

BUC FAMILY

A Publication of the BUC Family, Children and Possibility Ministries

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Terrorists Among Us: Domestic Abuse in the Church

Pr Les Ackie

According to MI5, the current threat level for international terrorism in the UK is SEVERE. News reports inform us of devastating atrocities perpetrated on British soil and internationally by radical fanatics of various persuasions. While an increasing number of home-grown extremists has led the government to challenge local communities to root out potential terrorists among them, in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, we have our own terrorists to worry about. They don't carry AK-47s or manufacture explosive devices, but they are terrorists nonetheless. They carry Bibles, communion plates, and offering baskets. They teach Sabbath School lessons, lead Pathfinder clubs and occupy pews. They may tick all the boxes as members in regular standing, but once they finish playing church, they go home, beat their wives and terrorise their children.

Describing domestic abusers as terrorists is not simply hyperbole to grab attention. It is an accurate description of individuals whose relational dynamics directly parallel the coercive tactics of totalitarian regimes and organisations. Webster's Dictionary defines terrorism as "the calculated use of violence (or threat of violence) against civilians in order to attain goals . . . through intimidation or coercion or instilling fear". In her book, *Trauma and Recovery*, Dr Judith Herman

clearly demonstrates the parallels between domestic abuse and political terror. She compares "the survivors of vast concentration camps created by tyrants who rule nations and the survivors of small, hidden concentration camps created by tyrants who rule their homes (p.3)."

Leading campaigner against domestic abuse, Professor Evan Stark, describes abusers' relationships with their spouses as 'intimate terrorism'. He asserts that these relationships are less about "violent acts" and more about the "pattern of domination that includes tactics to isolate, degrade, exploit and control, as well as to frighten them or hurt them physically" (*Re-presenting Battered Women: Coercive Control and the Defense of Liberty*). While campaigns against domestic violence understandably focus on external wounds for shock effect, it is the non-visible psychological and emotional wounds that cause the

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Adventists Say No to Violence

When it comes to these wounds, it appears that the response of those in positions of authority is “out of sight, out of mind.” Consequently, we need to shine a spotlight on the suffering many endure behind closed doors. Stark concludes that, “coercive control is not so much what men do to women, but what they keep women from doing for themselves.” The fundamental crime of domestic abuse is the violation of a person’s basic human rights. In such cases, the primary concern is NOT the preservation of the marriage. It is the physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual safety of the victims. Domestic abuse in the Seventh-day Adventist church is a reality. Research conducted by Dr René Drumm among 1 0 0 Adventist churches has demonstrated that a major obstacle in addressing domestic abuse is



the fallacious belief among church leaders that it is not a major concern. However, Dr Drumm’s research also demonstrated that women in the church are just as likely to be abused as those outside the church. Perpetrators included pastors, elders, deacons as well as other church leaders and members across various cultures, ethnicities, social and economic status.

The failure to hear the cry of battered wives by minimising the destructive effect of coercive control has resulted in church leaders, in effect, colluding with perpetrators. Women who have been physically, emotionally and psychologically abused by their husbands have been further spiritually abused by church leaders who misinterpret biblical passages, guilt-tripping vulnerable victims to return to and remain in their personal hell. The failure to be proactive in raising awareness has allowed abusers to terrorise their families with impunity under a blanket of secrecy.

Combatting domestic abuse requires the education of church leaders to dispel the myths about abusers and to understand the culture in which abuse thrives. Contrary to popular opinion, domestic abusers are generally not mentally ill people who cannot control themselves. They tend to hold down responsible jobs and function as responsible citizens in the community and in church. Abusers are spiritually deficient individuals who lack emotional intelligence and give themselves permission to act like tyrants when they don’t get their way. Abuse is always a choice. The Apostle Paul warns that in the last days men will ‘be lovers of themselves’; ‘unholy’; ‘unloving’; ‘unforgiving’; ‘slanderers’; ‘without self-control’; ‘brutal’; ‘despisers of good’; ‘traitors’; ‘headstrong’; ‘haughty’; ‘having a form of godliness but denying its power’ (see 2 Tim 3:1-7). Paul’s description accurately characterises self-absorbed abusers who choose to enforce compliance through fear, intimidation, manipulation and punishments.

Abusers tend to abuse because they have grown up in a culture that makes it acceptable. Our challenge as a community of faith is to change the culture. To educate men and boys to swim against the tide of a culture that both explicitly and implicitly devalues women through music, movies, pornography, “locker-room banter” and glass ceilings. This applies not only in the secular arena, but also to our Judeo-Christian heritage that has historically oppressed women and felt spiritually justified in doing so. For example, it was only in 1991 that rape within marriage was recognised in UK criminal law. This reflects a culture that has given tacit licence to abusers. And the fact that there are those within the church who will argue, tooth and nail, that it is not possible for a husband to rape his wife, is a clear example of the kind of twisted understanding of the marriage covenant that provides abusers with the justification they need to use their wives as they please. Force and coercion are incompatible with the character of God and those who bear His name cannot receive His approval while they violate the very principle that is the essence of the Divine.

**DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE
IS A CRIME**

1 John 4:8 states, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”

The power of the Holy Spirit notwithstanding, research demonstrates that perpetrators don’t tend to change without outside human intervention. Abusers need to feel the collective disapproval from a community of faith who are prepared to hold them accountable for their conduct. Abusers must encounter believers who are prepared to live out Jesus’ commitment to fight for the oppressed. We must be a safe place where survivors can find solace. The role of the church is to stand up for those who cannot stand for themselves.

Our challenge is to co-operate with Jesus in the fulfilment of the mission he declared in Luke 4:18-19, “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”.

Support Organisations for Victims of Domestic Abuse

Hidden Hurt: website with advice and information about domestic violence. Website: www.hiddenhurt.co.uk

National Domestic Violence Helpline: 0808 2000 247 or Website: www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk

Security and Safety Website: www.securityandsafety.co.uk

Refuge: provides and support and has a network of safe houses for women and children. Call: 0808 2000 247 or Website: www.refuge.org.uk

Action on Elder Abuse (AEA): works to protect, and prevent the abuse of, vulnerable older adults. Helpline: 080 8808 8141 or Website: www.elderabuse.org.uk

Women’s Aid: provides local support and national help and Freephone 24hr National Domestic Violence Helpline. Call: 0808 2000 247 or Website: www.womensaid.org.uk

Respect: provides help for survivors and perpetrators. Also has a Men’s Advice Line (for male victims). Male Helpline: 0808 8010327 or Website: www.respect.uk.net

DVMen: support for males being abused. Website: www.dvmen.co.uk

Mankind: confidential helpline is available for all men across the UK suffering from domestic violence or domestic abuse by their current or former wife or partner. Call: 01823 334244 or Website: new.mankind.org.uk



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Adventists Say No to Violence

SEC & BUC WOMEN'S MINISTRY
END IT NOW!
EMPHASIS CAMPAIGN

3RD - 24TH AUGUST 2024
Every Sabbath & Weekly on SEC Adventist Radio

SABBATH VENUES
09:30AM - 6:30PM
Norwich SDA Church
Edmonton SDA Church
Tottenham Lighthouse
Balham SDA Church

TOPICS, DISCUSSION & INSIGHT
Week 1 August 3rd: Abuse - Dating & Relationships
Week 2 August 10th: Abuse - The Impact on Our Health
Week 3 August 17th: Abuse - Breaking the Silence
Week 4 August 24th: Abuse - We Must END IT NOW!

SEC WOMEN'S DAY OF FELLOWSHIP
24th August 2024
Balham SDA CHURCH
83 Elmfield Road, Balham, London, SW17 8AD

ANASTASIA ROSS
SEC W. M. Director

SHARON PLATT-MCDONALD
BUC W. M. Director

Information
aross@secadventist.org.uk



General Conference Official Statement on Abuse and Family Violence

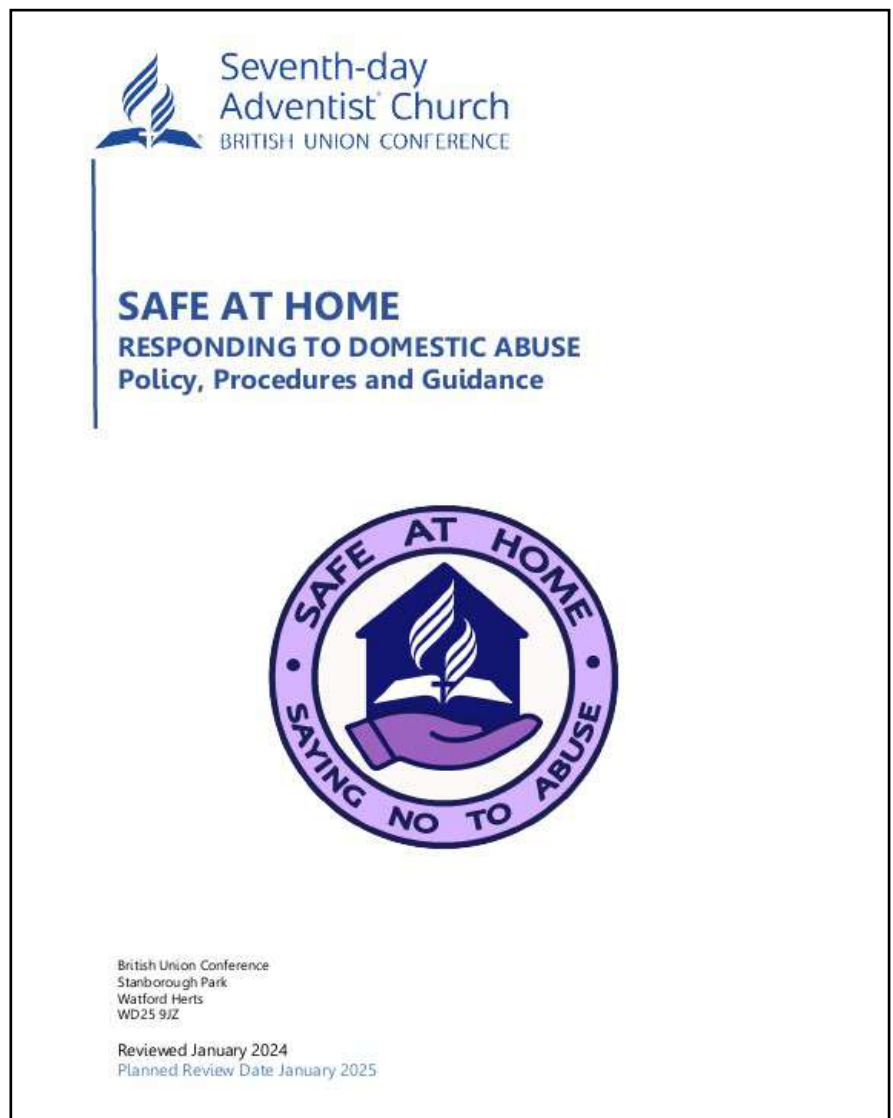
Seventh-day Adventists affirm the dignity and worth of each human being and decry all forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and family violence.

We recognise the global extent of this problem and the serious, long-term effects upon the lives of all involved. We believe that Christians must respond to abuse and family violence both within the church and in the community. We take seriously reports of abuse and violence and have highlighted these issues for discussion at this international assembly. We believe that to remain indifferent and unresponsive is to condone, perpetuate, and potentially extend such behaviour.

We accept our responsibility to cooperate with other professional services, to listen and care for those suffering from abuse and family violence, to highlight the injustices, and to speak out in defence of victims. We will help persons in need to identify and access the range of available professional services.

When changed attitudes and behaviour open possibilities for forgiveness and new beginnings, we will provide a ministry of reconciliation. We will assist families in grief over relationships that cannot be restored. We will address the spiritual questions confronting abused persons, seeking to understand the origins of abuse and family violence and developing better ways of preventing the recurring cycle.

This statement was approved and voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Administrative Committee (ADCOM) and was released by the Office of the President, Robert S. Folkenberg, at the General Conference session in Utrecht, the Netherlands, June 29-July 8, 1995.



Click here to download the BUC Domestic Abuse Policy
[Safe at Home](#)



The Seventh-day Adventist Church values every human being as part of God's creation. We are committed to safeguarding all children and adults at risk who take part in our services and activities.

Safeguarding Policy Statement

The Seventh-day Adventist Church commits to:

- Promote a safe environment for children and adults at risk of harm
- Respond promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Provide compassionate care and support for survivors of abuse
- Ensure that those working with children and adults at risk are trained and supported
- Raise awareness of safeguarding responsibilities throughout all church programming and provisions
- Work collaboratively with safeguarding agencies
- Follow legislation, statutory guidance and recognised best practice in order to protect the vulnerable
- Implement, maintain and regularly review the procedures outlined in our safeguarding policy

Safeguarding is Everybody's Responsibility

[Click this link to access and download the March 2024 updated copy of our Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance](#)

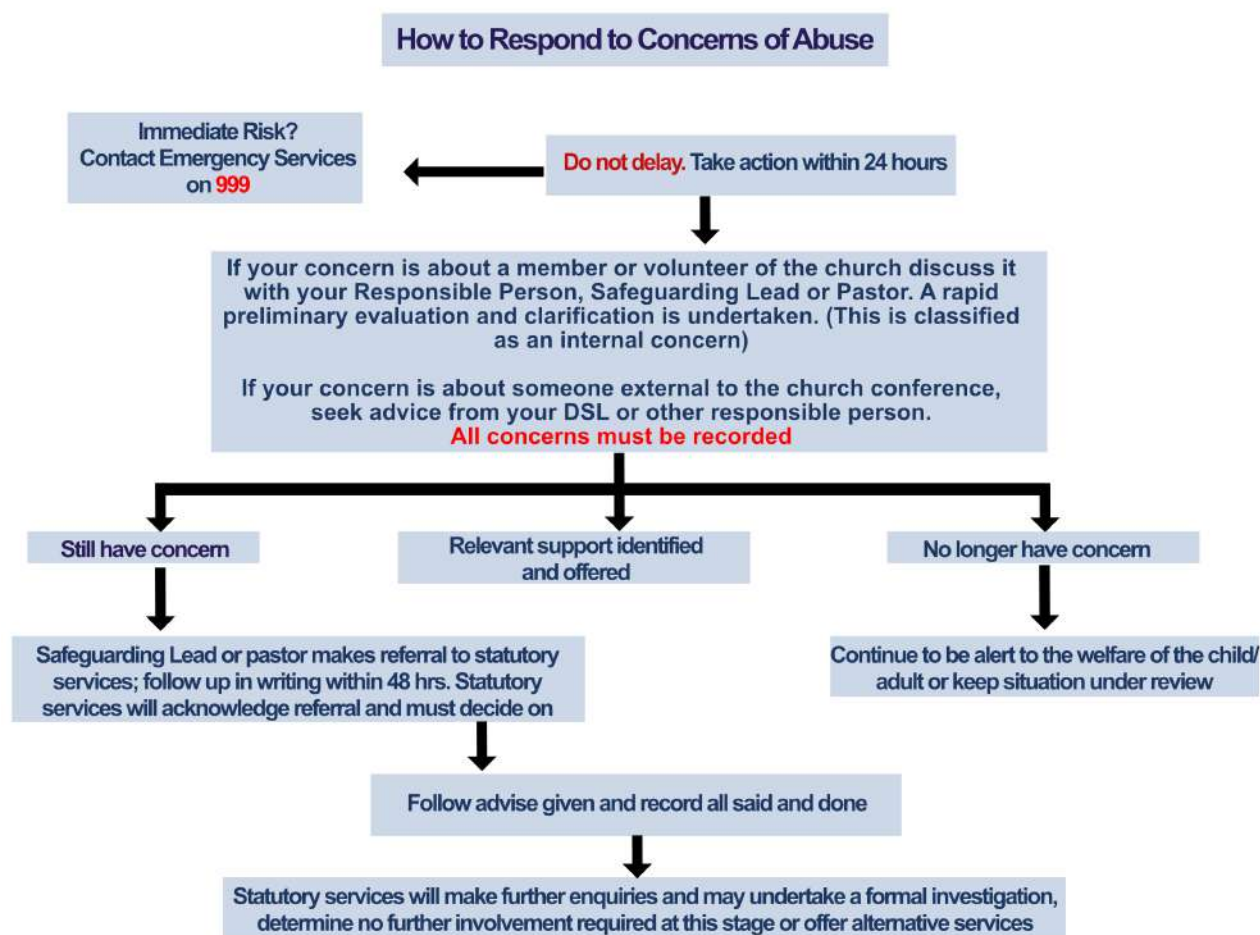


How to Respond to Concerns of Possible Abuse

Seventh-day Adventists believe that safeguarding the spiritual, emotional and physical well-being of the vulnerable is integral to practically demonstrating the grace of Christ in our churches and communities. We recognise our duty and responsibilities as a church to provide an environment which seeks to eliminate the risk of abuse. We therefore take all reasonable steps to safeguard the welfare of children and adults at risk. In doing so, we work in partnership with statutory and other agencies.

Each church is required to appoint a **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** who ensures that Keeping Our Church Family Safe policy and procedures are followed. As well as advocating for the vulnerable, DSLs provide support, guidance and training to staff and volunteers.

Each department head is designated as a **Responsible Person**, appointed by the local church/management to be responsible for a specific sphere of activity involving children and adults. While these role carry specific obligations, **combatting abuse is everybody's responsibility**. Below is a summary of the actions to be taken where there are concerns about the safety of children and adults at risk of harm.





BUC Family Ministries Leadership Training

Family Life Education

Sunday 18 February	Module 1—Effective Family Ministries in the Local Church
10:00 am – 1:00 pm	Module 2—Biblical Foundations for Family Ministry
Sunday 7 April	Module 3—Human Growth & Development
10:00 am – 1:00 pm	Module 4—Families Dynamics - Systems Theory
Sunday 19 May	Module 5—Spiritual Parenting
10:00 am – 1:00 pm	Module 6—Sex and Sexuality Education
Sunday 30 June	Module 7—Marriage Strengthening
10:00 am – 1:00 pm	Module 8—Emotionally Intelligent Communication
Sunday 22 Sept	Module 9—Conflict Management
10:00 am – 1:00 pm	Module 10—Family as a Centre For Evangelism



Meeting ID: 980 072 4322
Passcode: BUCFAM



Connecting Lives for Eternal Living







CHILDREN MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TRAINING 2024

- 1** Faith Development of children- Karen Holford

5th of May
Sunday
10am-1pm
Zoom
892 7001 3833
Passcode: SECCM

Raising Emotionally Healthy Children- Pr. Les Ackie
- 2** Building and Equipping your Children's Ministry Team- Pr. Rio Espulgar

9th of June
Sunday
10am-1pm
zoom
839 6418 1743
Passcode: SECCM

Alive in Jesus Curriculum- Pr. Rio Espulgar
- 3** Ministry to Children with Special Needs- Sophia Nicholls

14th of July
Sunday
10am-1pm
Zoom
854 8938 1474
Passcode: SECCM

Supporting Children Through Grief- Thembe Mapingire
- 4** Building Resiliency in Children Pr. Rio Espulgar

15th of September
Sunday
10am-1pm
Zoom
854 3931 2944
Passcode: SECCM

Ideas Involving Children in Mission- Pr. Rio Espulgar



SEC & NEC Family Togetherness Week of Prayer 2024



Pr. Max McKenzie-Cook



Pr. John Francis



Karen Holford



Dr. Kirk Thomas



Pr. Rio Espulgar

**Monday-Friday @ 7pm
September 2-6, 2024**

Zoom-<https://tinyurl.com/SECfamily>

[SEC MEDIA http://www.youtube.com/@secmedia](http://www.youtube.com/@secmedia)



Men's Retreat

NEC MEN'S MINISTRY



Create in me a clean heart



Created In
ciGi
God's Image

FORWARD
We Go!

Sept 6th - 8th

Book now

Type the code into your web browser
or scan the QR code on your device

ibit.ly/ZzlgV



Cost: £99.79

BOOK NOW FOR EARLY BIRD FEE.

Fee after August 17th £137.50

Day rates available. See link.



**John Lowther Scout Centre
NN14 1QF, Kettering**

Speakers:
Pastor Simba
Dr Ackie
Pastor Ian Philpott
Dr Lovemore
Elder Edwin Abacan
Pastor Rashford-Hewitt

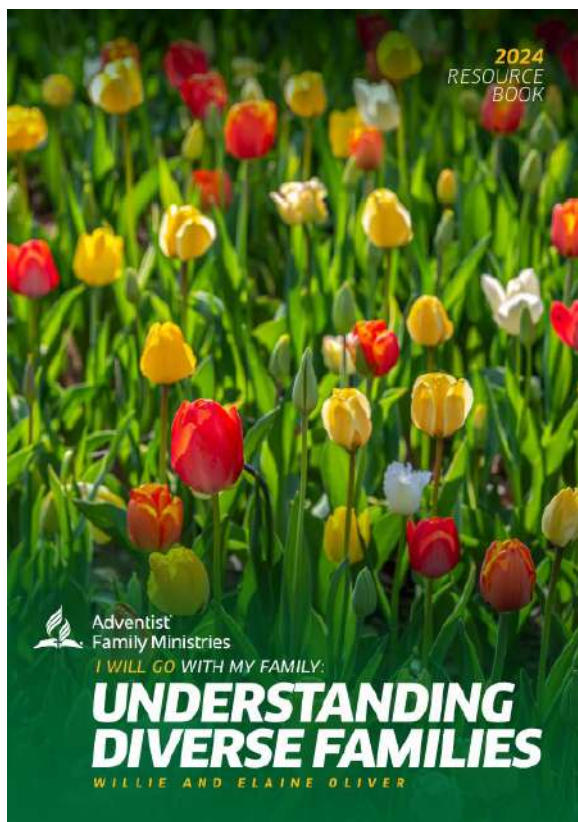
Saturday night BBQ & camp fire
Sunday morning activities
Dormitory-style accommodation
Local hotels are available for those with
particular sleeping needs



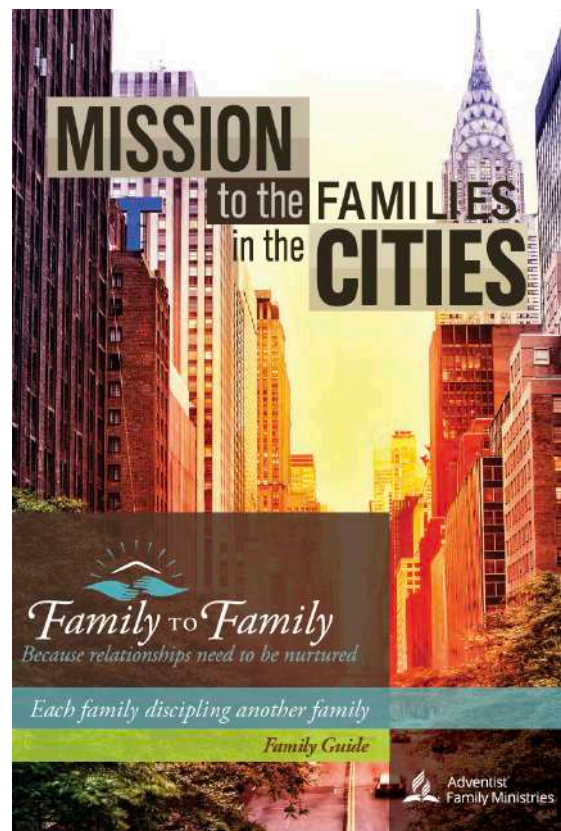
For more info email Pastor Andrew at arashford-hewitt@necadventist.org.uk



Click the link to learn more and download the resource
[Flourish](#)



Click the link to download the Resource Book
[Understanding Diverse Families](#)



Click here to download the Missions Resource
[Mission to Families](#)



YOU ARE NOT ALONE

CCS is here for you

CONTACT
0330 133 2495
 Dedicated listening line
0207 723 8050
 Office Number / Appointments
connect@ccscounseling.org.uk
www.ccscounseling.org.uk

**"I am not living,
 I am just surviving."
 Together we can make
 it happen.**

Often, it is not the initial experience that
 creates the overwhelming pain,
 but the lack of support.

Do not suffer alone
 Do not suffer in silence
 CCS is here to support you
 Together we can win your struggle.

CCS
 Cornerstone
 Counseling Service



**Facing Difficult
 times or issues,
 Need to talk?**

The first step is the
 hardest. Call the NEC
 Counselling Service Today!

07539 211 442

We can arrange
 for you to access
 support.

FORWARD
 We Go!

North England Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
 office: +44 (0) 115 960 6312 mobile: +44 (0) 7918618606
 22 Zulia Road, Nottingham, Notts - NG3 5DB
jfrancis@necadventist.org.uk • necadventist.org.uk

Seventh-day
 Adventist Church



**REAL
 FAMILY
 TALK**

WITH
**WILLIE & ELAINE
 OLIVER**

Through engaging, informative, and spiritual
 discussions about issues facing today's
 families, Real Family Talk seeks to strengthen
 families and inspire hope.

[Real Family Talk](#)

f t w e a

Click the link watch past episodes of [Real Family Talk](#)



Click the link to download the Resource Book [Keys to Healthy Minds](#)

Please visit the BUC website for information and resources



Adventist®
Family Ministries

[Click this link to access the site](#)



Adventist®
Children's Ministries

[Click this link to access the site](#)



Adventist®
Possibility Ministries

[Click this link to access the site](#)



[Click this link to access the site](#)

Useful Links

[AdventSource](#)

[Adventist Possibility Ministries](#)

[Adventist Single Adult Ministries \(ASAM\)](#)

[Adventist Special Needs Association \(ASNA\)](#)

[BUC Family Ministries](#)

[BUC Safeguarding](#)

[Care for the Family](#)

[GC Children's Ministries](#)

[GC Family Ministries](#)

[In Discipleship](#)

[Prepare Enrich](#)

[TED Children's Ministries](#)

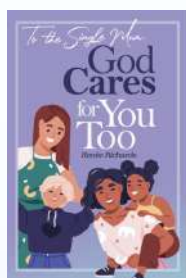
[TED Family Ministries](#)

[TED Possibility Ministries](#)

[Through the Roof \(Disability outreach\)](#)

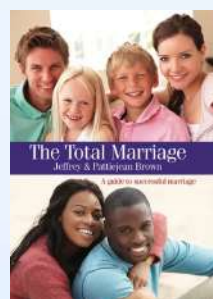
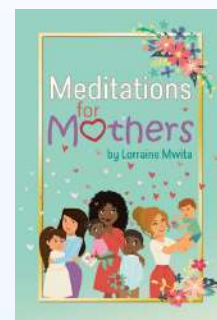
[Women's Aid](#)

Recommended Reading



To the Single Mom, God Cares for You Too. Renee Richards has been there. It's not easy being a lone parent! She has lived in sin; she has faced stresses and challenges; she has struggled with anger towards her baby's daddy; and she's been desperate for her Mr Right. Sis, believe me, whatever struggles you're going through right now, this woman can relate!

Meditations for Mothers. Cuddles, funny faces, loneliness and sleepless nights - Lorraine Mwita has been through the journey you are now on, and can definitely relate. God has given us so many reasons to be thankful, and we can learn so much about our relationship with Him when we look at our sweet little children. Praise God for the new life He has given you, and may these meditations bless your heart as you grapple with the challenges and joys of being a new mother.



The Total Marriage. Jeffrey and Pattie Jean Brown stress that marriage is not about finding the right person, but about being the right person. They answer such questions as what do you do when your marriage is not all you expected? How can conflicts within marriage be resolved? How can marital sex be made more fulfilling? How can a dead or dying marriage be brought back to life? Is there life beyond children?

BUC Family, Children, Possibility Ministries & Safeguarding



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