

## Legal Representation

You are entitled and encouraged to have the benefit of whatever support you need. This includes legal support which may help you to feel that you have a clear understanding of any of the outcomes of the Facilitation.

You are also encouraged to seek legal consultation in relation to your rights under Civil Law

## Contacting the Police

Child sexual abuse is a crime. South Australia has legislation that indicates that historical child sexual abuse matters can be criminally prosecuted. We strongly encourage you to contact the Police. If you would like support in contacting the Police, the SA PSO can help you.



## What if I have a grievance with the process?

If you are unhappy with the way you were treated or feel that the matter did not follow the proper process you are welcome to contact the SA PSO and speak with a staff member.

**For someone who has been abused in childhood the prospect of speaking out is often a significant step towards healing and recovery.**

**You are not to blame for what happened to you.**

**We want to offer you the opportunity to be listened to, to have your concerns taken seriously, dealt with sensitively and acted upon as necessary.**

## Our Contact Details

(08) 8223 5890

receptionprofstandards@adelaide.catholic.org.au

There are specific services that provide information, support, advocacy and counselling for adult survivors of sexual, physical and other abuses. Many of these services are free of charge and provide confidential support and information. Regardless of how recent or how long ago the sexual or other abuse occurred, consider contacting a support service to seek counselling and/or other supports.

**Relationships Australia (SA)** - 1800 998 187

**Victim Support Services** - 08 8231 5626

[www.victim.sa.org](http://www.victim.sa.org)

1800RESPECT - National Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence Counselling service 1800 737 732

[www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au)

**Yarrow Place** – 08 8226 8777

1800 817 421 (country calls)

Emergency a/hrs 08 2886 8787

**Royal Commission Inst. Responses to Child Sex**

**Abuse** 1800 099 340

SAPOL - 11 444



**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN  
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS  
OFFICE**

39 Wakefield Street  
ADELAIDE SA 5000



**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN  
PROFESSIONAL  
STANDARDS  
OFFICE**

**TOWARDS HEALING**

**Towards Healing was established in 1996. It is a process offered by the Church to a person who has been abused by a priest, religious or other Catholic Church personnel.**

## The aim of this pamphlet is to provide you with information on the Towards Healing Program.

### What does the Towards Healing process involve?

#### Initial Contact

There is a Professional Standards Office in each State and Territory to coordinate and assist in the Towards Healing program. A professional is available on **(08) 8223 5890** to discuss Towards Healing and to clarify any of your questions or queries.

#### How Long Does It Take?

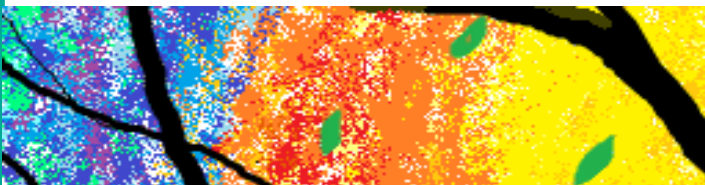
Towards Healing has 3 phases **Contact, Assessment** and **Facilitation**. There is no set timeframe for the Towards Healing process; it can take from 3 months to a year. The South Australian Professional Standards Office (SA PSO) will keep you informed of your process at all times. You are encouraged to contact the SA PSO at any time if you have any concerns about a time delay.

#### Can I Stop At Any Time?

Yes, all you need to do is tell us.

#### Can the Towards Healing process stop for other reasons?

Yes. If you have begun Towards Healing and decide to go to the Police or pursue a civil process, Towards Healing will stop. You will continue to be provided with support, such as counselling. Towards Healing can recommence once a civil or criminal matter ceases or is completed.



### How Do I Bring A Complaint To Towards Healing?

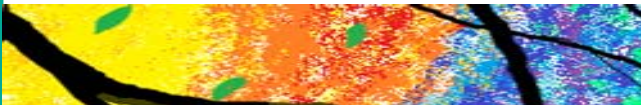
Complaints may be received by telephone, email or mail. The Director of the SA PSO will determine if allegations of abuse fit within the Towards Healing protocol.

#### PHASE 1.

##### The Contact Report

A Contact Report (written and signed complaint) will be obtained by a Contact Person, an independent professional. Their role is to listen to your story and prepare a Contact Report. Signing the Contact Report formalises the Towards Healing process.

Providing information for a Contact Report can be difficult. You are encouraged to bring along a support person. Previously submitted accounts or statements made to Police, lawyers or the Royal Commission can be part of the Contact Report. You may also be offered counselling to support you through the Towards Healing process.



#### Who Will See My Contact Report?

Only people associated with the Towards Healing process will see your Contact Report. Privacy and confidentiality are very important to us.

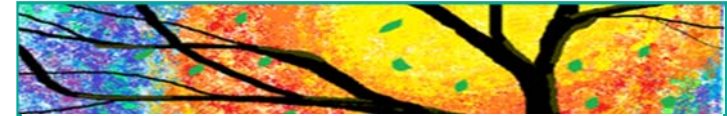
#### What is the accused person told?

Natural Justice requires that the allegations are put to the accused, whether he/she is still acting in the Church or not. In some cases the accused is deceased and this isn't possible.

#### PHASE 2.

##### Assessment - What is an Assessment?

An assessment is an exploration of the facts of the matter. It is undertaken by an independent professional called an Assessor.



#### Why Is there an Assessment?

In some situations further information is required. Dates, names and whether a person was present at a particular time may need to be verified. The Assessor is appointed to seek out this information.

An Assessment is not an adversarial process as in a criminal or civil law matter and does not have the power to convict or prosecute.

Assessments may take time and be stressful and we encourage you to speak with the SA PSO to ensure you have enough support. You are also encouraged to bring along a support person.

The Assessor will provide a finding in the matter that is based on the balance of probabilities.

A Survivor's experiences and statements are his/her truth. No matter what the findings of the Assessment are, you will be offered a meeting with the Church Authority to give you the opportunity to be heard and have your story responded to compassionately and seriously.

#### PHASE 3.

##### Facilitation - What is Facilitation?

Facilitation is a pastoral meeting conducted by an independent professional called the Facilitator. The Facilitator will meet with you and the Church Authority, individually, to determine your needs and the Church's response to your needs.

The purpose of this meeting is for the Church Authority to compassionately and sincerely hear your story and respond. This meeting is offered, but does not have to be attended.

You are encouraged to have a support person at this meeting.