

National Committee for Professional Standards

ABN 35 339 924 339



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1st August 2016

Dear Safeguarding and Professional Standards Coordinators,

RE: CHILD PROTECTION SUNDAY 11 September 2016

The Australian Catholic Church's Child Protection Sunday again falls at the end of the national Child Protection Week campaign, stressing the importance of primary prevention to reduce child abuse and neglect in Australia. The focus this year is:

'Stronger Communities, Safer Children'

So how do we, the Catholic Church, play our part in creating stronger communities where we work together to ensure our children are kept safe?

The images of child sexual abuse have continued to affect our entire community and diminish the trust some have placed in our Church. That trust has been further eroded when the institution has failed to appropriately respond to the victim's needs.

Yet the Catholic Church is in unique position to offer much within this focus of creating stronger communities, safer Children. One such example can be seen in Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, in which families and consequently communities are encouraged through love, strengthened by the virtues of generosity, commitment, fidelity and patience to become stronger more capable and more resilient. Stronger families and Church communities can then help to keep our children safe.

As the Royal Commission's February 2017 "Catholic Wrap Up" approaches, Child Protection Week, and in particular Child Protection Sunday provides a wonderful opportunity to highlight the steps we have taken to make children safer through our communities; at home, in our churches, schools and Catholic agencies.

As we have done in previous years we propose that you raise awareness of your local diocesan policies, procedures, initiatives and recent training in this important area, and specifically during Child Protection week publicise them widely on noticeboards, in bulletins, newsletters and websites.

Additionally, please find attached some resources that you may also choose to use during Child Protection Week or on Child Protection Sunday.

A Committee of the Australian Catholic Bishops & Catholic Religious Australia.

Attachments include:

1. Suggested Prayers of the Faithful for Sunday 11 September
2. Homily Notes for Sunday 11 September
3. A prayer for stronger communities, safer children
4. Newsletter abstract
5. Stronger Communities, safer children Bookmarks
6. Brochures:
 - i. Use Words that Help not hurt! (NAPCAN)
 - ii. When a child feels sad (NAPCAN)
 - iii. Being a Dad (NAPCAN)
 - iv. Domestic Violence Hurts Children Too (NAPCAN)
7. Posters for display in Churches, schools and other places of ministry.

Due to email size limitation, we have only attached resources 1 – 5, however all the resources can be found in the Dropbox. Please Ctrl+Click to follow the link

[Child Protection Sunday 2016 Resources](#)

If the click on link to the material is not working the actual link is.

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/7umtvgnlib3nhqx/AABBIfojImqL0Yd5VNIytJiwa?dl=0>

You may choose to print some of the above or you may make them available on your own websites. Alternatively, you may choose to provide links in your newsletters or websites. Some of these and additional resources maybe found at <http://napcan.org.au/resource-hub/>

A similar letter will be emailed to Bishops, Congregational Leaders and Catholic Education Offices. We hope that these materials will assist you in promoting Child Protection Sunday within your Diocese and encourage ‘Stronger Communities, Safer Children’.

Please feel free to contact the National Office for Professional Standards on (02) 9669 6218 with any queries and for any assistance.

With best wishes,

Mrs Narelle McMahon and Mr Tom Bagot
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