

Safeguarding children is a shared duty

Working together to protect children and create child safe cultures will be the focus of a workshop hosted by the Australian Catholic University (ACU) in Melbourne this Wednesday 27 September.

'Safeguarding Children: Leading Change' is an opportunity for those involved in child protection in Catholic organisations to share research, learnings and practice.

ACU's Institute of Child Protection Studies (ICPS) will present latest evidence and research.

ICPS Director Professor Daryl Higgins said over the last four years the Institute had worked closely with the research program of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and had forged partnerships with the Royal Commission and other academic institutions to deliver new and valuable insights about children's safety in institutions.

"This work demonstrates ACU's continuing commitment to taking a leadership role in the community to keep children safe and protected from harm," Professor Higgins said.

Catholic Professional Standards Limited (CPSL) Chief Executive Officer Sheree Limbrick said that bringing professionals together to share insights and research was valuable in taking the next steps.

"CPSL is committed to creating an environment that ensures the safety and protection of children and vulnerable people. This workshop provides a unique opportunity for delegates from dioceses, congregations, agencies and schools from across Australia to meet and share insights and identify areas of strength and capacity to support safe cultures," Ms Limbrick said.

Presenters will share their experience through case studies, including National Committee for Professional Standards Executive Officer Sister Annette Cunliffe, and Protection and Prevention Officer Tom Bagot; Catholic Education Melbourne Team Leader Student Wellbeing Unit Dr Lina De Paolo and Senior Project Lead – Child Safety Student Wellbeing Unit Elina Raso; and YMCA Australia Executive Manager Governance and Child Safety Olivia Brown.

Professor Higgins and ICPS Senior Research Fellow Dr Tim Moore will lead ICPS presentations.

"We will encourage new collaborative approaches to improving child safety within the Catholic community, and support services to take the valuable work of ICPS and ACU into the future," Professor Higgins said.

ACU's Institute of Child Protection Studies was established in 2005 and aims to enhance outcomes for children, young people and families through quality research, evaluation, training and community education. Research strengths include promoting children's participation, strengthening service systems and informing practice, and supporting child-safe communities.

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