

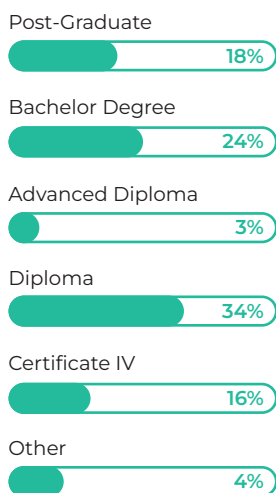
# SUChaplaincy National Snapshot 2023

SU has been providing social, emotional and spiritual support in Australian schools through chaplaincy for over 30 years. Throughout 2022 we collected information on their activities and impact. We are pleased to share our findings with you.

## QUICK FACTS

### QUALIFICATIONS

98% of chaplains meet/exceed the minimum qualification level of Cert. IV across Youth Work, Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care, Social Science, Education, Ministry/Theology, and other disciplines.



### DID YOU KNOW?

The average age of an SU Australia school chaplain is 44 years of age.



### GENERATIONS

Baby Boomers (52-70yrs old)



Generation X (37-51yrs old)



Generation Y (22-36yrs old)



Generation Z (6-21yrs old)



### GENDER

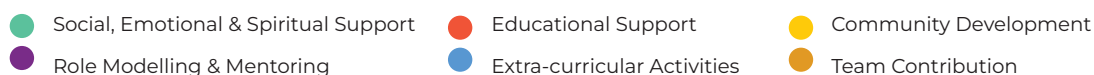


## WHAT DOES A SCHOOL CHAPLAIN DO?

School chaplains in Australia provide social, emotional, and spiritual support to school communities. They contribute to the overall wellbeing strategies and educational goals of our local schools.

School chaplains promote positive spirituality. They provide opportunities for students, staff and families to explore their own spirituality and what it means to them.

### How much time do chaplains spend on each of their key accountabilities?



## WHAT IMPACT DO SCHOOL CHAPLAINS HAVE?



"The first thing that comes to mind when I think about [Sheree] is her standing next to me. She's always there for me. I can tell [her] everything and I trust her with anything."

Izzy, Grade 5 Student

"Miss Jo plays a vital role in the continuum of care going above and beyond to reconnect the community after periods of isolation... to ensure students felt valued and connected, and parents and staff felt supported."

Neralie Chappell, Principal



## WHO DO SCHOOL CHAPLAINS TALK TO?

In Australia, school chaplaincy services are available and accessible to all students, staff and families. Chaplains don't provide case management or counselling but complement other school support services by providing pastoral care support.

### STUDENTS

Chaplains have

**16,712**

pastoral conversations every week, which makes up

**64%**

of their pastoral conversations. In an average three-day week, a chaplain would have

**23**

pastoral conversations.

### SCHOOL STAFF

Chaplains have

**6,602**

pastoral conversations every week, which makes up

**25%**

of their pastoral conversations. In an average three-day week, a chaplain would have

**9**

pastoral conversations.

### PARENT/CARERS

Chaplains have

**2,682**

pastoral conversations every week, which makes up

**10%**

of their pastoral conversations. In an average three-day week, a chaplain would have

**4**

pastoral conversations.

Total percentages add to 99% due to rounding.

## HOW DO SCHOOL CHAPLAINS HELP STUDENTS?

### Top 5 issues students talk to chaplains about...

#### 1. Friendship/Peer Issues

15%

#### 2. Bullying / Harassment

12%

#### 3. Mental Health – Anxiety/Depression

10%

#### 4. School Behaviour

9%

#### 5. School Disengagement

7%

Every year chaplains have

**178,000**

formal conversations and

**490,480**

informal conversations with Students.



School Chaplains provide support to

**2,132**

classes every week.

### What's the difference between an informal and formal conversation?

A formal conversation requires resolution, referral or follow-up.

An informal conversation, though significant, requires no further action.

With permission from the school principal, chaplains may refer families and individuals to relevant internal and external agencies for additional support.



## CHAPLAIN AND CHURCH CONNECT FOR FAMILY IN NEED



Two weeks before the end of the 2021 school year, Shyamala, a new chaplain at Altona College in Melbourne's west, heard some troubling news from a student she was working with.

Together with his mum and siblings, this student had been forced to flee his family home, after an 'incident'.

"He was displaying some inappropriate behaviour at school," Shyamala recalls. "He was reenacting some of the things he'd seen at home. He's very young, and sounded like he was a bit traumatised."

**His teacher asked Shyamala to work with him. At first, the young boy was hesitant to open up, but after realising he was in a safe space, he revealed some of what was going on at home.**

"He said he'd written a letter to Santa, asking for nappies, cash, and some toys. I asked what the nappies were for and he explained 'Mum says we didn't have any money for [Christmas] presents this year because nappies are so expensive.'"

The family had been roughing it since leaving home, and the young boy had recently missed his birthday, which prompted Shyamala into action.

**"I called one of the local churches [St Eanswythe's] and I told the vicar the needs of this family and he immediately said, 'Yes, we'll help'."**

That Sunday, the vicar put out a call to the congregation, explaining there was a family in need at the local school. In one weekend, they put together three huge bags of wrapped gifts, a box of nappies,

a Christmas hamper, good-as-new baby clothes, and over \$100 of gift cards.

**"I was blown away," says Shyamala. When she thanked the vicar for the support, he replied "No, thank you for allowing us to be a support."**

When she delivered the gifts to the family, the mum burst into tears.

"It made my heart sing. It was so beautiful."

**"The pastor had written a little note to them, and I gave it to the Mum and said, 'This is not from me, this came from the people of this church, who I've not met, and you've not met, but they knew they had to do this for you.'"**

## SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY VOLUNTEERS

### SU Chaplaincy connects schools with their local community.

Every week hundreds of volunteers engage with their local school to provide programs and events, facilitated by the Chaplain.

#### Volunteers and Volunteer Hours

**412** Social and Emotional Support = **1,031 hrs**

**124** Spiritual Support = **301 hrs**

**627** Community Development = **1,139 hrs**

**245** Role Modelling & Mentoring = **811 hrs**

**141** Educational Support = **366 hrs**

**603** Extra-Curricular Activities = **2,462 hrs**

**700** Team Contribution = **881 hrs**

**In 2022, School Chaplaincy Volunteers contributed approximately 7000 additional hours of support to Australian Schools.**



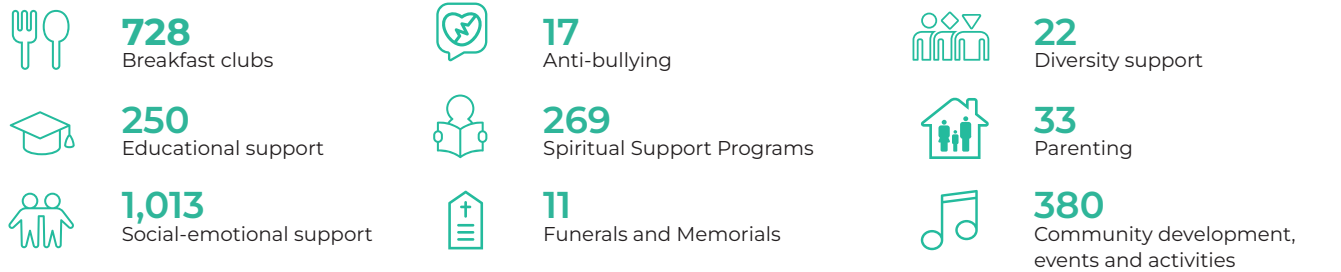
*Volunteers are sourced from the local community, churches, school parents, support groups and other invested organisations.*

## WHAT TYPES OF PROGRAMS DO CHAPLAINS RUN IN SCHOOLS?

Chaplains make a significant contribution to the wellbeing of school communities through the facilitation of social, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing programs, such as, Rock and Water, Rhythm 2 Recovery, and Seasons for Growth. These programs involve daily, weekly, or monthly sessions in response to the needs of the school.

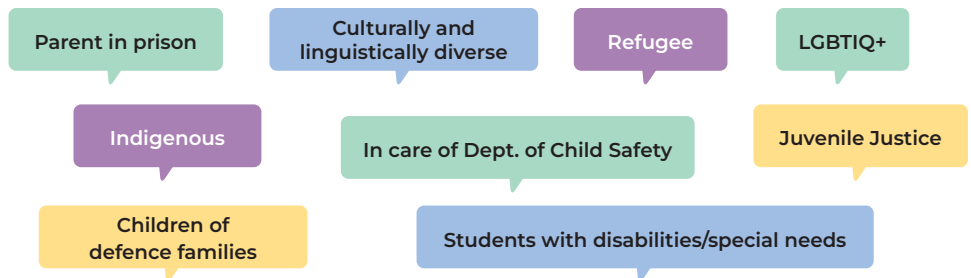


### How many programs do chaplains run in an average school term?



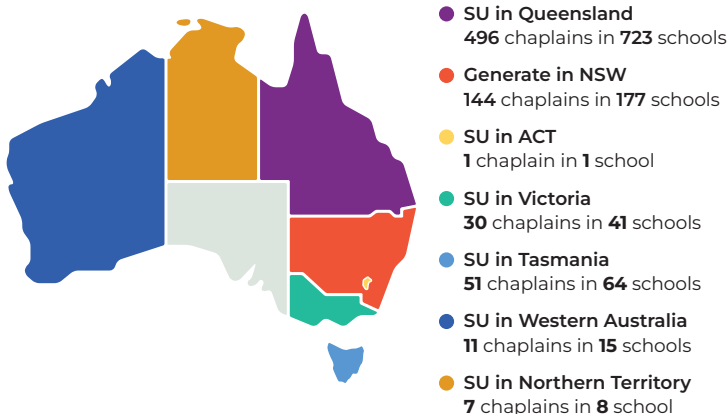
## DO SCHOOL CHAPLAINS SUPPORT THOSE AT-RISK?

School chaplains are available to everyone, but they are particularly invested in supporting individuals and groups who may be considered at-risk. Through early intervention activities and pastoral support, school chaplains increase the chances of these young people experiencing better life outcomes.



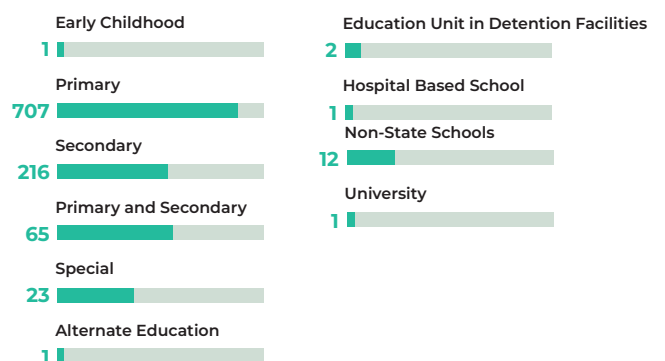
## WHERE ARE OUR SCHOOL CHAPLAINS?

### Nationwide Distribution of SU School Chaplains



**TOTAL SU Australia** 740 chaplains in 1029 schools

### Different types of schools chaplains work in



If you would like to download this report, visit [suchaplaincy.org.au/snapshot](https://suchaplaincy.org.au/snapshot)

This research was undertaken in partnership with **mccrindle** [mccrindle.com.au](https://mccrindle.com.au)

**SU Chaplaincy is a ministry of SU Australia Ministries Limited.**

ACN 009 669 569 | ABN 74 009 669 569 **Registered Charity No. 1261. RTO 30548**

SU Australia Ministries Limited is a member of the worldwide Scripture Union International community.  
Level 1, 126 Barry Pde, Fortitude Valley QLD 4006 T 1300 478 753 E [info@suchaplaincy.org.au](mailto:info@suchaplaincy.org.au)

