



18 November 2021:

European Day for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse

The European Women's Network against Sexual Violence marks 18 November: European Day for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, by putting in focus the child sexual abuse in the child's circle of trust, in accordance with the Council of Europe 2021 edition. Education about the theme of sexual violence against children is an imperative if we all together want to prevent and stop child sexual abuse.

Therefore the European Women's Network against Sexual Violence **calls for action of every parent, every guardian to a child, every professional in kindergartens and schools - to learn on risks, warning signs, sexual trauma in children, criteria the child uses to identify a trusted supportive adult as well as to learn what healing resources are where a child can receive help with confidence.** We call for action of **media professionals to report ethically** on the topic as a whole and, in particular, on cases of child survivors of sexual abuse. We call for action of **policy makers and decision makers, including parliamentarians, to maintain the highest place on public agenda for the prevention of sexual abuse and protection of children from sexual abuse.** **We are all responsible to use our authority to speak out on sexual abuse, to trust every child and leave the deeds behind that will protect children.**

Act with and for children! Learn that the life shows the largest prevalence of sexual abuse of children is in their circle of trust and speak today and tomorrow with one child you know! Teach a child how to recognize sexual abuse, that offender could be also their closest person, and how to react for protection. **Convey a key message of safety and keep your word if a child is hurt.**

In the times of COVID-19 pandemic when the home became even less safe place for a child and in the times when clerical and ultra-right wing threaten the won freedoms for women and produce violence against migrants and other marginalized social groups - as international community, national and local communities - each of us owns the power to act with and for children and we are all responsible to form a reliable circle of trust for a child. Because **every child counts. Every child is equally worthwhile.**

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Governing Board member of the European Women's Network against Sexual Violence