

# Report from SIL for Rachel Thomas Philippines

## **Statement of Findings of the Child Emotional and Physical Abuse Investigation Regarding Neville Thomas**

March 15, 2012 Copies to: Rachel Thomas Neville Thomas Pastor Neville Thomas  
Counselors

**Family Information** Neville Thomas is an Australian about sixty-four years old, who joined Wycliffe Australia 1 January, 1975 with his wife Gwen and following field orientation and language school worked with SIL in the Philippines from May/June 1977 to October 1989 where they did translation work among the Kalinga language group in the Mangali village. Neville also served as the branch treasurer for a time. Following their return to Australia he served Wycliffe Australia in finance and Member Relations. From 1991 to 1994 the Thomas' did some translation work, focusing on the dictionary, as a remote assignment. They voluntarily took Leave of Absence starting on 1 August 1993. The reason given was because of Rachel's health and the opportunity for Neville to cover her job at a car yard because she couldn't work but they were also experiencing major family problems. On 31 January 1994 they submitted their resignation. Neville and Gwen Thomas have two children, David, age forty-one, and Rachel, age thirty-seven. Neville and Gwen were divorced in April 1994 after twenty-four years of marriage. Neville then married Cate Green who has two children, a boy and a girl, who were approximately ages four and two at the time, and subsequently divorced Cate. He is believed to be living in Doncaster, Victoria, Australia. He has not responded to attempts to contact him. **Rachel Thomas** is Australian, age thirty-seven. Her parents worked as SIL translators in the Philippines from 1977 until October 1989. Rachel was age two when the family went to the Philippines and lived there until age fifteen when they returned to Australia. She attended preschool through grade eight at the SIL School at Bagabag along with home schooling by her mother when they were in the language allocation, except for the years they were on furlough in Australia.

**History of the Report** The SIL Child Safety Office received a report from Jenny Willetts, Wycliffe Australia Personnel Director, on August 24, 2011 stating that Rachel Thomas had made a report of abusive behavior she experienced when a child while her parents were working with SIL in the Philippines between the mid 1970's

and 1989. Appropriate administrative personnel were informed and the SIL child safety response process was initiated as is required by SIL administrative policies.

**Investigative Response Process** Six trained investigative team members conducted an extensive internal investigative response process which included interviews of over seventy individuals, including adult MKs, former and current members of the SIL Philippines, professional counselors, pastors and members of the Australia, USA and Canadian Wycliffe member Organizations. The process also involved

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research of historical data from SIL Philippines and SIL International data bases, contact with the Texas child abuse registry where SIL is incorporated and contact with the Australian child abuse authorities. Two additional outside investigative team members were also involved in the full investigative process including involvement in interviews, case planning, preparation and review of the findings as per Best Practice Standards of the Child Safety & Protection Network. They both concur with the findings.

**Summary of the Report** Neville Thomas is reported to have engaged in the following actions toward his two children, Rachel and David, from the time the children were preschool age: yelling, throwing the trash bin at Rachel repeatedly, tripping them and then yelling at them for it, calling Rachel "chicken" and David "fat head" and "watermelon head," spanking them with wooden spoons, a hairbrush, a belt, and a belt buckle, once leaving welts and bruises that resulted in Rachel saying that she ran away. When she was returned home Rachel reports that she got "the biggest beating of her life with the belt and the buckle." One time while he gave David a "huge belting" Rachel stood outside the door screaming 'don't hurt him.' One time David broke all the wooden spoons so that Neville could no longer use them on him. Neville also reportedly locked Rachel out of the house overnight, so she had to spend the night at a friend's house. His behavior was unpredictable causing Rachel to listen to his footsteps to know when he was angry and whether it was safe or not. Gwen's response was to try to keep the children quiet. He reportedly gave Gwen a lot of put downs and criticism, especially if she didn't see things his way. If she challenged him he made it so unpleasant she knew not to do it again. Gwen reports that he had total control of all the finances. Neville was violent toward the family's cats, kicking them

into the pond, throwing them against trees and posts, and killing two cats. While playing tennis he reportedly slammed the ball at his opponent so strongly and had such anger on his face, seeming to enjoy it and not apologizing, that the person left the court. Other adult MKs reported fear of him as children. One notes him getting angry when a fish broke the line. Several people noted his anger in the village, yelling at village people, shaming them. Several noted his anger when people disagreed with him, and his refusal to back down. During the course of interviews, when asked if they were aware of any inappropriate or abusive behavior toward children, others reported that Neville engaged in the following inappropriate sexual comments and behaviors: commenting to teenage boys inappropriately and appreciatively about nudity in movies, flirtatious conversations with women in social situations that embarrassed his children, playing "toesies" with a young girl while playing table games together in his home, taking nude pictures of two children in a bedroom in his home, involvement in pornography since before he was married that has continued since the family's resignation from SIL and Wycliffe with the most recent incident reportedly occurring in 2007 when he was fired from a church position for downloading pornography on the church computer over a period of months. Also reported are Neville being a peeping Tom looking in people's windows and being stopped by police twice for driving naked. Neither resulted in Neville being arrested and both occurred before his first marriage and service with Wycliffe. During his time in the Philippines he is reported to have stripped naked at the river with the village people, walked in his house naked with women out the back, bought "glossy" magazines and called his wife prudish for not approving of them. He is described by Gwen as having lied to her about things she knew were true, then telling excuses to hide the lies, then often saying it was her fault.

**Additional Information Gathered** Adult MKs and adults in the community variously describe Neville as athletic (particularly in tennis), competitive, opinionated, intense, studious, annoying, cocky and a spoil sport; "at times he would get angry if he lost at tennis or disagreed over work issues." Some remember him being an avid stamp collector. One colleague observed that he seemed to struggle with a deep seeded anger. It was felt by some that once he was angry there was no room for further discussion. One stated there were difficulties with him making decisions and being adamant about it, being unwilling to back down. Several people described him as very sociable and able to relate to people well. Others confirmed that he was strong on

*Very late hours: He had a fun lovinnd, although*  
the technical side. Fellow members remembered him as being overbearing. He is also described as fun to be around, always joking, the life of the party while his wife

was quiet whenever he was around, although she was social and outgoing when he was not present. One person said, "He had a fun loving side. He also had an underlying intensity." He was known to work very late hours into the night.

**Anger, Throwing Things, Tripping the Children, Blaming Them** Rachel described Neville as unpredictable, angry, and violent from when she was three or four years old through her teenage years. She reports that he would throw a trash bin across the room at her and threaten her. She stated, "He used to chase me and threw the trash can in my room at me repeatedly. He would send me away if I giggled at the table. I would have to go to my room and get no food." She reports "he would often stick his foot out to trip you when you walked by and then yell at you for hitting him. He did this to me and my brother." Gwen confirms that Neville "would stick his feet out in a provocative manner and knock the kids and then yell at them for it. I thought that was not right."

**Name Calling** Rachel reported that Neville called her "chicken" because she apparently had white fluffy hair soon after she was born. She reported that he called her brother "fat head" and "watermelon head." David took this name calling to be jokes because he has a big head and his friends used to do the same thing in a teasing, joking manner. There were times when he would feel very disappointed in what his father would say. He mentioned one example when he was working on a project and his father told him, "You will never finish that."

**Spanking in Anger Using a Spoon, Belt, and Belt Buckle** Rachel reported that her Mom spanked harder than Neville did, but he would get out of control. He used a belt, a belt buckle, a spoon and his hand with both her and David. Her mom used a spoon and her hand more. Rachel reports that one time, maybe when she was eight, the spanking by her father resulted in welts and bruises so she and a friend ran away to a friend's house who lived off the center. The friend's parents said they'd have to take them home when it became evening. They got home long past dark, breaking the rule about being home by sundown, and she reports, "I got the biggest belting of my life. He beat me with the belt and the buckle." Regarding Neville's treatment of David, Rachel stated, "He used to belt David and I would stand outside the door begging him to hit me instead. David did the same for me." She describes one such time as follows: "One time David went to Margaret Road's house to watch their cat have kittens and lost track of time. He came home after dark. He got a huge belting then and I remember screaming outside his door, 'Don't hurt him.'" David clearly remembers this incident and that there was a lot of yelling when he got home which could explain why Rachel remembers it and thinks it was a belting. David said he

used to get hit with belts, hairbrushes, and wooden spoons. David said, "It was very stressful for both of us (David and Rachel) and we would stand outside each other's door and ask parents to stop." Rachel also reports, "My brother broke all the wooden spoons one time and hid them. To do that it must have been pretty traumatic." David described this incident also: "When I was young I would be hit with wooden spoons when I would do something naughty. Once they went looking for something to spank me with, I said, 'Ha-ha, you can't find the spoons.' I had hidden or broken them or gotten rid of them. Sol guess I knew at a young age that I was being hit a lot by spoons so I wanted to get rid of them." David reports being spanked by his father with wooden spoons and a belt. He stated, "Once I got whacked with a hairbrush, I blocked it with my hand and the back of the brush went flying off to the other side of the room." Rachel also described this incident as follows: "Once he was whacked with a hairbrush and it broke when he blocked it with his arm." Rachel reports that one time when the family stayed in the Manila Guesthouse, Neville got angry at David about something, picked up and threw a heavy plastic hairbrush at David's head. "David ducked in time to miss the brush, and it hit against the wall and the handle broke off it. That would have really hurt David if it had gotten him." Gwen Thomas confirms this incident. "The brush broke when he meant it for David but it hit the wall." David states, "I also remember my dad using his belt. When I was young and still in the village, maybe year five, he took me out the back door of the house and took off his belt to whack me, but his pants fell down and everyone started laughing, so I didn't get spanked. He didn't use his belt after that. But all of this didn't affect me much because of my level of resilience. But it affected Rachel a lot."

**Marital Relationship and Effects on Children** Gwen Thomas stated, "I was aware of put downs and aware of conflicts of Neville with David when he would come home. At the meal table they would lock horns. I would kick Nev under the table about getting into things with David. He kept getting irritated with him. I got lots of put downs, criticism from Neville if I didn't see things his way. He was very strict, spanked with a hair brush, and used wooden spoons." Gwen reports that David told her as an adult that Nev used a leather belt off his trousers to spank Rachel. Gwen states, "I have no recollection of that. I don't know if it happened on more than one occasion. I would have had something to say about that." Gwen stated, "He was very controlling and if I challenged him he made it so unpleasant you knew not to do it again. When someone is so dominating the message you get is 'don't do that or you will pay for it'. He never hit me but in more subtle ways he controlled things with clothes, money, psychological, and finances." He managed all the money and how it was spent. Gwen had to account for what she bought while he bought what he

wanted, like stamps, clothes for himself or magazines. At one point Gwen confronted him about this and he started giving her and the children a minimal allowance that they saved for vacations. Rachel reports that Neville locked her out of the house overnight once and she had to spend the night at a friend's house. Rachel said, "My mom's approach to his anger was to try and keep me and my brother as quiet as possible. I remember sitting on the couch with my brother and being quiet because he was "going off" with Mom or the house girl. Rachel and Gwen both report that he became so angry on one occasion when Gwen did confront him that he "left the house and slept in the language assistant's room." They both report that he yelled so loud that the family next door would surely have heard things. Gwen Thomas described Neville as deceitful; that he had lied to her about things she knew were true and the trust between them had been broken. "He told lies and then excuses to hide the lies which is even more devious. And he often said it was my fault."

**Violence Toward the Family Cats** Rachel reports Neville "was really violent toward the cats, lots of generations of cats. He kicked them as hard as he could into the pond and they would have to swim out or try to walk across the lily pads. One cat turned and scratched his leg as he kicked it and he stopped doing it. He threw them against trees and posts. He was involved in killing two cats that I know of. He was allergic to cats so he would pat them with his foot to get them to relax and then kick them. It was very unpredictable when he would do something nasty and violent. I knew when his footsteps were loud and could hear him coming that he was angry. I knew when he would be safe or not by the sound." Gwen Thomas reported, "Nev was cruel to the cats. One time a kitten clawed him as he kicked it in the pond." Another MK stated, "I remember her dad doing something awful. She had a black cat with white tips, called Tiptoes. Her cat had a litter of kittens and he put them in a bag and drowned them in the pond. She loved those cats, they meant everything to her. I went to her house, and the kittens weren't there anymore and she was crying and told me what happened."

**Anger, Abusive Actions to Others Outside the Family** Rachel reports another time when Neville screamed at Gwen Green's parents so loud over a bike being damaged that she could hear him from a far away. Gwen Thomas independently described this incident stating, "He went to the Greens yelling and screaming about Gwen Green's bike." Gwen reported that one time while playing tennis with Bruce Grayden, "Nev slammed the ball at Bruce and the look of anger on his face scared Bruce, so he put down the racket and left." Another individual described this incident as follows: "Nev is a good tennis player and hit a tennis ball really hard at close range at Bruce

Grayden. He didn't say sorry but seemed to enjoy it. Bruce stopped being friends with him after that."

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Another person who was a young girl at the time when the Thomas' were in Bagabag remembers Rachel warning her to never be alone with Neville.

A male MK reported one time he was fishing in the pond with his friend David Thomas and his father Neville. The Thomas' had a stairway to the pond from their house. When the fish snapped the line Neville blew up out of proportion causing this individual as a child to be very scared of Neville's anger.

**Anger Toward Nationals** Gwen Thomas reported, "The biggest problem with his anger was when he was in the village. Nev got angry about people asking for things and conflict over the air strip. He would refuse to cooperate and say 'no'. I was surprised he actually got out of there alive. He would say blunt and harsh, cross things. One time we were getting ready to go on the plane weighing everything. The village people had National Geographic magazines in a box that they took from our house. Nev found it and got angry, and threw the magazines out. This was very shameful for them." Rachel independently described this incident as follows: "When he found out he went and accused her of stealing and threw the magazines all over the ground and yelled at her." Another adult interviewed stated, "Neville raised his voice at nationals on at least one occasion." Another reported Neville displayed "anger in the language community." An administrator stated, "Before helicopters were assigned Neville was told that the helicopter would be used for their allocation and not a plane. He got angry and said there is no way I will use the helicopter'. He had the village people work on the airstrip. He was deep seeded adamant and wouldn't back down. If he got angry over something, basically there wasn't much room to discuss it at that point. Just let him go off and maybe later."

**Inappropriate Sexual Comments** One young man remembers Neville making inappropriate comments to him and Neville's son David while watching movies together. He commented to the boys about how an actress looked in the swimming suit and another time commented about nudity in the movie with appreciation. "They were things I'd never heard a dad say. None of my dorm dads or my father ever made a comment like that to me. It was the kind of things fifteen-year-old boys would say after a movie but fathers wouldn't say that kind of things to a fifteen-year-old boy." David said he watched tons of movies with his Dad, and that they didn't know some of them were a "bit high rated for my age." David doesn't remember any comments by his father but does remember feeling embarrassed. David said that

looking back on it some of the movies were probably inappropriate for young kids. He said he would close his eyes until the end of the movie and that his dad never walked out of a movie, that his dad didn't know the barriers when it was right or not.

**Flirtatious Comments with Other Women in His Children's Presence** David Thomas has memories of feeling uncomfortable and embarrassed by his dad's flirtatious conversations with some of the other ladies while going with his dad to Magnolia's ice cream parlor in Manila. Rachel Thomas also reports her father charming the single women when she went with him to this ice cream place. She states her mom also heard about this from others.

**Inappropriate Touch** A female MK reports that Mr. Thomas played "toesies" with her under the table while she, Rachel and Mr. Thomas were playing Rummy Cube at the Thomas home. She states, "I think it was afternoon or early evening so we could do homework and go to bed. I pulled my foot back. I thought it was strange because they were so friendly and outgoing, but I didn't know what to make of it. Rachel apparently saw it and later told her, 'Don't ever be alone with my Dad.' She might have been more sensitive to things. That was the only time it happened."

**Taking Pictures** Another person who was a child at the time reports that he remembers "weird" things happening in the Thomas house, including Neville taking nude pictures of him and other children. He states, "I was between five and ten. I remember a camera being presented at one time. I was naked. I remember Rachel Thomas's dad doing that, using a 35mm camera, silver and I believe it was Minolta, and a black leather case. It was in that house, because I remember it had green floors with a weird painting technique to make it look like carpet, yeah, a Filipino technique. The green floor was in the living room. It happened in one of the bedrooms. I recall a female child. One male and one female, I don't remember who, Rachel's father, in one of the bedrooms, the naked pictures. It would have to have been late afternoon the way sun was over the floor. It would set over the rice paddies and it reflected off the cement. There were some trees to block the sun, but not enough." Neville is also reported to have taken photos of the house girls around the Bagabag center, which embarrassed them. It was photos of them putting up the wash on the line, nothing inappropriate except the way he did it. David, Rachel and their mother all report that Neville cut pictures of women out of magazines. David found them in the rubbish that he was burning and Gwen and Rachel found them with family pictures. Large number of cut outs of women's faces all the same size but also other pictures such as women in bikinis. They all them found it odd that he did this.

**Sexual Behaviors** Gwen Thomas believes that Neville was addicted to pornography long before he met her and that he told her about this problem with pornography. She also stated, "He confided in me before we got married that he was a peeping tom walking around looking in people's windows." She indicated that before their marriage "while he was driving to his parents' place he took his clothes off and opened the bonnet of the car like something was wrong. The police came along and then let him go. They must have been suspicious so came behind him and found him doing the same thing again. Rather than press charges they advised him to talk to a Dr. John Birrell who was a doctor and commissioner, someone high up in police. He saw him once who prescribed some hormonal treatment and that was the end of the story". When she was pregnant with David she stated she found him burning Playboys in the backyard. When they applied to Wycliffe Australia Gwen states that Neville acknowledged an incident of indecent exposure but said that it was dropped by the police, he had dealt with it, and it was no longer a problem. During their time in the Philippines Gwen Thomas stated, "There were three things that happened that I confronted Nev with. He hiked on a survey and stripped off naked at the river with people. At Bagabag base he came out of the bathroom with nothing on because I made some chocolate chips cookies, with women out the back. I said, 'what are you thinking?' The third item was confronting him about buying magazines, Gwen stated, "When he went to Manila he: bought these 'glossy' magazines. He called me a prudish, self-righteous twit for not approving of them. If I tried to intervene I'd be put down too. He did have a locked drawer. We did need security but I never knew what was in it." Gwen also stated that though she liked filling in as a children's home parent one time when he was away, she felt they couldn't do it as a couple because she would never trust him as a dorm dad because of his anger, sexual issues, and her lack of trust in him as a suitable caregiver for children. Gwen stated, "Now looking back, he never addressed and dealt with the sexual addiction problem." Another person interviewed confirmed that Gwen shared with them that "Nev had an addiction to pornography, had porn magazines which he tried to hide. He watched questionable TV programs. I've never heard this from Nev, only through Gwen."

**Reports to Others** Rachel Thomas was hospitalized at age eighteen for suicide attempts. The hospital would not discharge her as long as Neville was in the home. Rachel states her mom had a hard time making a decision about Neville needing to leave the home. Eventually he found a boarding house to stay in during the week so Rachel could be home. On the weekends she stayed with friends and he was home. Thus, they never crossed paths. Her psychiatrist stated, "She had many psych diagnoses: post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, bi polar, Dissociative Identity Disorder related to abandonment and abuse. She had a cluster of complex traumas,

very poor early experiences, she didn't feel safe anywhere, sense of self is fragile, would feel overwhelmed easily. She has been hospitalized for suicide attempts, ongoing suicide risk, self-harm, eating disorders, panic attack, and flashbacks." Rachel is currently under the care of a psychologist and is seeking further evaluation and possible treatment from a psychiatrist.

**Neville's Response** One person interviewed stated that Neville told him that things people were saying about him "were a pack of lies." Rachel stated that she heard from her mom's friends and her aunt that Neville told them she was crazy and they shouldn't believe a word she said. They told her mom he had said these things. When Gwen told Neville that he had to leave the house he got on the floor holding his heart and pretended to have a heart attack. Rachel confirms her mom telling her this.

**Thomas' Divorce** The Thomas' were separated for two and a half years before their divorce in April 1994, when Rachel turned twenty. Gwen states "I began to analyze and pray about the whole situation. I became aware of the issue with Rachel and her dad when we were here in the home in Melbourne. The final issue in the divorce was Rachel's disclosure of abuse by Neville." Neville met Cate Green and was engaged to her before the divorce. They were married in November 1994. Gwen reports that Neville told her she had to sell the house before Christmas. She also reports that he changed the address for himself to get all the donations from Wycliffe. The Thomas' resigned from Wycliffe Australia in January 1994. One individual interviewed stated that Neville remarried and they had issues around how he treated the children and gambling. Pornography Use in Church Job After resigning from Wycliffe Australia, Neville worked for a car dealership and for a couple of churches. One person stated he told one pastor that he needed to be alert to possible problems. The pastor said, "We don't have any proof of charges and we'll see how things go." Neville was reportedly let go from one church for issues of gambling. One of his pastors reported he had good bookkeeping skills. The pastor further indicated that Neville was a man who was not as much in touch with his feelings and life as other people. He said it was difficult to have an open and friendly relationship with him as compared to others. The pastor said Neville was willing to please and drop everything to help which was part of the problem; he was very linear and task oriented. He did not reveal much of himself to others, so it was hard to get close to him. He had a good work ethic. He had his job he was in control of and handled those but he had a limited ability to change, adjust to new expectations. Another said he was very pleasant and competent to work with. One church reported he had accessed pornography using the church computer he had been using. The person who

discovered it found many files. "It had been going on certainly for months." They reported he tried to dodge the issue, giving other reasons why this might have been on his computer. No one else used that computer so it was clearly his doing. They set up a way to monitor his computer, and he did it again the next day. When confronted he said he was doing research for the church. He subsequently admitted he had a problem. He was fired as a result of this issue, in 2007.

**Rachel's Reliability /Credibility** Individuals interviewed, both MKs and adult members at the time, variously describe Rachel as sweet, compliant, quiet, withdrawn, shy, and respectful. One individual stated that she didn't hang out with the other kids as much but wanted companionship. Two adults referred to pictures they had of Rachel and that she had her face down in the picture which was representative of her being shy and uncertain. Others describe her as artistic and good at mosaics and crafts. Both adults and MKs stated Rachel is someone who is more likely to minimize things than exaggerate things and that she is not a person who makes a big deal of things that aren't. One person (pastor) said this about her recounting her experiences: "In the early days she literally would rather die than tell you. That is not a person who looks to stir up trouble for others." Another said, "As a child and as an adult she is someone who tells the truth." Those who know her well describe her as being "brutally honest; frank; she tells it like it is; she would call a spade a spade." Those individuals who stated that Rachel had first reported what happened to them in the early 1990s stated that she has not changed the accounts since then, either about the people involved or the description of the events. Others said she is someone who doesn't want to talk about a lot of stuff. One stated, "When it comes out, it explodes out of her because she's introverted." Another said, "She doesn't seem to be someone who goes around saying stuff to be a sensationalist."

**Professional's Assessment** Rachel was first hospitalized at age sixteen and placed on antidepressants and anti-psychotic medications. She was also recovering from viral Meningitis at the time, the recovery being protracted over a period of months, and it is not clear what long term impact this had on her health.

Rachel's psychiatrist, Michael Schwartz, first saw her when she was age eighteen in 1991. Dr. Schwartz stated that Rachel reported to him consistent memories of Neville's physical and emotional abuse. From his professional opinion as a psychiatrist specializing in child trauma, "Rachel's symptoms are consistent with patterns typically observed in abuse victims." He also noted that her symptoms indicate that the abuse started at a very young age.

**Australian Authorities** In December 2011, SIL contacted the Australian federal police regarding these reported behaviors and inquired what the reporting laws were and how to follow them. Their written response was that "In consultation with our legal advisors, I can advise that there is no Australian Commonwealth Law that covers the alleged conduct prior to 1994." They advised that Rachel would need to contact the Victoria Police directly.

**SIL Definitions of Abuse** Child abuse is the treatment of a child under the age of 18, often in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power, which endangers or impairs the health or welfare of a child. SIL's definition includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and neglect.

**Physical Abuse** Physical abuse is any act that results in a non-accidental physical injury. Such acts may include, but are not limited to: hitting, slapping, punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, throwing, burning, choking, stabbing, holding under water, pulling hair, or holding against one's will; unreasonably severe corporal punishment or unjustified punishment; or excessive physical discipline done in anger; or any behavior that batters (physically injures) a child. There may be a single or repeated incidents. Physical discipline by parents of their own children, such as spanking or paddling, is not considered abuse as long as it is reasonable, not done in anger, and causes no bodily injury to the child.

**Emotional Abuse** Emotional abuse is defined by a pattern of behavior over time' that impairs or risks impairing a child's functioning or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. It includes acts of commission and acts of omission. Acts of commission may include but are not limited to unreasonable restriction of movement, patterns of belittling, denigrating, ridiculing, yelling at (loud speech that harms by bringing emotional degradation), threatening, scaring, humiliating, shaming, scapegoating, blaming, derogatory name calling, publically singling out a child for negative treatment or exclusion, intimidating, using jokes as put-downs, sarcasm, discriminating against, continual disapproval, rejecting, bullying, hazing, unpredictable responses, constant family discord and double message communication, or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment, as well as withholding love, support, or guidance. Acts of omission may include but are not limited to the failure to provide a developmentally appropriate and supportive environment, including the availability of a primary attachment figure, so that the child can develop a stable and full range of emotional and social competencies commensurate with her or his personal potentials and in the context of the society in which the child dwells.

**Conclusion** The reports regarding Neville Thomas were credible and corroborated, with nothing to be gained by making false statements about these experiences. The behaviors reported meet SIL's definitions of emotional and physical abuse. Sufficient information has been obtained and corroborated to conclude that procedures that govern SIL's response to child abuse will be applied. These procedures are not contingent upon the conclusions of the Australian child abuse authorities.

### **Action Plan Administrative Steps**

There is a distinction between one-time inappropriate behavior, which needs to be addressed to prevent recurrence, and repeated action, which meets the definition of emotional abuse. - Harassing, exacting humiliating tasks as a form of initiation into a group, playing rough practical jokes upon,

1. Since Neville Thomas is no longer affiliated in any way with SIL a copy of the statement of findings will be retained in the SIL Child Safety Office file. 2. Extracts of this report are provided through standard procedure to the SIL Philippines, Director, Glenn Stallsmith and the Wycliffe Australia, CEO, Barry Borneman, for the purpose of informing them and so that appropriate records can be made to reflect this information. SIL's standard of reporting to appropriate civil authorities has been followed. In this case that has included the Australian Federal Police. SIL will provide this report to the head pastor of the church Neville Thomas attends, following SIL'S policy, so that appropriate accountability and safety considerations can be made. SIL is highly committed to maintaining a safe, positive environment for children in our work. We now have in place child safety training for all staff to educate them regarding the reality and prevention of child abuse. We also have a code of conduct for staff to follow to ensure professional, safe interaction with children in our effort to do as much as possible to prevent child abuse of any kind.

**Supportive Services** 1. This Statement of Findings is provided to Rachel Thomas and Neville Thomas, with each receiving their own copy. 2. SIL places a high priority on victims getting help to overcome the trauma of emotional and physical abuse. Supportive services including counseling resources and resources on abuse are offered to Rachel Thomas. When counseling services are already in place, SIL will be supportive of these services and offer other resources on abuse that may be helpful. 3. SIL recommends to Neville Thomas that he seek counseling from a qualified therapist (at his own

expense) to help understand the nature of the trauma experienced by the victim(s) and to deal with the underlying causes of these issues. SIL is deeply saddened to have learned of this abuse that occurred when Rachel Thomas was a child within the organization and highly respects her for the difficult steps she has taken to report these experiences to us. We deeply regret the effects of these experiences while living in a community of believers committed to Christian ministry. SIL seeks to support her in her ongoing recovery from this trauma through the above mentioned counseling resources as an expression of our commitment to her well-being.

Sincerely,

Sandra L. Gould  
Sandra L. Gould Chief Human Resource Officer SIL International

### **Statement of Findings of the Child Sexual Abuse Investigation Regarding Wesley Churchill**

March 7, 2012

Copies to: Rachel Thomas Counselor(s)

**Family Information** Wesley Churchill is a Canadian, age thirty-nine, son of Winston and Lois Churchill who are Wycliffe Canada missionaries and served with SIL in the Philippines from 1971 to 1990. Wesley grew up in the Philippines from his birth in 1972 through 1990 when he graduated from Faith Academy high school. He lived at the SIL Bagabag center through eighth grade, and then attended high school at Faith Academy in Manila. He is married to Virginia Rumberger and they live in St. Andrews, Manitoba, Canada. They have two children. Wesley has a computer business. Rachel Thomas is Australian, age thirty-seven. Her parents worked as SIL translators in the Philippines from 1977 until October 1989. Rachel was age two when the family went to the Philippines and lived there until age fifteen when they returned to Australia. She attended preschool through grade eight at the SIL School at Bagabag along with home schooling by her mother when they were in the language allocation, except for the years they were on furlough in Australia. She attended high school at Faith Academy in Manila until age fifteen. Rachel is single and has a daughter, Kiki, age three. She receives a disability support pension and lives in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

**History of the Report** The SIL Child Safety Office received a report from Jenny Willetts, Wycliffe Australia Personnel Director, on August 24, 2011 stating that Rachel Thomas had made a report of abusive behavior she experienced when a child while her parents were working with SIL in the Philippines between the mid 1970's

and 1989. Appropriate administrative personnel were informed and the SIL child safety response process was initiated as is required by SIL administrative policies. In the course of interviewing others as part of the child safety response process, one additional adult MK made an independent but similar report of abuse for which the child safety response process was also initiated.

**Investigative Response Process** Six trained investigative team members conducted an extensive internal investigative response process which included interviews of over seventy individuals, including adult MKs, former and current members of the SIL Philippines, professional counselors, pastors and members of the Australia, USA and Canadian Wycliffe member Organizations. The process also involved research of historical data from SIL Philippines and SIL International data bases, contact with the Texas child abuse registry where SIL is incorporated, and contact with the Canadian child abuse authorities. The team spent over one thousand hours in this investigative process. Two additional outside investigative team members were also involved in the full investigative process including involvement in interviews, case planning, preparation and review of the findings as per Best Practice Standards of the Child Safety & Protection Network. They both concur with the findings.

**John R. Watters, President**

**Frederick A. Boswell** Executive Director

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**Summary of the Report** Male and female MK's variously reported incidents involving the following behaviors as perpetrated by Wesley: threats and intimidation, uncomfortable physical contact, being kicked in the crotch, forced oral sex, forced vaginal intercourse, attempted anal penetration, being cut with a knife, being held under water, being forced to watch frogs being mutilated and being forced to have intercourse with a dog. Wesley reported two incidents. One involved a group of kids with their pants down showing each other their genitals. The other included himself and another male MK sitting on each other's lap which involved inappropriate sexual contact that he remembers as being consensual. The behaviors were reported to have occurred from when Wesley was age five through age seventeen. Some involved actions that occurred once and others occurred as often as fortnightly. They are reported to have occurred in the bathroom near the preschool, in the school bathrooms, in the library bathroom, and at the river by Bagabag. Some also are reported to have occurred at the SIL Guesthouse in Manila.

**Additional Information Gathered Incidents in Bathrooms at Bagabag** Rachel

Thomas reported that when she was in nursery school at Bagabag and Wesley was

approximately five or six years old he would take her to a toilet or outhouse behind the nursery. She reported, "That bathroom became one of the main places he abused me." She reported the actions included forced oral sex and vaginal penetration. Rachel believes she would have been maybe three or four, but definitely before kindergarten. "Wes is only two years older than me so something must have happened to him." She stated that later a bathroom was added to the nursery building itself and a fenced area was added. Another MK identified a toilet that anyone could use, whenever, right next to the pre-school. Wesley remembered there being a toilet behind the nursery and identified its location on a map of the Bagabag Center. He did not recall any reason he would have had to take nursery children to the toilet, ever being in that bathroom, or anything happening there although he said it could be possible because he has very little memory of his childhood. Rachel stated that other incidents with Wesley occurred in the female bathroom off the library in the Study Center, in both school bathrooms, and at the kitchen sink at the Meeting Hall. Rachel stated it "usually happened on Friday nights because kids were allowed to run wild then around center." She reported that the incidents occurred frequently, fortnightly or more often from around 1976 to 1985, until she was grade five and Wes moved to Manila with his family. Rachel recounted that one time she was standing in front of the school and heard Wesley's older sister tell him, "I know what you're doing in the bathrooms and you had better stop or I'll tell on you." Beverly reported that she often had the responsibility for watching her younger brother and that she said things like that quite often. She does not recall saying it in relation to anything of a sexual nature.

**Incidents involving a knife and frogs** Rachel stated that Wesley had a Swiss army knife that he had gotten as a present and that he would cut her with it. She explained: "I am positive it was a Swiss army knife, I remember it vividly. It opens up and you fold things back into it like a corkscrew, knife, etc. I remember it being red and I remember the logo. It was most probably during the second term we had in the Philippines, between 1981 and 1985 probably. Wes would give me a choice of whether to use the knife on the frogs or me. I would choose the frogs, but no answer was good." After she chose the frogs he killed them in front of her. "Wes hit me with a frog with a broken leg repeatedly. I am absolutely phobic of frogs and toads." She stated, "If he hurt me particularly bad, he would walk me home because I was crying and he would tell my mom I fell out of a tree. Then I was banned from climbing trees." Rachel's partner stated, "Sometimes my voice can trigger a reaction from her, darkness can make her very uneasy, toads and frogs especially." Rachel described a time when she burned herself between her legs trying to melt plastic lollipop sticks. When Wesley found out, he purposefully kicked her in the crotch. She stated her

brother, David, saw him do it and told him to stop. Later Wesley had intercourse with her in the bathroom. She reported that he cut her with his Swiss army knife and carved his initial "W" on the inside of her upper thigh. Rachel's partner confirmed that Rachel has a "W" on the inside of her upper thigh near the groin area, high up. He said it is an old scar because it is white but clear. He stated it was very, very precise and recognizable. "From her eyes (looking down), it is a 'W'. If you look at it from another angle (looking up) it would look like an 'M'".

He also stated, "She had referred to a Swiss army knife before with regard to Wesley (Churchill). She reacted very strongly against my getting a pocket knife. In light of this and other triggers, I give a high credibility to what she says has happened to her. She has clearly been traumatized." David remembers Rachel getting burned when she melted some chopper chopper sticks, as they are called in Australia. It was very, very hot. She recalls Wesley kicking her in the crotch but she doesn't recall talking to him about it. Wesley acknowledged that he had a Swiss Army pocket knife growing up that he had gotten for Christmas. He verified that it was red and had all of the various sections on it like scissors, blades, etc. Michael Schwarz, a psychiatrist, reported that during his sessions with Rachel in the 1990s Rachel "talked at length about a young man, Wesley. She described many instances of sexual abuse by him. He tortured her with animals many times, frogs and a dog. Wes engaged in sexual activity with Rachel." Wesley stated that he may have dissected frogs but he didn't remember an instance of doing anything with Rachel. "I remember we used to catch them. Some of them were really big. I think we tied strings between them and threw them up and they would hang over the power lines. I do remember that happening." He did not recall hitting anyone with frogs. Another MK stated "really weird stuff happened, pinning frogs up on the school, torturing frogs and tacking small animals, I want to say guinea pigs or it could have been hamsters, on the school doors over the weekend. I remember they found someone and he was leaving animals strung out in front of the school." Another MK commented about frogs being tortured in play (without a specific reference to Wesley) "I remember once we made a fire, like kids like to do, and I had found a whole pile of baby frogs, like the size of a dime each. I had a jar of about 30 of them. This is going to sound weird but is indicative of the environment. I was sitting in front of the fire. I had a hypodermic needle and would inject the baby frogs with gasoline and then throw them into the fire so they would explode. For me, this is an indication of the abnormality of the environment."

**Incidents involving Wesley's Dog** Rachel reported that Wesley forced her to have intercourse with his dog, Goggles. She stated that the dog was often running around the center and with the kids. Wesley acknowledges he had a small, scrappy dog

named Goggles. Wesley didn't know how Goggles would have been used to scare people.

**Riding Motorbike to the River Where Abuse Occurred** Rachel described a motorbike, either red or yellow that Wesley had growing up. She stated it was a small one with a black seat. She stated she would ride on the back or she would run alongside. She remembered Wesley's dog going alongside sometimes to the river, maybe a mile away, where the Cogon grass (really tall grass) grew. She stated he raped her there. She remembers there being rocks underneath her. Wesley described having a couple of motorcycles. "The first one was electric and then a gas one after that. One was yellow with a black seat. That would have been a smaller one, the first one. It was electric to start with, and then Dad put a lawn mower engine on it. The second was a Honda, 90cc I think, red." Wesley said he didn't go to the river a lot as it was quite a ways, about a half hour bike ride, and his parents didn't like him going off very far or very long. Wesley did not remember going alone on his motorbike with anyone to the river. He did remember going with a group down to the river. When asked if something could have happened with Rachel, Wesley stated, "I would have to say it could have. It is overwhelming when there is so much evidence or something against me. I have to admit that yeah, there is a possibility. It keeps coming at me one after the other. I have to sit here and I have to come to the realization, that there are a lot of things out there I don't know or recall. I may have blocked it out for a reason, a lot of pain involved."

**Holding Her Head Under Water at Pond and Pool** Rachel reported that Wes "held me under water in the pool several times when adults were watching us and at the fish pond once and I was certain he was drowning me. This was when I was in the Philippines on my family's second term there, approximately 1981-1985. I think it was his power, another way to show his power and how powerless I was. When he let go, I'd take a big breath of air. I remember exactly where it was in the pool and the pond. I thought I wasn't going to get air anymore. Then I tried to stay away from him as much as possible. I would swim somewhere else." Wes reported that he remembers horsing around in the pool but doesn't remember holding kids heads under the water or anyone telling him to stop.

**Incidents in Manila** During grades seven and eight Rachel reported going to Manila once a month to get her braces adjusted. During some of the trips she stayed in a room by herself at the SIL Guesthouse in Manila and sometimes she would see Wesley visiting downstairs. "He lived in Manila and would just show up at the guest house. He would always say, 'Are you going to the bathroom? I'm coming.' Or he

would show up at my room, at the door. You can read all about the guests' schedule on a wall in a section of the mail room which was attached to the Guesthouse, so you could tell if someone was in a room by themselves. The list showed all of the people's plans, when they were coming and leaving, so Wes could see when we were coming." Rachel reported that on some of these occasions he came into her room (Room 12) and on at least one occasion Rachel reported intercourse. She stated incidents also happened in the bathroom connected to that room. "Sometimes I went to Manila with Nev (father) and they would put me in a room by myself; if there was a single lady there, they would put me in a room with her, but sometimes by myself. Wes would come in when I was by myself." She also reported sexual encounters initiated by Wes in the bright pink tile bathroom next to the kitchen on the lower level of the guesthouse in Manila. Rachel's mother confirmed that she went to Manila for orthodontic work regularly and that she stayed in Room 12. Others who are familiar with the SIL Guesthouse from that time have verified Rachel's description of the room and bathrooms. Wesley and his parents confirm that they lived in Manila near the SIL guesthouse when he was in high school at Faith Academy. Wesley did not recall anything happening at the SIL guesthouse or being at the guesthouse a lot. He recalled that there was a doorway in the middle, a hallway, lunch eating area, rooms off of a veranda, washrooms to one side, and stairs coming down off both sides. He did not remember being with any other kids in the rooms or washrooms or going to the guesthouse to visit girls.

**Chinese Burns** Rachel reported that Wesley used to do lots of Chinese burns to her on her arms. She stated, "I just remember his hands twisting on my arm in opposite directions." Wesley said he knew what Chinese burns were and that it happened but he didn't remember specific incidents of it. He acknowledged that he could have done that to her but that he didn't remember giving her a Chinese burn.

**Air Rifle and Bow and Arrow** Rachel reported that Wesley opened up his Dad's closet and showed her the gun there. He threatened to shoot her with it. He also had a bow and arrow which she saw Wesley use for target practice. She did not know the gun was a pellet gun or air rifle and it scared her knowing he had the gun and bow and arrows. They were used as a threat. She believed that he could kill her and this fear resulted in her compliance. She also believed that she would "get in huge trouble" if this became known even though she knew it was wrong. Wesley stated that he didn't think his Dad really liked guns and doesn't recall having a gun of any type. He remembered having sling shots. He stated he remembers shooting his father's bow and arrow in the field between the road and the runway.

**Physical Description, Circumcised** When asked to describe his physical appearance Rachel stated, "He was quite tanned. Blond hair when he was younger but it went brown later. He was tanner on the area of his shirt, arms and face, but not where his shorts were." Rachel knew from their sexual contact that Wesley was circumcised. Wesley confirmed that this was true.

**Incident with Female MK** A male MK reported that when they were children Wesley told him that he had done something inappropriate with a female MK. He stated he understood from Wesley this related to "virtual intercourse" and occurred when Wesley was maybe ten or twelve. It had to do with his penis stuck in her bottom in the bathroom. Wesley told him that he had to promise not to tell but he was concerned enough that he told his sister. He said that word got back to Wesley and Wesley was angry that he had told. Another male MK recalls being told about this same incident when he was about age eleven and recalls it being Wes and the same female MK that others have mentioned. Wesley stated that as a kid, "I lied, and I think I had self-esteem issues. I wouldn't put it past myself to say something like that. But again, with my memory what it is, I can only tell you what I remember. I don't recall ever being angry. This is the first time in about twenty-five years that I have even thought about it. I can't say that it didn't happen. In trying to get to the facts about what happened I want to say, 'No that never happened.' That is what I remember, that it never happened. I never ever thought about it. The only time that I can remember being involved with a girl, was when I started to date Virginia between grades ten and eleven."

**Female MK Incident** Another female MK who grew up at Bagabag and did not want her name used remembers an incident that occurred one time with two boys who wanted to know "if my line crack went all the way through." She doesn't remember how old she was but "it was in a bathroom near the post office somewhere, maybe between the post office and the back of the Headland's house. There was one girls' and one boys' bathroom on either side. It was near the post office and the finance offices and where the old preschool used to be. It was in that area." Adult Walked in on an Incident in Library An adult member reported an incident that Mike Bashkov told them as parents about walking into the library and finding kids with their pants down. Mike Bashkov confirmed that "during a Sunday evening service he went to the Study Center or Library and walked in on a boy with his pants down and a couple of girls were checking him out." A male MK reported, "I don't know if it was when I was in grade three, four, five, six or seven, I think it was maybe it was in grade five or six. A group of us were in a room in the library in Bagabag. I don't recall anything physical happening. It was 'You show me yours, I will show you mine.' Mike Bashkov, the

Maintenance Manager, walked into the room and saw what was happening and he told us all to leave the room. I went and told my mom and dad. I remember Dad sitting me down and talking to me about it. I don't remember anything specific." Wesley Churchill Adult MKs and adults in the community variously describe Wesley as a child as someone who preferred to be outside. Academics were more of a challenge for him when most of his classmates were high achievers in an international school setting. Others described him as a loner, a spoiled and socially awkward child who lied, got in trouble, had a temper and bullied younger children. Reports by others that Wesley stole things was confirmed by Wesley himself, including stealing a fish from someone else's house and telling his dad he had caught it. Wesley's sister stated that he was picked on during furloughs by friends and there was a period of time when he experienced the preliminary stages of tuberculosis in early elementary school. Wesley reported that he went through seven horrible years of transition to Canada from the Philippines after his graduation from Faith Academy but that he has since affirmed his faith and has made changes in his life and relationships. Wesley's sister, parents and wife confirm that Wesley went through a very difficult period but that he has become much more caring for others and although he can still lose his temper he deals with it much better. Others stated that he's much more caring now, not just about family but his employees; he's very open; nothing like he used to be. He walked away from the Lord and went through a very bad period. He went through quite a transformation several years back and has gotten his life in order, recommitted his life to the Lord, and is wholeheartedly serving. He's very open to things in his life now and is involved in leadership training and working with a mentor.

**Other Confirmations of Rachel's Account** The psychiatrist who saw Rachel in Bagabag due to depression at the time of these incidents indicated that she stated she was afraid to be around an older male student. She did not name the other student or describe the incidents at the time. The pastor of the home church Rachel and her family attended in Australia stated that Rachel had first reported that "horrible things had occurred" with Wesley when she returned from the Philippines as a teenager. Rachel's brother reported that she told him about Wesley two years after the family returned to Australia from the Philippines. Dr. Michael Schwarz, Child Psychiatrist Specialist who saw Rachel when she was seventeen and eighteen years of age, related in part Rachel's report to him of experiences with Wesley Churchill. This included torturing her with frogs and a dog and that he engaged in sexual activity with Rachel. When asked about Rachel's credibility Dr. Schwarz said, "Wesley exploited her in a very sexual and abusive way. I have no doubt about that. Her account about Wesley was very consistent and the consistency in her stories has

continually persisted. Her psychiatric presentation is consistent with very traumatic experience. I've done this job for thirty years. I've seen kids who have been abused and there is a consistency that ends up with this presentation." Peter Carlisle, Rachel's current psychologist, stated that she has described sexual incidents with Wesley Churchill that have been, "very specific and consistent. When she's in the middle of a flashback she describes it in vivid detail as though it is happening now. It is almost verbatim." He stated that Rachel has never been confused about the incidents or the identity of Wesley. "There has been consistency in what she has reported from our very first session 'till today."

**Texas and Canadian authorities** SIL contacted the Texas Child Abuse Hotline regarding this report. They said any action regarding Wesley Churchill would need to be done by Canada Canada would have jurisdiction to decide if they wanted to pursue this or not. They documented the call and will keep it on file. In March, 2012 SIL called Manitoba Family Services who referred us to the All Nations Coordinated Response Network (ANCHOR). They said that since this occurred in the Philippines and is not a current concern that it is not something that would need to be reported. They would only become involved if there was a current issue with a child. They did not want any further details or information,

**SIL Definitions of Abuse** Child abuse is the treatment of a child under the age of 18, often in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power, which endangers or impairs the health or welfare of a child. SIL's definition includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and neglect.

**Child-to-Child Cases** Should both the victim and the alleged offender be under the age of 18, it will typically be considered abuse if there are more than three years' difference (1095 days or more) between the ages of the children or there is a difference in responsibility, trust, or power between them. If there is less than three years' age difference and there is not a significant difference in responsibility, trust, or power between them, what would normally be defined as abuse will typically be considered inappropriate behavior. In these cases, an appropriate action plan will be put in place to address the behaviors of concern and their effects. Because of these and other variables, child-to-child cases will be judged on a case-by-case basis. Child-to-child abuse includes the types of abuse defined below.

**Sexual Abuse** Sexual abuse is the involvement of a child in sexual activity with an adult or another child (as defined above) which includes but is not limited to: a. Verbal: Remarks which include sexual threats, innuendos, solicitation, sexually explicit language; inappropriate comments about a person's body or appearance; or

any verbal expression with the intent to arouse or stimulate. b. Visual: Indecent exposure; showing or taking of suggestive or pornographic pictures or films, showing a child pornographic material, unclothed persons, or any sexual activity or simulated sexual activity such as masturbation or intercourse; peeping, leering, or staring; or viewing child pornography, Physical Touching: Physical contact (or penetration by penis, fingers, or any other body part or object) with a child's clothed or unclothed genitals, pubic area, buttocks, breast, or causing a child to perform any of these acts; masturbation in front of or to the victim; rubbing, holding, or kissing for the purpose of sexual gratification. d. Exploitation through involving a child in prostitution or in the production of pornographic materials. Sexual abuse also includes the above definitions when performed through a medium which includes, but is not limited to, computer, cell phone, iPhone, and other technology that allows for virtual communication.

**Conclusion** Rachel made reports of these actions by Wesley to a psychiatrist and to Wycliffe Australia in 1998. She subsequently made the same reports to SIL in 2011 and both have been consistent over time. Her psychologist and psychiatrist report that her accounts of these incidents have been specific and consistent over time and that her symptoms are consistent with patterns typically observed in victims of child sexual abuse. Rachel Thomas' report appears to be credible and honest with nothing to be gained by making false statements about these experiences. Other MKs and parents confirm various aspects of the reports and report additional incidents. Wesley Churchill was two years older than Rachel Thomas. Although there is not more than three year's age difference between the individuals involved and the incidents occurred when they were children, the behaviors were numerous and appeared over a significant period of time. Also, threat and intimidation were present. Thus the behaviors reported meet the SIL definition of sexual abuse. Sufficient information has been obtained and corroborated to conclude that procedures that govern SIL's response to sexual abuse will be applied. These procedures are not contingent upon the conclusions, if any, of the Texas child abuse registry where SIL is incorporated and with the Canadian child abuse authorities.

### **Action Plan**

**Administrative Steps** 1. Since Wes Churchill is no longer affiliated in any way with SIL a copy of the statement of findings will be retained in the SIL Child Safety Office file. 2. Extracts of this report are provided through standard procedure to the SIL Philippines, Director, Glenn Stallsmith, Wycliffe Australia, CEO, Barry Borneman, and Wycliffe Canada, Vice President for Personnel, Paul Hooper, for the purpose of informing them and so that appropriate records can be changed to reflect this

information. SIL's standard of reporting to appropriate civil authorities has been followed. In this case that has included the Canadian Child Protective Services. 4. SIL will provide this report to the head pastor of the church Wesley Churchill attends, following SIL's policy, so that appropriate accountability and safety considerations can be made. 5. SIL is highly committed to maintaining a safe, positive environment for children in our work. We now have in place child safety training for all staff to educate them regarding the reality and prevention of child abuse. We also have a code of conduct for staff to follow to ensure professional, safe interaction with children in our effort to do as much as possible to prevent child abuse of any kind.

**Supportive Services** 1. This Statement of Findings is provided to Rachel Thomas and Wesley Churchill, with each receiving their own copy. 2. SIL places a high priority on victims getting help to overcome the trauma of sexual abuse. Supportive services including counseling resources and resources on abuse are offered to Rachel Thomas. When counseling services are already in place, SIL will be supportive of these services and offer other resources on abuse that may be helpful. 3. SIL recommends to Wesley Churchill that he seek counseling from a qualified therapist (at his own expense) to help him understand the nature of the trauma experienced by the victim(s) and to overcome the underlying issues that led to these concerns. SIL is deeply saddened to have learned of this abuse that occurred when Rachel Thomas was a child within the organization and highly respects her for the difficult steps she has taken to report these experiences to us. We deeply regret the effects of these experiences while living in a community of believers committed to Christian ministry. SIL seeks to support Rachel in her ongoing recovery from this trauma through the above mentioned counseling resources as an expression of our commitment to her well-being.

Sincerely,

Sandra I Kould Sandra L. Gould Chief Human Resource Officer SIL International

## **Statement of Findings of the Child Emotional and Physical Abuse Investigation Regarding Penny Murphy**

March 7, 2012

Copies to: Rachel Thomas Counselor(s)

**Family Information** Penny Murphy, an American, is single, age sixty-four, retired, and living in Des Moines, IA. She joined Wycliffe USA first as a short term assistant in 1974 and then became a long term member. She served with SIL in the Philippines as a first through eighth grade school teacher with SIL from January 1974 until June 1989, teaching her first two and a half years at the Nasuli center, then most of the remaining years at the Bagabag center except for one year teaching at Faith Academy and one year as a companion for a translator. Rachel Thomas is Australian, age thirty-seven. Her parents worked as SIL translators in the Philippines from 1977 until October 1989. Rachel was age two when the family went to the Philippines and lived there until age fifteen when they returned to Australia. She attended preschool through grade eight at the SIL School at Bagabag.

**History of the Report** The SIL Child Safety Office received a report from Jenny Willetts, Wycliffe Australia Personnel Director, on August 24, 2011 stating that Rachel Thomas had made a report of abusive behavior she experienced when a child while her parents were working with SIL in the Philippines between the mid 1970's and 1989. Appropriate administrative personnel were informed and the SIL child safety response process was initiated as is required by SIL administrative policies.

**Investigative Response Process** Six trained investigative team members conducted an extensive internal investigative response process which included interviews of over seventy individuals, including adult MKs, former and current members of the SIL Philippines, professional counselors, pastors and members of the Australia, USA and Canadian Wycliffe member Organizations. The process also involved research of historical data from SIL Philippines and SIL International data bases and contact with the Texas child abuse registry where SIL is incorporated and the Iowa where Miss Murphy resides. The team spent over one thousand hours in this investigative process. Two additional outside investigative team members were also involved in the full investigative process including involvement in interviews, case planning, preparation and review of the findings as per Best Practice Standards of the Child Safety & Protection Network. They both concur with the findings.

**Summary of the Report Rachel's Summary of the Report** Rachel Thomas reports that Miss Murphy was incredibly strict and would get angry if students didn't do their

homework. Rachel stated that Miss Murphy would yell and stomp her feet a lot and Rachel and other students were scared of her. "When she yelled her face turned bright red. She would sometimes slam things down on her desk to get our attention. If we weren't fully paying attention, we would jump."

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She reports Miss Murphy broke a ruler across the back of her head one time. She reports Miss Murphy would sometimes not allow her to go to the bathroom when she asked, thus causing her to wet herself. Rachel remembers Miss Murphy getting really angry with her if she tried to get something out of her desk during class, or if she giggled. Rachel stated that Miss Murphy caught her one time with her arms inside the desk trying to get her Bible out. Miss Murphy sat on the desk and lifted her feet off the floor so her full weight was resting on the desk with Rachel's arms trapped inside the desk. Rachel reports, "I still have nightmares that I'm stuck in her class."

**Compilation Summary of the Report** Twelve MKs and one parent interviewed stated that Miss Murphy yelled at students in the classroom. Three students report that she pinched their arms and/or fingers in their desks by sitting on it. Two students report that she put masking tape over students' mouths for talking. Six students reported being wrapped on the knuckles. Three students report that she pinched one student's neck with fingernails till she drew blood. One student reported having a ruler broken over her head. Six students report Miss Murphy didn't allow children to use the bathroom which frequently resulted in the embarrassment of children wetting their pants in the classroom. Two parents interceded in her planned discipline of their child which involved making him pull weeds in the hot sun without water and putting him in an un-air conditioned storage room for several hours without water.

**Additional Information Gathered Years Rachel Thomas Attended Bagabag School and Teachers Those Years** School records document that the only year Rachel Thomas had Miss Murphy as a teacher was 7th grade. Bagabag school records document that Rachel Thomas attended school at the Bagabag the following dates and grades. The missing years in between were years they were in Australia on furlough.

- 1979/80 -- Kindergarten correspondence. Doris and Henry Kramer were teachers for K-6.
- 1980/81 -- 151 grade one semester correspondence. Doris and Henry Kramer were teachers for K-7.

1981/82 -- in Australia on furlough 1982/83 -- in Australia on furlough 1983/84 -- 4'h grade. Carol Simpson taught grade 2-4. Dotty Jackson taught K-18 grade. Miss Murphy was head teacher and taught grade 5-8.

1984/85 -- 5th grade correspondence. Carol Simpson taught grade grades 4-5. Dotty Jackson taught grade K-3 and was head teacher. Dave Kuhlman taught grade 6-8.

1985/86 -- in Australia on furlough 1986/87 -- 6th grade. Dennis Wolf taught grade 6-8 and P.E. Martha Hamm taught grades K-2, art, and grade 3-4 social studies. Miss Murphy taught grade 3-5 and was head teacher. 1987/88 -- 7th grade and living some in the dorm. Miss Murphy taught 5-8th grade reading, English, social studies, Bible, and lab. . Lila Raymond taught grades K-2. Martha Ham taught grades 3-4. Dennis Wolf taught grades 5-8 social studies, math, Reading, Bible, and P.E. 1988/89 -- 8th grade living some in the dorm. Lila Raymond taught grades K-2. Miss Murphy taught grade 5-6 and was head teacher. Charlotte Graham taught grades 7-8. Elizabeth taught grades 3-4. Comparing the school records of the years Miss Murphy taught at Bagabag and the years Rachel Thomas attended school there, the only year Rachel Thomas had Miss Murphy as a teacher for any subjects was seventh grade. Rachel said she might have only had Miss Murphy as her main teacher for one year but that she had classes with Miss Murphy other years for individual classes such as Bible, Philippine History, English and spelling. This is not corroborated by the school records.

**Years Miss Murphy Taught at Bagabag** Miss Murphy reports that she first taught at the SIL Nasuli school her first two and a half years in the Philippines beginning in November 1971. Bagabag School records document that Miss Murphy taught the following years and grades: 1975/76 -- she taught grades 2-6. 1976/77 -- she taught grades 1-6. 1977/78 -- she taught grades 1-6. 1978/79 -- she taught grades 1-6. 1979/80 -- she did one year furlough. 1980/81 -- she taught 4" grade at Faith Academy in Manila. 1981/82 -- she taught K-8. 1982/83 -- she took a year off from teaching and served as a companion to Kathleen "Kippi" Forfia, a SIL translator. 1983/84 -- she taught 5-8'h grade and served as head teacher. 1984/85 -- she was on furlough during the school year. 1985/86 -- she taught grade 3-4 and was head teacher. 1986/87 -- she taught grades 3-5 and was head teacher. 1987/88 -- she taught 5-8th grade reading, English, social studies, Bible, and lab. 1988/89 -- she taught grade 5-6 and was head teacher. In the summer of 1989 Miss Murphy returned to the USA and completed a master's degree in special education. She

resigned from SIL in December 1991 and taught for twenty years in the Des Moines, Iowa school system before retiring in June 2010.

**Discipline Policy** Paul Meisner, the principal at the time stated, "I think generally the protocol was a teacher would talk to the child and confer with the parents to bring kids in compliance. There was the freedom back then to paddle. It would not be done in the classroom in the presence of other students." One parent stated, "Spanking was appropriate with most of us. Teachers would have needed to talk with parents first." Another parent stated, "Teachers were allowed to spank." A fellow teacher stated, "I never knew of anyone who spanked while I was there. We might move a child to another part of class or corner. Once or twice I sent a one student downstairs to do their work. We had so little discipline problems there; they were good kids and we had full parent support. A student might lose recess, twice a year at most for losing recess." Miss Murphy stated the school policy for discipline of students was "keeping them after school. I spanked a couple students with permission of their parents." One student reported, "She would smack people on the bottom, but through the clothes. Kids would stand up and she would come up and 'whack, whack, or whack, whack, whack." Another student reported, "I got spanked once I remember. I probably earned it. I don't think it was overboard. I don't recall ever thinking I was being abused." Another male student stated, "She used a paddle. We would get wacked, not beaten. I don't remember anyone getting seriously injured." A female student stated, "On one occasion, I was taken to the bathroom and given a spanking related to counting on my fingers, for not being able to perform an academic task. The restrooms at school were down underneath the building, down the stairs, around and back under. I got a spanking on my backside with my clothes on. It might have been with her hand. We went back up and back to class. Miss Murphy confirmed this incident, as outlined below.

When asked if she had spanked any children Miss Murphy volunteered an incident naming this same student. She stated, "I did spank one girl one time. I took her downstairs, where no one would see her. Her parents gave me permission. I think she was second grade. I believe I used my hand twice on her bottom. She cried, I hugged her and she went back upstairs and got her work done." Another student stated, "In those years spanking was not seen as negatively as today. I don't remember it being used excessively. I remember that on occasion it was used." Two students reported that Miss Murphy had students sit in the corner. One stated, "Miss Murphy would make kids sit in the corner, and they were not allowed to look out. I was very scared that I would have to sit there. One boy was put there and it scared me because he was one of the best behaved kids. At the time, I thought it was very unfair. I never did have to sit there. Miss Murphy was easily frustrated."

**Anger/Yelling at Students** Adult MKs variously describe Miss Murphy as follows: One MK stated that she created a general atmosphere of fear and intimidation in the classroom. Another student stated, "I think she did a fairly good job of teaching but she was very easily angered. She would yell but she never injured anyone. She had a reddish complexion so she would get really red in the face when she would yell. I don't remember her striking anyone." Another indicated, "She could get angry. The anger was expressed primarily by yelling. The volume would have scared us the most, I suppose. She certainly got angry at more than one of us. It was more a matter that she was angry, upset, and yelling at us. We had to be careful at times, when she would get angry, not wanting to antagonize an angry adult that you needed to get along with." Yet another stated, "I remember her as very strict and she had a temper but she was a good teacher". Another former student remembered a lot of yelling and screaming from the big room next door where Miss Murphy taught. Another former student reported, "She yelled a lot and stomped her feet a lot." Another former student shared, "She yelled at me once but apologized later. Her temper was on a short leash, but she was known for working long hours, people respected that. She was a single lady on the field and life was tough for her." Another student recalled, "If one child acted out, she would let them have it verbally." Another student reported, "When Miss Murphy got mad, she would turn red. She had a pale complexion. You could see the blood rise. She would shout before she would hit." Another stated, "It seemed it got better after I got older." Another student said, "She was grumpy and snappy at you. Some kids would be scared of her. When she got mad she would get red in the face and it would get distorted. I would think, 'Oh, what is going to happen next?'" Another said, "I remember one teacher, Miss Murphy, who asked too much of us, too strict, with us young boys wishing we were outside. I remember positive social interactions with her outside school." Another said, "Miss Murphy would get real mad. Every morning she would write on the board how she was doing anger wise, so we would know whether to push the limits or not. Sometimes she would smack her ruler on the desks. She had a reddish complexion so she would get really red in the face when she would yell. I don't remember her striking anyone. I remember I had to stand in the corner." Another stated, "She had a quick temper. If she liked you she was good to you and if she didn't she could be mean. She could get angry very quickly and it seemed to be directed at the same people if they didn't settle down as quickly as she wanted. Normal things kids do could set her off." Another reported, one boy stuttered a lot and she made it worse for him." One stated, "It was hard because she wanted you to do your best. I guess with her, I felt that she thought I could do more than I could. I remember her getting upset if I didn't do well on a test. I think she thought I was just doing enough to get by

Adults in the community variously describe Miss Murphy as follows: An adult

colleague said she was a controlling person. A former director's wife states that a family discussed with her how strict Miss Murphy was. She said, "I think they felt she was overly strict many times." Another fellow teacher stated, "She had an excellent relationship with the students. She knew their families and knew them by name. She called them into account when they needed it for behavior. She told them she expected them to be better." Another individual stated, "She was a single teacher and pretty opinionated, probably, strict in testing. Yes, she wasn't real warm or totally friendly at times. She did teach our kids and they did learn. She was a teacher who was demanding, fulfilled that role to teach the kids as best she knew." One counselor serving missionary families there at the time indicated that school was harsh and difficult for one student because of Miss Murphy. One parent said that she threatened to spank children outside of school hours when she would see them playing by their own homes. Another parent stated, "As parents we always knew there was a shortage of missionary teachers and we had the idea that if there are no teachers then as parents we would have to teach. I think there was a code of silence. We were short of teachers, so put up with it. The main thing I recall is her yelling and screaming." One student reports that one time Miss Murphy yelled at students in front of the visiting principal of the SIL Philippines schools, Mr. Paul Meisner. She reports that he just observed and did not intervene. Mr. Meisner stated, "The only time I heard of it (inappropriate behavior by teachers toward students) was involving Miss Murphy who was kind of over the edge of being harsh but I never witnessed it. By in large there was nothing outstanding and parents were supportive. I don't recall any particular parent that came to me with that concern." When asked if anyone reported that Miss Murphy would get angry and yell at students, he stated, "I wouldn't be surprised as it was Miss Murphy's personality. If they said so I would have believed it. She was firm and kids would think she meant business. She would be physically beside them when she affected discipline. Kids would think, 'whoa, she is meaning what she says.'" When asked, "Was Miss Murphy ever spoken to by anyone about inappropriate discipline of students, yelling at students, or any other interaction with students to your knowledge?" He stated, "Not to my knowledge." When asked if she lost her temper with students, Miss Murphy acknowledged that she did. When asked what she did when she was angry she reported, "I would yell, apologize and calm down and we would go on with it." When asked how often, she stated, "three to four times a year maybe." When asked, "Did you do anything to work on anger or yelling?" she responded, "Anger was and continues to be a problem for me. I've worked on managing it, read many articles on how to manage anger, and continue to pray for God's control. I have never hit any person in anger- instead, I yell and hit inanimate objects (like a desk). I can see where that would frighten a student, but, again, I have never hit a person while angry, and I have

assured students of that fact. My anger quickly dissipates and is over. I explained it to a class once with the illustration of a long fuse vs, a short fuse and that seemed to help them if I said, "My fuse is short today", they were better behaved." When asked, "Being a teacher, what do you expect would be the effect on kids if they were yelled at in the classroom?" she stated, "I think it would make it uncomfortable. I felt like they knew I loved them. I would apologize if it got out of hand. It was short-term, and I don't think they would feel afraid of it." How long are you talking about? "A minute." What would you have said with apology? "I'm sorry for the behavior', take a deep breath, and let's go on. I deeply regret any student feeling afraid of me or feeling threatened by me. I have not sensed that feeling from any of the students in my thirty plus years of teaching. I have many happy memories of working with students: in the classroom, on various school trips, on evening or weekend activities, and at community events.

**Pinching Students' Fingers/Arm in Desks** One student stated, "One time my arm was in my desk and she came and sat on the desk and pinched my arm in there. Of course all the kids hated her for that. Some called it abuse but I just thought she was a mean teacher. I don't think she was extreme. I feel sorry for Miss Murphy. She was a young single woman who came to serve the Lord and MKs. She got stuck with me. She made some mistakes with me. She tried to educate me and I didn't make things easy for her. I was convicted a number of years ago and the Lord prompted me to write her and apologize for the disrespect I gave and she responded back graciously. Of course she was in the wrong. I felt bad for her. She wasn't a fun teacher and she did things that made students dislike her." Another student corroborated this incident stating, "I recall an incident where another child lifted the top lid of his desk and she told the child to keep his hands out of the desk. He didn't and she came and sat on the desk. I was horrified because she was a large woman." Another student stated, "We were not allowed to get anything out of our desks once the class started. She would yell when we put our hands in our desk. So if I forgot my Bible in my desk, I would very discreetly try to reach and get it out. But if she caught us doing that, she would sit on the desk while our arms were still in it. Once I remember she lifted up her legs so her whole weight was on the kid's arm. The time it happened to me it really hurt. It seemed like a couple minutes, but maybe it might have been only thirty seconds long. But it seemed to last a long time, not just a few seconds. I remember the pain and shock." A third student relates his fingers being in his desk and getting sat on. "The pain was acute and I remember huge indentations. My knuckles were white." Miss Murphy, in response to the question of whether she ever pinched students' fingers their desks, stated, "I do remember gently pressing down on the desk top and catching fingers after telling a student numerous times to stop sneaking

candy out of the desk-but not so hard that marks were left or permanent damage done."

**Putting Masking Tape on Students' Mouths** One former student reported, "She also put masking tape on our mouths if she wanted us to stop talking so much." Another had a journal entry from her childhood where she wrote, "Peter had to have tape over his mouth."

Miss Murphy when asked if she used any other physical discipline stated, "I threatened to tape students' mouths shut, and stuff their mouths with a dirty sock, but I never did."

**Hitting Students with Rulers** One student stated, "All I remember from my first time with her is that she dragged me outside with her through the front door and she said stern words to me. I can't remember what she hit me with, but there was a ruler, which seemed to be quite a scary thing. The school was a place I didn't want to go back to.

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She wasn't a nice teacher, it was nice to be away from her. The fact that she was a strict disciplinarian and very unpredictable made us want to avoid her." Another former student reported, "She broke a ruler over me, only once. I remember that when she hit me with the ruler, I was in the big classroom, not the little one where the Kramers taught. They were little rulers, twelve inch rulers, wooden ones. She picked up our rulers off our desks to hit us with them. There was a yardstick on top of the blackboard, that didn't get used." Another student stated, "Sometimes she would smack her ruler on the desks. Another stated, "Miss Murphy had particular people who she picked on and others were her favorites." This individual named three students who got in trouble a lot, stating they were the main ones. A different student also reports being "hit by rulers on the hand and being put in the corner, often in the corner, when he was in first grade with Miss Murphy." A female student stated, "If she came up behind you and you were talking or doing something you would get a whack on the knuckles." Another student reported that once a child was hit hard enough that the student got swollen knuckles. Another student reported, "Miss Murphy smacked people. She used corporal punishment. Every time I can remember it, it was for something that the kids were being pretty annoying about. They hadn't done what they were told. She would get extremely frustrated and used a ruler to smack them. It was just, they were told to do something, they didn't do it, so they were naughty, and so they got it. Things like not doing your homework, refusing the answer. One time we were supposed to memorize a Bible verse, and

worked on it for a few weeks. Then two kids didn't say anything when she called on them to recite. They hadn't learned anything at all. So she grabbed the ruler and smacked them. It was the girl first, but then she broke the ruler on the boy. It was a foot-long ruler. There was a pile of them because we used them for our school work. We didn't have our own. We would grab one from the supply because there were so many grades mixed together. That one time, she did lose it on him and she broke the ruler on him. She very quickly walked away. The girl cried. The boy didn't. He was pretty tough." A different student reported a similar sounding incident: "The only thing I saw was physical abuse from an overworked teacher, Miss Murphy, with two students. She broke a meter stick over one of them." The student who was reported by others to have several rulers broken over her head by Miss Murphy stated, "No, she never hit me with the ruler." Another female student reported the following incident: "As far as I can remember, I was sitting at the teacher's desk with Miss Murphy; I believe I had a work sheet or some kind of math assignment that I was struggling with, didn't understand. I was counting on my fingers, but Miss Murphy told me not to do that and she gave me a single whack to my finger with a ruler. I was upset, I was crying. There was nothing else that happened. I think I was sent back to my desk. I was scared. There were other times I had to sit with her at her desk to perform whatever assignment or math task I was having trouble with. It was very intimidating." When asked what she was scared of, the student reported, "Just that something would happen because I couldn't do my work. This was the atmosphere in class, a certain level of fear if you couldn't complete your work, or were not paying attention. As a second grader, I was probably looking out of the window, thinking of playing on swings, or doing something else. The years that I had teachers I was not afraid of, I enjoyed school. I was always very afraid of Miss Murphy, to the point that I was fearful to walk past her house or to tell my parents about my fear of her because they were friends." This student's parents report, "Math wasn't a strong point for our daughter, so she counted on her fingers. And that was evidently when she got her fingers rapped. If a kid has a math problem, that kind of thing won't help them learn math. Miss Murphy and I were pretty good friends. Our daughter told us later that my friendship with Miss Murphy made it so she didn't say anything." One student reports, "I harbored some anger up through my adult years. There was a time if you had asked me this question several years ago I would have told you that if I had met her in a dark alley, if I were armed, I would have used it. I want to tell you that God has changed my heart. I wanted to speak to you about this. Whatever may have happened or didn't happen, what I experienced or anger I felt, the final outcome and experience for me has been the ability to forgive. It does not negate, it does not allow for irresponsibility, but I am free to forgive, and I don't harbor any anger. I find it providential that this has actually come

up in recent weeks here, because it was not that long ago I spoke to my husband, saying, 'I don't feel angry at her. I feel sorrow for my friends, specifically the ones who have been affected in much worse ways than I.' I also feel sorrow for this woman, who did not seem to understand what her role was in teaching children." Miss Murphy stated she doesn't remember hitting students with a ruler at all. "I can't even fathom doing that. It boggles my mind to think of several students saying that. I do not remember ever hitting a student with a ruler on head, knuckles, back anywhere."

**Squeezing Student's Neck, Drawing Blood** One student reported, "For a science experiment once, another student and I were shooting water and getting messy. Miss Murphy squeezed the back of my neck really hard with her fingernails till she drew blood." His sister related that he told her about this incident describing that they were flicking wet paintbrushes at each other at the sink. Miss Murphy dug her fingernails into the back of his neck and his neck bled. Another student related that he observed this incident. "I saw her grab him and put marks in his neck. She let him go, walked around a bit, felt bad. He was crying. She talked to him." When asked if she had ever squeezed a child's neck, drawing blood, Miss Murphy volunteered that she remembered taking the back of a student's neck with her fingers to get him to focus on his work but doesn't recall which student it was, and doesn't recall drawing blood. She stated, "My nails were never very long to pierce skin."

**Pulling Weeds in the Hot Sun, Being Put in Closed Room for Several Hours Without Water** Two parents stated, "We went to Miss Murphy on our son's part when it was overdone when she disciplined him [by having him] to dig sticker weeds or something in the school playground in the hot sun with no water, for some small misbehavior. I believe the teacher backed down when I said 'No, you're not going to make him do it or I'm going to come do it with him.' Another time he was going to be put in a room downstairs, a closed un-air conditioned room with no water for several hours. We said, 'No, you won't do that.' I think he came home and said he'd have to do this and we talked to her. This was when he was nine or ten. She had problems but she was also very kind in many ways. She made kids a bear cake for their birthday. This doesn't make up for abuse."

**Bathroom Rules/Wetting Pants** Rachel reports that Miss Murphy "wouldn't allow us to go the bathroom most times we asked, so just about all of us wet our pants at our desks, some of us much more often than others." Rachel states, "I remember the last time I wet my pants in the classroom. I was in grade five. I was late for a friend's birthday party. Because I wet my pants I had to stay longer at school. I got detention."

She didn't call it that. She just wouldn't let me go home." School records document that Miss Murphy did not teach at Bagabag during Rachel's fifth grade year. Rachel is definite that it was Miss Murphy. She clearly remembers what room she was in, where she was sitting, the desk she was sitting at facing the blackboard and on her right side was the door. School records document that Miss Murphy taught grades 3-5 during Rachel's sixth grade year and did not teach any sixth grade subjects. (See teacher list on earlier page.) This incident could have occurred only during Rachel's seventh grade year. One adult MK reports, "I remember wetting my pants in the big classroom (Miss Murphy's room), one of my most horrible memories. It was when I was six or seven, not a baby. Maybe there was a reason; like we had been told we could not go." One parent stated, "We knew she was not letting kids go to the toilet." Another adult MK stated, "I was a teacher's pet, including Miss Murphy's. Sometimes I was too shy to say I needed to go to the toilet, so I wet my pants in her class. I was just trying to hold it and didn't make it. Miss Murphy's reaction to me was 'oh, you better go home and change.'" Another states, "I can't remember if I didn't ask or if I asked and wasn't given permission, but I wet myself." A fourth MK stated, "I wet my pants quite a bit. I had some kind of a kidney problem back then that didn't get diagnosed until I was nine years old. So I was routinely wetting my pants in class. A lot of times I just couldn't wait. That is the only thing I don't like, I was repeatedly told I couldn't go to the washroom when I needed to go. That resulted in wet pants and stuff." Another MK's journal documents this. Another student reports "he said if he could make it through only one day without pissing his pants or stuttering, that would be very good. He had a stuttering problem and a bladder problem. So these things happened a lot." Another student reported that this student "had a bedwetting problem and he was teased about it and I felt bad for him because it was well known and he was teased about it." Another recalls "walking by this student's desk and saying 'you have water on your chair.' He was the class clown, perhaps trying to cover up his embarrassment." Another student reports seeing a fifth grade MK wet herself in Miss Murphy's class. An additional student states "I remember coming in and I gotta go, and asked after recess, and she would say 'you should have gone at recess', which only made us hate her more. Instead of trying to understand where we were coming from she reacted negatively." Another student stated, "She wouldn't let kids go to the bathroom as a form of punishment." Eight individuals when interviewed thought that Miss Murphy's rule regarding using the toilet was: you use it before school, at recess or during lunch. One student stated, "Sometimes she would let us go but usually she didn't. It wasn't even predictable. It was completely humiliating to have a growing puddle under your chair. And you got wet pants. It doesn't feel good after a while. It was completely humiliating. No way to avoid it unless we completely defied her

which we didn't do." A school administrator stated, "There would have been the practice of raising hands or being excused but I have no recall there was a rule that students couldn't be excused from class to go but it would not surprise me if Miss Murphy said suck it up until recess." Another teacher stated, "She did like rules. She liked order. I can imagine she had rules. She was an orderly type person." Miss Murphy reports, "Children never had to stay after school for wetting their pants. That's not anything! would ever do." When asked if any children wet their pants in her class she said "no." When asked about a specific student who reported this she stated, "I don't remember. If he said he wet his pants quite a bit, yes. He did have a bathroom problem. He didn't have to wait five minutes." When asked, "If he said he routinely wet his pants, would that ring true to you?" she replied, "Not that I was aware of." When asked if she told him he couldn't go to the bathroom, Miss Murphy stated, "No, we had a conversation with his parents, if he needed to go, he could go. It might have been that he had a problem before they told us. If they hadn't told us then I might have had him wait and he might have waited and wet his pants and not told me. I wasn't sure that it needed to go on for that long." When asked, "What happened if children had an accident and did not make it to the bathroom?" Miss Murphy stated, "I couldn't tell you who it was, one little girl wet her pants, and I couldn't tell you who it was. I would take her to library/office and contact parent to bring fresh clothes. At least that is what I remember?" When asked, "Do you recall a little boy wetting his pants?" She stated, "No. I am not coming up with anyone." She stated, "I don't want to trivialize reported feelings, but wetting pants and staying after school are normal occurrences in a school. They are not occurrences we want to have happen but still they do. Wet pants are handled as quickly and discreetly as possible; students normally had opportunity to tell their parents if they had to stay after school."

**Reliability, Credibility** Individuals interviewed, both MKs and adult members at the time, variously describe Rachel Thomas as sweet, compliant, quiet, withdrawn, shy, and respectful. One individual stated that she didn't hang out with the other kids as much but wanted companionship. Two adults referred to pictures they had of Rachel and that she had her face down in the picture which was representative of her being shy and uncertain. Others describe her as artistic and good at mosaics and crafts. Both adults and MKs stated Rachel is someone who is more likely to minimize things than exaggerate things and that she is not a person who makes a big deal of things that aren't. One person (pastor) said this about her recounting her experiences: "In the early days she literally would rather die than tell you. That is not a person who looks to stir up trouble for others." Another said, "As a child and as an adult she is someone who tells the truth." Those who know her well describe her as being "brutally honest; frank; she tells it like it is; she would call a spade a spade." Those

individuals who stated that Rachel had first reported what happened to them in the early 1990s stated that she has not changed the accounts since then, either about the people involved or the description of the events. Others said she is someone who doesn't want to talk about a lot of stuff. One stated, "When it comes out, it explodes out of her because she's introverted. Another said, "She doesn't seem to be someone who goes around saying stuff to be a sensationalist."

**Iowa and Texas Child Abuse Authorities** SIL contacted the Texas Child Abuse Hotline regarding this report. They said since Penny Murphy is living in Iowa the Iowa Child Abuse Hotline would need to be contacted to see if they would want to pursue this or not. If Penny Murphy were a Texas resident they would run a background check to see if there are any reports. They documented the call and will keep it on file. SIL also contacted the Iowa Child Abuse Hotline regarding this report. Iowa will not look at a situation after children have turned eighteen. Iowa does not have jurisdiction since this happened in the Philippines. They did not want the teacher's name or any details.

**SIL Definitions of Abuse** Child abuse is the treatment of a child under the age of 18, often in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power, which endangers or impairs the health or welfare of a child. SIL's definition includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and neglect.

**Physical Abuse** Physical abuse is any act that results in a non-accidental physical injury. Such acts may include, but are not limited to: hitting, slapping, punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, throwing, burning, choking, stabbing, holding under water, pulling hair, or holding against one's will; unreasonably severe corporal punishment or unjustified punishment; or excessive physical discipline done in anger; or any behavior that batters (physically injures) a child. There may be single or repeated incidents. Physical discipline by parents of their own children, such as spanking or paddling, is not considered abuse as long as it is reasonable, not done in anger, and causes no bodily injury to the child.

**Emotional Abuse** Emotional abuse is defined by a pattern of behavior over time' that impairs or risks impairing a child's functioning or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. It includes acts of commission and acts of omission. Acts of commission may include but are not limited to unreasonable restriction of movement, patterns of belittling, denigrating, ridiculing, yelling at (loud speech that harms by bringing emotional degradation), threatening, scaring, humiliating, shaming, scapegoating, blaming, derogatory name calling, publically singling out a child for negative treatment or exclusion, intimidating, using jokes as put-downs, sarcasm, discriminating against, continual disapproval, rejecting,

bullying, hazing', unpredictable responses, constant family discord and double message communication, or other non-physical forms of hostile or rejecting treatment, as well as withholding love, support, or guidance. Acts of omission may include but are not limited to the failure to provide a developmentally appropriate and supportive environment, including the availability of a primary attachment figure, so that the child can develop a stable and full range of emotional and social competencies commensurate with her or his personal potentials and in the context of the society in which the child dwells.

**Conclusion** The reports of the following behaviors were credible and corroborated with multiple students documenting each of the behaviors listed, with no indication of students seeking to make a false report: Yelling at students, pinching their arms in desks, putting masking tape over students' mouths, rapping students on the knuckles and head, pinching a student's neck enough to draw blood, and preventing students from using the bathroom so that they wet their pants in the classroom on multiple occasions. The behaviors identified meet SIL's definition of physical and emotional abuse. Sufficient information has been obtained and corroborated to conclude that SIL's physical and emotional abuse policies will be applied regarding behaviors engaged in by Miss Penny Murphy.

**Action Plan Administrative Steps** 1. Since Penny Murphy is no longer affiliated in any way with SIL a copy of the statement of findings will be retained in the SIL Child Safety Office file. 2. Extracts of this report are provided through standard procedure to the SIL Philippines, Director, Glenn Stallsmith, Wycliffe Australia, CEO, Barry Borneman, and Wycliffe USA, Child Safety Officer, Bob Musum, for the purpose of informing them and so that appropriate records can be changed to reflect this information. There is a distinction between one-time inappropriate behavior, which needs to be addressed to prevent recurrence, and repeated action, which meets the definition of emotional abuse. Harassing, exacting humiliating tasks as a form of initiation into a group, playing rough practical jokes upon. SIL's standard of reporting to appropriate civil authorities has been followed. In this case that has involved reporting to Child Protective Services in Texas, where SIL is incorporated and Iowa, where Penny Murphy now resides. 4. SIL will provide this report to the head pastor of the church Penny Murphy attends, following SIL's policy, so that appropriate accountability and safety considerations can be made. 5. SIL is highly committed to maintaining a safe, positive environment for children in our work. We now have in place child safety training for all staff to educate them regarding the reality and prevention of child abuse. We also have a code of conduct

for staff to follow to ensure professional, safe interaction with children in our effort to do as much as possible to prevent child abuse of any kind.

**Supportive Services** 1. This Statement of Findings is provided to Rachel Thomas and Penny Murphy, with each receiving their own copy. 2. SIL places a high priority on victims getting help to overcome the trauma of emotional and physical abuse. Supportive services including counseling resources and resources on abuse are offered to Rachel Thomas. When counseling services are already in place, SIL will be supportive of these services and offer other resources on abuse that may be helpful. 3. SIL recommends to Penny Murphy that she seek counseling from a qualified therapist (at her own expense) to help understand the nature of the trauma experienced by the victim(s) and overcome the underlying issues that led to these concerns. SIL is deeply saddened to have learned of this abuse that occurred when Rachel Thomas was a child within the organization and highly respects her for the difficult steps she has taken to report these experiences to us. We deeply regret the effects of these experiences while living in a community of believers committed to Christian ministry. SIL seeks to support her in her ongoing recovery from this trauma through the above mentioned counseling resources as an expression of our commitment to her well-being.

Sincerely,

**Sandra J. Would** Sandra L. Gould Chief Human Resource Officer SIL International