



MEDIA RELEASE

Reporting of Abuse in the Catholic Church

The Child Abuse Prevention Service (CAPS) strongly supports the recent decree issued by Pope Francis requiring clergy to promptly report all allegations of sexual abuse and for dioceses around the world to establish confidential abuse reporting systems that include protections for whistleblowers.

Though these laws should have been made a very long time ago, CAPS applauds this new direction and hopes that it signifies a much needed cultural shift in how the Catholic Church responds to allegations of abuse committed by clergy.

As the oldest child abuse prevention organisation in Australia, CAPS has long been aware of the harrowing impacts that occur when allegations of child sexual abuse are ignored or are not handled by institutions in a serious and compassionate manner.

New CAPS CEO Tracy McLeod Howe said that “We as a society need to protect the lives of our most vulnerable as the highest priority. The potential damage to the reputation of powerful people or institutions is nothing compared to the devastation that happens when victims of abuse are ignored or disbelieved”.

Examining how all areas of society need to work together to protect our children will be a key topic to be discussed at the CAPS Safe Children Conference in Sydney on 22 October 2019. The annual event provides the platform for the national conversation on child protection matters, ensuring that the issue receives the attention it deserves long after the conclusion of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

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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