

campaign

# JOIN US TO HELP STOP CHILD ABUSE



**O**ur lives and those of our children are inextricably linked to other people's children. Our police, our doctors, our criminals are all someone's son or daughter. If left untreated, today's abused child may be tomorrow's homeless youth, drug addict or abuser, so child abuse and neglect is a problem that affects us all.

The issues surrounding the question of why abuse occurs are complex, but that is no reason to shy away from the challenge of finding a solution. This month, *marie claire* launches its campaign *Child Abuse: Stopping It Starts With Us*. Our aim is to raise awareness about the problem of abuse and empower people to make a difference. It's a campaign of which we can all take ownership.

Over the next three months, both in the magazine and on our campaign website, [www.stopit.com.au](http://www.stopit.com.au), we will outline ways in which you can become part of the solution to the problem and bring you real-life stories from people who have survived abuse or neglect and are breaking the cycle.

We are also urging our readers, their friends, relatives and colleagues, to take the first step in helping to stop child abuse by signing our pledge, which appears below and on our website. By taking this step, you will

be committing yourselves to doing everything you can to keep our children safe.

You can also join *marie claire*'s call for the appointment of an Australian Commissioner for Children and Young People to act as an advocate for children at a national level. While it's good that there is now a Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Larry Anthony MP, we feel our children deserve an independent statutory authority, outside government, to speak on their behalf and ensure their welfare stays at the forefront of the public agenda.

You can also make a difference by volunteering your time to an organisation dedicated to the prevention of child abuse, such as NAPCAN (National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect). Call (02) 9211 0224 to learn more about volunteering in your state. The YWCA's national Big Sister Big Brother program wants mentors for children at risk. For information, call 1800 222 776. Kids Help Line also needs volunteers to help raise money for its nationwide counselling service. Call (02) 9415 4011 for details.

Visit [www.stopit.com.au](http://www.stopit.com.au) for the numbers of other worthy organisations that need your help, and for information on the simple, everyday ways in which you can make a difference and help stop child abuse and neglect.

## IF YOU ARE CONCERNED THAT A CHILD IS BEING ABUSED ...

Talk about your worries with someone you trust, for example a friend, your local doctor, a school welfare counsellor, or a social worker at your local council. Think about the steps you can take. Develop a plan and act on it. Children rely on adults to help protect them. Make sure that whatever you do, you don't place yourself or the child in any further danger.

You can also talk anonymously with the government service in your state: **ACT** Family Services Office, (02) 6207 1069 **NSW** Child Protection and Family Crisis Service, 1800 066 777 **NT** Crisis Line, 1800 019 116 **Qld** Dept of Families, (07) 3235 9999; 1800 177 135 (for callers outside the metropolitan area) **SA** Child Abuse Report Line, 13 14 78 **Tas** Child and Family Services Line, 1800 001 219 **Vic** Child Protection Crisis Line, 13 12 78 **WA** Crisis Care Unit, (08) 9223 1111 (for callers in Perth); 1800 199 008 (for callers outside Perth). Young people can call Kids Help Line on 1800 551 800.

## SIGN OUR PLEDGE

**"I PLEDGE TO DO ALL I CAN TO HELP STOP CHILD ABUSE"**

Signed:.....

Name (please print):.....

Address:.....

tick here

I support *marie claire*'s call for the appointment of an Australian Commissioner for Children and Young People to act as an independent advocate for all children.

**SEND THIS PETITION TO:** *marie claire* Stop Child Abuse Campaign, PO Box 1252, Sydney, NSW 2001. We'll forward the forms to the Federal Government.