



World Council of Churches

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To the World Council of Churches
member churches and
Central Committee members

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I am particularly proud to report that the WCC has developed a practical toolkit that can help you build your churches' capacity to prevent child sexual violence. Here, you will find resources for your pastors, leaders, Sunday schools and prayer meetings. They are designed to facilitate real conversation and help churches create a safer world for children.

In these days of concern about global health, we must not forget children. Christians have always acknowledged our sacred duty to nurture children and protect them from harm. Yet we know that so much still needs to happen to ensure churches are a safe haven for children all over the world, as we see from the global survey, the Out of the Shadows Index, undertaken by the Economist Intelligence Unit.

Churches are well placed to raise awareness of threats of child sexual abuse, put in place preventive measures, and support victims, especially among the most vulnerable. By giving ourselves the tools to recognize the signs, to talk about it, and to report it, we can all help protect children against physically and emotionally traumatizing abuse. In this toolkit, you will find:

- A **brochure** with important global, national and regional information on the Out of the Shadows Index and its key findings and recommendations.
- A **poster** with contact information for the national Child Helpline partner, who takes calls and emails 24/7 from concerned adults or children. (For countries not listed in the toolkit, you may request a template for adaptation from media@wcc-coe.int. The list of national Child Helplines can be found <https://www.childhelplineinternational.org/child-helplines/child-helpline-network/>
- A **spiritual life booklet**, with Bible studies, songs, and prayers that can be used to understand what the Bible says about children, sexual violence, and the role of the church to be a refuge.
- **Information about the Thursdays in Black campaign**, with suggestions for how to raise awareness about the risks for children, and using tools from the Out of the Shadows materials alongside the Thursdays in Black campaign.

We encourage you to use this toolkit in your churches and within your ministry and to share it with others. As spiritual leaders, you are best placed to lead this initiative. Please consider these resources as additional to your own experience and materials, as well as an incentive to develop new ones specific to the main challenges in your own context. We can all work together to end sexual violence against children. In this we continue the work of the Lord himself to safeguard children and heal the wounded.

All the Out of the Shadows' toolkit resources are available at:

<https://seafile.ecucenter.org/d/e46ccc62ed1249faaf1/>

Yours in the Crucified in Risen Lord Jesus Christ.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ioan Saucă". The signature is written in a cursive style with a vertical line for the letter 'I'.

Rev. Dr Prof Ioan Saucă
Acting General Secretary
World Council of Churches