



MEDIA RELEASE

Children still in prisons: Australia's shame

The Child Abuse Prevention Service (CAPS) is appalled by the report broadcast on Monday's Four Corners program that children as young as 10 are being incarcerated in maximum security watch houses in the direst of circumstances, and as a consequence, are placed in significant danger.

CAPS is particularly alarmed by the brutally draconian measures that had been implemented by facility staff to punish children. The awful treatment of children that we witnessed tonight strips our most vulnerable of their dignity and safety. Our society should be an international exemplar and have the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of all systemic responses that involve children and young people.

CAPS hopes that the alarming footage contained in the report serves as a wake up call for the Queensland Government and the rest of Australia to end the incarceration of children in maximum security facilities immediately. CAPS commends the tireless efforts of Queensland Public Guardian, Natalie Siegel-Brown, in petitioning the government to bring children out of these facilities as a priority.

New CAPS CEO Tracy McLeod Howe said that "children in these circumstances have already experienced significant trauma and require specialist support and compassion, not punitive interventions".

McLeod Howe further said "We need to listen to our most vulnerable and give them a voice regarding the types of approaches that are needed to achieve more empowering and effective outcomes, both for our children and the broader community".

About CAPS

Established in 1973, the Child Abuse Prevention Service (CAPS) is the oldest child abuse prevention organisation in Australia. We are a non-government, non-religious charitable organisation that works with vulnerable children and people across Australia to prevent child maltreatment in all its forms, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. We provide evidence-based educational programs that build well-being, emotional resiliency and create the strong family environments needed to ensure that children are safe, supported, and loved. Our staff are experienced educational psychologists that are well-equipped to deliver programs designed to increase protective behaviours in children and forever break the cycle of abuse.

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