



NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION WEEK
5 - 11 September 2021



National Child Protection Week begins on Sunday 5 September 2021, running from 5 **September – 11 September** with the Catholic Church in Australia marking **Safeguarding Sunday** (formerly Child Protection Sunday) on **12 September 2021**. Safeguarding Sunday seeks to recognise and reconcile the immense harm caused by the sexual abuse of children and adults at risk by personnel associated with the Catholic Church (Australian Catholic Bishops Office, 2021).

The 2021 National Child Protection Week theme is '**Every child, in every community, needs a fair go.**' This theme seeks to highlight the bigger picture in addressing child abuse and neglect, particularly the role of family and community in ensuring the health and wellbeing of youth. To treat all of Australia's children fairly, we need to make sure every family and community has what kids need to thrive and be healthy.

A key objective of National Child Protection Week is raising awareness and creating conversations around child safety within our community. The Catholic Diocese of Wollongong encourages you to share the following information and resources with your parish community to engage them in these conversations. This could be through your parish bulletin, website, email communications, or any other avenues that you think are appropriate.

Why Child Protection Week is important

The week aims to raise the profile of child protection and highlight the community's role in ensuring the safety of children and young people. It is also an opportunity to recognise all the good work that is being undertaken by workers and volunteers in creating and maintaining child safe environments for all children and young people who engage with parishes, ministries, schools, welfare services and activities in the diocese.

Getting children involved

A fundamental factor in Child Protection Week is understanding the importance of involving children in this discussion, with a particular focus on understanding from their point of view as to how we as a community can assist in keeping them safe. This allows children and young people to be heard and assists them to develop a healthy understanding of what is acceptable and what they can do if feeling unsafe.

To support engagement with children and young people in your community, NAPCAN has generated interactive activities which can be shared and completed by youth and their families:

- NAPCAN Children's Art Activity, which includes 'talking points' to get you started on how to talk to children about their protection: (https://www.napcan.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/NCPW2021_ArtCompProposal_FINAL_2.pdf)
- NAPCAN Children's Voices activity (<https://www.napcan.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Childrens-Voices-Activity-2018.pdf>)

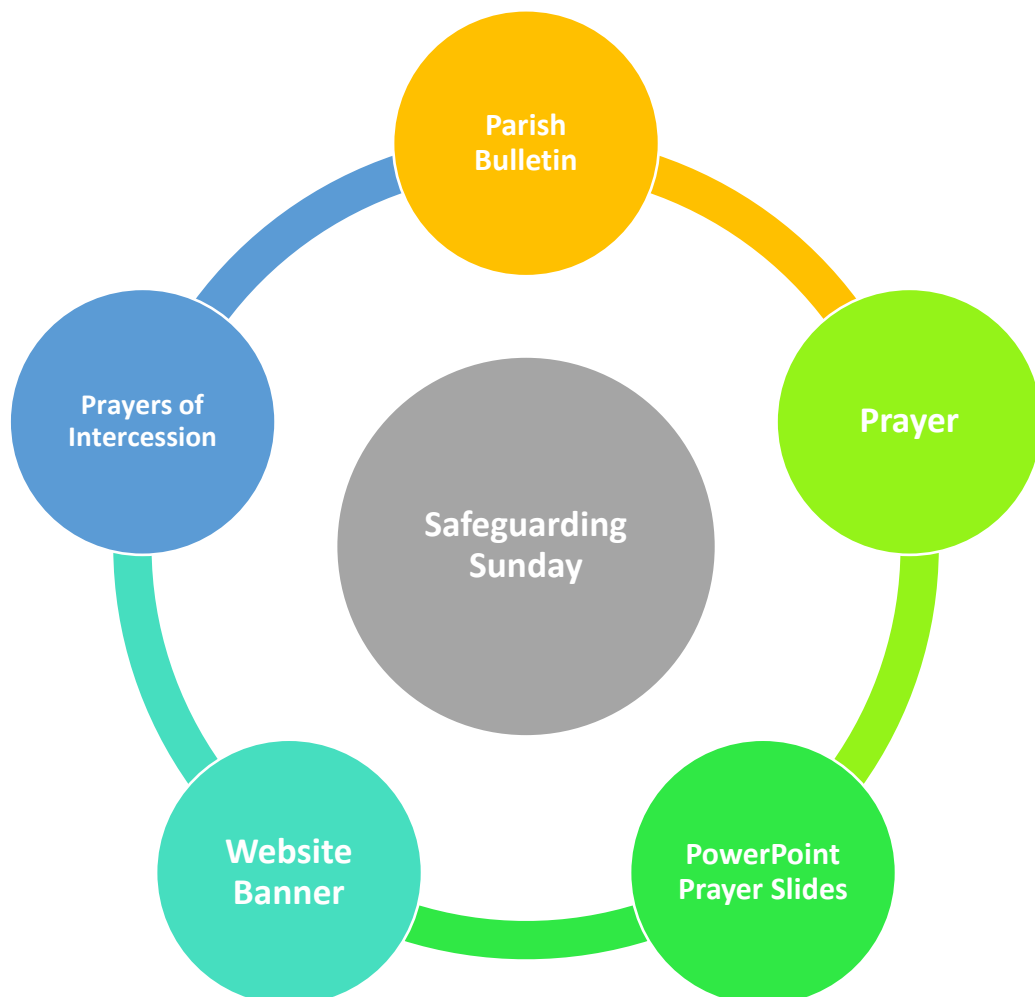


Involving the Parish and Community

Creating a context where the safety of children and young people can be discussed includes inviting our parishioners, the community, and parents into the conversation with us. A great way for us as a diocese to celebrate and promote the importance of Child Protection Week is by voicing the message within our parishes and communities. We ask that you consider including the message as part of Mass throughout the week and through Parish Bulletins.

The Australian Catholic Bishops Council (ACBC) has provided several resources found on their website: <https://www.catholic.org.au/safeguarding-sunday>.

Click on each icon below to access the resources provided by the ACBC.



When sharing the message of Child Protection Week - **‘Every child, in every community, needs a fair go** – we ask that you reflect and consider the following:

Providing information to our parishioners and community about what the week/day is about.

We have included resources throughout and below for you to share.



Promoting an understanding that builds connected communities which foster the safety of children is a job for all of us

How can we all play our part? E.g., by being supportive of parents rather than judging, by getting involved in your local community, by taking time out to engage with children and to believe them, advocating for policies that give families the support they need. If your parish is undertaking any initiatives that assist building connected communities, this is a great opportunity to promote further parishioner involvement in these initiatives, particularly those that have been created to support people during these challenging COVID-19 times.



Protecting children from abuse

This is a task for everyone in the community to get involved and act upon. We can all look out for children, believe them, speak up if something is unsafe, know the signs and risks for abuse, educate ourselves and our staff about how to create child safe organisations, have conversations with children and families about safety.

RESOURCES:

- Reporting a Child at Risk: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/families/Protecting-kids/reporting-child-at-risk>
- What is Child Abuse and Neglect? <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/families/Protecting-kids/reporting-child-at-risk/harm-and-neglect>
- Facts sheets in relation to reportable conduct: <https://www.ocg.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/reportable-conduct-scheme/fact-sheets> Principals for a Child Safe Organisation
https://www.ocg.nsw.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/838/ChildSafePrinciples_web.pdf.aspx?Embed=Y

Further Developing our Understanding of Child Protection

To further your engagement with National Child Protection week there are several professional development opportunities and webinars to participate in, click each box below:

NAPCAN

- NAPCAN will be opening this week with a live-streamed official launch by the Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) and Her Excellency, Mrs Linda Hurley on the 6 September. This will be followed by a keynote address by Anne Hollonds, National Children's Commissioner.

- National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect Webinar Details:**

- Mon, Sep 6, 2021 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM AEST

- Registration and Information:

- <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/4124988712372206608>

OCG

- The NSW Children's Guardian Janet Schorer will host a panel discussion on this year's theme and will be joined by speakers from Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC), Multicultural Youth Affairs Network (MYAN) and Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA).

- Office of the Children's Guardian Webinar Details:**

- Thur, Sep 9, 2021 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM AEST

- Registration and Information:

- <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/1395083859996471056>

NAPCAN also have a full week of learning opportunities for the general community, teachers, parents and more, please see the full list here: <https://www.napcan.org.au/ncpw-webinars-2021/>

Additional Resources:

- NAPCAN Brochures: <https://www.napcan.org.au/napcan-brochures/>
- Child Protection Week Posters/Tip Sheets <https://www.napcan.org.au/posters-and-tip-sheets/>
- It is also important for children to understand their rights as individuals, the UN has generated a 'simplified' version of rights for youth: <https://www.unicef.org.au/upload/unicef/media/unicef-simplified-convention-child-rights.pdf>
- Student Safety and Wellbeing in Catholic Education: <https://www.dow.catholic.edu.au/safety-and-wellbeing/child-protection/>
- Safeguarding in the Diocese of Wollongong: <https://www.dow.org.au/safeguarding/>
- Family services within CatholicCare: <https://www.catholiccare.dow.org.au/services-and-programs/family/>