



Seventh-day  
Adventist<sup>®</sup> Church  
BRITISH UNION CONFERENCE

# SAFE AT HOME

## RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC ABUSE

### Policy, Procedures and Guidance



British Union Conference  
Stanborough Park  
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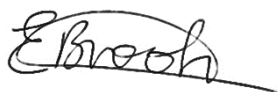
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## FOREWORD

Promoting the well-being of those created in the image of God is integral to the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As a church body we care for and strengthen each other physically and emotionally as well as spiritually. *Safe at Home* calls for us to do no more than purposefully reflect our God-given commission in the principles of how we behave towards one another.

These policies and the procedures are provided to guide and support you in fulfilling our shared responsibility to create a safe environment for all family members within in our homes. They will also provide the guidance necessary to hold those who perpetrate abuse responsible for their actions. Combatting domestic abuse is everybody's responsibility. It requires collaborative work not only in the various levels of church organisation but also with those agencies within our communities who possess the specialised skills and resources to assist those in need.

The real activity to safeguard survivors of abuse comes through our purposeful attitudes and actions in our daily Christian walk. I sincerely trust that we will work together under God's guidance in keeping our church family safe at home.



**Eglan Brooks**

BUC President

## INTRODUCTION

The Seventh-day Adventist Church places great importance upon family life. In line with our world church position statement<sup>1</sup> we affirm the dignity and worth of each human being and decry all forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and family violence. The church recognises the global extent of this problem and the serious, long-term effects upon the lives of all involved. We therefore believe that Seventh-day Adventists must respond to abuse and family violence within both the church and the community. We believe that to remain indifferent and unresponsive is to condone, perpetuate and potentially extend such behaviour.

We are committed to maintain zero tolerance of abuse in all its forms. All are damaging and an evil in God's sight. The terms 'victims' and 'survivor' will be used interchangeably depending on the context. Survivor will be the preferred description conveying the truth that those who experience abuse can rise above their adversity.

*Safe at Home* sets out the Church's guidelines relating to changing the culture in which abuse thrives and taking practical steps to address it when it occurs. It also provides the procedures to be followed to reduce, to the minimum, the risk of abuse to children and adults within our households. It is our prayer that these resources will empower you to care effectively for those affected by domestic abuse. Our role is to exemplify the ministry of Jesus who declared, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18). God is on the side of the oppressed and we should be too, to "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; for the rights of all who are destitute" (Proverbs 31:8).

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<sup>1</sup>[General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists position statement on abuse and family violence \(1995\)](#)