

Media statement

30 August 2019

Protecting children is everyone's business

Did you know more than 200,000 Australian kids each year experience harm or neglect or are at risk of harm or neglect? That's enough children to fill the Brisbane Entertainment Centre more than 15 times.

During **Child Protection Week (2-6 September)**, Laura Easterbrook, Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS) Clinical Nurse Consultant, Child Protection Liaison Unit, said to tackle such a wide spread problem meant the community had to work together to better protect children.

Ms Easterbrook said: "Whether you are a carer, grandparent, teacher or neighbour, we can all work together and play our part to keep children safe.

"We can teach children that we all have the right to feel safe all the time. We can talk with someone about anything, even if it feels awful or small. If children do not feel safe they should tell, tell and tell again," she said.

"As parents or carers, open communication, listening and being aware of the signs of child abuse and neglect is important. We need to hear our children and seek advice if they speak out about abuse.

"Children today are experiencing different challenges we did not have when we were young. The internet and technology mean they have many new opportunities for learning and expressing themselves, although it also exposes them to new risk such as viewing inappropriate material, grooming and cyber bullying," Ms Easterbrook said.

"Being a carer is tough, it's important to ask for support when needed. We are lucky to have plenty of useful resources and services on the Sunshine Coast we can tap into.

"And if you do see a family facing challenges it is important they get help as soon as possible before problems get bigger. Consider reaching out to an expert about what to do, especially if you think a child may be in harm's way."

If you'd like to learn about what resources and tools are available to keep our children and young people safe, SCHHS Child Protection Liaison Unit (along with partners including Laurel Place, Daniel Morecombe Foundation, Centacare, SunnyKids, Act for Kids, QPS, IFYS and United Synergies) will be hosting a Child Protection Week event.

Where: Sunshine Coast University Hospital,

When: Wednesday 4 September 10am-12pm.

Sunshine Coast

Hospital and Health Service

Media statement

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY

Join us for interviews and photos with members of the Child Protection Liaison Unit.

Where: Sunshine Coast University Hospital,
When: Wednesday 4 September 10am-12pm.

ENDS

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