

SU has been providing social, emotional and pastoral support in Australian schools through chaplaincy for over 30 years. Throughout 2024 we collected information on their activities and impact. We are pleased to share our findings with you.

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

## what does a school chaplain do?



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

School chaplains are in the prevention and support business: helping students find a better way to deal with issues ranging from family breakdown and loneliness to friendships and mental health.

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



- Social, Emotional & General Wellbeing
- Educational Support
- Community Development
- Role Modelling & Mentoring
- Extra-curricular Activities
- Team Contribution

## what impact do school chaplains have?



*"If you're down and have something on your mind you can talk to Chappy. He cheers me up and my friends. Sometimes I don't want to talk to anyone but then I saw Chappy, and he always tries, so finally I had someone to talk to."*

**Anonymous student**

*introducing School Chaplain Andrew to another student.*

*"Long is part of the fabric of not just [our school] but [our suburb]. People who have been without transport, he has been able to find them cars. He's like a bowerbird for good things in our community."*

**Heidi, School Principal**

*sharing about School Chaplain, Long, who has served in various schools for 22 years.*



# 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  
**16,605**  
pastoral conversations  
every week, which makes up

**65%**

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

**23**  
pastoral conversations.

## SCHOOL STAFF

Chaplains have  
**5,896**  
pastoral conversations  
every week, which makes up

**23%**

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

**8**  
pastoral conversations.

## PARENT/CARERS

Chaplains have  
**3,051**  
pastoral conversations  
every week, which makes up

**12%**

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

**4**  
pastoral conversations.



# 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 holistic 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?

**804**  
Breakfast Clubs

**64**  
Anti-bullying

**276**  
Mentoring and Role Modelling

**267**  
Educational Support

**207**  
Spiritual Support Programs

**31**  
Diversity Support

**912**  
Social-emotional Support

**5**  
Funerals and Memorials

**26**  
Parenting

**677**  
Community Development,  
Events and Activities



## how school chaplains help

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

1. Education Support (Behaviour, Disengagement, Study Issues)



2. Friendship/Peer Issues



3. Bullying / Harassment



4. Child Protection (including Family and Domestic Violence)



5. Mental Health (Anxiety/Depression)



Every year chaplains have

**177,080**

formal conversations and

**487,120**

informal conversations with students.

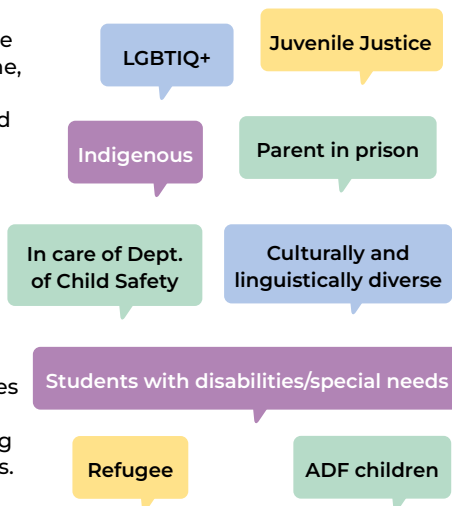
School Chaplains provide support to

**2,664**

classes every week.

## helping at-risk students

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.



## 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

**417** Social, Emotional & General Wellbeing = **1,131 hrs**

**647** Community Development = **1,133 hrs**

**455** Role Modelling and Mentoring = **6,101 hrs**

**153** Educational Support = **1,016 hrs**

**557** Extra-Curricular Activities = **6,513 hrs**

**416** Team Contribution = **781 hrs**

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

## the impact of chaplaincy

**The Nest** is Australia's wellbeing framework for children and young people aged 0 to 24 years.

It's a way of thinking about the whole child in the context of their daily lives, viewing wellbeing in a way that brings together the different elements a child or young person needs to thrive.

The Nest conceptualises wellbeing as interconnected domains that support each other to help children reach their potential.

Below are the percentages of school chaplains who report substantive impact in each of these key domains.

### valued, loved and safe

Helping students develop more positive relationships with family, friends, and peers

85%

Being a positive role model for students to emulate

95%

### healthy

Promoting the social, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of students

86%

Helping students to develop strategies to deal with their emotions and stress

83%

### school community

Contributing to a positive ethos and culture in the school

89%

Supporting teachers and other school staff

79%

### actively participating

Helping students to develop a stronger sense of belonging at school and/or to the wider community

69%

Helping students to express their views and opinions about issues that affect them

62%

### engaged in learning

Helping students to be ready and return to classroom learning after being in distress

76%

Supporting students in their learning through classroom support

56%

### identity and culture

Supporting the spiritual health and wellbeing of students

52%

Affirming the cultural and/or spiritual identity of students

51%

### essential needs

Facilitating Breakfast Clubs or other services to ensure students are adequately fed at school

70%

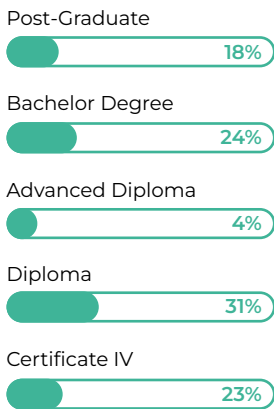
Providing students with other material basics (uniforms, books, equipment) to help their learning outcomes

38%

# quick facts

## Qualifications

100% 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.

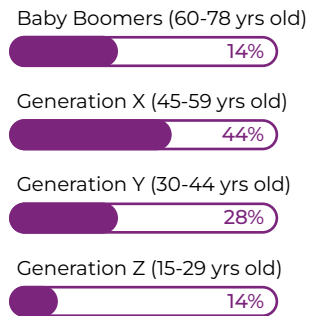


## DID YOU KNOW?

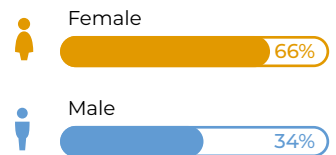
The average age of an SU Australia school chaplain is 46 years of age.



## Generations

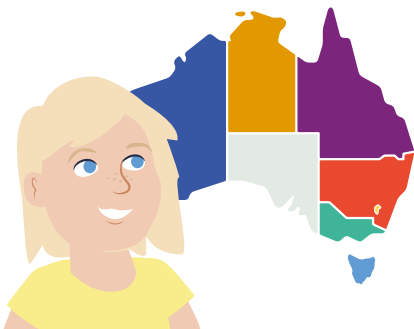


## Gender



## where are our school chaplains?

### Nationwide Distribution of SU School Chaplains



- SU in Queensland  
492 chaplains in 698 schools
  - SU in NSW  
147 chaplains in 182 schools
  - SU in ACT  
1 chaplain in 1 school
  - SU in Victoria  
26 chaplains in 29 schools
  - SU in Tasmania  
38 chaplains in 46 schools
  - SU in Western Australia  
13 chaplains in 14 schools
  - SU in Northern Territory  
9 chaplains in 9 schools
- TOTAL SU Australia**  
726 chaplains in 979 schools



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

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