



Sisters of Saint Joseph
of the Sacred Heart

THEME - NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION WEEK 2023

National Child Protection Week: 3 – 9 September 2023

Australia observes National Child Protection Week each September, as part of a nationwide initiative to protect children from abuse and neglect. National Child Protection week seeks to engage and empower all Australians to understand they have a part to play in keeping our children and young people safe.



The National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) aims to raise the Australian community's awareness of child abuse and neglect and to have a greater understanding and awareness of the complexity of such. No longer is it accepted to be ignorant of the issues, rather, we all must collectively take responsibility for how we can help ensure children are safe and protected.

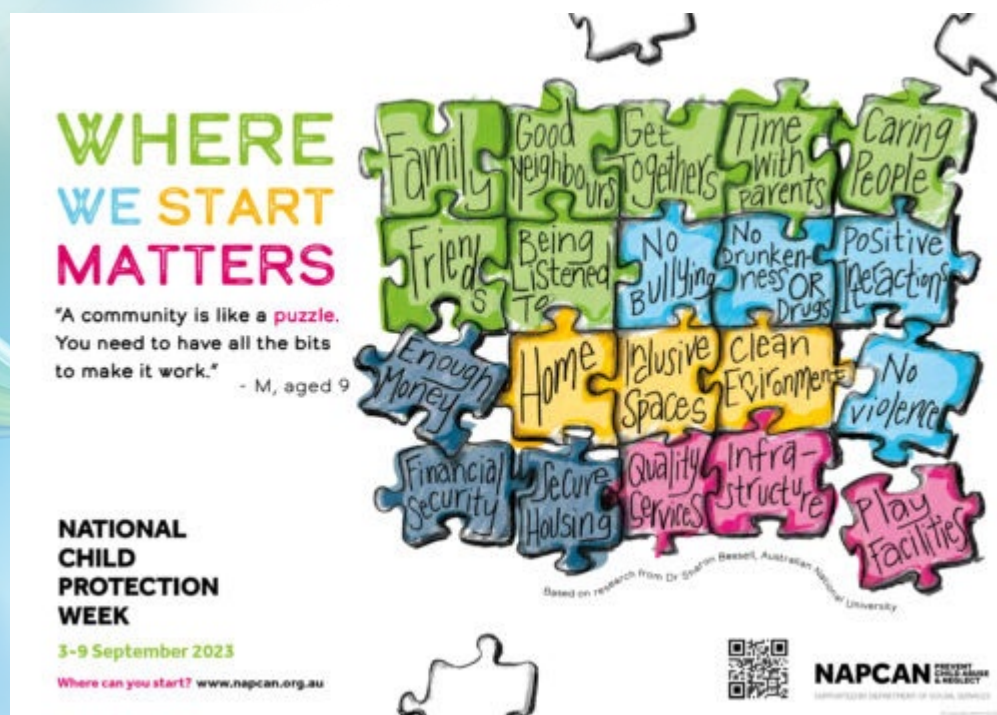
In 2023, the message that 'Every child in every community needs a fair go' will be complemented with the theme '**Where we start matters.**'

Where we start our lives in terms of where we live, the resources available to us, and the opportunities presented to us, make a significant difference to our life outcomes.

Where we start as decision makers in addressing large complex policy problems such as child abuse and neglect, also has a significant personal, social, and economic outcome.

Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart (SOSJ) again pledges support for National Child Protection Week on NAPCAN's website. You can click [here](#) to view our pledge. *(note to Comm's team: When I go onto the NCPW – it appears that our 2022 is on there. Could you please upload SOSJ's support to NAPCAN's website with the 2023 wording (different theme between the years). I sent an email on 10/07/2023, with requests regarding our 2023 pledge wording and email banner for NCPW.)*

The below poster is just one of NAPCAN's themed posters for the 2023 campaign. NAPCAN have a range of resources, and events planned to celebrate National Child Protection Week, These can be accessed on their website or by clicking [here](#).



NAPCAN shares some great ideas on how Religious Communities can play their part to protect and care for children and young people in our community. Some of these ideas include:

- Be a positive role model. Children and young people learn from the people that they spend time with, so make your influence positive.
- Become informed on the indicators and risks of child abuse and neglect as well as preventative measures.
- Develop means for communication channels, such as newsletters.
- Develop child related policies and procedures which promote wellbeing and are consistent with state / territory mandatory reporting legislation. A code of conduct for working with children and your people is another practical tool for promoting clear and consistent roles and behaviours.
- Ensure that all who work with children and young people, have a Working With Children Check.

The wonderful news is that Sisters of Saint Joseph (SOSJ), have already implemented these above ideas.

- ✓ The Adult and Child Safeguarding Commitment Statement reflects principles of care and respect and dignity for all. The SOSJ Adult and Child Safeguarding Commitment Statement is on display within our buildings, centres and museums and is also publicly available on the SOSJ website, under the 'Safeguarding' pod.
- ✓ Our mandatory Safeguarding training informs personnel of the indicators and risk of child abuse and preventative measures.
- ✓ Our safeguarding newsletters are widely circulated and available for all to read on the SOSJ website, under the 'Safeguarding' pod.
- ✓ The SOSJ Safeguarding framework includes policies and procedures and a Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct. We are so pleased that our personnel, volunteers, and all Sisters, have

signed their acknowledgement and commitment to the Code of Conduct. These documents can also be found on the SOSJ website, under the 'Safeguarding' pod.

These measures aim to increase our awareness of child abuse and neglect and work to prevent such harm from occurring in the future.

The official launch of National Child Protection Week 2023 shall be delivered by the Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) and Her Excellency, Mrs Linda Hurley. The launch will include a keynote address by National Children's Commissioner, Professor Ben Mathews who will provide insight into the findings of the Australian Child Maltreatment Study. It will be a privilege to hear their insights during this webinar and you are encouraged to register for this event, which is scheduled on Monday 4 September 2023, 10am – 11:30am.

Later that day (Monday 4 September 2023, 3pm), you can join in for another webinar titled 'Let's listen deeply to what First Nations can teach us about child wellbeing.' This is sure to be an insightful webinar led by Professor Judy Atkinson – Jiman & Bundjalung woman, and Kylie Captain – Gamilaroi woman. You can register for these webinars, as well as any of the other weeklong series of free webinars, by clicking [here](#).

The Australian Catholic Church observes 'Safeguarding Sunday' (previously called 'Child Protection Sunday') on the second Sunday in September each year. Safeguarding Sunday coincides with National Child Protection Week and falls on Sunday 10 September 2022.

Safeguarding Sunday seeks to acknowledge the immense damage caused by the sexual abuse of children, including by priests, religious and lay people within the Catholic contexts. It makes a commitment to the practices and protocols that create and maintain safe environments for all people, especially children and other people who are at risk. It invites people to pray for those harmed by abuse directly and indirectly.