

Day for Prevention of Child Abuse

Child abuse, especially sexual abuse, is a universal and alarming problem.

Together, let us create a culture of prevention. Today, November 19 is World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse. Increased attention and efficient protection skills and prevention measures are necessary at family-, local-, national- and international level. After a long tradition of silence, sexual child abuse is being more and more denounced and becoming a public and political topic. Alerting Governments and civil society organizations to play a more active role in the promotion of and respect for the rights of the child, and contribute to the prevention of child abuse, Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF) launched in 2000 the World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse, a Day to be commemorated every 19 November in synergy with the anniversary of the International Day for the rights of the child (20 November) which has as its objective to be a rallying point around the issue of child abuse and the need for urgent effective prevention programs. Why do we need a World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse? Every year over 1 million children are pulled into the sex trade. Almost daily we hear of new child abuses, and even employees of respected institutions have been found to be involved in sexual abuse. It is clear that an intelligent and effective approach to this problem consists in increasing prevention measures and protective skills, raising public awareness and encouraging denunciation of abuse. What difference does the World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse make? In 2001, 150 NGOs joined an international coalition to mark the Day with public awareness campaigns and prevention education. More than 100 organizations sent reports of local and national events organized on 19 November. They are part of an emerging movement for the creation of a culture of prevention. The Republic of Costa Rica is the first country that declared by Presidential Decree 19 November a National Day.