

## Commitment to Child Safety

As part of the world-wide **Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary**, (also known as the Loreto Sisters), the Province of Australia and South East Asia was established from Ireland in 1875 by Mother Gonzaga Barry and companions. Faithful to the vision and mission of its founder, Mary Ward (1585-1645), the Loreto Sisters are committed to a shared mission to transform the Church and the world particularly by empowering women to “seek truth and do justice”. The Loreto Province across Australia and South East Asia comprises Sisters and those in formation to become Loreto Sisters. They are joined by a ‘circle of friends’: board members, staff of our schools and ministries, employees of Loreto, Loreto Ministries, Mary Ward International Australia and volunteers.

Since its inception, Loreto’s educational, social, spiritual and pastoral ministries have served children and young people under 18 years, as well as adults.

In keeping with Gospel values, our Mary Ward heritage and Catholic Social Teaching, Loreto Sisters uphold the dignity of the human person and the right of every person to flourish in an environment that is safe and supportive, caring and compassionate, nurturing and life-affirming. Loreto places the safety of all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, young people and vulnerable adults at the centre of its planning, processes and policies, professional development and projects in Australia and overseas. In particular, Loreto is committed to safeguarding children and young people participating in our programs from:

- sexual abuse
- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect
- witnessing family violence

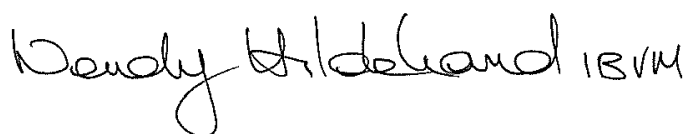
This commitment to providing a safe environment for children and young people is approved and endorsed at the highest levels of our organisation.

As part of this commitment, Loreto has introduced Child Safe Principles. These Principles, which complement our Code of Conduct and our Child Safe Policy, are designed to:

- create an environment where children's safety and wellbeing are at the centre of thought, values and actions
- place emphasis on genuine engagement with and valuing of children
- create conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children and young people
- create conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying any harm
- provide a framework for responding to any concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm.

Anyone with concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions should refer to the Contact Us page on the Loreto website, [www.loreto.org.au](http://www.loreto.org.au), or contact Loreto's Professional Standards Officer, Sr Maria Bongiorno IBVM, by phone +61 (03) 9813 4023 or by email at [Maria.Bongiorno@loreto.org.au](mailto:Maria.Bongiorno@loreto.org.au).

Loreto's commitment to provide a safe environment for the children and young people to whom we minister is endorsed and approved by the Loreto IBVM Province Leader.



Wendy Hildebrand IBVM  
Province Leader  
Loreto Australia & South-East Asia