



STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION  
Mr Michael Pettersson MLA (Chair), Miss Laura Nuttall MLA (Deputy Chair),  
Ms Nicole Lawder MLA

**ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE (QTON)**  
**Public Hearing - Inquiry into Loneliness and Social Isolation in the ACT**  
**Tuesday, 21 May 2024**

Asked by Ms Nicole Lawder MLA on 21 May 2024: Jennifer Kirkaldy, General Manager Policy and Advocacy, Salvation Army, took on notice the following question(s):

Ref: *Hansard - Uncorrected Proof Transcript (UPT)*, 21 May 2024 [p39]

In relation to:  
*disclosure and relationship length*

**MS LAWDER:** We have heard a couple of examples. You were saying the lady took 12 months to talk about her cold showers. Is there any research or data about how long it might take to build those sorts of relationships with clients? I guess it is quite variable.

**Ms Kirkaldy:** I think we might have a little bit. Can I take that on notice and come back to you? We certainly know that it does take a long time to build the relationship to the point that people disclose—and obviously it is different for each individual, but I am pretty sure we have done some work for how long it takes for you to have a relationship with someone before they will disclose family violence or gambling harm, for example. Can I take that on notice and come back to you?

**MS LAWDER:** Thank you. Yes.

Jennifer Kirkaldy, General Manager Policy and Advocacy (Salvation Army): The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

I have confirmed with The Salvation Army Research and Outcome Measurement Team that they have not conducted research specifically on the time it takes to build a relationship with a community member.

From our experience, the length of time it takes to build a relationship, and for someone to feel safe and ready to disclose an issue or need, varies widely. The length of time this takes may be influenced by a range of individual and contextual factors such as what the underlying issue is and an individual's previous experience with support services.

There are strategies that can help to build a trusting relationship but there is no definitive timeframe for this process. Sometimes community members come to us ready to disclose their issues and other times it can take a very long time to build trust and safety before a community member feels ready and able to disclose a particular issue.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion

Signature:



Date:

31/5/24

By Jennifer Kirkaldy, General Manager – Policy and Advocacy, The Salvation Army