



## National Child Protection Week 2010

When we know 33,000 children are abused each year, it's everyone's business

Sunday 5 – Saturday 11 September 2010

NAPCAN is a leading advocate for the prevention of child abuse and neglect. NAPCAN's mission is to prevent child abuse and neglect before it starts and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all Australia's children. NAPCAN does this by influencing public policy, building community awareness and driving behaviour change (NAPCAN Prevention First).

NAPCAN works with researchers, professionals, government, business, the media and committed individuals to bring about this change. NAPCAN also works directly with children and young people, conducting innovative programs to strengthen protective behaviours and build resilience and life skills. NAPCAN also works in local communities building inclusive networks and strengthening local support of children and families. For further information, go to:

[www.napcan.org.au](http://www.napcan.org.au)

### 'What can I do to prevent child abuse and neglect' – Tips'

If you think a child has been abused or neglected, you must ring your local child protection authority or the police. But in order to help prevent getting to a tragic situation in the first place just like in **Polly and Me** there are lots of things you can do to help protect children. The following tips are not definitive or exhaustive, but are a good start.

#### Parents and relatives: look out for children!

1. Teach all the children in your family how to be safe with people. Learn about child abuse and neglect and the warning signs.
2. Listen to, reassure and believe children. Children who have experienced abuse may try to tell an adult several times before somebody hears them. If you're worried about a child in your family, there are lots of things you can do.
3. Reach out to help parents of young children in your extended family - parents need all the support they can get. Let them know that it is okay to ask for help. Parenting is hard and all parents will benefit from help at times.

#### Neighbours: take the time!

1. Inform yourself about child abuse and neglect and ways you can help protect children in your neighbourhood (e.g. notice the signs of stress in your neighbours and lend a hand if you can).
2. Take the time to get to know the families in your street so that families can give one another support to cope with the stresses of parenting.
3. If you're worried about a child, don't stay silent, do something.



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### **Local communities: keep building a child-friendly Australia!**

1. Community organisations - offer practical assistance to families in the neighborhood and check that everything you do is parent-friendly (e.g. flexible hours, offering child care, helping with transport).
2. Local councils – provide services for children (e.g. parks, libraries, public toilets, safe streets, parent-friendly parking, safe bike paths, cultural and social events such as family fun days or sports carnivals) and provide resources for parents (e.g. playgroup and parenting courses).
3. Schools - be a community hub that offers learning environments and support for parents as well as children.

### **Policy makers: face the challenge of prevention!**

1. Ensure there are child and family health nurses for home visits to all Australian families with a new baby.
2. Introduce measures to reduce the level of parental alcohol abuse.
3. Increase parent education and family support services in areas where there is a high level of child abuse and neglect.

### **Media: help spread the word!**

1. Help spread the word that when we know 33,000 children are abused every year, it's everyone's business. Publish these NAPCAN tips.
2. Digital media industry: partner with child abuse prevention experts to keep all kids smart online and safe offline
3. Help change the focus to prevention, not just child rescue. Interview leading child abuse prevention experts so that we have a more informed public debate on prevention.

### **Business: play your part to support families!**

1. Have flexible work hours and job share available to staff who are parents, and make it an attractive option.
2. Partner with local community organisations (e.g. sponsor kids' sporting activities).
3. Be family-friendly. Provide a play area in your shop/business, and baby change facilities, and welcome children. Do not stock junk food on low shelves where children can reach it.

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