

Media Release

Sunday 14 September 2025

Silent march winds through Wellington's waterfront to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation

The Saint Nicholas Children's Trust held their third march, this time in Wellington on Saturday, where over 30 masked supporters walked along the waterfront to raise awareness about child sexual exploitation.

The Saint Nicholas Children's Trust was founded by senior health leader Angela Francis to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation and empower Kiwi communities to take action.

[Research released in July by ECPAT NZ](#) reveals how organised, covert, and sustained sexual exploitation of children is happening in New Zealand. It noted how young people are disproportionately at risk, but there is little general awareness of the reality of the situation or pathways to help safeguard against it.

Since launching in early 2025, the Trust has conducted events, including marches in Nelson (where the charity is based) and Christchurch, which have been attended by MPs, mayors and other leaders invested in this important issue.

Now the movement has come to Wellington.

Gathering at Te Papa at 10am Saturday morning, supporters donned masks to represent children whose voices are silenced by sexual abuse. They walked from Te Papa, finishing at Dockside Café, where participants joined in conversation about the issue.

"The reality is stark – millions of children globally are believed to be victims of sexual exploitation each year," said Angela Francis.

"This is not a problem we can ignore. It happens here in New Zealand too. Our mission is to bring this issue out of the shadows and equip Kiwis with the knowledge and tools to help prevent it. The turnout in Wellington shows how much Kiwis care about protecting vulnerable children, and that gives us hope."

Also in attendance was Wellington Mayoral Candidate Hon Andrew Little and Labour MP for Ōhāriu Greg O'Connor.

Raising awareness of child sexual exploitation is not just the responsibility of central government – local government also has a role to play," Little said.

O'Connor shared: "During my years as a police detective, it was investigating child sex offending which left the greatest impression on me, especially what I consider the theft of the innocence of children. Any efforts to help prevent child sex exploitation deserves to be encouraged".

Further details about the Saint Nicholas Children's Trust are available at www.snctrust.org.

ENDS

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**Saint Nicholas
Children's Trust**
raising awareness of child sexual exploitation

