



## Safeguarding News

### January 2026

Greetings,

Welcome to the first Safeguarding insert for 2026!

#### **Policy Update**

The SOSJ Safeguarding Information Sharing and Record Keeping Policy has now been endorsed by the Safeguarding Committee and approved by the Congregational Leadership Team. The policy contains a link to the new and revised *Safeguarding Declaration* form. This form is to be used when you are volunteering for work or service involving the public (e.g. St Mary MacKillop's Feast Day celebrations) and do not hold a state-based child compliance check such as a WWCC. The updated policy is available on the SPIRIT Intranet.

#### **NSW Working with Children's Check Review**

The NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) is inviting the public to participate in the review of the *NSW Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012*, which governs the NSW Working with Children's Check (WWCC). As of 30 June 2025, 2,012,813 people in NSW held a WWCC clearance. I am familiar with both the *NSW Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012*, and the *NSW Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013*, and have thoroughly reviewed the OCG Discussion Paper (November 2025). I have contributed feedback to the review and look forward to it supporting greater community understanding and compliance with the various definitions of child related work.

#### **National Memorial**

In 2017, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse recommended a national memorial to help survivors who felt that remembering was one way to help prevent child sexual abuse and protect children in the future. In 2026, construction will begin for the memorial to be built in Canberra. The design signifies protection, strength, and enduring connections, offering a space for healing and reflection. It was selected in partnership with a survivor advisory group. Social Services Minister Tanya Plibersek says, "We continue to listen to – and acknowledge – all those who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse. We recognise the pain, suffering, and trauma experienced by victims and survivors, and the long-term impact this has on lives and families. This brings us one step closer to creating a place of remembrance, reflection, truth, healing, and hope."

#### **Safer Internet Day**

Safer Internet Day is recognised on Tuesday 10 February 2026. It's a global day of action that brings together communities, schools, organisations, and families from 180 countries to raise awareness of online safety issues and work towards a safer internet, especially for children and young people. It's an opportunity to pause and talk about what's really happening online, and to consider what each of us can do to make the digital world better.



**Sisters of Saint Joseph**  
*of the Sacred Heart*

---

Australia leads the world in internet safety for children, with social media minimum age restrictions in place from 10 December 2025. eSafety Commission Julie Inman Grant notes that legislation is only part of the solution - kindness and respectful online are just as essential. You can visit the eSafety website at [www.eSafety.gov.au](http://www.eSafety.gov.au) to explore tools and resources that help prevent online harm.

### **Human Trafficking**

Every year on 8 February, communities around the world unite in prayer, reflection, and action for the International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking. This Day coincides with the liturgical memory of St. Josephine Bakhita, a Sudanese nun who was kidnapped and enslaved as a child, and who later became the universal symbol of the Church's commitment to ending human trafficking.

You are always welcome to contact me with a question, concern or just to have a chat!

Blessings,

*Jane Lace – Safeguarding Co-ordinator (North Sydney)*

*Ph: +61 2 8912 2760*

*Email: [jane.lace@sosj.org.au](mailto:jane.lace@sosj.org.au)*

