitlin](#); [Fleck, Katrina](#); [Brighton, Meg](#)
Subject: [REDACTED] Support for School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED] [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]
Date: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 10:32:56 AM

Hello

Title/Question	Support for School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
Action	Minister Berry Response please
Responsibility	SE
Response type	letter
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	EGM SDD 7/3/19 MO 13/3/19
Clearance	EGM SDD
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
X50291

From: BERRY
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 4:27 PM
To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: School chaplaincy

Please see the attached correspondence relating to Education. For appropriate action/response

Cheers,
Grace

From: RAMSAY
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 9:12 AM
To: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: School chaplaincy
One for your office please.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 24 February 2019 7:04 PM
To: RAMSAY <RAMSAY@act.gov.au>
Subject: School chaplaincy

Dear Mr Ramsay,
I read with great disappointment that the ACT school chaplaincy program is going to end. [REDACTED] attend a school where there is a school chaplain and it is a program that works really well. I'm wondering why, as a Christian, you would oppose this program. Are you aware that the role of the chaplains is NOT to evangelise or proselytise but to stand alongside the students as they approach problems or difficulties? I don't therefore understand why you, of all people, would oppose this.
It looks as though your loyalty to the Labor Party is greater than your loyalty to God. Is this the case?
I would be grateful for your response.
Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

Izzard, Belinda

From: King, Ashley on behalf of Education DLO
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 10:52 AM
To: EDU Student Engagement Director's Office
Cc: Hawkins, Ross; Sturgiss, Kim; EDUMCR; McGarvey, Caitlin; Fleck, Katrina; Brighton, Meg
Subject: [REDACTED] Support for School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED] SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hello

Title/Question	Support for School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
Action	Minister Berry Response please
Responsibility	SE
Response type	Letter
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	EGM SDD 7/3/19 MO 13/3/19
Clearance	EGM SDD
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
X50291

From: BERRY
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 4:28 PM
To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 230219 - 1322891 - [REDACTED]

Please see the attached correspondence relating to Education. For appropriate action/response

Cheers,
Grace

From: RAMSAY
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 9:07 AM
To: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 230219 - 1322891 - [REDACTED]

Hi Abby,

Is this one for your office?

Thanks
Sharyn

From: minister@act.gov.au [<mailto:minister@act.gov.au>]
Sent: Saturday, 23 February 2019 4:54 PM

To: RAMSAY <RAMSAY@act.gov.au>

Subject: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 230219 - 1322891 - [REDACTED]



Gordon Ramsay, MLA

The following correspondence has been submitted via the Contact my Minister website.

The constituent has indicated that they would like a response to their correspondence.

Ban on Chaplains in schools

Hi Gordon, I didn't have your email so I'm going through the system. This decision is very strange given the Code of Conduct clearly specifies chaplains are not to proselytise. The role is a pastoral and spiritual one and the spiritual comment is part of curriculum. There is so much mis-information about chaplains in public schools. Having been a chaplain and run a service for many years the enhancement of the wellbeing for students, families and staff is what these services at their best provide. It's sad to me that your government has put some unfounded concerns ahead of the greater good. [REDACTED]

Correspondence Reference # 230219 - 1322891

Submission date: 23 Feb 2019 4:54pm

Contact Information

[REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]
Postcode:0839

Izzard, Belinda

From: King, Ashley on behalf of Education DLO
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 11:00 AM
To: EDU Student Engagement Director's Office
Cc: EDUMCR; Hawkins, Ross; Sturgiss, Kim; McGarvey, Caitlin; Fleck, Katrina; Brighton, Meg
Subject: [REDACTED] info Only Support for School Chaplaincy Program Anon
 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi

Title/Question	Info Only Support for School Chaplaincy Program Anon
Action	Nil
Responsibility	SE
Response type	Info Only
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	Nil
Clearance	Nil
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
 X50291

From: BERRY
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 4:27 PM
To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 240219 - 1322966

Please see the attached correspondence relating to Education. For appropriate action/response

Cheers,
 Grace

From: RAMSAY
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 9:12 AM
To: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 240219 - 1322966

One for your office please.

From: minister@act.gov.au [<mailto:minister@act.gov.au>]
Sent: Sunday, 24 February 2019 9:10 PM.
To: RAMSAY <RAMSAY@act.gov.au>
Subject: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 240219 - 1322966



Gordon Ramsay, MLA

The following correspondence has been submitted via the Contact my Minister website.

The constituent has indicated that they do not require a response to their correspondence.

Extremely disappointed.

Dear Mr Ramsay I'm extremely disappointed in the current ACT education minister's decision to scrap chaplains from ACT schools. I wonder how the Bill of Rights can state that there should be freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief, however to remove chaplains completely without giving any public schools a CHOICE is so contradictory to that bill it makes me sick. Is it just that the Bill of Rights protects religious beliefs just so long as it's not Christian beliefs? I'm not writing to Ms Berry because from what I have read of this subject in the media, she is obviously so completely anti chaplains for some reason, I don't think she would listen to sense if it hit her over the head. I was hoping as a previous man of God, an obvious man of intelligence and hopefully still a believer, you would help the rest of your party see what an atrocious breach of the Bill of Rights banning chaplains would be. In the last few years my eyes have been truly opened to the fact that being a so called "safe seat", the ACT Labor/Green party no longer cares about what their constituents truly want. They constantly do their own thing without proper consultation with the Canberra community and this I have to say for me, is the last straw.

Correspondence Reference # 240219 - 1322966

Submission date: 24 Feb 2019 9:10pm

Contact Information

No details provided

Izzard, Belinda

From: King, Ashley on behalf of Education DLO
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 11:12 AM
To: EDU Student Engagement Director's Office
Cc: EDUMCR; Hawkins, Ross; Sturgiss, Kim; McGarvey, Caitlin; Fleck, Katrina; Brighton, Meg
Subject: [REDACTED] Support for School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED] [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hello

Title/Question	Support for School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
Action	Ministerial Response please
Responsibility	[REDACTED]
Response type	letter
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	EGM SDD 7/3/19 MO 13/3/19
Clearance	EGM SDD
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
X50291

From: BERRY
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 4:27 PM
To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: School Chaplaincy

Please see the attached correspondence relating to Education. For appropriate action/response

Cheers,
Grace

From: Moody, Ethan **On Behalf Of** BARR Reception
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 11:32 AM
To: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: School Chaplaincy

Hi Abby,

Referring to your office.

Kind regards,

Ethan Moody
Office of the Chief Minister
Andrew Barr MLA | Member for Kurrajong
Ph: (02) 6205 0011

E: ethan.moody@act.gov.au

ACT Legislative Assembly - 196 London Circuit, Canberra ACT 2600

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 11:31 AM

To: BARR Reception <BARR@act.gov.au>

Subject: School Chaplaincy

Dear Chief Minister

I would like to meet with you about your government's decision to end the School Chaplaincy Program in ACT Schools at the end of the year. Would you please set aside a time to talk about this decision which impacts our local community greatly?

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

Izzard, Belinda

From: King, Ashley on behalf of Education DLO
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 11:19 AM
To: EDU Student Engagement Director's Office
Cc: EDUMCR; Hawkins, Ross; Sturgiss, Kim; McGarvey, Caitlin; Fleck, Katrina; Brighton, Meg
Subject: [REDACTED] SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY PROGRA, [REDACTED]
 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi

Title/Question	SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY PROGRA, [REDACTED]
Action	Ministerial Response please
Responsibility	SE
Response type	Letter
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	EGM SDD 7/3/19 MO 13/3/19
Clearance	EGM SDD
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
X50291

From: BERRY
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 4:27 PM
To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 250219 - 1323163 - [REDACTED]

Please see the attached correspondence relating to Education. For appropriate action/response

Cheers,
Grace

From: minister@act.gov.au [<mailto:minister@act.gov.au>]
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 12:35 PM
To: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>
Subject: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 250219 - 1323163 - [REDACTED]



Yvette Berry, MLA

The following correspondence has been submitted via the Contact my Minister website.

The constituent has indicated that they would like a response to their correspondence.

School Chaplaincy

Dear Minister, I want to express my dismay at the proposed dismantling of the chaplaincy in schools initiative next year in the ACT. I have attended meetings where the reports of headmasters, chaplains and schools is overwhelmingly that the chaplains add great value to the welfare of students and staff. As a [REDACTED] attending public school in the ACT they would be all the poorer for having withdrawn the loving, careful and spiritual contribution that chaplains provide. As [REDACTED] I can vouch for the value of chaplaincy in public institutions along with other helping professionals I think that in a pluralistic society that faith groups should not be marginalised, and that those with faith or none should be valued and respected equally. To be able to address issues of purpose and meaning and value in state schools, which chaplains do when requested, is important. As chaplaincy services are voluntary - as long as guidelines are followed by the chaplains - I cannot see the sense of this initiative being dumped!

Correspondence Reference # 250219 - 1323163

Submission date: 25 Feb 2019 12:34pm

Contact Information

[REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]
Postcode: 2614

Izzard, Belinda

From: King, Ashley on behalf of Education DLO
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 11:54 AM
To: EDU Student Engagement Director's Office
Cc: EDUMCR; Hawkins, Ross; Sturgiss, Kim; McGarvey, Caitlin; Fleck, Katrina; Brighton, Meg
Subject: [REDACTED] Support for Ending School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
 [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi

Title/Question	Support for Ending School Chaplaincy Program [REDACTED]
Action	Ministerial Response please
Responsibility	SE
Response type	letter
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	EGM SDD 7/3/19 MO 13/3/19
Clearance	EGM SDD
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
X50291

From: BERRY
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 10:15 AM
To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 250219 - 1323372 - [REDACTED]

Please see below/attached correspondence related to Education. For appropriate action/response.

Cheers,
Abby/Grace

From: minister@act.gov.au [<mailto:minister@act.gov.au>]
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 6:04 PM
To: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>
Subject: Contact my Minister - Correspondence: 250219 - 1323372 - [REDACTED]



Yvette Berry, MLA

The following correspondence has been submitted via the Contact my Minister website.

The constituent has indicated that they do not require a response to their correspondence.

Thank you for your action on ACT Chaplains

Dear Minister Berry, It was quite a brave step to axe the Chaplains scheme. I have been against it since it was announced, as it was obviously John Howards method of implanting Christian Missionaries into Australian schools. I lived in the [REDACTED] and have been a long time member of [REDACTED] and various [REDACTED]. I have been telling people [REDACTED] about government funded Chaplains, they have been quite astonished, as they often said they thought Australia was a reasonable place. I was also at the High Court for Williams II v The Commonwealth in 2014, where I watched as the Commonwealth Solicitor found it very difficult to explain to Chief Justice Hayne what the Chaplains actually did, as they are not therapists or councilors but are only allowed to refer to other services. No doubt you have been getting lots of "commentary" from the proponents or those with vested interests in the Chaplains. Most comments I have seen are very supportive of your actions. Thank you

Correspondence Reference # 250219 - 1323372

Submission date: 25 Feb 2019 6:04pm

Contact Information

[REDACTED]

Postcode:2902

From: [King, Ashley](#) on behalf of [Education DLO](#)
To: [EDU Student Engagement Director's Office](#)
Cc: [Hawkins, Ross](#); [Sturgiss, Kim](#); [EDUMCR](#); [McGarvey, Caitlin](#); [Fleck, Katrina](#); [Brighton, Meg](#)
Subject: [REDACTED] FAA BANNING CHRISTIAN RELIGION IN SCHOOLS [REDACTED] [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]
Date: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 12:10:01 PM
Attachments: [myview.pdf](#)

Hi

Title/Question	FAA BANNING CHRISTIAN RELIGION IN SCHOOLS [REDACTED]
Action	FAA
Responsibility	SE
Response type	FAA
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	FAA
Clearance	FAa
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
X50291

From: BERRY
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 10:14 AM
To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Please read
FYI.
Not sure if it needs a response
Cheers,
Abby/Grace

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 25 February 2019 9:49 PM
To: yvette.berry@act.alp.org.au
Subject: Please read
Hi Yvette,
I have attached a PDF with my letter for you, please read.
Thank you,
[REDACTED]

Schools are a type of society, as such they should model the healthy view of all of society. It has come to my attention that schools are moving in the direction of banning Christian religion. I say that this is wrong for two reasons. 1) Where Christian religion has been banned in modern society those societies have become oppressive. 2) Christian religion has benefits in preserving mercy in society, and is known to increase societal obedience.

Removing God from society comes at a cost. The teachings of Christ lead citizens toward obedience, mercy, and servitude. Where these teachings are banned society descends into a self serving attitude and eventually anarchy. To see this you only have to look at Communist societies, which are purely secular, built on the law written premise that “there is no God”. The former USSR, China, and North Korea, are such Godless societies. All of these societies have a history of abusing their own citizens. Why is this the case, well if there is no God, there is no rule of moral law. Secular society at it root is self serving, for if there is no accountability to a moral God, the only thing that matters is self survival.

I could talk for eons of the bible's benefits to man, with Jesus call to “Love” even your enemies, to “do good to them”, to “not murder”, “to be kind and compassionate, giving preference to one another”, “to serve one another in love”, to “remember the poor” but for now I will focus on just one scripture.

1Pe 2:13-14 Keep all the laws of men because of the Lord; those of the king, who is over all, And those of the rulers who are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers and for the praise of those who do well.

Studies show how the Teachings of Christ help criminal Offenders rehabilitate

In April of 1997, with the full support of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), Prison Fellowship Ministries (PFM) launched an unusual correctional experiment—a Faith-Based Pre-Release Program. The program was distinctive in that it was expressly Christian in orientation. The InnerChange Freedom Initiative (IFI), as it would later be named, was officially launched under the recommendation of then-governor George W. Bush. This unique public-private partnership between TDCJ and PF represented a first for Texas. The study showed that people exposed to the teaching of Jesus were more successful in rehabilitation, and less likely to reoffend once released from prison as an example 15% reoffence rates to people who completed the bible study to 42.2% for those that did not.

RECIDIVISM TYPE	18 Month Recidivism Rates for IFI Participants 24 Month Recidivism Rates for IFI Program Graduates (Excluding first 6 months following release)		24 Month Recidivism Rates for IFI Program Graduates and Non-Completers Paroled Early	
	(1a) IFI Graduates vs (2a) IFI Non-Completers		(1b) IFI Graduates vs (2b) IFI Non-Completers Paroled Early	
	(1a)	(2a)	(1b)	(2b)
Arrest				
% Arrested	16%	42.2%	17.3%	62.7%
# Arrested	12	43	13	32
Sample Size	75	102	75	51
Incarceration				
% Incarcerated	8%	34.3%	8%	47.1%
# Incarcerated	6	35	6	25
Sample Size	75	102	75	51

Baker Eddie Morton a prison minister with Unfoldment Inc.

"Welcome to God's deputy home of three great healing ideas, Sermon on the mount the movie, Conquering Fear, and what can I do to be saved. These ideas have been tested and proven to be effective, they were tested for three years with more than two hundred inmates at lanton prison in Virginia as a part of the Unfoldment Incorporated substance abuse program at the prison when the program ended the DC department of corrections reported a 76% reduction in the recidivism rate for inmates who were exposed to these ideas, if these ideas can heal those regarded as the worst among us they can help anybody".

The following is a direct quotation from **George Cornell, AP Religion Writer (The Wilson Daily Times, December 1, 1990)**

The group's study involved 190 prisoners who between 1975 and 1979 had taken part in Christian discipleship training, and a similar number who had not, matched by age, race, gender and other factors. Both groups had been released from prison eight to 14 years prior to the study.

It found that the religion-trained ones had an 11 percentage point lower recidivism rate than the control group. Forty percent of the religion-schooled group committed new offenses, while 51 percent of the others did so.

The religiously trained group also had a longer crime-free period following release, and when they did commit new crimes, the crimes were less severe compared to past offenses. The control group had increased crime-severity.

The recidivism rate for women who took religious training was even lower, only 19 percent, compared to 47 percent among the control group of women. Among men only, the differential was only seven points...

We are a family who has a Christian background, but we can not afford to send our children to a private school, I feel it would be an offence to our family, and ██████████, to be told by their school that Christian religion is banned. For me I see Christian chaplains as a representation of the acceptance of Christianity, and a validation of their family life. But more than that removing Christ is removing the only authoritative teaching of mercy, servitude, and societal obedience. I don't want my kids to think they are worthless animals, with nothing but survival as their goal. As it stands religion is op-in in public schools it is not forcing anyone to do anything.



CENTER FOR RESEARCH
ON RELIGION AND
URBAN CIVIL SOCIETY

The InnerChange Freedom Initiative

*A Preliminary Evaluation
of a Faith-Based Prison Program*

BYRON R. JOHNSON

*Director and Distinguished Senior Fellow
Center for Research on Religion and Urban Civil Society
Adjunct Fellow, Center for Civic Innovation
Manhattan Institute*

WITH DAVID B. LARSON

*International Center for the Integration
of Health and Spirituality*

CRRUCS, the Center for Research on Religion and Urban Civil Society, is part of the School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania. Founded in 2000, CRRUCS is dedicated to producing and disseminating cutting-edge empirical knowledge about the role of religion in contemporary urban America. With an interdisciplinary team of Penn-based colleagues, and in close working partnerships with other major universities, think tanks, research intermediaries, and news organizations, CRRUCS focuses on how national and local faith-based organizations help to solve big-city social problems; how religion relates to contemporary urban political participation, civic engagement, and social well-being; and how local congregations, grassroots ministries, and other communities of faith matter in the daily lives of disadvantaged urban children, youth, and families.



CENTER FOR RESEARCH
ON RELIGION AND
URBAN CIVIL SOCIETY

The InnerChange Freedom Initiative

*A Preliminary Evaluation
of a Faith-Based Prison Program*

BYRON R. JOHNSON

*Director and Distinguished Senior Fellow
Center for Research on Religion and Urban Civil Society
Adjunct Fellow, Center for Civic Innovation
Manhattan Institute*

WITH DAVID B. LARSON

*International Center for the Integration
of Health and Spirituality*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4	Executive Summary
6	Background
	Do Secular Prison Programs Reduce Recidivism?
	Prison Fellowship and Religious Programs
	Describing the InnerChange Freedom Initiative
11	Research Methodology for Evaluating IFI
	Selection Criteria for Admission to the IFI
	A Matched Design
	IFI Participants—the Study Group
	Selection Bias
	Graduating from the IFI Program
	Measuring Recidivism
	Monitoring the Role of Mentoring
17	Findings
	Does Participation in IFI Reduce Recidivism?
	Mentoring and Aftercare
	Why Do IFI Graduates Have Lower Recidivism Rates?
	Describing the IFI Environment
25	Spiritual Transformation—A Developmental Process
	Spiritual Transformation Theme 1: I’m Not Who I Used to Be
	Spiritual Transformation Theme 2: Spiritual Growth
	Spiritual Transformation Theme 3: God Versus the Prison Code
	Spiritual Transformation Theme 4: Positive Outlook on Life
	Spiritual Transformation Theme 5: The Need to Give Back
	The Role of Spiritual Transformation in Prisoner Rehabilitation
33	Mentors Matter But It’s Hard to Do
42	What Do We Know About IFI Recidivists?
	Summarizing Lessons Learned from IFI Recidivists
48	Summary of Findings
49	Discussion of the Findings
13	Table 1
14	Table 2
17	Table 3
18	Table 4
19	Table 5
20	Table 6
21	Table 7
52	Endnotes

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

From the beginning of this evaluation research project, the research team has worked closely with and benefited from the assistance of numerous officials from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) headquarters in Huntsville. These include Don Keil and Lynne Mosley from the Chaplaincy Department, Debbie Roberts and Cathy McVey from the Programs and Services Division; and Pam Thielke from the TDCJ Parole Division in Houston. The research team made hundreds of visits to the Carol Vance Unit over the last six years and has greatly benefited from the cooperation of Warden Fred Becker, Deputy Warden Bruce August, Captain Moreno, and numerous other correctional staff. The research would not have been possible without the support of key InnerChange Freedom Initiative (IFI) staff such as Tommie Dorsett, Philip Dautrich, Jerry Bryan, Jack Cowley, Ray Roberts, and IFI Aftercare staff Larry Frank and James Peterson. These individuals have assisted the research team and have tolerated our questioning, observing, and monitoring, at all hours of the day and night over the last six years. The following research colleagues have been instrumental in completing this research: Spencer Li, Jennifer Schwank, Roosevelt Noble, James Schut, Anne Piehl, Joseph Tierney, George Gallup, John DiIulio, Rebble Johnson, James Q. Wilson, and Marc Siegel. Special thanks goes to Dr. Tony Fabelo, Executive Director of the Criminal Justice Policy Council (CJPC), and CJPC senior researcher Michael Eisenberg. Tony and Mike have provided invaluable counsel and assistance in all aspects of the evaluation as well as the preparation of this final report. A great deal of appreciation is owed to Richard Lewis, Research Director at Prison Fellowship Ministries, who has been supportive throughout this lengthy study and has enabled us to conduct an unhindered and thoroughly independent evaluation. Finally, I want to acknowledge the assistance of my long-time research collaborator and dear friend, pioneering faith-factor researcher, Dr. David B. Larson. Who could have imagined, that at the age of 54, in the prime of his research life, Dave would unexpectedly die March 5, 2002? Dave started this project with me in 1997, and it would not have been attempted without him.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The InnerChange Freedom Initiative: A Preliminary Evaluation of a Faith-Based Prison Program

In April of 1997, with the full support of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), Prison Fellowship Ministries (PF) launched an unusual correctional experiment—a Faith-Based Pre-Release Program. The program was distinctive in that it was expressly Christian in orientation. The InnerChange Freedom Initiative (IFI), as it would later be named, was officially launched under the recommendation of then-governor George W. Bush. This unique public-private partnership between TDCJ and PF represented a first for Texas, if not the country. Technically speaking, IFI is a faith-based program operated by PF through a contract with TDCJ. IFI is a largely volunteer driven program that is different from other rehabilitation programs or prison ministries in some profound ways. It represents perhaps the first full-scale attempt to offer comprehensive programming emphasizing education, work, life skills, values restructuring, and one-on-one mentoring in an environment where religious instruction permeates all aspects of the prison environment.

Reanalyzing data previously compiled and analyzed by the Criminal Justice Policy Council of Texas, this study tracks the two-year post-release recidivism rates for those prisoners that entered the IFI program from April of 1997 through January of 1999, and were released from prison prior to September 1, 2000. In addition, this report summarizes the results of an intensive on-site, multi-year field study of IFI, including in-depth interviews with IFI staff and participants.

To allow for a two-year tracking period, IFI participants included in the current study are those who have had the potential to be out of prison for at least two years by September 1, 2002. A total of 177 participants met these requirements and thus formed the basis of the IFI study group. Comparison groups were selected from the records of inmates released during the evaluation period that met program selection criteria but did not enter the program. The comparison groups were matched with IFI participants based on the following characteristics: race, age, offense type, and salient factor risk score. A total of 1,754 inmates were identified as the main comparison group for this study.

Anchored in biblical teaching, life-skills education, and group accountability, IFI is a three-phase program involving prisoners in 16 to 24 months of in-prison programs and 6 to 12 months of aftercare following release from prison. In this ambitious correctional experiment, IFI is responsible for implementing, administering, and funding inmate programs, and TDCJ is responsible for housing and security matters. IFI and TDCJ are testing the proposition that by intentionally working together they will be able to achieve the civic purpose of recidivism reduction and thereby increase public safety.

Among the study's key findings are the following:

- (1.) The IFI participants in this study include 75 prisoners who completed all phases of the program (called IFI Graduates), 51 who were paroled early, 24 who voluntarily quit the program, 19 who were removed for disciplinary reasons, 7 who were removed at the request of the staff, and 1 who was removed for serious medical problems. The total number of IFI participants comes to 177 offenders who were released prior to September 1, 2000. IFI participants were compared to a matched group of 1,754 inmates who met the IFI selection criteria but did not participate in the program.

- (2.) 17.3% of IFI program graduates and 35% of the matched comparison group were arrested during the two-year post-release period. A program graduate is someone who completes not only the in-prison phases of IFI dealing with biblical education, work, and community service (usually lasting 16 months), but also includes an aftercare phase (usually lasting 6 months) in which the participant must hold a job and have been an active church member for 3 consecutive months following release from prison.
- (3.) 8% of IFI program graduates and 20.3% of the matched comparison group were incarcerated during the two-year post-release period.
- (4.) Considering all participants, including those inmates who did and did not complete all phases of the program, 36.2% of IFI participants were arrested compared to 35% of the matched group during the two-year tracking period. Among the total number of IFI participants, 24.3% were incarcerated compared to 20.3% of the comparison group during the two-year post-release period.
- (5.) Mentor contact is associated with lower rates of recidivism.
- (6.) Initial skepticism of the IFI program diminished over time with TDCJ staff eventually embracing the program.
- (7.) Narratives of IFI members revealed five spiritual transformation themes that are consistent with characteristics long associated with offender rehabilitation: (a) I'm not who I used to be; (b) spiritual growth; (c) God versus the prison code; (d) positive outlook on life; and (e) the need to give back to society.
- (8.) Spiritual transformation can best be understood as a developmental process marked by key turning points or events.
- (9.) Completing the IFI program, and continued positive pre- and post-release mentoring are central to both the offender's spiritual transformation and rehabilitation.
- (10.) Lack of post-release accountability via mentors and congregations, the decision of the IFI participants to isolate themselves from those that could most benefit them, and the tendency to not accept personal responsibility for poor decision-making, are factors associated with recidivism.

BACKGROUND

In January of 1996, Prison Fellowship Ministries (PF) introduced the concept of a Faith-Based Program to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). The concept was distinctive in that it described a program that was expressly Christian in orientation, “emphasizing restorative justice, in which the offender works through several phases of treatment to reshape his value system.”¹ Shortly thereafter, the 75th Texas Legislature directed TDCJ to develop a rehabilitation tier of programs that would be evaluated on its success in reducing recidivism. Several existing as well as new programs were subsequently identified as meeting this legislative goal: In-Prison Therapeutic Community, Pre-Release Therapeutic Community, Pre-Release Substance Abuse Treatment, and the Sex Offender Treatment Program. The “InnerChange” Pre-Release Program, as it was originally named, became TDCJ’s latest addition to the rehabilitative tier when it was officially launched in April of 1997, under the recommendation of then-governor George W. Bush.

Interestingly, this unique public-private partnership was commonly referred to by TDCJ as, “TDCJ-Prison Fellowship’s ‘InnerChange’: Faith-Based Pre-Release Program.” The collaboration between TDCJ and PF represented a first for Texas, if not the country.² Several months after the official start-up of the InnerChange Pre-Release Program, Prison Fellowship officially changed the name to the InnerChange Freedom Initiative (IFI). According to PF, IFI is a program different than other prison ministries in that it represents the first full-scale attempt to offer religious programs in a prison environment virtually “around-the-clock.” As we will explain later in this study, observations of the program over the last six years show that IFI promotes adult basic education, vocational training, life skills, mentoring, and aftercare, while linking each of these important components in an environment permeated by faith and spirituality.

Do Secular Prison Programs Reduce Recidivism?

The question of whether or not secular treatment programs are effective was addressed in Robert Martinson’s widely cited study, “What Works? Questions and Answers about Prison Reform.” This study, or at least many of the subsequent interpretations of it, seemed to emphatically answer this question in the negative—nothing works.³ However, subsequent research has more accurately answered the question this way—some prison programs do reduce recidivism for some offenders, in some settings.⁴ Over the last two decades there have been a number of studies systematically evaluating the effectiveness of various correctional treatment programs to reduce recidivism.⁵ These research reviews draw very similar conclusions about what is effective in reducing recidivism following release from prison. In general, rehabilitation programs that were most efficacious included at least one of the following components:

- academic skills training (e.g. adult basic education and GED)
- vocational skills training (e.g. acquiring and maintaining employment)

- cognitive skills programs (e.g. goal-setting, problem-solving, and self-control)
- drug abuse treatment

It should be noted, however, that the amount of recidivism reduction for those in secular programs when compared to prisoners not receiving the program, tends to be rather small (e.g., 5%–10%).⁶ Unfortunately, evaluations of treatment programs are notoriously under-funded, and it is therefore, difficult to put in place more rigorously designed research methodologies, making interpretation of the findings less definitive. For example, some research only reports on program completers without consideration of matched or comparison groups. Such research presents insurmountable challenges to both validity and reliability. In sum, there is research evidence that some secular programs can reduce recidivism, but these reductions tend to be less than 10%.

Prison Fellowship and Religious Programs

As long as prisons have existed, religious ministries of all shapes and sizes have had outreach to prisoners, but no one ministry has had outreach as pervasive as that provided by Prison Fellowship.⁷ At the core of Prison Fellowship’s mission is the premise that crime is fundamentally a moral and spiritual problem that requires a moral and spiritual solution.⁸ Interestingly, some of the earliest prisons in America were also based on the belief that crime was a moral and spiritual problem and that prisoners were much in need of religion. Consequently, intensive religious instruction and training was very much part of the fabric of some of America’s earliest prisons. It should not come as a surprise, then, that a significant percentage of today’s prison vernacular, as well as philosophy (e.g., corrections, penitentiary, reform, retribution), are drawn heavily from a religious perspective or basis.

Though IFI may indeed be a “revolutionary” correctional experiment, the belief that God can transform the life of even the worst prisoner is not new. Clergy and religious practitioners have proclaimed such a message to prisoners as long as prisons have existed. PF still believes that religion is the critical ingredient in rehabilitation and helping former prisoners go on to lead a crime-free life.

Prison Fellowship is concerned with reaching out to prisoners via a variety of in-prison programs. Through one-to-three-day seminars and weekly Bible studies, inmates are taught to set goals that prepare them for release. These programs teach concepts such as “surviving the prison environment, beginning a relationship with God in prison, overcoming obstacles, building better families, sharing the Gospel behind bars, and preparing for life on the outside.”⁹ The weekly Bible studies usually last an hour, and the one-to-three day seminars might be offered several times a year at a particular prison. The level of prisoner exposure to such religious programming, on an annual basis, would be a maximum of 50 hours of Bible study and several days of intensive seminars—a relatively modest correctional intervention.

There is, however, preliminary empirical evidence that high participation in PF-led Bible studies is associated with reductions in recidivism.¹⁰ Johnson and colleagues found that prisoners from four different New York prisons attending 10 or more Bible studies during a one-year period prior to release, were significantly less likely to be arrested during a one-year post-release follow-up study. In a new study tracking these same prisoners for an additional seven years, findings reveal that high participation in volunteer-led Bible studies remains significantly

linked to lower rates of recidivism for two years and even three years post-release.¹¹ To observe such a significant effect over a three-year post-release period is noteworthy even for a substantial intervention, but is even more compelling considering the relatively minor intervention of volunteer-led Bible studies over the course of one year before release from prison.

An assumption widely held within PF is that if small doses of religious programs can have noticeable effects, then the consequence of significantly increasing the level of faith-based programs, coupled with educational, vocational, and cognitive programs, could lead to much more significant effects. PF leaders would argue there is a fundamental need to complement the traditional prison community with an unabashedly spiritual community. PF believes that if God can change the heart, rehabilitation can truly begin. Further, as prisoners mature spiritually, they believe the prison culture itself can be transformed. Realizing such a paradigmatic shift, PF faithful would contend, could lead to dramatic reductions in prisoner recidivism.

In essence, then, PF saw IFI as a move from small doses of intermittent Bible studies or seminars to a completely faith-based approach to prison programs. PF adherents, in fact, are not alone in this view. The concept of IFI has resonated with a number of correctional leaders and governors across the country, and similar IFI programs are now operational in Iowa, Kansas, and Minnesota.

Describing the InnerChange Freedom Initiative

IFI is a program different than other prison ministries in general, and even Prison Fellowship's own religious programs in particular (e.g. volunteer led seminars and Bible studies), in that it represents the first full-scale attempt to offer religious programs that connect inmate spiritual development with educational, vocational, and life skills training. Realistically, IFI is a "faith-saturated" prison program whose stated mission is to "create and maintain a prison environment that fosters respect for God's law and rights of others, and to encourage the spiritual and moral regeneration of prisoners."¹² According to the IFI promotional material, the program is a "revolutionary, Christ-centered, Bible-based prison program supporting prison inmates through their spiritual and moral transformation beginning while incarcerated and continuing after release."¹³

IFI was launched in April of 1997, at the Carol Vance Unit, a 378 bed prison in Richmond, Texas.¹⁴ The Vance Unit, one of over 100 prisons located throughout Texas, was selected for the site of the InnerChange Freedom Initiative program because of its custody level as a pre-release facility and proximity to the Houston area—the focus of aftercare resources and volunteer recruitment. Only offenders from Houston or surrounding counties are considered for participation in the program.¹⁵ Two-hundred beds in the Vance Unit, or essentially half the facility, have been reserved for participants in the IFI program.¹⁶ The only distinguishing characteristic of the Carol Vance Unit from other pre-release prisons located throughout Texas, is the fact that it is located in the Houston area.

Simply stated, IFI is responsible for inmate programs and TDCJ is responsible for security and custody. Prison Fellowship currently provides IFI with funding to cover the costs for salary and benefits of program staff, costs associated with Bible-based instructional and educational materials for the program, staff and volunteer training materials and expenses.¹⁷ The Texas Department of Criminal Justice covers the security and operating costs of the Vance Unit. Inmate support costs, such as food, medical services and clothing, are also paid for by TDCJ. Together, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice and Prison Fellowship have formed a unique public-private

partnership—one designed to test the proposition that this collaboration could achieve the civic purpose of reducing recidivism and thereby increasing public safety.

Anchored in biblical teaching, life-skills education, and group accountability, IFI is a three-phase program involving prisoners in 16 to 24 months of in-prison biblical programming and 6 to 12 months of aftercare while on parole. Phase I focuses on building a spiritual and moral foundation from which the rest of the program is based. The goal of Phase II is to test the inmate's value system in real-life settings in hopes of preparing him for life after prison. Commonly referred to as aftercare, Phase III is the reentry component of IFI and is designed to help assimilate the inmate back into the community through productive and supportive relationships with family, local churches, and the workplace.

Phase I of IFI lasts 12 months and focuses on rebuilding the inmate's spiritual and moral foundation as well as providing educational and survival skills. A heavy emphasis is placed on: (1) biblical education as well as GED, tutoring, substance abuse prevention, and life skills; (2) work (job assignments are similar to those of other prisoners in the general population at the Vance Unit); (3) support groups designed to increase one's personal faith (Survival Kit, Heart of the Problem, Experiencing God, and Masterlife¹⁸); (4) support groups for improving relations with family members as well as crime victims; (5) mentoring, and (6) peer groups (Community Bible Study).

Phase I is designed to transform the criminal thinking process and establish a new foundation for growth. Six months into Phase I, IFI participants are supposed to be matched with a mentor. Mentors are Christian men from the Houston community who meet with IFI prisoners one-on-one for a minimum of two hours per week. Rarely do mentors miss these meetings.

Phase II of the IFI program lasts 6 to 12 months and seeks to continue the educational, work, and support group aspect of the program. The main difference in Phase II is that IFI participants are allowed to perform community service work during the day at off-site locations, such as Habitat for Humanity. IFI members in Phase II continue with Christian-based education, Bible study courses, mentoring, and support groups, but with a special emphasis on leadership issues. Since IFI operates under the assumption that the program encourages spiritual growth, it is expected that in Phase II participants will begin to increasingly take on leadership roles within the program.

Evening programs are offered to IFI participants throughout the week with support groups focusing on a different topic each night: Monday night program focuses on Personal Faith, Tuesday night—Mentoring, Wednesday night—Substance Abuse, Thursday night—Family/Crime Victims, Friday night—Community Bible Study. Additionally, intensive spiritual weekend retreats are offered periodically through the auspices of Kairos, a nationally recognized prison ministry.

Phase III of IFI is the aftercare component of the faith-based program and lasts for an additional 6 to 12 months. The mission of the aftercare program is to assist IFI members in their reentry into society by helping with housing and employment referrals, facilitating the mentoring relationship, and making connections between the offender and local church communities that will provide a nurturing environment to continue the former prisoner's spiritual growth. Two full-time IFI aftercare workers currently monitor the progress of well over 300 former prisoners in the greater Houston area. Aftercare staff is involved in recruiting new churches and volunteers to assist in the mentoring of IFI participants, and to help with other critical reentry needs such as housing, transportation, and employment.

IFI made the decision early on that the target of aftercare services would be directed toward those offenders completing at least 16 months of the IFI prison program at the Carol Vance Unit. Therefore, those offenders who do not complete the program, for example, because of an opportunity for early parole, or who are asked to leave the program early by IFI (typically for disciplinary reasons), are not guaranteed reentry assistance from IFI's aftercare workers. The justification for this controversial decision is that IFI wanted to encourage and reward successful behavior (completing the program) with additional assistance beyond the prison walls. Arguably, those offenders most in need of aftercare may well be those who are not receiving aftercare since they did not complete the program. IFI leadership ultimately decided it was more prudent to "invest" already limited aftercare resources in only those program participants who had exhibited the most progress by completing the program; rather than investing in individuals who had not sufficiently progressed in the program.¹⁹

The 75th Texas Legislature not only directed the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to develop a rehabilitation tier of programs, but also required the Criminal Justice Policy Council (CJPC) to monitor implementation of these programs as well as measure the program outcomes. In particular, the primary focus of the CJPC evaluation would be to examine if these programs, including IFI, were able to reduce recidivism.²⁰ In addition to documenting outcomes like recidivism, PF felt it vital to commission an independent evaluation that would focus more on the IFI participants and the program itself.²¹ The current evaluation, therefore, relies on the reporting of recidivism data and outcomes previously generated by the CJPC, with the IFI program, participants, and program impact, if any, being the focal point of this study.

The research team adopted an evaluation approach that combined both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The quantitative aspect of the evaluation essentially focused on recidivism outcomes, namely arrest and incarceration of former IFI participants, while the qualitative component relied largely upon observational work and field interviews. This approach helped to document the workings of the faith-based prison program, the spiritual changes in the participants as well as the prison environment, and the experiences of IFI participants following release from prison. The evaluation team was assembled early enough to observe discussions and negotiations between TDCJ and PF at the earliest stages in the development of the IFI program. These observations afforded the research team an inside perspective that has helped to inform the evaluation research.

Selection Criteria for Admission to IFI

Since IFI is a Christian-based program, many have assumed that the program is open only to inmates with a Christian background. This is clearly not the case as inmates from various faith traditions (or no faith tradition) have both applied to and have been selected for participation in the program. Candidates simply must volunteer to participate and recognize that the program is pervasively Christian. In order to be eligible for consideration, inmates within the TDCJ population must be between 16 to 24 months from release on mandatory supervision or parole.²² Only men are considered for the program and candidates must be able to speak English.²³ Sex offenders are excluded from IFI consideration as are inmates with significant medical problems. Adherence to the sex offender exclusion is strictly enforced, though offenders with fairly pronounced medical problems have been admitted into the program.²⁴

The final two criteria (county to which the offender is slated to return following release from prison and custody status) drastically reduced the selection pool and created complications for the IFI program before it could even get started. Eligibility dictated that prisoners must be returning to Houston or an adjacent county. Both TDCJ and PF surmised that it was in the best interest of the future participant, as well as the IFI program, to limit the pool of potential participants to those who were from Houston. Because the Carol Vance Unit is located just outside of Houston, where volunteers, mentors, and aftercare services are based, it was logically expected that

offenders would fare better after release from prison if they were returning to family and other aftercare services in Houston. This criterion alone drastically reduced the size of the potential selection pool.²⁵

The last criterion was even more restricting; prisoners had to have a “minimum-out” custody status in order to be considered for the IFI program. “Minimum-out” custody refers to “a designator used to identify those minimum custody offenders who have been approved to work outside the security perimeter with minimal supervision.”²⁶ Minimum custody is reserved for prisoners who have been able to have their custody level reduced over time by exhibiting good institutional behavior or by not violating institutional rules. TDCJ policy stipulates that prisoners cannot work outside of the prison without minimum-out custody status.²⁷ Pre-release facilities throughout the TDCJ system rely heavily on inmates with minimum-out custody because of the cost savings associated with having them do work for the prison outside of the institution.

Since work and community service is an important feature of the IFI program and participants in Phase II have the opportunity to regularly work in a group outside of the prison in the community or what prisoners call the “free-world,” it was critical for IFI to require a minimum-out custody criteria. Prisoners with minimum-in custody status are not allowed to work outside the prison unit.²⁸ Since prisoners with minimum-in custody levels far outnumber prisoners with minimum-out custody, there simply was an insufficient pool of eligible prisoners from which to draw. This dilemma caused both TDCJ and PF to make several critical concessions at the outset regarding the IFI selection criteria, namely, to consider prisoners with minimum-in status—a point we will revisit in the next section. To prevent misunderstandings about selection it must also be noted that minimum custody status is not determined by offense severity, rather it is based upon the inmate’s institutional track record.

A Matched Design

Initial plans between TDCJ and PF called for sending eligible cohorts of 25 to 35 prisoners every four months to the IFI program. The plans also called for eventually capping the IFI population at 200. These IFI projections certainly seemed reasonable to all the relevant parties; especially considering the total inmate population in TDCJ in 1997 was over 138,000 and climbed to over 151,000 in 2000. The research team proposed and both TDCJ and PF agreed to the process of randomly assigning inmates from the pool of eligible applicants to participation in the IFI program. It was believed that there would be a sufficient selection pool meeting all the criteria and allowing for random assignment to IFI. The control group would be those individuals who applied, met the criteria, were selected for admission, but were randomly assigned to some other pre-release facility.

However, the initial selection process was not yielding enough inmates to fill the 25 to 35 member cohort or group. This obstacle not only made random assignment impossible,²⁹ it put the entire IFI project in jeopardy. TDCJ subsequently agreed to consider those applicants to IFI who had minimum-in status, if there was a high probability of reducing their custody status to minimum-out during the first phase of the program. Though this concession increased the pool size enough to send full cohorts to the IFI program, it did not, however, allow the luxury of assigning participants randomly to IFI or other pre-release facilities, as virtually every eligible prisoner who met all other selection criteria was sent to the IFI program.

Comparison groups were then selected from the records of inmates released during the evaluation period that met program selection criteria but did not enter the program.³⁰ As seen in Table 1, a total of 1,754 inmates were identified as the matched comparison group for this study. These inmates met IFI selection criteria but did not

TABLE 1.

IFI and Comparison Group Descriptions

GROUP	DESCRIPTION	POPULATION
IFI Group	Prisoners who met the selection criteria and entered the program between April 1997 and January of 1999, and were released from prison prior to September 1, 2000.	n=177
Match Group	Prisoners selected from the records of inmates released during the evaluation period that met program selection criteria but did not enter the program.	n=1,754
Screened Group	Prisoners selected from the records of inmates released during the evaluation period that met program selection criteria and were screened as eligible but did not volunteer or were not selected for program participation.	n=1,083
Volunteer Group	Prisoners selected from the records of inmates released during the evaluation period that actually volunteered for the IFI program, but did not participate either because they did not have a minimum-out custody classification, their remaining sentence was not between the required length (18-30 months) to be considered, or they were not planning to return to the Houston area following area.	n=560

participate in the program. A second comparison group of 1,083 inmates were screened as eligible for the program but did not volunteer or were not selected for program participation. A third comparison group of 560 inmates actually volunteered for the IFI program, but did not participate, either because they were not classified as minimum-out custody, their remaining sentence length was either too short or too long to be considered, or they were not returning to the Houston area following release.

The comparison groups were matched with IFI participants based on the following characteristics: race, age, offense type, and salient factor risk score.³¹ As can be seen in Table 2, the comparison groups are generally similar to those prisoners in the IFI group in regard to race, age, offense, and risk characteristics. This risk score is based on factors associated with recidivism and consequently categorizes offenders into three categories for risk of recidivating. The IFI participants and comparison groups have similar distributions by risk score.

Since none of the comparison groups include prisoners actually entering the program, we decided to identify a fourth comparison group of prisoners actually admitted to IFI, but who received early parole and thus left prison before completing the IFI program. These early releasees make for a more appropriate comparison group since they were actually participants in IFI and removed from the program for strictly external reasons beyond the control of those administering program or those participating in the program. This comparison group will provide another vehicle for estimating if IFI completion is associated with a program effect.

IFI Participants—the Study Group

This study tracks the two-year post-release recidivism rates for those prisoners that entered the IFI program from April of 1997 through January of 1999, and were released from prison prior to September 1, 2000. To allow for a two-year recidivism window or tracking period, IFI participants included in the current study are those who have had the potential to be out of prison for at least two years by September 1, 2002. A total of 177 IFI participants met these requirements and thus form the basis of the evaluation group.

In order to avoid confusion, however, about what it does or does not mean to be part of the study group, it is important to make several observations. First, a two-year recidivism study like the current one actually means

TABLE 2.

Demographic Characteristics of IFI and Comparison Groups

CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFENDERS	COMPARISON GROUPS			
	IFI Participants	Match Group	Screened but Did not Enter	Volunteered but Did not Enter
Race/Ethnicity				
African-American	67%	62%	49%	66%
Hispanic	16%	12%	31%	15%
Anglo	18%	26%	20%	19%
Age Group				
≤35	48%	48%	48%	56%
>35	52%	52%	52%	44%
Offense Type				
Violent	12%	10%	18%	11%
Property	36%	34%	36%	38%
Drug	50%	53%	45%	48%
Risk Score				
High Risk	31%	33%	34%	32%
Medium Risk	54%	50%	50%	52%
Low Risk	15%	17%	17%	17%
Sample Size	177	1,754	1,083	560

that, at a minimum, all offenders in the study have had the opportunity to be on release from prison for at least two years. Second, this does not mean that all 177 were out of prison for two years. Some, in fact, were arrested within days of release and some were incarcerated within several months of release. Conversely, almost half of the evaluation group ($n=85$) was released from prison prior to September of 1999, and a substantial number of these ($n=34$) were released before September of 1998, meaning that a significant number of prisoners had the potential to be on release from IFI for as much as three or four years.

Selection Bias

In the absence of conducting a study with randomly assigned cases to both experimental and control groups, we cannot eliminate all lists of selection bias. Acknowledging that we cannot refute the existence of selection bias, it is important to address a number of the most obvious related concerns.

A common concern raised in comparison studies like the current one, is that those receiving the intervention, in this case, a faith-based prison program, are selected in a way that increases the likelihood of successful outcomes for the study group. One might argue that since the program is “Christ-centered,” that Christian prisoners might get preferential treatment in the selection process. Having observed the selection process, and having interviewed hundreds of prisoners eventually selected for the program, the research team saw no evidence to support such a conclusion.

A related concern is that the most devoutly religious prisoners in TDCJ would be the ones most likely to volunteer for the IFI program in the first place. Indeed, the argument goes, these individuals represent the “cream of the correctional crop,” those who have already found God or who have been spiritually transformed and rehabilitated before arriving at IFI. If this concern were valid, the logical extension of this criticism is quite interesting. Namely, that if such individuals fare better on parole, it is not due to the IFI intervention, but rather the religious or spiritual change that took place before participation in this faith-based program.³²

The best response to this concern is that the matched design utilized in this research provides three different comparison groups to the study group. As mentioned earlier, the matched groups look very much like the study group on key factors known to be associated with recidivism. Stated differently, the study group seems to resemble in important ways the matched comparison groups. It can still be argued, however, that these key predictive factors do not control for religious commitment or spirituality. Indeed, inmates volunteering for the program may well be more religious than the matched group, but this would be an invalid criticism of the third comparison group that also volunteered for the program or the fourth comparison group of those who were paroled early.

The research team interviewed many correctional officers, correctional administrators, and prison chaplains throughout TDCJ to learn what they thought about the inmates who would seek to participate in the IFI program. In general, there was skepticism, even among chaplains, about the motivation for participation in the IFI program. Many correctional workers were suspicious of prisoners volunteering for the program and believed they were simply trying to “con” the system and earn an early release on parole.

Interestingly, while chaplains believe there are those prisoners who are quite sincere in their religious or spiritual commitments, and that some of these may well find their way into the program, they were more likely to respond in ways that validated the response of correctional officers. A number of chaplains in TDCJ told us that some of the worst “cons” in the state would certainly be applying for the program. Indicating that such inmates are quick to try every program available in hopes of impressing prison personnel as well as the parole board, and that IFI would simply be the latest gimmick. In fact, one senior chaplain predicted that if the IFI program were to succeed with the kind of inmates it would certainly attract, it would work on any inmate in TDCJ. However, motivation for participation is always the Achilles heel of comparison group designs. The bottom line is that motivation is present and we do not know which way the bias goes.

Graduating from the IFI Program

In the current study, more than sheer length in the IFI program, we were particularly interested in comparing those individuals who had completed the program with those who had not. IFI made the decision that after having completed the three phases of the program a member is eligible to officially “graduate” from the program. Technically speaking, to qualify as a graduate of IFI a participant must: (1) complete 16 months in the IFI program at the Carol Vance Unit;³³ (2) complete 6 or more months in aftercare; (3) hold a job and have been an active member in church for the previous 3 months prior to graduation; and (4) verify that he has satisfactorily completed the aftercare requirements.³⁴ It is very common for researchers to compare recidivism rates for program completers and non-completers. However, IFI’s requirements necessary for being classified a graduate are quite restrictive. When compared to non-graduates, IFI graduates are clearly the beneficiaries of preferential

treatment, on average, for three to six months post-release. We will revisit this problem in the findings section, as well as the likelihood that defining graduates in such a restrictive manner carries the potential for underreporting the actual recidivism rate.

Recidivism studies are based strictly on dates of the specified tracking period; they are not based on the length of program participation. For example, a number of the 177 IFI participants were only in the prison program for a matter of days, some for several weeks, and others went beyond 20 months. This does not indicate that recidivism studies are uninterested in the length of program participation. It simply means that lack of participation, no matter how minor, is not a factor for excluding such subjects from the evaluation group under study. In fact, we will examine whether length in the IFI program is or is not related to rates of recidivism.

Measuring Recidivism

Two commonly used recidivism measures are included in the current study. The first recidivism measure, arrest, is a broader less restrictive measure of recidivism. It is quite possible, for example, for an individual to be arrested and receive no other sanction, or a series of sanctions other than incarceration. The second measure of recidivism utilized in the current study is incarceration. It is a more restrictive measure and is the most often utilized measure of recidivism. Incarceration in the current study is based on the percentage of offenders returning to prison or state jail within two years of release due to a conviction for a new offense or revocation for violating conditions of parole.

Monitoring the Role of Mentoring

IFI was designed to incorporate aftercare as an essential part of program completion. After six months in the IFI program, in general, participants are matched with a church-based mentor from the Houston area. IFI staff believed mentors would play a critical role in the long-term success of program participants. It was hoped that the mentoring relationship that was developed while the offender was still in prison would continue during the difficult months following release from prison. Mentors are supposed to help with as many aspects of prisoner reentry as possible. For example, mentors are encouraged to accompany IFI members when they make regular visits to their parole officer. They are also asked to help with transportation, job referrals, and a host of other issues affecting prisoner reentry. Mentors tend to discuss almost anything the IFI participant wants to discuss. From family matters, to employment and housing, to various struggles they confront during the week, to spiritual issues, mentors and IFI members feel quite comfortable discussing any issue, problem, or obstacle. As stated earlier, however, the matching of mentors did not always happen on time or at all, since a significant number of prisoners were paroled early and before a mentor could be assigned. Surveys of parole officers were conducted in 1999 and 2001 to determine the level of contact between mentors and parole officers and the level of contact between mentors and IFI participants.³⁵

FINDINGS

Findings presented in Table 3 compare the measures of recidivism between the total sample of IFI participants and each of the three comparison groups. As can be seen, 36.2% of IFI participants were arrested during the two-year period following release. Similarly, 35% of the matched group, 34.9% of the screened group, and 29.3% of the volunteered group were arrested during the two-year follow-up period. Likewise, there is little difference between IFI members (24.3%) and the matched group (20.3%), the screened group (22.3%), and the volunteered group (19.1%) in terms of the percentage of former prisoners who were once again incarcerated in the two-year post-release period.

TABLE 3 .

Recidivism Data Among IFI Participants and the Match Group

RECIDIVISM	COMPARISON GROUPS			
	IFI Participants	Match Group	Screened but Did not Enter	Volunteered but Did not Enter
Percent Arrested Within				
Two Years of Release	36.2% (n=64)	35% (n=614)	34.9% (n=378)	29.3% (n=164)
Percent Incarcerated Within				
Two Years of Release	24.3% (n=43)	20.3% (n=356)	22.3% (n=242)	19.1% (n=107)
Sample Size	177	1,754	1,083	560

Since IFI was launched in early 1997, representatives of both IFI and PF have maintained that in order for the program to be effective in reducing recidivism, participants would have to complete all three phases of the program. This rationale is based on the premise that each phase of the program builds upon the previous phase. Stated differently, IFI participants will find it difficult to live a crime-free life and survive parole if they do not complete all three phases and graduate from the program. Table 4 documents that 75 of the 177 IFI participants (42%) completed all program phases and graduated from the program, while 102 members (58%) did not complete all three phases of the program. Hispanics are most likely to “graduate” from the program (61%) and African-Americans are least likely to complete all the components of IFI (37%). Prisoners over the age of 35 are more likely than those under 35 to have graduated or completed all three phases of the IFI program

TABLE 4.

Demographic Characteristics of IFI Non-Completers and Completers

CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFENDERS	IFI GROUPS		
	IFI Participants	Percent Completing Program ("Graduate")	Percent Not Completing Program
		42%	58%
Race/Ethnicity			
African-American	67%	37%	63%
Hispanic	16%	61%	39%
Anglo	18%	45%	55%
Age Group			
≤35	48%	35%	65%
>35	52%	52%	48%
Offense Type			
Violent	12%	46%	54%
Property	36%	41%	59%
Drug	50%	42%	58%
Risk Score			
High Risk	31%	42%	58%
Medium Risk	54%	47%	53%
Low Risk	15%	57%	43%
Sample Size	177	75	102

(52% vs. 35% respectively). Inmates with low salient factor risk scores were more likely than those with high salient factor scores to graduate from the program (57% vs. 42%).

Among the 102 who did not graduate from the IFI program, 51 (50%) were released via parole or mandatory release before they could finish all phases of IFI. Early release on parole was a significant problem for several of the first few cohorts or groups entering IFI, as the Texas Parole Board came under pressure in 1998 and 1999 to stabilize the size of the prison population. Not surprisingly, among the first to be paroled early were minimum custody prisoners, including those from IFI. The problem of early release on parole was subsequently minimized after the first several cohorts were admitted into the program. Another 51 prisoners were removed from IFI for the following reasons: 19 for disciplinary purposes, 7 at the request of IFI staff, 1 for medical problems, and 24 at the voluntary request of the applicant.

Does Participation in IFI Reduce Recidivism?

Table 5 presents the recidivism findings comparing IFI participants to various comparison groups. As mentioned earlier, there is no difference between the total IFI sample and the matched group on either measure of recidivism. Simply stated, participation in the IFI program is not related to recidivism reduction. Many of the IFI participants were paroled early by TDCJ and did not have the benefit of staying in the program. As one might expect, program graduates are much less likely than IFI participants who did not complete the program to be arrested within the

TABLE 5 .

Results of IFI Texas Two-Year Recidivism Analysis*

RECIDIVISM TYPE	Full Sample (n=1931)		IFI Sample (n=177)		IFI Graduates (n=75)		IFI Non-completers (n=102)	
	(1a) IFI vs. (2a) Match Group		(1b) IFI Graduates vs. (3b) Non-Completers		(1c) < 16 months vs (3c) > 16 months		(1d) <16 months vs (3d) > 16 months	
	(1a)	(2a)	(1b)	(3b)	(1c)	(3c)	(1c)	(3c)
Arrest								
% Arrested	36.2%	35.0%	17.3%	50.0%	15.0%	20.0%	46.5%	68.8%
# Arrested	64	614	13	51	6	7	40	11
Sample Size	177	1,754	75	102	40	35	86	16
Chi-Square	0.09, p = .76		19.98, p < .0001		0.33, p < .5652		2.67, p < .1023	
Incarceration								
% Incarcerated	24.3%	20.3%	8.0%	36.3%	5.0%	11.4%	34.9%	43.8%
# Incarcerated	43	356	6	37	2	4	30	7
Sample Size	177	1,754	75	102	40	35	86	16
Chi-Square	1.57, p = .21		18.79, p < .0001		1.05, p < .3059		0.46, p < .4982	

* Note: All tests used the Pearson X² statistic with one degree of freedom for a 2 X 2 table.

two-year tracking period (17.3% vs. 50%). In a similar pattern, IFI graduates are significantly less likely to be incarcerated within two years of release than those IFI members not completing the program (8% vs. 36.3%).

IFI program graduates have significantly lower rates of arrest than the matched group (17.3% vs. 35%), or either of the two comparison groups—the screened group (34.9%), and the volunteered group (29.3%). Similarly, those completing the IFI program have significantly lower rates of incarceration than the matched group (8% vs. 20.3%), as well as the screened group (22.3%), and the volunteered group (19.1%).

The fact that IFI graduates are significantly less likely to be either arrested or incarcerated during the two-year period following release from prison represents initial evidence that program completion of this faith-based initiative is associated with lower rates of recidivism of former prisoners. As noted earlier, it is not unusual to observe 5 to 10% reductions in recidivism for inmates who complete various in-prison treatment programs. The recidivism reductions found in the current two-year post-release study of IFI, are over 17% for arrest, and 12% for incarceration. Though the number of offenders in the current study group is quite small ($n=177$), the results are nonetheless promising and considerably higher than most reported within the correctional literature.

Knowing that program completion is significantly linked to reductions in recidivism is an important observation. This finding, however, does not by itself reveal if it is program completion or merely the length of time in the program that is most related to recidivism reduction. In order to examine this issue more completely, we specifically focused on length of time in the IFI program for program completers. The findings presented in Table 5 indicate that those participants graduating from IFI with less than 16 months in the program had lower rates of arrest (15.0% vs. 20%) and incarceration (5% vs. 11.4%) than those graduates who remain in the program for 16 months or more. Similarly, non-completers with less than 16 months in the IFI program had lower rates of arrest (46.5% vs. 68%) and incarceration (34.9% vs. 43.8%), than those non-completers with 16 or more months in IFI. Though IFI participants (both completers and non-completers) with less than 16 months in the program have lower recidivism rates, the difference is not statistically significant. More research is needed to examine the intriguing question of

TABLE 6.

Additional Results of IFI Texas Recidivism Analysis*

RECIDIVISM TYPE	18 Month Recidivism Rates for IFI Participants (Excluding first 6 months following release)		24 Month Recidivism Rates for IFI Program Graduates and Non-Completers Paroled Early	
	(1a) IFI Graduates vs. (2a) IFI Non-Completers		(1b) IFI Graduates vs. (2b) IFI Non-Completers—Paroled Early	
	(1a)	(2a)	(1b)	(2b)
Arrest				
% Arrested	16%	42.2%	17.3%	62.7%
# Arrested	12	43	13	32
Sample Size	75	102	75	51
Chi-Square	13.81, $p < .0002$		27.27, $p < .0001$	
Incarceration				
% Incarcerated	8%	34.3%	8%	47.1%
# Incarcerated	6	35	6	25
Sample Size	75	102	75	51
Chi-Square	16.81, $p < .0001$		27.54, $p < .0001$	

* Note: All tests used the Pearson X^2 statistic with one degree of freedom for a 2 X 2 table.

optimum program length. Is it possible that after a certain time period in such an intensive program that there is a point of diminishing or even negative returns? As more program participants go through the program, a larger sample will make it possible to answer this question.

As mentioned earlier, we also decided to examine a fourth comparison group—those IFI participants who were paroled early before they could complete the IFI program. This comparison group is comprised of former prisoners who were not removed from the program for disciplinary reasons and may represent a more suitable comparison group than either of the three listed above. The only possible criticism of this comparison group is that by virtue of the parole board's decision to release them early, this group could be viewed as a prisoners posing less of a recidivism risk than other IFI non-graduates. As can be seen in Table 6, IFI graduates are significantly less likely than the comparison group of IFI non-graduates paroled early, to be either arrested (17.3% vs. 62.7%) or incarcerated (8% vs. 47.1%). Interestingly, the differences in recidivism between IFI graduates and IFI non-graduates leaving the prison early via parole are more dramatic than those found with the other comparison groups.

It is important to remember, however, that program graduates were defined as those who successfully complete the in-prison portion of the program as well as maintaining employment and regular church attendance for three months prior to graduation. For obvious reasons the comparison groups cannot be subjected to the same criteria and this distinction clearly favors the IFI graduates in the recidivism analysis. In other words, the difference in reported rates of recidivism would almost certainly be smaller if the definition of an IFI graduate did not include maintaining employment or regular church attendance for three months prior to graduation. To address this concern we conducted several additional sets of analyses. Since graduates are typically the recipients of resources that non-graduates may not receive during the first six months following release from prison, we reanalyzed the recidivism rates for IFI graduates and non-graduates from month seven through month twenty-four, providing for an 18-month tracking period. Stated differently, if the operationalization of graduates is indeed problematic, one would

TABLE 7.

Results of IFI Texas Two Year Recidivism Analyses*

Mentor Contact
(IFI Sample) n=177

RECIDIVISM TYPE	Mentor Known to PO vs. Unknown		Regular vs. Little or No Contact	
	Known	Unknown	Regular	Little
Arrest				
% Arrested	19.8%	29.5%	16.7%	28.5%
# Arrested	18	26	9	35
Sample Size	91	88	54	123
Chi-Square	2.30, p = .13		2.79, p = .09	
Incarceration				
% Incarcerated	7.7%	17.0%	9.3%	14.6%
# Incarcerated	7	15	5	18
Sample Size	91	88	54	123
Chi-Square	3.63, p < .06		0.96, p = .33	

*Note: All tests used the Pearson X^2 statistic with one degree of freedom for a 2 X 2 table.

expect this new analysis to somewhat “level the field” and to substantially reduce the difference in recidivism between IFI graduates and IFI non-graduates. As can be seen in Table 6, however, rates of arrest for graduates and non-graduates during the 18 month tracking period (16% vs. 42.4%), closely resemble those reported for the entire two-year tracking period (17.3 vs. 50%). Likewise, the rates of incarceration for graduates and non-graduates during the 18 month follow-up period (8% vs. 34.3%) are almost identical to those found in the two-year tracking period (8% vs. 36.3%). Though the evaluation team still believes that IFI’s definition of what it takes to be a program graduate is too restrictive, these additional analyses reduce somewhat our concern that the IFI graduate classification significantly skews the findings in favor of those IFI participants who complete the entire program.

Mentoring and Aftercare

After release from prison, IFI participants continue on parole in Phase III of the program for another 6 to 12 months. During this aftercare phase of the IFI program, it is expected that IFI participants, like any other offender released from prison, will meet regularly with their parole officer. What is different, however, is that IFI mentors are also encouraged to attend these meetings, especially during the critical weeks and months following release from prison. As can be seen in Table 7, when comparing those cases where the mentor was known to the parole officer versus those cases where the mentor was not known to the parole officer, the IFI participant was less likely to be arrested (19.8% vs. 29.5% respectively) or incarcerated (7.7% vs. 17% respectively). Further, if the parole officer had documented regular contact versus little or no contact between the mentor and the IFI participant, then the IFI member was also less likely to be arrested (16.7% vs. 28.5%) or incarcerated (9.3% vs. 14.6% respectively).

To summarize, the analysis yields the following recidivism findings: (1) There is no statistical difference between the total sample of IFI prisoners and the matched group on either measure of recidivism during the two-year tracking period; (2) IFI program graduates were significantly less likely than the matched group to be arrested (17.3% vs. 35%) during the two-year post-release period; (3) IFI program graduates were significantly less likely than the matched group to be incarcerated (8% vs. 20.3%) during the two-year follow-up period; and (4) Mentor contact is associated with lower rates of recidivism.

Why Do IFI Graduates Have Lower Recidivism Rates?

As previously demonstrated, we know that completing the IFI program is significantly linked to lower rates of arrest and incarceration during the two-year study period following release from prison. Knowing that recidivism rates are lower is obviously important, but it does not provide an answer to the rather obvious question of why recidivism in the IFI study group is significantly lower than the matched group. In this section we rely upon qualitative methods employed throughout the study, in order to shed light on this important question.

We begin by providing a qualitative description of the IFI program in hopes that the reader will understand more clearly the workings and nature of the program. The description to follow is based on hundreds of hours of observational work as well as interviews with relevant prisoners, correctional staff, IFI staff, volunteers, mentors, and others. The description of IFI is followed by a presentation of interview data broken down into observations of five major themes of spiritual transformation. The qualitative findings not only reveal important insights into the spiritual transformation and growth of IFI members, but provide narratives that help to show how spiritual development parallels and enhances the process of rehabilitation.

Describing the IFI Environment

In general, the environment of the IFI program has been and continues to be extremely open, supportive, upbeat, friendly, and nurturing. Days begin early and end late. In addition to daily work details typically associated with most prisons, inmates in IFI are expected to participate daily in classes (offered throughout the day and evening), worship and devotional times. IFI participants are given homework and are expected to do a considerable amount of reading outside of classes. Many get up as early as 4:30 in the morning to either complete class assignments or to do their own personal Bible study, often referred to as their daily “quiet time.” Lights are usually out at 10:00 pm. Unlike the general population inmates, IFI participants do not have televisions in their living areas. This was an area of contention for some within IFI, at least initially, but many have stated that the program is so demanding, there would not be enough time to watch television even if it were allowed.

The research team has visited the program and has observed over the last six years consistency a number of program traits that many experts in the correctional treatment arena would deem essential for creating an environment that fosters rehabilitation. It is not uncommon to see inmates display affection toward each other, with the staff, and with volunteers that would seem reminiscent of an extended family gathering or reunion. “Brotherly hugs” are not only common they are essentially a basic feature of the program. IFI participants were routinely heard stating to volunteers or other first-time visitors to the program, “hey man, it’s time to hug a thug.”

Various obstacles had to be addressed to get the program launched and running smoothly. These include, for example, curriculum development, staff turnover, the lack of meeting space and the early parole of a significant number of IFI participants. These problems are not uncommon to implementation of most new programs within a correctional setting. Though each of the obstacles were seen at the time to be serious impediments to the IFI program, they did not in the eyes of the evaluation team seem to translate into a reduction in the morale of staff or the delivery of services to IFI participants. Though comments from IFI participants about the program tended to be positive, this does not mean that the program was without criticism as is obvious from the following statements of four IFI participants.

They don't let us watch television. They alter the program schedule with little or no notice.

The IFI program director is a dictator trying to please others. I don't like the fact the program is making me stay in prison longer.

You know it is Bible study on top of Bible study. The schedule is too packed. Too many people are throwing too many things at us, and it makes me pull back and kind of rebel when they are trying to force their views on us. The more I pull back, the less I'm going to get out of the program.

Drop-slips (misconduct reports) are starting to cause confusion in the program. They are nitpicky. We don't do drop slips in the penitentiary. The program has some faults. You can't expect to change the penitentiary mentality over night.

The schedule is too tough. I get up at 4:00 am and go to bed at 9:00 pm. There isn't enough time to get all the reading done. I need more time.

Over the first year or so of its existence, the IFI program began to take on the identity of a “church community” within the confines of the prison. By design, IFI leadership and staff sought to create an environment that draws upon the best features of a church setting. Some IFI members are selected to assume roles of leadership not unlike those of deacons or elders referred to in scripture. Additionally, special religious meetings with outside speakers are a regular feature of IFI. Often referred to as “revival services” by IFI members and staff alike, feedback from participants who have attended was almost always positive. In particular, we have talked to inmates from non-protestant backgrounds about these meetings, and have heard similar reports.

The InnerChange staff really seem to care about us. I'm Catholic and they haven't tried to force me to become a Protestant. If people want to get something out of the program they will.

For at least the first year there was a concerted effort to largely segregate IFI members from the general prison population. Prison Fellowship believed very strongly that in order to create a healthy spiritual climate in the prison, you would need to keep these two prison populations apart. In other words, there was concern that if allowed to mingle, the general population inmates would hinder if not contaminate the spiritual progress being made with participants in the IFI program. TDCJ was more than happy to comply with this request, as they too felt this concern was a valid one.

Before too long, however, IFI and TDCJ had to reconsider the practice of segregating IFI inmates from the general population. IFI members began asking if they could interact with general population inmates. Conversely, many general population inmates, though initially suspicious of the program, began inquiring about potential involvement

in the program. Many within IFI were eager to share their new found faith, while general population inmates were more than a little curious about the special programs that regularly took place within IFI. At the request of IFI, TDCJ agreed that the restriction to keep the two populations segregated at all times would be removed. Consequently, where possible, there has been an effort not to deprive general population inmates from some of the spiritual components of the program. This has afforded the opportunity for some IFI inmates to “witness” (i.e. to share their faith) to general population inmates, and to even involve some of them in Bible studies independent of those taking place within IFI. The following quote from a prisoner in the general population captures the way many perceive the IFI program:

They (IFI members) have an advantage over us. They have something to fall back on that we don't have. We have a big X on our back when we walk out into the free world... Their chance is zero to come back if they stay with it. I wish I could be in it. I've seen a change in a bunch of them. Several are playing a game, but most of them are for real. I'm a five-time loser—I know I need help to stay out. We all need the InnerChange program.

(General Population Inmate)

The environment of the IFI program is bolstered by the ongoing presence of volunteers, facilitators and mentors. Without exception, IFI participants have indicated the critical impact volunteers have made in their lives. The sincerity and time commitment of volunteers has simply overwhelmed program participants. Some inmates have indicated that the presence and dedication of the volunteers has had the effect of shattering stereotypes they have held of free-world people (i.e. non-prisoners). These stereotypes often carry views of people in society as harsh, punitive, racist, and self-serving individuals.

Interviews with various members of the custodial staff at the Carol Vance Unit confirm that IFI participants are not only doing well, but that the inmates and the IFI program seem to be influencing the entire prison.

I have been here since InnerChange started. Some people have it and some don't. You can see the difference. Some of them just come here to get close to home. Instead they get close to God... I would say that 85 to 90 percent of those who are gone, have left out of here with a completely different perspective. I have noticed that they are even trying to change their families... They learn to take blame for themselves; to face reality. I have heard them say 'I brought myself here and I need to accept responsibility.' That's not typical.

(Correctional Officer, 5 years with TDCJ)

Many of the general population inmates envy the InnerChange inmates because of the special classes, the mentors, the volunteers, and the air-conditioning (IFI program rooms are air conditioned). The general population inmates can't believe all the free-world people that come in here. All the time and attention they (mentors/volunteers) give, and the snacks and refreshments they bring. It's easy to see why general pop inmates would envy InnerChange inmates... It's interesting though, I've seen the InnerChange inmates share the food given to them with the general population inmates. I think that has really won over these other prisoners.

(Correctional Officer, 3 years with TDCJ)

The difference between InnerChange and for example, the drug treatment programs I have observed over the years, is the family and community emphasis of InnerChange. There's a lot of involvement from the outside. And the free-world people are seeing what we're seeing—change. It's a great program. It's intensive. I expect them (InnerChange inmates) to do a lot better than general population inmates when they are released... The program is so open now, it is beginning to help the general population. People thought there would be a conflict between the two; instead, the general population wants it. Some of these special programs are also open to the general population and they are really helping—it's kind of a "spill-over" effect. General population inmates are attending various activities and programs and are asking, "How can I get in?" In fact, as an example of this spill-over, the general population has organized an official Bible study of their own... What I would like to see happen, is for InnerChange to take over the entire Unit. I'd say that 80 percent of correctional officers would say that the InnerChange program is legitimate (not a con). I've interviewed a lot of them (IFI members) and some of them told me they were in it for the free ride, but now God has changed them and is even changing their families. You know prisons often times help create monsters. InnerChange gives hope. These guys can truthfully say that they have a chance to make it.

(Major, 18 years with TDCJ)

Numerous observations and interviews based on visits to the program during day and evening hours as well as aftercare visits, confirmed a growing confidence among staff and prisoners alike in the effectiveness of the program. Conversations that have taken place and observations that have been made of all IFI staff reveal that the staff remain very positive about the program, their IFI colleagues, and in general, the progress of the inmates in the program.

Spiritual Transformation—A Developmental Process

A paramount goal of IFI is to utilize a biblically-based program³⁶ with an overt emphasis on spiritual growth and moral development. The expectation is that this will substantially enhance achieving the secular and correctional goal of rehabilitation. As inmates proceed through the IFI program, therefore, we should expect to observe changes in attitude and behavior to be evident among program participants and those who interact with them.

A key evaluation goal, then, was attempting to gauge the spiritual development of IFI participants. Even though most observers of IFI are ultimately interested in only the outcome of recidivism, it is critical to have some sense of the spiritual transformation among inmates as they proceed through the program.

Since the inception of IFI, the evaluation team has focused on observations of program members in various settings such as classes, free-time, inmate-mentor sessions, and during individual and group devotionals (e.g. Bible study, prayer, or personal reflection). Direct discussions and interviews with individual IFI members as well as interaction and dialogue in various group settings have also provided valuable feedback to the evaluation team. Finally, interviews with program staff and volunteers have provided additional insights into the spiritual progress or growth of these members over time.

Augmenting our ongoing observational efforts, we conducted unstructured interviews with IFI members from different groups and different stages within the program. Rather than having inmates respond to a structured questionnaire with fixed responses, the interviews were intentionally unstructured since the intent was to provide the

least threatening environment for the respondent, in hopes they would respond candidly about their experiences. IFI participants were simply asked to share any thoughts they had about the program or their experience in the program. Though responses covered a number of different topics, inmates overwhelmingly offered remarks that dealt with their spiritual transformation. Narratives of IFI members reveal five spiritual transformation themes: (1) I'm not who I used to be; (2) spiritual growth; (3) God versus the prison code; (4) positive outlook on life; and (5) the need to give back to society. To follow is a presentation of extracted excerpts from a sample of these interviews.

Spiritual Transformation Theme 1: *I'm Not Who I Used to Be*

IFI participants consistently verbalized themes indicating they are thankful to have the opportunity to start their life over again. One of the common statements expressed by IFI participants was that “I'm not who I used to be” (54% of the 125 recorded interviews contained statements reflecting this theme). Their new found faith or the rediscovery of a lost faith from their childhood has made it possible to begin not just a new life, but a life where they are genuinely loved by God and others and can view themselves as good people who have been forgiven for their past mistakes. They have been given another chance or a new lease on life. Their current positive self-accounts represent a dramatic departure from their often bleak past. According to research on British offenders, Shadd Maruna states this process of “willful, cognitive distortion” helps offenders desist from crime and to “make good” with their lives.³⁷ For those who have been in prison before, maybe multiple times, this time they feel like they are on a mission as they prepare to leave prison. They now have a sense of meaning and purpose they have not known before. For many, there was a Christian conversion experience in IFI that marked a turning point in their life. A spiritual awakening or reawakening that was foundational for them.³⁸

Before InnerChange, I was kind of at a fork in the road, not knowing which way to go. I had a bad attitude and a hard time getting along with people. I used to get in fights all the time. I remember telling myself I didn't want to live like this anymore and I prayed for God to take control and I gave my heart to the Lord. I'm beginning to control my thoughts and my anger. I'm beginning to find peace for the first time. Something that used to get me into a fight, I will now laugh at. I don't curse anymore. Instead I try to share God with people. It's nice to hear positive things being said about me for the first time in my life. When someone tried to help me before, I would deny it. I didn't think anyone cared—I see now they really do. (Len)

The program has awakened me. It has birthed a new me. It has made me who I am. I'm learning to get along with others and to understand why people do what they do. I am learning more by listening. IFI has made me feel like I am somebody and that I have potential. I have a whole lot more discipline and self-control than before. Being able to be obedient to not just authority, but to everyone. And I'm learning to control my anger. Things out of my control have always bothered me. I struggled with this everyday. Change is not overnight and it's not easy to change, but God is changing me. God has shown me what I used to be about and what I'm about now. (Gale)

I have discovered a lot of flaws in myself in the last nine months—flaws in myself, not the InnerChange program. I used to always have a lot of anger, but things just don't upset me like they used to, you know. Now I'm trying to turn spiritual knowledge into wisdom. (Stan)

Previous research on active offenders (persisters) as well as inactive offenders (desisters) has found that the differences between the two groups were partly related to the way they defined themselves within their social worlds. Maruna calls this process “rebiographing,” and suggests that in order for chronic offenders to refrain from crime, they need to make sense of their past. In rewriting the narratives of their lives, desisting offenders often look to instances in their pasts when their “real” selves showed and when respected members of conventional society recognized their talents and good qualities. Eventually, Maruna argues, these narratives become the building blocks of reform and desistance from crime. Without this rebiographing, or rewriting of one’s now reformed identity the ex-offender will always be an ex-offender.

The experiences of IFI members seem to very much resonate with the experiences Maruna describes for crime desisters. In the current study, however, it would seem more accurate to refer to this process as “spiritual rebiographing.” In fact, IFI members are taught that spiritually speaking, they are new creations, that God has given them a new identity. Past behaviors are not something they have to deny or blame on someone or something else, it is simply something tied to the “old” person they used to be. The new person they have become is the focus of the present and future. The emergence of the new self allows the IFI member to make sense of his past, while looking forward to the future.

In order to live crime-free lives they must receive affirmation and validation of the truthfulness of their claim to have changed. Ceremonies and testimonials of respected individuals acknowledging the change in the desister are critical to the strengthening of this new identity and can be a real turning point in societal reintegration. Especially at the early stages, they need outside validation to convince themselves of the authenticity of their conversion. While affirmation from just about anyone helps, those from public officials are the most compelling. Indeed, both Maruna and Wexler³⁹ believe that graduation ceremonies and other “redemption rituals” should be commonly used in the criminal justice system. These public ceremonies reinforce and contribute to the desister’s ability to rebiograph their past. IFI not only encourages regular testimonials, they recognize through various public ceremonies the accomplishments of IFI members.

Spiritual Transformation Theme 2: *Spiritual Growth*

When IFI participants were asked to share whatever was on their mind, the most common response dealt with their spiritual growth. Indeed, 69% of those interviewed indicated that they had grown spiritually as a result of participation in IFI. They spoke of their life in terms of a spiritual journey, a journey that had benefited from important turning points or events that had a profoundly positive impact. For some, the journey was just beginning, for others it was a long journey but with new found direction. For most, it was a journey that was very much a work in progress. Spiritual growth, then, was something prisoners within IFI very much viewed as a developmental process that was well underway, but was far from where it needed to be. In order to transform their deviant histories into the present good, desisters employ “redemption scripts.”⁴⁰ This process establishes the goodness of the individual and marks the emergence of the desisting self.

I have learned what life is about since being here. I have learned that life is about helping others to grow like I'm growing. I have found peace for the first time. The change came over me when I saw that other people loved me. Then I wanted to do the same to others. That's when my whole life began turning around. (Lawrence)

I'm becoming stronger in the word of God. You're more into God type activities here. Instead of a little religion here or there—you're surrounded by it. The program builds your knowledge and hopes. One can never quit growing and I know I have a long way to go. Church will be a very important part of my life when I get out. My mentor will be a help to me too. (Dan)

I had to go to church as a kid. I was in the choir too. I quoted scripture, but when I got older I phased out of church. Now, I'm a Muslim. I have the fear of God in me. I'm anxious to get out of here and tell people about God's Word. Some laugh at Islam out of ignorance—I just laugh it off. I'm glad to go through this program. It has been uplifting and mind awakening. I didn't know how to apply things to my life before. If you stay around something positive long enough, it will rub off on you. And that's what has happened here. It's a spiritual thing. (Bernie)

For the first time I have respect for others. I even try to encourage others, and pray for them. The books we use here and the Bible have really helped. Praying has helped. When I stumble, now I repent. When I get out of here, the church is going to be a big part of my life. (Juan)

Spiritual Transformation Theme 3: *God Versus the Prison Code*

We know from the corrections literature that inmates are profoundly influenced by a unique prison subculture. The existence and adopting of a distinctive prison culture, what has been referred to as “prisonization” or as some of the IFI members called it, the “penitentiary mentality” or “prison code” is widely acknowledged by those who live and work in prisons.⁴¹ The existence of gangs, other racially motivated groups, violence, sexual aggression, and other antisocial behavior represent just some of the widely known aspects of the prison culture. There are others. Displays of machismo are often considered acceptable—showing love, affection, or compassion, can be viewed as signs of weakness and are not acceptable. The prison culture provides fertile ground for the breeding of a mentality that supports the notion of rehabilitation or reform as something very much needed by the prison—not the prisoner. The issue of trust, or more precisely the lack of trust, is a central feature of the prison code. For example, a new prisoner learns very quickly that outside a select group of prisoners, inmates should not trust other people. This is especially true when referring to prison staff or others who work in or represent some aspect of the criminal justice system.

Further, the prospect of “opening-up” or becoming transparent about one’s needs, or shortcomings—a major feature of the IFI program, can be problematic because it not only shows weakness, but it may require one to trust in something or someone else—a prospect that may well run counter to the prison code.

Many correctional experts agree that one of the biggest obstacles to more regularly achieving successful outcomes in various treatment programs is the inability to counteract the deleterious effects of the prison culture. At the core of IFI is the premise that a faith-based program will eventually erode the negative or harmful tendencies of the

“prison code” or “penitentiary mentality.” In essence, IFI’s approach is based on the assumption that the prisoner’s spiritual transformation and spiritual growth will help to provide an antidote to the present prison subculture. Thus a spiritually transformed prisoner will be more likely to choose a prosocial response over an antisocial response when faced with a moral dilemma. The IFI program is based on the belief that spiritually transformed prisoners will, in fact, accept good over evil, or God over the prison code.

How does spirituality counteract the influence of the prison culture? A prime example within IFI is the issue of inmates filing “drop-slips” (misconduct reports) on other inmates. The “penitentiary mentality” says you never snitch on another inmate. Prisoners are supposed to mind their own business. For inmates who have been in prison multiple times (and many in IFI have) this is a deeply-embedded rule. However, the philosophy of IFI is just the opposite of that promoted via the prison code. Namely, IFI members are taught they have the responsibility to hold each other accountable for various kinds of rule infractions. The issue of trust, therefore, is something that does not come easy for many inmates, since “the code” teaches otherwise—especially when and where staff is concerned. Particularly among the newest IFI members, there is still the firmly held belief that “snitching” on another inmate, regardless of the situation, violates the code. However, among members who have been in the program for a longer period of time, they are better able to deal with the tension between these two extremes, often times with faith trumping the code. We found that in 34% of our interviews, statements were made indicating an offender’s decision to respond in a way that prioritized faith or spirituality rather than the prison code. The following are excerpts that capture the struggle between following one’s faith or the prison code.

I didn’t trust anyone before I came here. I thought I knew everything, that I had all the answers. Now I know I don’t have anything figured out. And at the same time I’m at peace today with myself. It’s changed how I view the world. I’m learning to have more patience. I have found that when I humble myself, I get closer to these guys. (Lowell)

God is pulling everything back together. I know God’s in control. I have to deal with the inmate mentality here, where guys don’t want to be confronted about sinful behavior. . . I now value accountability. I think this is where Christians blow it. They don’t want to correct someone else even though they know they’re in sin. (Ricky)

The prison system says that you must play tough. But that’s not real. Confession is good for you according to the Bible. I’ve come to realize that the inmate code is really nothing but a facade. I can be myself now. (Neal)

Spiritual Transformation Theme 4: *Positive Outlook on Life*

The longer IFI participants are in the program, the more positive their outlook on life, their current situation, and their future prospects become. Many tend to see the “silver lining” even when they are the recipients of bad news. They are delighted about their new life, who they have become, and what the future now holds for them. Because many now believe that they are God’s children and that God is in control of everything, they report having developed a new confidence they have not known before. They possess an assurance that they are accepted and loved by God and draw peace from the belief that one day they will reside with God in heaven. Interviews revealed that 32% of

respondents viewed their circumstances positively. Noted criminologists Robert Sampson and John Laub, who work on factors that contribute to the desistance of crime, discuss “transformative action” and “subjective reconstruction of the self,” concepts they found to be quite common among people who develop new commitments and find purpose and meaning in life and consequently stay out of trouble.⁴²

Along the same line, Maruna found that persisters had a much more pessimistic or fatalistic outlook on life and that they tended to attribute this feeling of doom and gloom to a lack of opportunities and hardships stemming from various forms of past social and economic disadvantage. Desisters, on the other hand, like many IFI participants, had a much more positive outlook on life.

I was just fortunate to get into the program. Before the program I didn't pray, I didn't read the Bible, and I didn't know God. In March of 1997, I prayed in my cell and gave my life to Christ... You know, I just found out that I won't get out in February as planned, but instead November. But that's okay because God wants me to stay in this program longer. (Stuart)

I'm a stronger believer in God, I have grown in patience, I have a peace of mind that I never had in the world. I have joy. I stopped asking God for parole. Whenever He wants me out is OK, I'm willing to stay in prison another year. My father passed while I was here, but this program has helped me deal with his death. (Phil)

You know I was so disappointed to get a serve-all (instead of early parole) because it was going to put me back an extra six months, but all-in-all I really do think it has been worth it. During that time my confidence has really been boosted-up and it has forced me to get up in front of people—its been great. The extra time here has helped me to learn to lean on God, because I know I can't make it by myself. (Gene)

Spiritual Transformation Theme 5: *The Need to Give Back to Society*

In order to rationalize their situation, inmates commonly state that they are in prison not because they deserve to be, but because the criminal justice system is either unfair or corrupt all together. Their incarceration, therefore, can be viewed as an indictment on society rather than on them personally. It is the system, many prisoners have contended, that is in need of reform and rehabilitation.

Conversely, instead of feeling that society owes them, many IFI participants feel an overwhelming need to give back to society and the community when they get out of prison. Many view themselves as people who were down-and-out until someone cared enough to help them up. Now that they have turned their lives around and have a new and positive identity, they express an unusual sense of gratitude for this new life and they feel compelled to give back to a society that they have never helped before. They feel an overwhelming desire, if not obligation, to make a positive contribution to the community. They believe their experiences of going “to hell and back” especially qualify them to reach out and help others not to make the same mistakes they have made.

I've always believed in God. But I got away from God as I got into my teens. This program has brought me back to my Christian roots. My feeling and thinking is different from when I got here. I see a big change in myself,

I don't see things the way I used to. I used to be a loner, and didn't care about much else. I'm finding myself being more sociable and trying to help others. That wasn't true of me before I got to InnerChange. Helping others find purpose in their life through God, has been a real blessing. (Lou)

I was a halfway atheist when I came into the program. I came here just to get close to home (Houston), I didn't come here for spiritual reasons. But about two months ago I gave my heart to Jesus. Everything has changed since then. I know He's real. I don't want the classes to end now. If this program can help somebody like me, it can help anybody. I'm from the streets. But I know now that God is real...I want to share my testimony with other TDCJ cellmates I have had before I came here, because I wasn't a Christian then. (Harold)

I wish everybody could go through InnerChange. I came to the program to learn about the Bible. It has taught me that prayer is important. I wish my dad could go through InnerChange. He's serving 25 years in prison... I didn't come up in a spiritual life, but God has done a real work in my life since coming here. Sharing my faith with my family is important to me. Now I have a better relationship with my family too. (Kerry)

The Role of Spiritual Transformation in Prisoner Rehabilitation

Several observations from these interviews are worth noting. In general, comments tended to be very positive and supportive of the program. Almost without exception, members indicated they have grown spiritually since coming to IFI. Interestingly, although many indicated they were Christians and had been involved in chaplaincy (i.e. religious programs in prison) prior to IFI, a significant number indicated that they had not experienced a spiritual transformation until IFI. This is a very important point that may be consistent with Prison Fellowship's belief that the level or intensity of involvement is the critical factor in the spiritual transformation of prisoners. Many of these inmates indicated that they had become believers during their youth, but that they quickly followed a different path after leaving church during adolescence. Further, they indicated that the IFI program had brought them back to God and caused them to reevaluate their lives.

Focus groups with prisoners entering IFI seem to support Prison Fellowship's contention that length of time in the program would be associated with spiritual growth. Interviews revealed that the newest members were much more likely to respond negatively to the program. A common set of criticisms consistently emerged from some of the new IFI participants. For example, the feeling that the environment at InnerChange is negative, resulting from accountability conflicts, favoritism displayed by staff, and staff selection of leadership council members. The "leaders" were referred to as "show ponies" or "poster boys" as well as other members that new IFI participants claimed were "faking it." After having been in the program for several months, however, focus groups revealed that most members thought the environment was positive and that there were many opportunities for change at InnerChange. Most realized that positive and negative aspects exist but the newest program participants seem to be most likely to dwell on the more restrictive aspects of the IFI environment. The newest groups had much more of a negative assessment of IFI staff. New members complained not only about staff favoritism, but what they perceived as the constant changing of IFI rules. On the other hand, members who had been in the program for at least three months, generally reported having positive experiences with the staff and claimed that IFI staff affirmed and supported them. Finally,

the members diverged regarding their views on the correctional officers. IFI members new to the program often felt that correctional officers and other TDCJ staff were harsh or tried to provoke them. IFI members with more time in the program felt that TDCJ staff tended to treat them in a more positive way than correctional staff in other prisons where they had served time. These observations are consistent with a point made earlier, namely, that spiritual transformation tends to be a developmental process.

Each of the five spiritual transformation themes discussed above not only correspond to but can be seen as providing the impetus for various characteristics and attributes often associated with the process of rehabilitation.

Theme 1 *I'm not who I used to be*, is important because it carries a recognition on the part of the offender that their previous behavior was justifiably unacceptable to society. In fact, the person they have become actually condemns their previous behavior because the new person now appreciates and promotes prosocial rather than antisocial behavior.

Theme 2 *Spiritual growth*, is important because it recognizes that the person is very much a work-in-progress. While many report they have made a great deal of progress in putting their life back together, most acknowledge they still have a long way to go. Importantly, they are quite surprised and encouraged about their own spiritual growth, and this progress is confirmed and validated by staff, volunteers, and mentors—further strengthening their resolve to continue this path of spiritual development. Particular events like being “born again” or the recognition that God and others actually love and care for them appear to be critically important turning points in their spiritual development.

Theme 3 *God versus the prison code*, is particularly significant since many correctional staff concede that the penitentiary mentality or prison code is so pervasive and strong as to be beyond the possibility of reclaiming. As stated earlier, the prison code runs counter to the various components of offender rehabilitation programs. To be able to successfully oppose or even reverse the influence of the prison code is a significant achievement. We have found evidence in this research that would suggest that the IFI environment successfully opposed if not reversed the prison environment at the Vance Unit.

Theme 4 *Positive outlook on life*, is important because it reflects a paradigm shift for many offenders typified by hope and purpose. Instead of viewing their life in a fatalistic way, where offenders might relapse or decide to commit crime due to a minor setback with a friend, family member, or employer, those with a positive outlook are much more likely to be resilient in the face of adversity during their societal reentry. Believing that their life now has meaning and knowing that they are loved and accepted by God and others, they are much more likely to view their life and circumstances in an upbeat rather than negative or hopeless way.

Theme 5 *The need to give back to society*, is something many seemed to be overwhelmed by. They simply report feeling compelled to give back, to make a contribution to society in a way that improves the situation of others, especially others who come from similar backgrounds and experiences as their own. In sum, all five spiritual transformation themes reflect behavior and attitudes consistent with those one would hope for in achieving offender rehabilitation.

In general, interviews of IFI participants offer subjective evidence that many of the members are progressing spiritually. In free-flowing conversation, inmates responded in ways that indicated their lives were changing through involvement in the IFI program.

Mentors Matter But It's Hard To Do

As we have indicated previously, the role of mentors in the vulnerable period following release from prison is absolutely critical. Focus groups with IFI participants who have been released from the program confirm the struggles faced by former prisoners as well as the centrality of mentors and spiritual growth in surviving reentry.

The men shared how the IFI program has helped them in a number of ways—from bringing them to salvation, to preparing them for the outside, to resolving their questions about God. The group shared that they had been transformed during their time in the IFI program and that the spiritual growth has been invaluable to them on the outside. Overwhelmingly, the men shared how, through InnerChange, they have discovered a new way to live and a new way to look at things. The program has also helped some men to realize that people on the outside do care about them, rather than believing that society as a whole has rejected them. Some of the releasees said that they learned how to be a leader at IFI, how to be held accountable, and even accept responsibility for their words and deeds. These attributes seemed to be helpful during the difficult transition back into society.

IFI releasees do not see much of each other aside from the mandated support group meetings. For most, these meetings are beneficial times of sharing trials and encouraging one another. Without exception the parolees indicated that they miss the fellowship they enjoyed with the others while in prison and wished it were possible to get together more often. This is where the significance of mentors becomes magnified. Without the constant support from others in the program, the mentoring relationship, if it is active and productive, can make the difference toward successful reintegration.

Releasees indicated that the time immediately following release from prison is a honeymoon of sorts for many of the men. But this honeymoon period dissipates as trials and responsibilities arrive, thus making it more difficult to keep God as a priority in their life. Such trials include temptations from old friends, fatigue, employment difficulties, transportation problems, adjustments to a new environment (e.g., finding their way around again), “little things,” impatience, relational issues with family members and girlfriends, and financial struggles.

To follow are excerpts of conversations with IFI mentors that reflect a wide range of perspectives, both positive and negative, on the significance of mentoring in a post-release environment.

BJ: How's the mentoring going with D?

Tim: *D is doing fine. He joined the church the second Sunday of July. I'm the pastor of this church. D's mother, brother, and sister are all members and attend regularly. D has been faithful to the church since his release. I have visited his home on two occasions and have visited his parole officer once or twice as well. And obviously we see each other at church too. I have always wanted to do prison ministry but never had the opportunity until InnerChange. Rev. B approached me and I was very impressed with the prospects of working with the InnerChange program. The church has been very supportive of D; some know he's been in prison and some don't. On Tuesday nights I also mentor another IFI member at the prison, and have been doing this for the last two months. I really thank God for the opportunity to be part—I wish I could do more.*

BJ: Have you been able to meet regularly with S since he's been out?

Gil: *I live in Rosenberg and S lives on the other side of Houston. Therefore, we have not been connecting. I think he is doing fine, but it is just difficult to connect when you are geographically so far apart.*

BJ: I understand that you and J have not been meeting regularly?

Kim: *J and I have not interacted that much and I cannot say for sure how well he is doing. I contacted J by phone several times and I have made one home visit. J is attending a different church now, and that has made it certainly less convenient for us to see each other. The real problem is that I was assigned to J after he left prison and we never had a chance to bond at InnerChange. He has made several calls to me and clearly has not tried to avoid me, I just think it is more difficult when you don't have that relationship established.*

BJ: What have you observed since M's release a year ago?

Joe: *M has continued to grow spiritually. We have, like a list of scriptures that we keep track of and share. If he has questions, you know, we can have a good exchange and good dialogue as we discuss it, because I don't have all the answers. Even though I'm there to teach him, I have tried to stress to him that he has got to get to know the word of God for himself. What I noticed was, that he really took that to heart and started to study. There were times when I would come in, and of course, I would have my notes and I was prepared and I would go on into a discussion and kind of lead our talk and quite often I found he would take the discussion over and then he would really start teaching me the way, you know, just really a blessing. So I watched him from the inception of our talking and there was a little bit of initial resistance, but as we continued to meet and started to pray. I'd say, after the first 90 days I really started to see that transformation, that change in him. More of a shift toward his really getting into the Word (Bible) and starting to grow.*

BJ: How often do you see N now?

Sam: *We talk anywhere from 3 to 4 times a week and we see each other at least once per week.*

BJ: How did you get involved in this whole InnerChange thing?

Sam: *I'm a minister and I got involved in prison ministry in the past when I lived in Dallas and I really enjoyed it. When I moved to Houston, the church I joined really wasn't involved in prison ministry, but Rev. B came to our church and did a presentation on InnerChange. He mentioned too that they were looking for mentors for the program because that's part of what they do—identifying mentors who teach and have a spiritual walk and are interested in being involved in a biblical-based mentoring program with inmates. After he and I talked a little, he mentioned InnerChange had a couple of guys that we need mentors for and he mentioned the names. And it turns out that I knew N because I had gone to school with N's brother. He and I grew up together. I told Rev. B that 'I knew this guy' and he said, 'well great, that's even better because we like to have mentors from the area that they are going to go back into.' As it turns out, N's church and my church are right around the corner from each other. So it all worked out great, that fact that I could work with a person that I know, even made me want to do it more so.*

Based on interviews held with mentors and IFI participants, the pattern of the mentoring typically follows two different paths. First, almost all the mentors said that the two men hit it off during the Tuesday night sessions at the prison. They talked together, prayed with one another, discussed future plans, talked about personal problems, and became friends. However, it is on the outside that the two divergent paths come into view. For some IFI participants the contact with their mentor has continued and even thrived. Their relationships are reciprocal and a strong bond has formed. However, for other IFI members, the relationship with their mentor has diminished with

time. Immediately following release from prison, they continued to keep in touch with one another. Yet, over time the contact has not been maintained.

Most of the mentors interviewed said they feel comfortable confronting the IFI participant when they are headed down the wrong path. However, one mentor noted that he does not always know when the IFI member is headed down the wrong path. Another mentor said that he shows concern and prays for the former prisoner when he knows he is making poor decisions, but ultimately believes it is the former prisoner's own choice. Because of the lack of contact, some mentors did not always know whether the IFI participant was attending church or Bible study or about other aspects of their spiritual journey. Still, many of the mentors were able to describe struggles the IFI participants faced since they have been released, including professional, financial, relational, and emotional problems.

The mentors offered valuable information concerning IFI expectations of them as mentors, as well as their level of preparedness going into the mentoring relationship. Most of the mentors shared that they did not know what was expected of them as mentors. Moreover, several of them did not feel trained or prepared to mentor, especially for the mentoring that takes place on the outside. One mentor noted that it is on the outside where the real problems arise. Although they had attended the training offered by IFI, they still did not feel properly equipped. In sum, the relationships appear to be strong on the inside, but are severely weakened on the outside.

As stated before, the impact of the volunteers and mentors on IFI participants has been critical. To follow are excerpts of interviews with IFI participants that capture the significance of these relationships.

BJ: Can you describe some aspect of your relationship with your mentor?

Ron: *My mentor is great. We're talking about school and work. I'm getting a lot of encouragement and love. I now find myself talking about my past, which I normally don't like to do because it was just too painful.*

BJ: What has been your reaction to the free-world people who come to IFI?

Dan: *The volunteers have been extremely helpful to me. The example set by the volunteers has been unbelievable. A lot of volunteers have been victims themselves. They share their own struggles and pains. The first day I met my mentor (big smile comes to inmate's face), we bonded immediately. I'm planning to go to my mentor's church when I get out.*

BJ: Has your mentor been helpful?

Andy: *My mentor has really helped and wants to help me when I get out of here. That makes me feel great. I'm only two months from the completion of my GED. And the volunteers have been very important in my spiritual growth.*

BJ: What do you think about the IFI volunteers?

Wil: *The volunteers have really helped. One volunteer had a wife dying in the hospital and he still came to visit me on Tuesday night.*

BJ: Any thoughts on the volunteers who come in on Tuesday evenings?

Pat: *The volunteers stand out. The quality of these people is unbelievable. One of the volunteers that works with me moved from Houston to Austin and still drove back to Houston for the Tuesday night meeting. He has done so much for me. I couldn't let him down for anything.*

BJ: What do you think about the volunteers and mentors?

Rae: *These volunteers mean a whole lot to me and this program. They aren't paid. Bad weather and all they show up, they have a strong commitment. We get so much out of it. I told my mentor I can't believe you'd come into a prison when they have a job, family, and kids. We've become very close and share personal things. We are brothers. We will work together when I'm out, no matter where we have to meet.*

BJ: What can you tell me about your mentor?

Bob: *My mentor stopped by here last night on his way home from Virginia. His wife picked him at the airport and brought him straight here on Tuesday night before going home. Can you believe that? And then, his wife waited in the prison parking lot for two hours while he was in here mentoring me. I can't understand how someone could care that much.*

The following narratives capture an extended dialogue with IFI participants about their relationship with mentors and general observations about the program.

BJ: Has your mentor been pretty faithful to this relationship?

Nat: *Yeah, yeah. I think he has missed one Tuesday, the week of Thanksgiving. Other than that he has been here every single Tuesday. He has also brought several mentors in with him on extra nights. He has really hung with it. He has volunteered to come get me in Huntsville this weekend.⁴³*

BJ: So, there's no doubt in your mind that the two of you will connect once you're released.

Nat: *Oh, no doubt, no, no! We're already buddies, you know.*

BJ: When are you going to meet on the outside, do you already have a regular plan?

Nat: *Yes. I got a scheduled date in the parole office for twice a month and my mentor has already indicated he would like to attend those meetings and be involved with that. You know, he wants to be there with me at the parole office. He's going to buy me a suit when I get out. So, we're going to go to the Men's Warehouse and these are the things he wants to do and I'm like, 'sure, okay.' He wants to do it. And he has said, 'hey, I want you to be like part of my family.'*

BJ: Is this your first time in prison?

Nat: *No, it's my third time.*

BJ: Have you ever experienced anything like IFI before?

Nat: *Oh, no. I have had some supervisors who have given a compliment as I was leaving that unit, saying something like I was above average with some of the guys they had seen come through and to take care of myself. It was good encouragement, but no, nothing like this. I have never set any goals before. Goals are fine, but if you don't have an awakening in your soul, in your spirit, in your heart, then you're not free from the things that kept you there before and I never was free from my alcohol addiction. You know, I could never even imagine that I wouldn't, you know, be drinking again. Now I can't even imagine drinking again.*

BJ: Did you go through any alcohol treatment programs before coming to InnerChange?

Nat: *Oh, sure.*

BJ: Did they have an impact on you?

Nat: *Sure they had an impact on me. I stayed sober for a while, you know. I learned a lot about alcoholism. I learned a lot about the AA program and it was pretty spooky. I learned that I was pretty much helpless and bound to it—a pretty hopeless situation. It always led me back to drinking again or being dry and miserable, I mean I could be sober but not happy. It didn't have anything to it. Until I gave that problem to Jesus Christ, it was still a problem. Now it's something I have to be real careful with. It is something I have to manage. You know I have to stay away from alcohol and the situations that tempt me, but I don't have to worry about drinking again, because that has been relieved—the worry of that and the fear that I might (relapse) is gone. You know, people want to know, 'how can you say that?' Personally, the load or the weight has just been lifted off of me so that I don't have to worry about it anymore. People all the time say, 'I don't understand how you can tell me, without being out there and you're not facing the temptations, how you can say all this stuff.' But I say, 'well, it started by just saying it. You know, just saying it.' Once I started saying it, and asking Jesus Christ to help me make it through, and now it feels good to say it. You know, you get that hooray feeling. I get more power each time I declare that that is just not me anymore and give the glory to God, I feel charged about it. I don't have to worry about it. The times I am tempted, I have the right answer now. And if I should even think about saying anything different then the conviction should just swoop down on me. You know when you say something to God and you mean it and you make a pact with God and he gives you some peace over it, I don't think you are going to break that pact and be very comfortable.*

BJ: Do you feel the same way about your release and your success on release as you do about the whole issue of alcohol and your possible relapse?

Nat: *Oh, well, alcoholism has always been my problem. You know, all my employers and everybody have always said that I was a great guy that shouldn't drink. Anything that ever held me back was related to alcohol. Now, not only do I feel like I don't have to rush out there and warehouse money and things to hedge against. I've got the rest of my life to build something and I'm not fearful of it disappearing because I'm going to get in trouble again or because I'm going to get drunk. So, now I kind of have a calmness of spirit that says, 'hey, you can go out there and do the little things and by doing them the right way, taking the time and effort to do the things you're supposed to do, the big things will take care of themselves.' I can see that now, but I could never see that before. Somehow it seemed like I had to push extra hard before and everything was now, now, now! I just don't feel that way now. And so, things have come right on time. I've got a job when I get out of here. I've got a place to live, I just found out this weekend that I've got a vehicle from the employer. The drivers license I was worried I wouldn't get, I wrote them again and that's all cleared up. You know, I mean, just one, two, three in due time things are coming together. Right down to my shoes. God is good. Things are happening just right on time. You don't get these assurances that everything is going to be just fine and that you're going to get all these answers a year ago, cause somehow I don't think that's faith if you know that you have got everything lined up way in advance. But my mentor and I have prayed for each and everything that we figured could be a need, and I mean each and every one of them plus a few we didn't even pray for—have all lined up.*

BJ: Tell me about your mentor.

Paul: *R is a very strong Christian and our relationship has grown. And I know that just as him and I were matched-up, it was what God had designed, because he was very strong in the Word. We set there and share about our personal life, but we are always sharing about our struggles and encouraging one another and we pray for each other every week. It's just a very, very strong spiritual relationship, which is what I needed—another man that understood where I was. R's just real with me, you know? He enjoys seeing all the things going on in my life, but him and I are just regular ole pals every week. We laugh and cut-up, and we cry about situations in our lives. He encourages me.*

BJ: Will you stay in touch with him?

Paul: *Oh yeah! And he's excited too, that I'm not wandering off. That was one of the things that we talked about when I was telling him I might be moving. Even then, we would have stayed in touch by email and phone, but it's still not the same as being able to walk into a room with him and sitting down and talking. And he knows all the struggles that I have in my life. He keeps me honest with those, you know. Sometimes we'll be crying, and sometimes we'll be laughing, sometimes we cut-up, but he's always there. To me, I couldn't have asked for a better mentor.*

BJ: As everybody around here knows, you wrote the parole board to turn down a chance to be paroled early, in order to stay locked-up for an additional year so you could complete the IFI program. There were IFI members who told you that you were a fool to turn down parole. Have those same people realized why you did it?

Paul: *Most of the guys that were here with me in Group 2, before they left, have said that they realized I was just real and that I was just doing what God called me to do. And that God called each of us here for a reason and to deal with ourselves and what we had become. Especially one of them I remember, I mean he had very, very negative things to say the day we were talking about me staying during class. Then about a week before he left IFI, he said, 'you know, I really understand you and appreciate what you did.' And now when he calls in (to InnerChange) since I work in the office, I get to talk to a lot of the guys from time-to-time, we talk and he shares his struggles, and yet, at the end of our conversations we always end up with, 'hey, I love you.' And to me, that's really neat, because that's what it's all about. It's staying in tune with God, and in tune with God's love, and not being afraid to tell another man, 'hey, I love you.'*

BJ: Had you ever done that before coming to prison?

Paul: *Not really. Over all the years, I may have had a friend or two that I could have told them that I loved them. But now, it's almost, I mean, I love every guy that has gotten out of here. Even the ones I didn't necessarily like, I love them because I have God's love in my heart for them. That doesn't mean I always like the way they behave or what they tell me, but I know that I'm kind of like a little indicator to them of what God's love is like. Even though I may tell them they are crazy and that they need to straighten up today, I'm still going to be there for them tomorrow. I'm not going to let them down. And it's certainly not me, because if I did things the way I wanted to, sometimes I'd just write them off. I'd say, 'man I've got nothing for you no more.' But I know that's not the way. God made it evident that he had a lot of love for me. You know, I turned my back on Him and run away from Him for a lot of years and He was still there for me, so that's the least I can do.*

BJ: It has been about a month since I last chatted with you, how's it going?

Cal: *Everything's going great. My kids are doing well. Matter fact, I found an extra kid I didn't know was mine, a 14 year old girl. I've seen the pictures and she sure does look like me. I could have been upset when I first found out, but I wasn't. You know this little girl could have been praying for 14 years for her dad and now God is giving her her daddy. If that's so, so be it. I wrote her mom last night and was letting her know this is not no jailhouse religion and that I'm not trying to be no jailhouse preacher or Bible freak. I'm just making better choices now and I'm doing positive things. Basically, that's what the Bible is. You don't have to be no preacher to understand the Bible, it's basically positive things. The Bible's not going to tell you to do anything negative. So, if you think positive and make positive choices, basically you going to be alright. That's basically what InnerChange is about. I been here nine months now and I understand that it's not about being a good Christian, it's about changing your attitude toward life. The devil was saying don't write her (my daughter's mother) just leave it alone. But I knew that wasn't right. So, I wrote her and told her that I had changed my life and whatever we need to do to work it out. Then she wrote me back last night and told me she had been to hell and back, and that she has multiple sclerosis and that she had gone blind for two weeks but has her eyesight back, and has three kids.*

BJ: It sounds like maybe you're feeling better about the program now than the last time I interviewed you.

Mic: *Well, I guess at that time I hadn't quite got over the initial shock of getting a serve-all you know, and it was kind of tough to get over, because I was thinking I was going to make parole. But as I have had time to get into the program and get focused on it, this has really been a blessing, you know. Learned a lot about myself—it has helped build me up. No complaints.*

BJ: Tell me what has been going on recently?

Mic: *Yeah, I participated in Kairos and that was a real blessing. All those people from the outside come in and it really touched my heart. To see people who do not even know you and to just come out and shower you with love. It wasn't so much all the cookies and stuff they brought in, but just them coming in and hugging you and they genuinely seemed like they wanted to be here and fellowship with you—to show you their love, that was something.*

BJ: Tell me about your plans, are you in school, what are you doing right now besides your work assignment?

Mic: *Right now, uh, I'm doing a computer training program—Windows 95 training plan. And I've been working on trying to become computer literate. I don't know if it's going to get me a job on the outside, but I know for a warehouse clerk everything's got to be computerized now-a-days. And I think it is really going to benefit me, so I'm really training in that. And I really want to get into the travel agent area and I know I'm going to have to have some kind of computer training for that.*

BJ: Tell me, how are things going?

Zoe: *Well, uh, just a lot of Bible studies and Rev. W has been teaching us Bible doctrine Monday through Friday, from 12 to 3. That right there has been pretty good. He's a real good teacher, teaches us about the Bible, about Jesus, the Word of God.*

BJ: How are you feeling about the program now that you've been here about six months?

Zoe: *I think it's great personally. You know I enjoy it, and it feels good to hear the word of God everyday and have people that come in from the free-world and have a lot of revivals, and lives getting saved. All the teaching of Rev. W and P has been helpful. Like skills, Bible doctrine, and Bible studies have been a real good learning experience. It's helping your mind and the way you think and seeing the way that God wants you to live your life.*

BJ: Are you thinking differently than the way you used to think?

Zoe: *Yeah, well, I used to think when I was out there about nothing but money and women. But now I find myself thinking about nothing but family, freedom, and heaven. The ultimate goal now in my life is to make it to heaven.*

BJ: Are people in your family seeing a change in you?

Zoe: *Well, I wasn't really a bad person, but I was a person who thought more of worldly and materialistic things. I thought that was what was important. You know, nice clothes, nice house, nice stuff, you know, I thought that was real important, but I found out that's not real important at all. What's important is to have a relationship with God. To try to be out there with your family, not put yourself in a position to ever be put in this kind of a situation. Life's too short to be incarcerated and to waste it and then you're going to burn in hell if you haven't give your life to God and to live by His Word. There's really no other choice. You either live by His Word or if you don't live by His Word, chances are you will sin, and if you sin after sin, and you know, a lot of the time, crime comes along with it, you can wind up incarcerated. I don't see that as being very smart, a very good alternative, I would much rather live by the Word of God and just put my life in His hands. You know, see if He can guide me in the right direction, to stay out there with my family and to eventually end up in heaven.*

BJ: Is this your first time down?

Zoe: *This is my first time incarcerated, sure is, I'm 32 years old, and got incarcerated in October of 1995. I've been in prison for 38 months, and I've got 12 more to go. And I've given my life to God, and I pray that I never, ever get put in this kind of situation again. I really want to live my life the way the Bible tells you you are supposed to live it. You know, love one another, share, and care for people. I simply want to be like, uh, those guys in the free-world who work their 40 hours a week and come home to their one wife. I used to call them suckers, you know, because I used to want to have a bunch of girlfriends and go to clubs all the time. I thought I was smarter than everybody, but now I find myself incarcerated and away from my so-called girlfriends and they're still out there with their wives you know, just living an honest life and going to church and all that. I simply want to be like that now. I just want to work a 40 hour per week job, cut-out my coupons, and be free—go to church and praise the Lord. This program is a wonderful program and I pray that it continues. I'll be out of here in 12 months, but I know there will be other people in here and hopefully it can make an impact on their lives as it has mine. I've really seen a different way. I'm ready to close that chapter in my life where I was not very successful. I wouldn't care how much money you make or how many women you have. If you wind up incarcerated and you live in sin everyday—I don't think you're a very successful person.*

BJ: Has your family noticed any changes in you?

Ben: *My mother and my daughter really know me and when they seen me in visitation they said they noticed a difference in me. They said I must have changed a lot because my conversation had changed and was real strong about God and things like that.*

BJ: Tell me about Ben six months ago, and Ben today.

Ben: *Well, I think I've changed a whole lot. I've come a long way, but I'm not at the point where I want to be. I've learned to put God first in everything I do, in all the problems and tribulations that I go through. My friends couldn't understand a lot of the things that was going on here, like all the hugging, and people trying to help their brother out. And I had just never seen this before in other prisons. They show a lot of love here. People sharing personal things about their family and what's going on with their family and was asking the others to pray for their family.*

BJ: You haven't seen that before?

Ben: *Oh, No. Through the power of prayer I've seen God answer prayer. And I've seen a lot of people come to InnerChange and give their lives over to Jesus Christ. In the scripture it says, I used to act like a child and talk like a child, and now I've put away childish things since I've become a man. And then it says, the old man has passed behold the new—increasing in Christ.*

BJ: Tell me about the program here at InnerChange.

Ben: *Well, I'd have to say that the best thing they done for me, is to let me know about the Holy Bible—through reading it, it strengthens you. Before coming here I didn't really know how to pray. I used to get on my knees and just say something, you know, like 'God just look out for my family, don't worry about me, I done already messed my chance up.' But I guess he was hearing my prayers and give me another chance by sending me to InnerChange. He sent me here to wake me up, and now I'm awake. Now I'm trying to get where He has already gone—the gates of heaven.*

BJ: You mentioned something earlier about trying to share your faith with others.

Ben: *I be trying to witness to my father and my little brother too, trying to let them know about Christ and that He's good. Through Him, He'll make anything possible. I know that's right. And it's in the Bible too. And I'm not all the way strong about the Bible, but I say, if you pick Jesus, you'll pick the best thing you've ever picked in your life. You know, every night I try to get a couple of guys that younger, I ain't but 24 years old myself, and go into prayer. And I pray for their families and that touches their hearts to know that someone cares, because they're lonely just like I'm lonely too.*

What Do We Know About IFI Recidivists?

The descriptive narratives to follow are useful in identifying patterns and trends associated with a sample of IFI members who were unsuccessful after release and ultimately returned to prison.

Wayne

Wayne was paroled from TDCJ after completing 15 months in the IFI program. He had served eight years of a 13 year sentence for Burglary of a Building with Intent to Commit Theft. Wayne had served four previous prison sentences (three of these for the offense of robbery) prior to this most recent commitment. A warrant was issued nine months later for Possession of Cocaine and Wayne's parole was subsequently revoked. According to his parole officer, he was mandated by the parole board to attend substance abuse treatment.

Wayne had a long and even violent criminal history, as well as a series of institutional violations. He read at a fourth grade level and had an IQ of 66. By any definition, these elements would place Wayne in a high-risk group for re-offending. Even at IFI, there were documented cases of his anger and impulsiveness causing problems.

James was a mentor to Wayne and worked with him over the course of eight or nine months at the IFI prison program. James believed they had established a solid relationship during this time, reporting that they had "bonded for life." After release from prison, things were going well and Wayne's mentoring relationship was progressing nicely. James reported that he meets Wayne at the aftercare meetings on Tuesday and/or Thursday evenings. Furthermore, Wayne became a member of his mentor's church. James reported having contact with Wayne's parole officer. Mentor James told the parole officer that he had instructed Wayne to contact him at anytime, day or night, and that he would take him to church.

After a period of time, Wayne began attending a different church located in his own neighborhood. Though it never seemed obvious to James that Wayne was using drugs, James remembered during our interview that Wayne had admitted using marijuana. Wayne justified his drug use by arguing that he was mad at his employer. James confronted and counseled Wayne, but he responded "I don't care." Later, James saw Wayne carrying a six-pack of beer and confronted him about this. By this time Wayne was no longer attending church regularly.

Wayne initially lived at his sister's residence, but was asked to leave the residence after he and his brother-in-law "got into it." Wayne then moved across town into a neighborhood where Wayne did not find positive support. Indeed, according to his mentor, his new girlfriend was anything but a positive influence in his life, enticing him into an unstable and drug-using lifestyle. Wayne's parole officer agreed that "challenges" at home were the beginning of his downfall. The parole officer also remembered that the other IFI parolees and Wayne's mentor James were praying for him during one of the evening parole meetings when a number of his difficulties were discussed before the group. James stated that if Wayne had stayed involved in church and had not moved, the outcome could have been different.

Kenny

Kenny was released after completing 18 months in IFI. He had served approximately 8 years on a Robbery conviction. Kenny has one previous prison commitment for Robbery. Ten months after release, Kenny was arrested on Theft charges.

With regard to IFI, Kenny was an active participant in the program. He held a leadership position for 10 months and was noted as a positive role model. He achieved quite a reputation during his stay in the IFI program; he was outgoing and very popular with the other program members. However, toward the end of his time in the IFI program, he had become apathetic toward the program. Despite his popularity and initial enthusiasm, he never won the confidence of the entire IFI program staff and other inmate leaders within the program. For this reason, the program director decided that Kenny would not receive a graduation certificate despite the fact he was one of the first to actually complete the entire 18 month program. The consensus seemed to be that he was a typical “con” who was never really sincere in his religious commitment. Chester began mentoring Kenny as a volunteer with the Kairos ministry. He felt their relationship only grew stronger and better during those 13 months prior to Kenny’s release. Chester stated that he believed his role as a mentor was “to be a friend and encouragement to Kenny, not to crack-the-whip; he would leave that to the InnerChange staff. We both enjoyed the time together and both looked forward to it.”

Chester acknowledged that Kenny was quite smart, but that he was a “carnal Christian” and wanted to have feet standing in both worlds. In fact, Kenny admitted he wanted to live life on the “high side” and that he liked to party. Chester remembers Kenny saying, “Let’s stay away from the spiritual stuff and just talk.” Spiritually speaking, Chester said that Kenny wanted to keep things at arms length. In fact, he said that when the IFI environment began to more intentionally resemble a church, “Kenny just checked-out. It got too personal. If it had been me, I would have kicked him out of the program. Maybe I should have told him that.”

Although Kenny seemed to be doing okay after his initial release, it didn’t take long for things to turn bad. Initially, Kenny lived with his mother and was attending church, a men’s Bible study and attended a few IFI parole meetings. But within two months, he had moved out, was living in a hotel and was taking cocaine. Kenny and Chester talked by telephone virtually every day, and therefore Chester was very knowledgeable about Kenny’s behavior. Kenny then tried to reconcile with his former wife and was living with her parents. This living arrangement didn’t last too long as he moved back in with his mother, though that living situation didn’t last either. He eventually moved to north Houston near Intercontinental Airport, separating him geographically from his mentor who lived in Sugarland.

Kenny had a long history of both alcohol and drug abuse and was active in the drug recovery program while incarcerated. According to mentor Chester, Kenny wanted to live by his own abilities. He stated that Kenny’s focus has always been on money more so than even his family.⁴⁴

Harold

Harold was released from prison after completing only 3 months in the IFI program. He had served approximately 4 years of a 15-year sentence for Possession of Cocaine. He served at least one previous prison sentence for Sale of Controlled Substances.

Due to his short stay in the IFI program before being paroled, he was not assigned a mentor. According to his Region 7 parole officer, Harold never really had a chance. The parole officer indicated that Harold did not have a good support system in place when he was released and that he had not really “plugged in” to the IFI program. Consequently, he failed to keep some of his scheduled appointments and did not regularly attend group meetings with other IFI parolees. Further, his parole officer stated that Harold was not regularly attending church. The fact that he incurred a new charge quickly did not surprise his parole officer, “you could see it coming.”

Peter

Peter was released after completing 11 months in IFI. He was serving a 17-year prison sentence for a Theft conviction. Peter has a long criminal history; it includes six previous prison sentences for convictions such as Forgery, Burglary, and Possession of Drugs.

Peter had been out of prison for 19 months when he was arrested. He was caught selling drugs to an undercover cop and was subsequently charged with Manufacturing/Delivery of a Controlled Substance—Cocaine.

Peter was interviewed at the Harris County Jail. He explained that he had a mentor, Gerald, but only for a short period at IFI. Peter stated that their interaction was very brief and they certainly did not establish any kind of a meaningful relationship. He never saw his mentor after leaving prison. The research team was unable to locate Gerald for an interview. Both telephone numbers listed for him were disconnected. Peter indicated that he attended church regularly for three months after leaving prison. He says transportation problems plus his work schedule at Church’s Chicken caused him to begin to miss church—essentially cutting his church attendance in half. At this point Peter moved from the southwest to the southeast side of town, continued to live alone and began attending a different church. Peter felt that it wasn’t the same because apparently, at the first church he attended, the pastor had taken a special interest in him. Peter never became a permanent member of this second church.

Peter claims he was let down by IFI since he was never given a real mentor and he indicated that a close mentor would have helped him greatly. During the interview, Peter stated he had tried to go out and do things on his own and that was his biggest problem. Although he admits to making some mistakes, such as using drugs after his release from IFI, he was reluctant to accept full responsibility for the behavior that ultimately led to his arrest. Peter reported he is still doing Bible study in the Harris County Jail.

JR

JR was released after completing 12 months in the IFI program. He had served 7 years of a 15-year sentence for Delivery of Controlled Substance—Cocaine. He had served four previous prison sentences (Auto Theft, Credit Card Abuse, Theft, Delivery), and has accumulated some 20 institutional violations.

Initially, JR was noted for being quiet, but eventually he opened up to IFI counselors and became more involved in the program. He spoke highly about his family and expressed a desire to teach children that crime is not the way to go. Before release from prison, JR was described as “having done everything that we have asked of him” by the IFI program director.

According to mentor Roger, he and JR had established a good mentoring relationship. Roger picked up JR every Sunday and took him to his Baptist Church. This regular church attendance lasted from his release in April until June. Around this time JR moved out of his parent's house because he wanted to start doing things for himself. But upon moving, JR left no new telephone number for Roger, and thus began by his own admission distancing himself from his mentor.

By September, JR's boss had told him to clean-up his act and in response, JR just quit. JR was now using drugs and after leaving a "dirty urine," his parole officer told him he should turn himself in—he didn't. His parole officer stated she "wasn't surprised," and tried to intervene on his behalf and did what she could to encourage JR to seek help. She even got him a bed at a drug treatment facility. Unfortunately, when JR finally agreed to come in, it was too late—he was arrested for Possession of Cocaine the evening prior to his entry to the treatment center.

When interviewed back in prison, JR stated that his mistakes were his own fault. He went on to say that the church was indeed helpful and that he was made to feel as though he was a part of the church. He also explained that his mentor was very important to him, in fact, even more important than the influence of his church. JR described his mentor, Roger, as someone who supported him and "stayed in the Word."

Jose

Jose was paroled from TDCJ after completing 10 months in IFI. He had served approximately 4 years of a 6-year sentence for Burglary. Jose had been arrested numerous times before for various crimes, such as Criminal Mischief, but had never been incarcerated.

Initially, Jose was described as committed to the program and cooperative, though he was also noted for failing to participate meaningfully. But 4 months into the program, problems were cited. Jose was described as hostile and unfocused, creating disturbances and sleeping during class. Although Jose's attitude improved he was still viewed as a recidivism risk by IFI staff.

According to his mentor, Fred, they were matched up three months prior to his release. Fred indicated that Jose was not supposed to get out of prison until after the summer and therefore Fred and his wife made plans for a summer trip to Honduras. Jose's early parole took place while Fred was out of the country. When Fred returned from the trip, he tried to reach Jose by phone, but with no success. "He just wouldn't return my phone calls." Fred stated that Jose originally lived with his mother, but then moved to another area of Houston and began living with his girlfriend. Fred continued calling Jose, but was only able to reach him on the phone one time. In that conversation, he indicated that he had not been attending church. Fred maintained that Jose was not interested in being held accountable.

Mentor Fred indicated that he had never met Jose's parole officer and felt like this type of communication would have been beneficial for both the parole officer and himself. Jose's parole officer stated that she never heard him mention a mentor and as far as she knew they were never in touch with each other. She indicated that the apparent absence of a mentor was at the heart of Jose's problem.

Frank

Frank was released on parole after completing 12 months in IFI. He served more than 8 years of an 18-year sentence for Forgery. Frank has a long criminal history including four previous prison commitments (two for Forgery and two for Burglary).

According to his parole officer, Frank was initially reporting in regularly, but by December, four months after being released, he had started using drugs. He was ordered to complete an inpatient treatment but failed to continue attending classes after the program ended. Progress reports in his parole file indicate he was doing poorly and twice tested positive for cocaine use.

Frank's mentor, Bobby, has hired a number of parolees over the years and has provided transportation as well as financial support for these former inmates. Bobby stated that he saw Frank everyday because he took him to and from work. Together, they were regularly attending services at Lakewood Church, weekly Bible studies (sometimes both Tuesday and Thursday nights), and IFI parole meetings. Bobby claims Frank was doing fine for a while, but then things began to change. First, Frank was not completely happy at Lakewood and started attending church elsewhere. Then Frank openly admitted to having two girlfriends, and bragged about the fact that neither of the women knew about the other relationship. Then his mentor began to notice a change in Frank's attitude and appearance; he started using excuses for missing church, IFI parole meetings and Bible study. In addition, his clothing began to take on more of a "street" look. According to his parole officer, Frank was in complete denial in regard to his drug problem. Although he was doing very well at the beginning, she says he went down fast.

Bobby has helped many former prisoners and has seen other cases similar to Frank's. Like other former prisoners that Bobby has employed and supported, there was certainly potential for a successful reentry into society. However, Bobby contends that many former prisoners fall prey to a common foe—idleness. He claims that unless former prisoners are occupied with constructive activities, such as work, church attendance, or volunteerism, they will eventually relapse in some way. When asked if the idleness could be replaced by regular church attendance and Bible study, mentor Bobby quickly responded in the negative, "These guys need to be occupied all the time. They can't handle free time. Church and bible study only account for several hours out of the entire week."

Bobby reported that he gave Frank many opportunities to make things right, but Frank never did. In addition to making excuses, Frank began to lie to his mentor and eventually Bobby decided that his time would be better spent with other former prisoners. Bobby feels that things might have been different if he had been able to mentor Frank for a longer period of time before Frank left the prison because establishing a strong relationship is of paramount concern.

Sam

Sam was released from prison after completing only six months in the IFI program. He was arrested five months later on a new charge of Forgery.

Sam was interviewed back in prison. Sam indicated that he left prison without a mentor. He lived at home with his wife and daughter and attended church. He stated that he attended church weekly until August. His wife stated that Sam was attending church regularly when he first got out of prison, and would even attend when she could not. However, his adjustment to the free-world was difficult because he was so impatient. Minor arguments or problems were difficult for him to handle.

Sam stated that problems at home caused him to quit attending church and go back to living on the streets. However, when asked about the problems at home, he was never clear as to what the struggles were about. When asked where he moved to after leaving home, he responded, “I was motel hopping.” When asked about his church, he indicated that there was more of a spiritual feeling at IFI than the church he was attending in the free-world. In other words, the church on the outside didn’t measure up to the church behind the prison bars. He stated that nobody knew him at church and that he never really was “plugged in.”

Sam stated that he left home, church, and his job, all at the same time. When asked if he knew he was throwing it all away when he left, he responded “yes.” He also stated that if he had stayed at IFI for the full 18 months, he would have been much better off. His statement, “I didn’t have anybody to turn to,” is troubling since it appears he turned away from exactly the people who could most help him.

According to his wife, “he didn’t have support from a mentor. There were times he needed someone else besides me.” She stated that Sam needed more patience, and that eventually he was just looking for an excuse to snap. She indicated a mentor could have made a difference. She further stated that he had a job at Holiday Cleaners, and she had even found him a truck to purchase. Unlike many of Sam’s IFI colleagues on parole, money was not an issue as his family was quite stable financially.

Summarizing Lessons Learned from IFI Recidivists

As is clear from the accounts of recidivists presented above, the relationship between the mentor and the IFI participant is pivotal in prisoner reentry. Initially, a number of IFI participants enjoyed frequent contact with their mentor; however, the contact seemed to diminish over time as parolees changed jobs, residences or phone numbers. This made it difficult for mentors to maintain contact. Indeed, a number of mentors described the severe contrast between constant supervision on the “inside” and virtually no supervision on the “outside.” This contrast makes it very difficult for parolees to adjust to life outside of prison. Without frequent contact and supervision by the mentor, parolees have too much idle time. Simply stated, frequent contact between mentor and offender is important to post-release success, and infrequent contact is the first step on a path to post-release failure.

We observed that as parolees experience difficulties, there is an attempt to distance themselves from those most likely to hold them accountable for their behavior. Decreasing church attendance and Bible study seem to be associated with reduced mentor contact and a deteriorating of the mentoring relationship. We believe one reason for this is the fact that few of these mentors saw their role as holding parolees accountable and would rather be seen as a friend who supports rather than confronts inappropriate behavior.

A number of the mentors mentioned that the IFI member went to a different church. Absent a mentor to facilitate or negotiate a connection with the congregation, few churches are able to provide the much needed support network. In the absence of a supporting congregation, it is doubtful that houses of worship can provide the kind of assistance former prisoners need to be successful in societal reintegration.

What distinguishes IFI recidivists from those IFI participants that managed to survive in society without recidivating? IFI recidivists in some respects resemble what Maruna referred to as “persisters”—those who continue to commit crime over time. A number of characteristics emerge when reflecting on these IFI participants who were clearly unsuccessful following their release from prison. First, the failure to build and sustain consistent contact with churches seems to be a common feature. The social support network and positive role models that many had indicated as being critical to their post-release success remain largely untapped resources.

Second, the diminishing role (or outright absence) of mentors seems to be a shortcoming shared by a number of the recidivists. Coupled with the absence or lack of mentoring is the declining significance of accountability. Though many struggled with accountability early in the IFI prison program, most came to recognize that accountability would be central to their long-term success during the aftercare phase.

Third, is the tendency of recidivists to begin to isolate themselves from those most likely to provide them with assistance? For example, instead of being able to confide in mentors and gain assistance with their struggles, by isolating themselves recidivists may be showing a lack of trust or fear associated with the discovery of their unacceptable behavior. Fourth, a number of the recidivists are either in denial about their current problems, or have a pessimistic outlook on their situation and tend to blame their struggles on the IFI program, and especially on the inability of the IFI aftercare component to adequately provide for them. The issue of personal responsibility, a hallmark of the IFI program, is minimized by a number of the recidivists. These four factors not only are central to their return to criminal activity, but run counter to the five spiritual transformation themes discussed earlier. Rather than exhibiting attributes associated with spiritual transformation or rehabilitation, recidivists more closely resemble a return to the features earlier identified with the “penitentiary mentality” or “prison code.” Lessons learned from IFI recidivists are a rude reminder of why, inevitably, any prison intervention will affect only some of those who volunteer for it.

Summary of Findings

The findings presented above dovetail with the recidivism findings presented earlier in this study. To review, we earlier found that:

- (1.) The IFI participants in this study include 75 prisoners who completed all phases of the program (called IFI Graduates), 51 who were paroled early, 24 who voluntarily quit the program, 19 who were removed for disciplinary reasons, 7 who were removed at the request of the staff, and 1 who was removed for serious medical problems. The total number of IFI participants comes to 177 offenders who were released prior to September 1, 2000. IFI participants were compared to a matched group of 1,754 inmates who met the IFI selection criteria but did not participate in the program.
- (2.) 17.3% of IFI program graduates and 35% of the matched comparison group were arrested during the two-year post-release period. A program graduate is someone who completes not only the in-prison phases of IFI dealing with biblical education, work, and community service (usually lasting 16 months), but also includes an aftercare phase (usually lasting 6 months) in which the participant must hold a job and have been an active church member for 3 consecutive months following release from prison.
- (3.) 8% of IFI program graduates and 20.3% of the matched comparison group were incarcerated during the two-year post-release period.

(4.) Considering all participants, including those inmates who did and did not complete all phases of the program, 36.2% of IFI participants were arrested compared to 35% of the matched group during the two-year tracking period. Among the total number of IFI participants, 24.3% were incarcerated compared to 20.3% of the comparison group during the two-year post-release period.

(5.) Mentor contact is associated with lower rates of recidivism.

Interviews and observations of IFI participants (pre- and post-release), IFI staff, TDCJ employees, and mentors, help to explain the reductions in recidivism associated with IFI participants who graduate from the program.

To summarize, we found:

(6.) Initial skepticism of the IFI program diminished over time, with TDCJ staff eventually embracing the program.

(7.) Narratives of IFI members revealed five spiritual transformation themes that are consistent with characteristics long associated with offender rehabilitation: (a) I'm not who I used to be; (b) spiritual growth; (c) God versus the prison code; (d) positive outlook on life; and (e) the need to give back to society.

(8.) Spiritual transformation can best be understood as a developmental process marked by key turning points or events.

(9.) Completing the IFI program, and continued positive pre- and post-release mentoring are central to both the offender's spiritual transformation and rehabilitation.

(10.) Lack of post-release accountability via mentors and congregations, the decision of the IFI participants to isolate themselves from those that could most benefit them, and finally, the tendency to not accept personal responsibility for poor decision-making, are factors associated with recidivism.

Discussion of the Findings

Over 600,000 prisoners were released to local communities throughout the country in 2002, and the number of ex-offenders coming out of prison will increase in 2003, as well as in subsequent years to follow. Such overwhelming numbers represent an unprecedented and disturbing trend in U.S. history. These figures are troubling for many because of the fact that so few of these former prisoners will have been involved in prison programs designed to address well-known problems like substance abuse, poor education, and skilled vocational training.

In order to manage this now widely recognized prisoner reentry crisis, noted corrections expert, Joan Petersilia, has identified several major prisoner reintegration practices in need of correctional reform.⁴⁵ First, Petersilia argues it is necessary to alter the in-prison experience and essentially change the prison environment from one fostering antisocial behavior to one promoting prosocial behavior. This shift in philosophy would call for fundamentally changing the prison culture so as to teach skills and values that more closely resemble those found in society at large. Second, it is critical that relevant criminal justice authorities revise post-release services and supervision while targeting those with high-need and high-risk profiles. In other words, provide closer supervision and assistance to those most likely to recidivate. Third, there is a need to seek out and foster collaborations with community organizations and thereby enhance mechanisms of informal social control. Stated differently, there is a need to establish partnerships that will provide a network of critically needed social support to newly released offenders facing a series of reintegration obstacles.

Interestingly, the InnerChange Freedom Initiative incorporates all three of these correctional reforms. This unique faith-based program not only attempts to transform prisoners, but as Petersilia suggests, attempts to change the prison culture from one that tends to promote antisocial behavior, to one that is both conducive to and promotes prosocial behavior.

Additionally, IFI provides critically needed aftercare services to prisoners following release from prison. Employment and housing are just two of the main areas where IFI aftercare workers provide invaluable assistance. As Petersilia has noted, it is important to prioritize need and risk, such that those most likely to recidivate are given closely needed attention and assistance. This is exactly the role IFI aftercare workers have assumed is most prudent for them to play. Indeed IFI aftercare staff place a great deal of their energies on parolees comprising their “critical care” list. Central to this process of aftercare is the role of IFI mentors. Mentors are clearly an asset to the long neglected issue of prisoner reentry.

Finally, IFI has made a concerted effort to partner with both parole officials and congregations throughout the Houston area. Collaborating with parole has been important because it has allowed both parole and IFI to pool their resources in supervising parolees. Partnerships with churches have made it possible to recruit scores of volunteers who teach a wide variety of classes in the IFI program. Similarly, these congregations have been the place IFI has targeted for recruiting mentors and indeed entire congregations, to agree to work with these prisoners and former prisoners. Without the partnership with these faith-based organizations, IFI would not exist.

Petersilia claims there exists promising in-prison and post-prison programs that help ex-convicts lead law-abiding lives. She argues that community-based organizations, local businesses, and faith-based organizations are showing themselves to be critical partners in assisting offenders with the transition back into society. The key word in this observation, however, is the reference to *promising* rather than *proven* programs. The current study contributes preliminary but important evidence that a faith-based program combining education, work, life-skills, mentoring, and aftercare, has the potential to influence in a beneficial way the prisoner reentry process.

John Braithwaite argues that Americans are quick to apply degradation ceremonies to offenders and thus help “certify deviance,” but are often reluctant to embrace programs whose goal it is to “decertify deviance.”⁴⁶ The controversial decision in the state of Texas to embrace a faith-based program that claimed it could in fact “decertify deviance,” is supported by preliminary research findings linking spiritual transformation to rehabilitation and subsequently to reductions in recidivism in a two-year post-release study.

According to Michael Eisenberg of the Texas Criminal Justice Policy Council, programs implemented in correctional settings typically require 2 or 3 years to address start-up problems and institutionalize the program into day to day operations.⁴⁷ We agree. IFI certainly experienced a number of significant start-up problems during the first several years of its existence. Interestingly, it is exactly those IFI participants, the initial members who had to deal with the problems associated with a new program, that make up the study group in this research. Stated differently, IFI is not being evaluated on those prisoners who have gone through the program after all the program problems and shortcomings were remedied, rather it is being assessed on the first offenders to participate in and leave from the program.

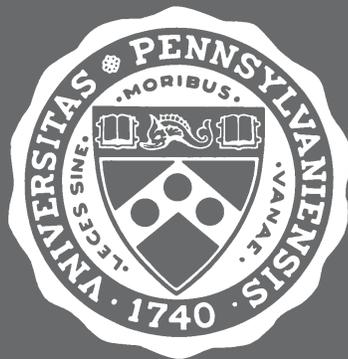
This study underlines the need for additional statistical research on recidivism rates beyond the two-year tracking period, as well as additional methodological refinements to compensate for the limitations of quasi-experimental research designs. Further research is needed that more intentionally studies the dynamics of the aftercare phase of the IFI program, the social and spiritual support provided for former prisoners during this last program component of IFI, and the differences between the effectiveness of mentoring found in the prison versus the value of mentoring in the community following release from prison. Finally, we need additional ethnographic research to be able to more fully understand the linkages between spiritual development and rehabilitation, and the ways in which both of these phenomena may be related to prisoner reentry.

E N D N O T E S

- ¹ From the TDCJ Feasibility Study for monitoring and tracking participants in “InnerChange.”
- ² Prison Fellowship was awarded the contract after responding to a competitive grant solicitation from TDCJ.
- ³ Robert Martinson. 1974. “What Works? Questions and Answers about Prison Reform.” *Public Interest* 35: 22-35.
- ⁴ See John J. DiIulio, Jr. (1990). *No Escape: The Future of American Corrections*. Basic Books.
- ⁵ See for example, Steve Aos, Polly Phipps, Robert Barnoski and Roxanne Lieb. 2001. *The Comparative Costs and Benefits of Programs to Reduce Crime*. Seattle: Washington State Institute for Public Policy; Francis T. Cullen. 2002. “Rehabilitation and Treatment Programs.” In *Crime: Public Policies for Crime Control*, edited by James Q. Wilson and Joan Petersilia, 253-91. Oakland, CA: Institute for Contemporary Studies; Gerald Gae, Timothy J. Flanagan, Laurence L. Motiuk, and Lynn Stewart. 1999. “Adult Correctional Treatment.” In *Prisons*, edited by M. Tonry and J. Petersilia, 361-426. Chicago, Ill: University of Chicago Press; Sarah Lawrence, Daniel Mears, Glenn Dublin, and Jeremy Travis. 2002. *The Practice and Promise of Prison Programming*. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute; Doris L. MacKenzie and Laura J. Hickman. 1998. *What Works in Corrections? An Examination of the Effectiveness of the Type of Rehabilitation Programs Offered by Washington State Department of Corrections*. College Park: University of Maryland.
- ⁶ See Joan Petersilia, *When Prisoners Come Home: Parole and Prisoner Reentry* (p. 177). Oxford University Press, 2003.
- ⁷ PF is easily the largest organized prison ministry in the United States. According to Prison Fellowship’s most recent Annual Report, the ministry is supported by the efforts of over 300,000 volunteers. With an annual budget of 47 million dollars, some 200,000 prisoners per month participate in either Bible studies or seminars led by PF-trained volunteers in over 1,300 of the country’s 1,850 state and federal correctional facilities (See *God at Work in Prison Fellowship: Annual Report Fiscal Year 2001-2002*. Prison Fellowship Ministries, 1856 Old Reston Ave, Reston, VA. www.prisonfellowship.org).
- ⁸ Prison Fellowship identifies itself as a not-for-profit, volunteer-reliant ministry whose mission is to “exhort, equip, and assist the Church in its ministry to prisoners, ex-prisoners, victims, and their families, and to promote biblical standards of justice in the criminal justice system.”
- ⁹ See www.ifiprison.org.
- ¹⁰ Byron R. Johnson, David B. Larson, and Timothy G. Pitts (1997). “Religious Programs, Institutional Adjustment, and Recidivism Among Former Inmates in Prison Fellowship Programs.” *Justice Quarterly* 14: 145-166.
- ¹¹ Byron R. Johnson (forthcoming study). *Religious Programs and Recidivism among Former Inmates in Prison Fellowship Programs: A Long-Term Follow-Up Study*.
- ¹² *Finding Common Ground: 29 Recommendations of the Working Group on Human Needs and Faith-Based and Community Initiatives*. Search for Common Ground: Washington, DC 2002.
- ¹³ See www.ifiprison.org.
- ¹⁴ Technically, IFI was launched at the Jester II Unit, which was renamed the Carol Vance Unit in 1999.
- ¹⁵ Initially, only offenders from Harris County were considered, and then surrounding counties were added in order to increase the potential pool size. In order to further increase the pool of potential applicants to the program, as of 2002, prisoners eventually returning to the Dallas-Fort Worth area have been added to the IFI selection process. This has increased significantly the number of participants currently in IFI, though it has no bearing on the current study sample.
- ¹⁶ The Texas Department of Criminal Justice and Prison Fellowship have agreed to increase the IFI population at the Vance Unit. As of April 2003, the IFI program houses over 200 prisoners, and with the increasing size of cohorts coming into the program, plans are to fill the entire 378 bed facility with IFI participants sometime in 2004.
- ¹⁷ For example, Prison Fellowship’s costs to operate IFI in fiscal year 2000-2001 alone were \$1.45 million.
- ¹⁸ These books are all Christian books dealing with the basics of Christianity and progressing to more advanced concepts and understandings of Christianity and spiritual growth.

- ¹⁹ This decision was not uniformly supported by either IFI institutional staff at the prison or those workers in aftercare.
- ²⁰ The CJPC is an official Texas agency independent of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice or other criminal justice agencies. Headed since 1984 by Dr. Tony Fabelo, the agency’s mission is to generate thorough research, planning and evaluation to help the Governor and Legislature develop and monitor policies for improving the effectiveness of the adult and juvenile justice systems.
- ²¹ Because of his track record in publishing scholarly research examining the impact of religion and spiritual commitment in relation to delinquency, criminality, prisoner adjustment, and recidivism, PF approached Professor Byron Johnson about conducting a second independent evaluation of IFI. Johnson subsequently secured the expertise of David B. Larson, a research psychiatrist known for conducting and publishing many empirical “faith factor” studies.
- ²² In order to increase the pool size, this criterion was eventually changed to 18-30 months from release or mandatory supervision or parole.
- ²³ For those prisoners interested in participating in IFI, each inmate’s prison file is examined for disciplinary records, release plans to halfway houses, pending detainers, and other relevant criteria prior to being selected for the program. Next, each inmate must complete an IFI 30-day self-study program as the first step to be considered for placement in the InnerChange program. Upon completion of the self-study, a committee of TDCJ and IFI staff reviews the inmate’s readiness and eligibility for participation in the IFI program. Eligible prisoners are then transferred to the Vance Unit.
- ²⁴ See the following publication for additional information on the selection process developed in 1997—*Overview of the InnerChange Freedom Initiative: The Faith-Based Prison Program within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice*, Michael Eisenberg and Brittani Trusty, (2002). Criminal Justice Policy Council, Austin, Texas.
- ²⁵ To further increase the pool of potential offenders to choose from, counties adjacent to Harris also became eligible for consideration.
- ²⁶ *Classification Plan*, Institutional Division, Texas Department of Criminal Justice (1998).
- ²⁷ Conversely, violation of prison rules or other inappropriate behavior can lead to increases in one’s security or custody classification.
- ²⁸ Minimum-out refers to “a designator used to identify minimum custody offenders who have not been approved to work with minimal supervision outside the security perimeter. *Classification Plan*, Institutional Division, Texas Department of Criminal Justice (1998).
- ²⁹ The loss of random assignment, while a methodological setback to the evaluation team, did not cause concern for those tasked with completing the CJPC evaluation, as they routinely use matched group designs in their evaluations of TDCJ programs.
- ³⁰ While comparison groups are widely used and commonly accepted in evaluation research, it is important to note that a program’s impact on participants can only be measured accurately if one knows what would have happened to the participants had they not enrolled in the program. For a more thorough explanation see: See Jean Grossman and Joseph P. Tierney, “The Fallibility of Comparison Groups,” *Evaluation Review*, (5): 556-571, 1993.
- ³¹ Salient factor risk score is a correctional assessment tool commonly used in most prisons to help predict the level of risk that prisoners pose to correctional authorities.
- ³² In either case, such a criticism implies that religious programs or experiences do reduce recidivism—the only problem is unraveling which spiritual intervention is responsible for the effect.
- ³³ Initially IFI required 18 months in the prison program, and then reduced that number to 16 months. However, if one completes fewer months and then essentially makes up the difference in Phase III (Aftercare), the Aftercare staff can still choose to “graduate” the person.

- ³⁴ Such verification tends to be established with either the IFI member's parole officer, mentor, or IFI staff.
- ³⁵ This survey was undertaken by TDCJ and the Parole Division.
- ³⁶ Biblically-based refers to the idea that all program components can logically be based on scripture.
- ³⁷ Shadd Maruna. 2001. *Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild Their Lives*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
- ³⁸ In order to protect the identity of mentors, volunteers, staff, or prisoners, pseudonyms are used in the dialogue.
- ³⁹ See David Wexler (2002). "Therapeutic Jurisprudence: An Overview." Retrieved at: www.law.arizona.edu.
- ⁴⁰ See also the description of "differential anticipation" in the classic work of Daniel Glaser. 1969. *The Effectiveness of a Prison and Parole System*. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill.
- ⁴¹ See the *Prison Community*, by Donald Clemmer, 1963.
- ⁴² John Laub and Robert J. Sampson. 2001. "Understanding Desistance from Crime." In *Crime and Justice*, edited by M. Tonry and Norval Morris, 1-70. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- ⁴³ All inmates in the TDCJ system are transported to Huntsville and go through this prison when officially released on parole.
- ⁴⁴ Chester continued as Kenny's mentor during his next prison commitment and is still mentoring Kenny today.
- ⁴⁵ A fourth area in need of reform, changing prison release and revocation practices, is a reform presently beyond IFI's authority.
- ⁴⁶ John Braithwaite (1989). *Crime, Shame, and Reintegration*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- ⁴⁷ See Michael Eisenberg, "Implementation of the TDCJ Rehabilitation Tier Treatment Programs: Progress Report," Criminal Justice Policy Council, Austin, TX, April 1998.



Co-sponsored by



CENTER FOR CIVIC INNOVATION
AT THE MANHATTAN INSTITUTE

Supported by

THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS

From: [McNally, Bronwyn](#)
To: [Hawkins, Ross](#)
Cc: [Laurent, Kristen](#)
Subject: Deed of Variation and Letter to SU
Date: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 5:10:30 PM
Attachments: [SU letter NSCP 2019 Deed of Variation 2019.docx](#)
[NSCP Deed of Variation to Deed of Grant - Rollover 2019 - Scripture Union Pro rataV2.docx](#)

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Hi Ross

Please find attached the letter to Scripture Union along with the Deed of Variation for discussion. I'll bring hard copies tomorrow.

Thanks

Bron

Bronwyn McNally | Research and Policy Executive Officer

Phone: +61 6205 7619 | Email: bronwyn.mcnally@act.gov.au

Student Wellbeing | Education | ACT Government

Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning | 51 Fremantle Drive, Stirling | GPO Box 158
Canberra ACT 2601

www.education.act.gov.au | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Google+](#)

This email, and any attachments, may be confidential and also privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and delete all copies of this transmission along with any attachments immediately. You should not copy or use it for any purpose, nor disclose its contents to any other person.



[REDACTED]
Scripture Union Queensland
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

National School Chaplaincy Program: Deed of Variation 2019

I am writing to you regarding the National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP) 2019-2022. Further to my letter of 5 February, in order to facilitate the continuation of services for 2019 the current Deed of Grant between your school and the ACT Education Directorate (the Directorate) has been varied to reflect the requirements of the 2019-2022 Program and the decision to transition ACT public schools from the NSCP in 2019. The variation to the Deed of Grant and updated ACT NSCP Guidelines are enclosed. The key changes to the delivery of the NSCP in 2019 include:

Funding

The funded amount has increased to \$20,280.00 (GST exclusive) per school per year.

Chaplains Role:

- Chaplains must have regard to the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children, and the relevant state and territory responses to the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Abuse (Volume 6 – Making institutions child safe, Volume 10 – Children with harmful sexual behaviours and Volume 13 – Schools);
- Chaplains must undertake training on bullying and cyberbullying provided by the Office of the e-Safety Commissioner. Chaplains must have completed this free professional learning within 18 months from the time the professional learning is available to Chaplains. Details and timing of the availability of the training will be advised in 2019.
- There is also greater detail on the role the chaplain may perform in consultation with the school principal and community in addition to pastoral care services for example breakfast clubs and lunchtime activities.

Transition Arrangements

As discussed at our meeting on 13 February 2019, the Directorate will work with you to transition ACT public schools away from the NSCP from the end of Term 2, 2019. The Directorate will work closely with you to develop the transition plan to minimise potential disruption to students and the school community and to provide certainty for Chaplains.

Clause 11.2 of the Deed of Grant between your organisation and the Territory allows the Territory to reduce the funding or terminate the deed for any reason. A staged transition will be implemented in consultation with your organisation with the transition points being at the end of term 2, term 3 and term 4 of the 2019 school year. The Directorate will provide a transition schedule that specifies which schools will step down at each of these transition points in early term 2. The Directorate will develop the schedule based on consultation with schools and will provide Chaplaincy ACT with four weeks' notice prior to the identified schools' transition.

To reflect the new arrangements the payment schedule in the deed of variation includes an initial payment for terms 1 and 2 of \$245,388. Payment for terms 3 and 4 will be made on a pro rata basis as the program is stepped down, in line with the transition plan and informed by the number of schools that remain engaged in the program. Payments will be made at the beginning of each term upon receipt of an invoice for the agreed amount.

Please sign, scan and return the variation to ETDStudentWellbeing@act.gov.au as soon as practicable. On receipt of the signed copy the Directorate will execute the agreement and provide your organisation with a copy for your records.

Please contact Bronwyn McNally on 6205 7619 or via email at ETDStudentWellbeing@act.gov.au for further information if required.

Yours sincerely,

Ross Hawkins
Executive Director, Service Design and Delivery
ACT Education Directorate
February 2019



DEED OF VARIATION

Dated

Parties

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

**SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY ACT, A
DIVISION OF SCRIPTURE UNION
QUEENSLAND**

ABN: 74 009 669 569

**VARIATION OF DEED OF GRANT
NATIONAL SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY
PROGRAM**

Prepared by

ACT Government Solicitors
PO Box 260
Civic Square ACT 2008
Ph: 02 6205 2503
Fax: 02 6207 0650
Ref: CM 635610

Version

Version 0.1 31 January 2019

PARTIES: **AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**, the body politic established by section 7 of the *Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act 1988* (Cth) (**Territory**) represented by the Education Directorate.

SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY ACT, A DIVISION OF SCRIPTURE UNION QUEENSLAND (ABN: 74 009 669 569) of PO Box 1167 Eagle Farm, QLD 4009 (**Recipient**).

BACKGROUND

- A. The Territory and the Recipient executed a Deed of Grant (**Deed of Grant**) on or about 25 January 2015 in relation to funding under the National School Chaplaincy Program.
- B. Clause 14.1 provides for variations to the Deed of Grant to be made only by the written agreement of the parties.
- C. The parties have agreed to vary the Deed of Grant in accordance with the terms of this Deed.

IT IS AGREED by the parties as follows.

1. Interpretation and Governing Law

- (1) Unless the context requires or it is otherwise specified in this Deed, any words used in this Deed that are defined in the Deed of Grant have the same meaning for the purpose of this Deed.
- (2) This Deed is governed by and construed in accordance with the law for the time being in force in the Territory and the parties submit to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of the Territory.

2. Effective Date

The variations to the Deed of Grant described in this Deed take effect on the date of this Deed.

3. Variation

- (1) **Clause 1.1:** the definition of Guidelines is deleted and replaced with the following:

“means the 2019 ACT National School Chaplaincy Program Guidelines at **Attachment A** to this Deed as varied and notified by the Territory to the Recipient from time to time.”

- (2) **Item 1 Schedule 1** is deleted and replaced with the following:

Grant Period From the date of this Deed to 30 June 2020.
See clauses 1.1 and 3

- (3) **Item 2 Schedule 1** is deleted and replaced with the following:

- Grant**
See clauses 1.1 and 2.1
- (1) \$1,848,000 (GST inclusive) for the Funding Years 2015-2018.
 - (2) \$245,388 for terms 1 and 2 of 2019 with additional payments to be made in line with the Directorate's transition schedule.
 - (3) The Grant is payable by instalments. Invoices must be rendered in accordance with the following table:

Funding Year – 1 January -31 December in each year	Amount	Date from which Invoice may be rendered in each year
2015	\$462,000.00	15 January
2016	\$462,000.00	15 January
2017	\$462,000.00	15 January
2018	\$462,000.00	15 January
Terms 1 and 2 - 2019	\$245,388	15 January
Term 3 2019	TBC	TBC
Term 4 2019	TBC	TBC

Due to the staged transition of ACT public schools away from the NSCP during 2019, payment will be modified on a pro rata basis per school term for the number of schools participating in the program at that time.

The first payment of \$245,388 will be made to cover the costs of delivering chaplaincy services for Term 1 and 2. Subsequent payments will be made in terms 3 and 4 based on the number of school participating in the program at that time.

- (4) **Item 5 Schedule 1** is deleted and replaced with the following:

Contact Officers For the Territory:
See clauses 1.1 and 15.8

Kristen Laurent
 Address: GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601
 Email: Kristen.laurent@act.gov.au
 Phone: 6207 2327

For the Recipient:

[please update contact details for your organisation]

- (5) **Schedule 3** is amended by inserting after the table at Item 4:

Item 5. Funding Year 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019

School	Amount of Grant
Amaroo School	Up to \$22,308
Black Mountain School	Up to \$22,308
Calwell High School	Up to \$22,308
Campbell High School	Up to \$22,308
Caroline Chisholm School	Up to \$22,308
Erindale College	Up to \$22,308
Gordon Primary School	Up to \$22,308
Hawker College	Up to \$22,308
Isabella Plains ECS	Up to \$22,308
UC High School Kaleen	Up to \$22,308
UC Lake Ginninderra College	Up to \$22,308
Lake Tuggeranong College	Up to \$22,308
Malkara School	Up to \$22,308
Melba Copland Secondary School	Up to \$22,308
Ngunnawal Primary School	Up to \$22,308
Richardson Primary School	Up to \$22,308
Mount Stromlo High School	Up to \$22,308
Theodore Primary School	Up to \$22,308
Torrens Primary School	Up to \$22,308
Trinity Christian School	Up to \$22,308
Wanniassa Hills Primary School	Up to \$22,308
Wanniassa Primary School	Up to \$22,308

- (6) **Attachment A** to the Deed of Grant is deleted and replaced with the attachment to this Deed titled 'ACT National School Chaplaincy Program Guidelines 2019-2022'.

SIGNED AS A DEED ON

SIGNED for and on behalf of the)
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY)
in the presence of:) Signature of Territory delegate

.....
Signature of witness Print name

.....
Print name

SIGNED by or for and on behalf of)
SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY ACT, A)
DIVISION OF SCRIPTURE UNION) Signature of director/ authorised
QUEENSLAND ABN 74009669596) officer/ individual*
in the presence of: *DELETE whichever is not applicable (see note below)

.....
Signature of director/ secretary/ witness*
*DELETE whichever is not applicable (see note below) Print name

.....
Print name Signature of second authorised officer*
*only use if Incorporated Association (see note below)

.....
Print name



Note:

Date: Must be dated on the date the last party signs the Deed or, if signed counterparts of the Deed are exchanged, the date of exchange. Also date the cover page.

Company: Must be signed in accordance with section 127 of the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth), for example, by 2 directors or a director and a secretary. Common seal may be affixed if required under the Recipient’s constitution.

Incorporated Association: Must be signed in accordance with the Recipient’s constitution, which may or may not require the common seal to be affixed. As a minimum, 2 authorised officers must sign.

From: [Brighton, Meg](#)
To: [Hawkins, Ross](#); [Laurent, Kristen](#)
Subject: RE: Chaplains: further corro
Date: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 7:24:39 PM

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Dear Ross
Thank you for clarifying – agree.
Regards
Meg

From: Hawkins, Ross
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 7:23 PM
To: Brighton, Meg <Meg.Brighton@act.gov.au>; Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Chaplains: further corro

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Meg – in terms of a point of distinction for the letters, how about the Min one, sets out her rationale, talks about valuing individual contributions in schools. Keen to continue the communication with school and community.
Directorate letter – after min (should reference it) focuses on process (certainty for 6 months no transitions before then) – will look to work with each school given individual circumstances ... etc.... highlight that we are always available to talk if required... not that schools are keen to ensure continuity etc...
... both need to go before the session with chaplains next week.
Kristen can you please develop on this basis.
Thanks

From: Brighton, Meg
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 3:46 PM
To: Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>
Cc: Hawkins, Ross <Ross.Hawkins@act.gov.au>; Brighton, Meg <Meg.Brighton@act.gov.au>
Subject: Chaplains: further corro

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Dear Kristen
I have spoken to the Office today – please can you progress a letter to Chaplains from EDU and a letter to Chaplains from Minister. Office agrees with our advice regarding attending the SU meeting and the suggestion of an EDU hosted meeting with Chaplains.
Ross and I briefly discussed earlier today.
Thanks
Meg

Meg Brighton | Deputy Director-General **Education Directorate** | ACT Government
T: [+61 2 6205 9458](tel:+61262059458) | E: meg.brighton@act.gov.au
Level 6, [220 Northbourne Ave](#) Braddon | GPO [Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601](#) |
www.education.act.gov.au

From: [Laurent, Kristen](#)
To: [Brighton, Meg](#); [Hawkins, Ross](#)
Cc: [McNally, Bronwyn](#)
Subject: RE: Chaplains: further corro
Date: Wednesday, 27 February 2019 7:26:06 AM
Attachments: [Transition plan key activities.docx](#)
[EDU letter to Chaplains.docx](#)

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Thanks Meg.

██████████ from Scripture Union Queensland phoned this afternoon wanting to discuss the requests made in ██████████ emails. ██████████ advised they haven't yet talked to chaplains about the fact that transition for some schools from the program will begin as early as the end of Term 2. That is, they may currently be under the impression that the program will continue in their school for the full school year. ██████████ and ██████████ will be attending the meeting with chaplains in Canberra next week (Wed 6 March) and their preference would be to meet with the chaplains on their own for this first meeting so they can communicate the staged transition arrangements. ██████████ has agreed to capture key issues, questions and concerns raised at the meeting to share with us and inform our planning for a smooth transition process, and with a view to us meeting with the chaplains when we are better positioned to respond the questions they will have around employment classification, pay rates, conditions etc.

██████████ has asked if we can hold off on sending our correspondence to chaplains until after this meeting and if it would be possible for us to share a copy of the draft letter to chaplains with them before they meet with them. I think this is reasonable but said I would get back to ██████████ on this. ██████████ was very appreciative of the open channels of communication between the Directorate and ██████████ office and it was a positive interaction. We were able to talk ██████████ through our intended approach to stepping down of payments through a revised payment schedule in the Deed of Variation which made sense to ██████████.

If the MO is comfortable with this approach and draft letter I will share a copy once cleared. I didn't mention who the letter would be coming from.

I have also attached a mud map of our plans for transition based on some detailed scoping Bron and I have prepared please see attached.

Regards
 Kristen

From: Brighton, Meg
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 3:46 PM
To: Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>
Cc: Hawkins, Ross <Ross.Hawkins@act.gov.au>; Brighton, Meg <Meg.Brighton@act.gov.au>
Subject: Chaplains: further corro

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Dear Kristen

I have spoken to the Office today – please can you progress a letter to Chaplains from EDU and a letter to Chaplains from Minister. Office agrees with our advice regarding attending the SU meeting and the suggestion of an EDU hosted meeting with Chaplains.

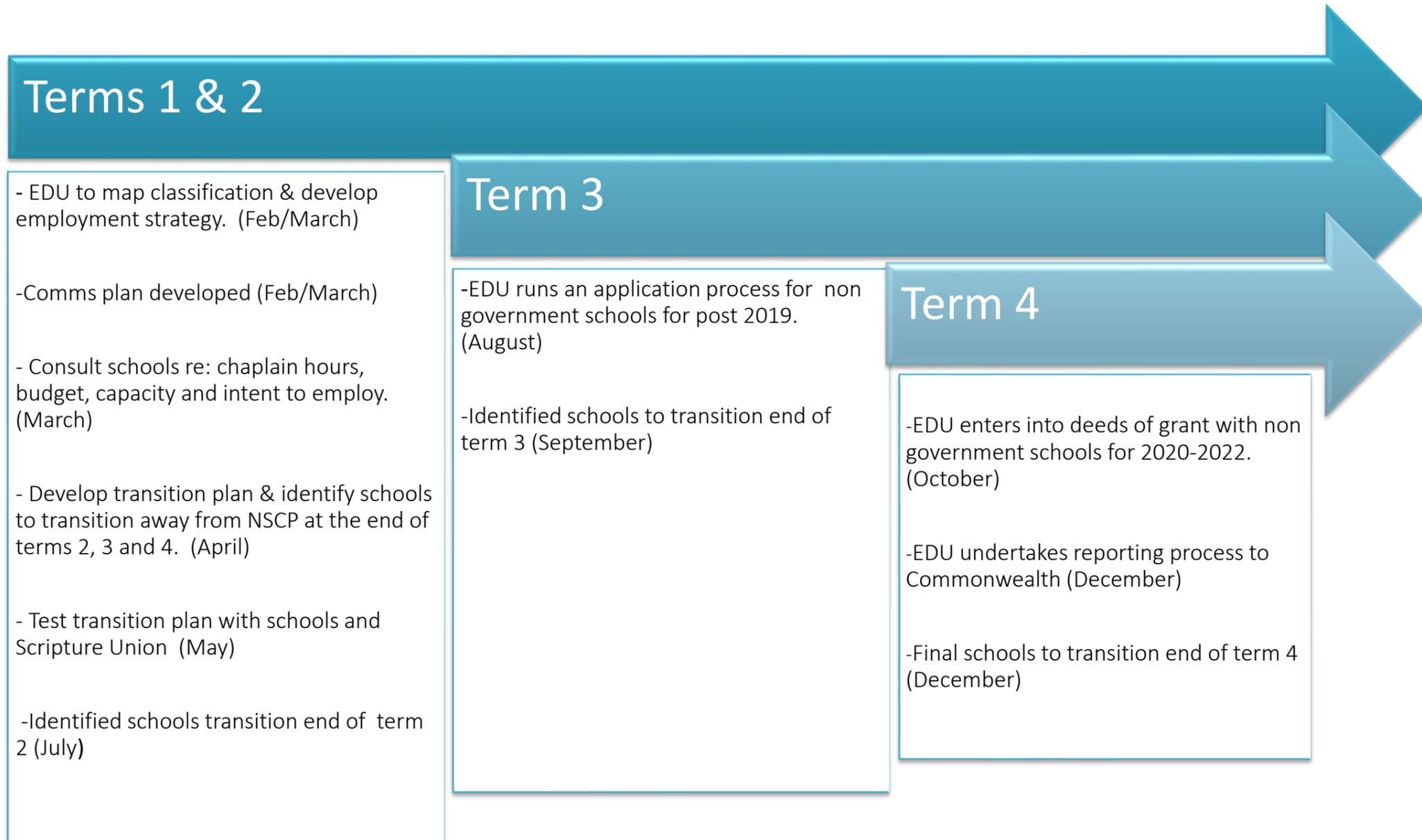
Ross and I briefly discussed earlier today.

Thanks
 Meg

Meg Brighton | Deputy Director-General **Education Directorate** | ACT Government
 T: [+61 2 6205 9458](tel:+61262059458) | E: meg.brighton@act.gov.au

Level 6, [220 Northbourne Ave](#) Braddon | GPO [Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601](#) | www.education.act.gov.au

Key activities: Transition plan for ACT public schools from the NSCP





Dear

I am writing to you to provide you with some information about the decision to transition ACT public schools out of the National School Chaplaincy Program. (NSCP)

As you are aware, the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development has made the decision to transition ACT public schools away from the NSCP in 2019. This decision was made to align supports in schools with the *Education Act 2004* to ensure education in ACT schools occurs within a secular context. The ACT Government is committed to supporting the wellbeing of children and young people and has made significant investment in student wellbeing in recent years. This investment means that schools are well positioned to meet the broad range of student wellbeing needs through a holistic approach.

We recognise this decision was unexpected and you may be feeling uncertain about what this means for you. The decision was not a reflection on the quality of services chaplains funded under the program currently provide. In light of the value many chaplains add to the wellbeing supports of a school community, the Directorate is working towards an offer of direct employment to enable schools to engage chaplains funded under the NSCP to continue to provide wellbeing supports on a secular basis.

There is now information about the Minister's decision in the public domain and as often happens when the media reports an issue, some of the nuances surrounding the situation is lost. Principals and Chaplaincy ACT have been advised that NSCP services will remain in place for Term 1 and 2 of this year. I would like to assure you that the Directorate will work closely with Chaplaincy ACT and schools to carefully plan the transition on a school by school basis.

It is important that any transition activities planned minimises potential disruption to students and the school community and this process is done in consultation with school chaplains. I will ensure Chaplaincy ACT, schools and chaplains remain updated as we progress throughout the year.

Yours sincerely

Ross Hawkins
Executive Director
Service Design and Delivery

From: [Laurent, Kristen](#)
To: [Hawkins, Ross](#); [King, Ashley](#)
Subject: RE: Office request Chaplaincy correspondence [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Date: Wednesday, 27 February 2019 7:39:29 AM

UNCLASSIFIED

Thanks, noted.
Kristen

From: Hawkins, Ross
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 8:06 PM
To: King, Ashley <Ashley.King@act.gov.au>
Cc: Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Office request Chaplaincy correspondence [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

Thanks Ashley -agreed – we will test with the office first
R

From: King, Ashley
Sent: Tuesday, 26 February 2019 1:00 PM
To: EDU Student Engagement Director's Office <EDUDSEOffice@act.gov.au>
Cc: Seton, Sam <Sam.Seton@act.gov.au>; Hawkins, Ross <Ross.Hawkins@act.gov.au>; Sturgiss, Kim <Kim.Sturgiss@act.gov.au>; EDUMCR <EDUMCR@act.gov.au>; McGarvey, Caitlin <Caitlin.McGarvey@act.gov.au>; Fleck, Katrina <Katrina.Fleck@act.gov.au>; Brighton, Meg <Meg.Brighton@act.gov.au>
Subject: Office request Chaplaincy correspondence [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi

The office has suggested a “template” response be prepared for both those for and against the program decision.

Noting that each response may require some customising as well.

The office are happy to get the draft “template response” for consideration prior to responses for all correspondence is undertaken.

Please email me cleared “template” response and I will work with the office and will advise once cleared to proceed.

Thanks

Ashley

Mr Ashley King

Education Directorate Liaison Officer

Phone + 61 2 6205 0291 | Email: EduDLO@act.gov.au

Office of Yvette Berry MLA

Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development

This document is not released in accordance with Section 17 of the
Freedom of Information Act 2016, schedule 1.2



UNCLASSIFIED

To:	Deputy Director-General	Tracking No.: EDU19/13/01
Date:	27 February 2019	
From:	Executive Group Manager, Service Design and Delivery	
Subject:	School Chaplaincy	
Meeting Date:	7 March 2019	

Background

1. The National School Chaplaincy Program NSCP was renewed for another four years from 2019-2022.
2. The 42 schools who participated in the 2015-2018 Program were rolled over for 2019 school year. Twenty-Two (22) of these are public schools. See Attachment A: List of public schools.
3. Prior to signing the Project Agreement with the Commonwealth, Minister Berry lobbied the Federal Minister for Education to include secular workers in the program.
4. Minister Berry also wrote to the shadow Minister for Education Tanya Plibersek supporting the inclusion of secular workers. Labor has announced schools will be able to choose a secular worker under a Labor Government
5. The AEU has previously voiced concerns about the NSCP. In particular that the ACT Government needed to preserve the secular nature/ traditions of public schooling and that funding should be invested in wellbeing programs more broadly.

Issues

6. Minister Berry made the decision to withdraw public schools from the NSCP through a staged approach in 2019.
7. This decision was based on the incompatible nature of the Program with the non-sectarian, secular environment and principles of public education.
8. Public School principals of the 22 schools were informed of the decision on 7 February 2019. Please see Attachment B: letter to schools from the Director-General
9. EDU is working with the 22 schools and Chaplaincy ACT as the funding provider to create a transition schedule. It is anticipated schools will step away from the program at the end of terms 2, 3 and 4.
10. Many chaplains are valued members of school wellbeing teams. Schools will have the option to employ chaplains on a secular basis which will enable them to continue providing wellbeing services within schools.

11. The role is likely to be similar to that of a Youth Worker and EDU is mapping the roles and duties. Schools will need to fund these positions within existing budgets. EDU will work with schools who may find this to be a cost pressure.

Consultation

Internal

12. People and Performance
13. Legal and Governance

Cross Directorate

14. Government Solicitor's Office

External

15. Scripture Union QLD
16. Catholic Education Office
17. Association for Independent Schools of the ACT
18. Young Life

Benefits/Sensitivities

19. Chaplains may not wish to be employed in a secular capacity in ACT public schools.
20. Families of students at schools with chaplains have written to the Minister in support of the program.

Ross Hawkins

Executive Group Manager, Service Design and Delivery

Executive Group Manager, Service Design and Delivery:	Ross Hawkins	Phone:	57719
Action Officer:	Bronwyn McNally	Phone:	57619

Attachments

Attachment	TRIM No	Title
Attachment A		List of public schools receiving NSCP funding
Attachment B	19/149	Letter to Schools from the Director-General

Vandyk, Thomas

From: King, Ashley on behalf of Education DLO
Sent: Thursday, 28 February 2019 12:41 PM
To: EDU Student Engagement Director's Office
Cc: EDUMCR; Hawkins, Ross; Sturgiss, Kim; Fleck, Katrina; McGarvey, Caitlin; Brighton, Meg
Subject: [REDACTED] SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM [REDACTED] SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]
Attachments: Correspondence from [REDACTED].pdf

Hi

Title/Question	Support for Ending SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM [REDACTED]
Action	Ministerial Response please
Responsibility	SE
Response type	Letter cc Chief Minister
IRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	15/3/19
Clearance	EGM SDD
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
X50291

From: BERRY
Sent: Thursday, 28 February 2019 12:08 PM
To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Correspondence from [REDACTED]

Please see the attached correspondence relating to Education. For appropriate action/response

Cheers,
Grace

From: Moody, Ethan On Behalf Of BARR Reception
Sent: Thursday, 28 February 2019 11:33 AM
To: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>
Subject: Correspondence from [REDACTED]

Hi Grace,

Could we refer to your office and be CC'd in on the response?

Kind regards,

Ethan Moody
Office of the Chief Minister
Andrew Barr MLA | Member for Kurrajong
Ph: (02) 6205 0011
E: ethan.moody@act.gov.au

The Chief Minister
ACT Government
Civic Centre, Canberra

Dear Chief Minister:

I am writing to you to congratulate you & your government on your recent policy initiative on chaplains.

I hope that this will be a step towards giving the ACT an educational system which is "Free, Secular & Compulsory"-- in a word the kind of education system which

always talked about and hoped for.

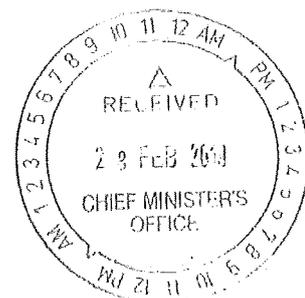
Indeed I look forward to an ACT in which there is strict separation of Church and State.

I hope, sir, that you will contribute to this.

With best wishes

[Redacted signature block]

25 February 2019



Vandyk, Thomas

From: Laurent, Kristen
Sent: Thursday, 28 February 2019 2:27 PM
To: Hawkins, Ross
Cc: McNally, Bronwyn; Sturgiss, Kim; Sant'Ana, Laura
Subject: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: Media request School Chaplaincy [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Attachments: List of gov schools NSCP 2019.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Ross

Please see below, for your urgent clearance, responses to further questions from the [REDACTED] in relation to school chaplains. Media and Comms need to get this across to the MO by 4pm.

Regards

Kristen Laurent | Senior Manager, Policy and Projects
 Phone: 6207 2327 | Email: kristen.laurent@act.gov.au
 Inclusion and Engagement | Education | ACT Government
 Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning | Fremantle Drive, Stirling | www.act.gov.au

From: McNally, Bronwyn
Sent: Thursday, 28 February 2019 1:56 PM
To: Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Principals [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

Hi Kristen responses below.

We want a list of the 22 schools with a chaplain. Could you send that through?

- List attached.

How many schools have a youth worker or counsellor (not a psychologist) there? And is that role usually split across multiple schools or just at one like a chaplain is?

- 31 ACT public schools currently have a Youth Worker. Youth Workers may work across more than one school site. This is also the case with Chaplains.
- Principals manage the staffing allocation aspect of their budget and may choose to directly employ a counsellor, however these professionals are separate to the school psychologists. The Directorate does not hold central data on the number of counsellor positions in schools.

How will the chaplain role change in schools - under the guidelines they have to be from a church but as I understand it they can't talk about religion already, so is there any change to their actual duties? (Put another

way, if existing chaplains with religious ties are allowed to stay on, won't they be doing essentially the same thing?)

- The role of the Chaplain and a Youth Worker is similar except that under the National School Chaplaincy Program funding Chaplains must be endorsed by a recognised religious institution and can support students to explore their spirituality and provide spiritual guidance.
- The general role of the Chaplain is to assist with supports and strategies coordinated by the schools wellbeing team such as breakfast clubs, lunch time activities, workshops for families and wellbeing programs. Existing Chaplains employed to do this on a secular basis will continue to do these duties but without the faith based element. Schools and wellbeing teams are able to reach out to community groups and agencies in partnership with families if students need particular support that is relevant to their faith or culture.

And non-gov schools can still apply for funding (or you will get it for them and give it out)?

- The decision for ACT public schools from the National School Chaplaincy Program does not affect the participation and funding for non-government schools.

If schools want a social worker do they get extra funding for it, how often does this happen and how many work schools?

- Principals manage their staffing allocation budget and allocate resources in accordance to the needs of their school community. This may include the employment of counsellors or social workers as part of school wellbeing teams. These costs are met within schools existing budgets. The Directorate does not hold central data on the number of these positions.

Bronwyn McNally | Research and Policy Executive Officer

Phone: +61 6205 7619 | Email: bronwyn.mcnally@act.gov.au

Student Wellbeing | Education | ACT Government

Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning | 51 Fremantle Drive, Stirling | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601

www.education.act.gov.au | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Google+](#)

his email, and any attachments, may be confidential and also privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and delete all copies of this transmission along with any attachments immediately. You should not copy or use it for any purpose, nor disclose its contents to any other person.

From: Laurent, Kristen

Sent: Thursday, 28 February 2019 12:38 PM

To: McNally, Bronwyn <Bronwyn.McNally@act.gov.au>

Subject: FW: Principals [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

UNCLASSIFIED

From: Sloane, Brenton

Sent: Thursday, 28 February 2019 12:27 PM

To: Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>

Cc: EDU Media <EDU.Media@act.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Principals [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Kristen,

In addition to that, there is also this question:

If schools want a social worker do they get extra funding for it, how often does this happen and how many work in schools?

Can we throw that on the pile as well?

Cheers,

Brenton Sloane | Senior Communications Officer
Media and Communications | Education | ACT Government
P: (02) 6205 4196 | M: 0431 252 698 | E: brenton.sloane@act.gov.au
Level 6, 220 Northbourne Avenue | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601
www.education.act.gov.au | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

From: Sloane, Brenton
Sent: Thursday, 28 February 2019 12:23 PM
To: Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>
Cc: EDU Media <EDU.Media@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Principals [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hello Kristen,

The Minister's Office has received some follow-up questions from [REDACTED] about the chaplaincy program. They have now asked for our assistance to provide information with which to answer these questions.

Would you be able to provide me with some information to answer these questions?

The questions are:

We want a list of the 22 schools with a chaplain. Could you send that through?

How many schools have a youth worker or counsellor (not a psychologist) there? And is that role usually split across multiple schools or just at one like a chaplain is?

How will the chaplain role change in schools - under the guidelines they have to be from a church but as I understand it they can't talk about religion already, so is there any change to their actual duties? (Put another way, if existing chaplains with religious ties are allowed to stay on, won't they be doing essentially the same thing?)

And non-gov schools can still apply for funding (or you will get it for them and give it out)?

Please contact me if you need to discuss this further.

Cheers,

Brenton Sloane | Senior Communications Officer
Media and Communications | Education | ACT Government
P: (02) 6205 4196 | M: 0431 252 698 | E: brenton.sloane@act.gov.au
Level 6, 220 Northbourne Avenue | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601

www.education.act.gov.au | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

From: EDU Media

Sent: Thursday, 28 February 2019 12:03 PM

To: Sloane, Brenton <Brenton.Sloane@act.gov.au>; Doman, Claudia <Claudia.Doman@act.gov.au>; Evans, Rachel <Rachel.Evans@act.gov.au>

Subject: FW: Principals [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

FYI – for action.

From: Johnston, ClaireV

Sent: Thursday, 28 February 2019 11:59 AM

To: EDU Media <EDU.Media@act.gov.au>

Subject: FW: Principals

Hi guys

See below follow up from [REDACTED] Can we get some answers to the highlighted questions? Thanks.

Claire

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, 28 February 2019 10:57 AM

To: Johnston, ClaireV <ClaireV.Johnston@act.gov.au>

Subject: Re: Principals

Thanks Claire. I'm trying to file it tomorrow while it's timely but honestly I think it will be more of a next week thing for Saturday's paper - let's say Wednesday deadline? (Will need to file Thursday at the latest so there's time to edit and lay it out).

Also I'll give you a buzz in a sec - the eds here are still super interested in the chaplain stuff and want a list of the 22 schools with a chaplain. Could you send that through? (I know Calwell High has one and that's about it so far haha)

Also wondering:

How many schools have a youth worker or counsellor (not a psychologist) there? And is that role usually split across multiple schools or just at one like a chaplain is?

How will the chaplain role change in schools - under the guidelines they have to be from a church but as I understand it they can't talk about religion already, so is there any change to their actual duties? (Put another way, if existing chaplains with religious ties are allowed to stay on, won't they be doing essentially the same thing?)

What happens if schools (beyond the 22 already with one) want that kind of dedicated role? Is there scope to recruit more youth workers etc.

And just checking you're not looking to expand the number of youth workers/counsellors right now to replace chaplains? (But will consider investing more in future?)

What does the minister say to comments from Andrew Barr and federal Labor that schools should have a choice between secular and religious chaplains rather than only having secular in public schools?

And non-gov schools can still apply for funding (or you will get it for them and give it out)?

Anything else to add on this?

Thanks heaps, Claire. Sorry to bang on about this but still a bit confused about how it all works. Call me if it's easier to just chat over the phone.

Government Schools currently receiving Chaplaincy Funding

	School Name	Sector	Funding recipient
1.	Amaroo School	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
2.	Belconnen HS	EDU	Young Life
3.	Black Mountain School	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
4.	Calwell HS	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
5.	Campbell High School	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
6.	Caroline Chisholm	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
7.	Erindale College	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
8.	Gordon PS	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
9.	Hawker College	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
10.	Isabella Plains Early Childhood School	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
11.	Lake Tuggeranong College	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
12.	Malkara Specialist School	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
13.	Melba Copeland Secondary School	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
14.	Mt Stromlo HS	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
15.	Ngunnawal PS	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
16.	Richardson PS	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
17.	Theodore PS	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
18.	Torrens PS	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
19.	UC High School Kaleen	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
20.	UC Lake Ginninderra College	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
21.	Wanniassa Hills PS	EDU	Scripture Union QLD
22.	Wanniassa School Jnr Campus	EDU	Scripture Union QLD

From: [Laurent, Kristen](#)
To: [Shun Wah, Jane](#); [McNally, Bronwyn](#)
Subject: FW: [FOR CLEARANCE, due COB Today] EDU19/13/01 School Chaplaincy meeting brief
Date: Thursday, 28 February 2019 4:10:00 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
Sensitivity: Confidential

UNCLASSIFIED

This would be very welcome.
 kristen

From: Hawkins, Ross
Sent: Thursday, 28 February 2019 3:47 PM
To: Sant'Ana, Laura <Laura.Sant'Ana@act.gov.au>
Cc: Sturgiss, Kim <Kim.Sturgiss@act.gov.au>; Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>; Seton, Sam <Sam.Seton@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: [FOR CLEARANCE, due COB Today] EDU19/13/01 School Chaplaincy meeting brief
Sensitivity: Confidential

UNCLASSIFIED

Thanks

Ps – lets discuss these in future and how much we need to do... I would be keen for us not to have to provide pre briefs if we can

R

From: Sant'Ana, Laura
Sent: Thursday, 28 February 2019 1:15 PM
To: Hawkins, Ross <Ross.Hawkins@act.gov.au>
Cc: Sturgiss, Kim <Kim.Sturgiss@act.gov.au>; Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>; Seton, Sam <Sam.Seton@act.gov.au>
Subject: [FOR CLEARANCE, due COB Today] EDU19/13/01 School Chaplaincy meeting brief
Sensitivity: Confidential

Hi Ross

Please find attached for your clearance (electronically) the Meeting brief to support you and Meg during the next EDU AEU meeting.

Meeting Brief – Chaplaincy
 Attach A – List of public schools NSCP
 Attach B – Template letter to principals re transition from NSCP.

MCR has asked us to provide this brief to them by COB today. Could you please clear it electronically today?

Kim – Hard copies in your in-tray. Thank you.

Thank you.

Kind regards

Laura Sant'Ana | Liaison and Coordination Executive Officer
Phone + 61 2 6207 2232 | Email Laura.Sant'Ana@act.gov.au

From: EDU Student Engagement Director's Office
Sent: Wednesday, 27 February 2019 11:36 AM
To: McNally, Bronwyn <Bronwyn.McNally@act.gov.au>
Cc: Laurent, Kristen <Kristen.Laurent@act.gov.au>; Sturgiss, Kim <Kim.Sturgiss@act.gov.au>
Subject: EDU19/13/01 School Chaplaincy meeting brief
Sensitivity: Confidential

Hi Bron

Could you please prepare some dot points to support Ross and Meg in the discussion of the School Chaplaincy in the next EDU AEU meeting?

Please provide your dot points, cleared by Snr Manager, by COB 28/2/2019.

Kind regards

Laura Sant'Ana | Liaison and Coordination Executive Officer
Phone + 61 2 6207 2232 | Email Laura.Sant'Ana@act.gov.au

From: Page, Vicki **On Behalf Of** EDUMCR
Sent: Wednesday, 27 February 2019 10:29 AM
To: EDU Student Engagement Director's Office <EDUDSEOffice@act.gov.au>
Cc: Sturgiss, Kim <Kim.Sturgiss@act.gov.au>; Page, Vicki <Vicki.Page@act.gov.au>
Subject: FOR ACTION: EDU/AEU meeting brief
Sensitivity: Confidential

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Hi

Title/Question	School Chaplaincy
Action by	SE
Response due date	COB 28/2/2019.
Cleared by	EGM SDD
Response to	EDUMCR
TRIM	N/A – email MCR
Response type	Template attached

PLEASE NOTE

Calendar invitation has been sent to EGMSDD for attendance.
Please provide meeting brief to assist DDG in discussions at meeting.

Regards
Vicki

Vicki Page

Ministerial and Commonwealth Relations | Education | ACT Government

02 6207 3765 | vicki.page@act.gov.au

Level 6 220 Northbourne Avenue Braddon | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601

www.education.act.gov.au | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Google+](#)

