

# Media Advisory

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## Council of Europe launches new campaign to stop sexual violence against children

**Dates:** 29 and 30 November 2010

**Place:** Rome (Italy) – Complesso Monumentale di San Michele a Ripa Grande (Via di San Michele 22)

**Description:** The Council of Europe and the Italian Ministry for Equal Opportunities will launch a European campaign to promote legal, educational and other measures needed to combat all forms of sexual violence against children.

Sexual violence happens much more often than people think. One child in five in Europe is thought to be a victim of sexual violence. In 70 to 85% of cases, children know their aggressors. In 90% of cases, sexual offences are not reported to the authorities.

The campaign will raise awareness among children, parents, teachers and other people in contact with children about the scale of the problem and to provide them with the knowledge they need to prevent sexual abuse and to report it.

The measures promoted by the campaign are contained in a recent Council of Europe [Convention](#) on the protection of children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. The campaign's main objective is to obtain its ratification and effective implementation by all Council of Europe member States.

Given the difficulties many countries face in tackling the issue of sexual abuse perpetrated by people who children trust (within the home, in foster care, at school or in the context of extracurricular activities), the campaign will focus on this particular challenge.

The campaign sets a simple rule, called the "Underwear Rule", that parents are encouraged to teach their children aged 4 to 7 to make them understand their right to set limits, and the need to express their feelings and speak up. The rule is explained in a TV spot, a children's book, a website and other support materials featuring a character called Kiko (\*).

The City of Rome will support the Council of Europe's action through a poster campaign from 22 November to 5 December. The TV spot will be broadcast on RAI from 29 November to 12 December 2010.

Giorgio Napolitano, President of Italy, Maria Rosaria Carfagna, Minister for Equal Opportunities, Selma Aliye Kavaf, Turkish State Minister Responsible for Family and Women, representing the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers, and Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, will attend the launch, with other European high officials, parliamentarians and experts.

### 47 member States

Albania  
Andorra  
Armenia  
Austria  
Azerbaijan  
Belgium  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Bulgaria  
Croatia  
Cyprus  
Czech Republic  
Denmark  
Estonia  
Finland  
France  
Georgia  
Germany  
Greece  
Hungary  
Iceland  
Ireland  
Italy  
Latvia  
Liechtenstein  
Lithuania  
Luxembourg  
Malta  
Moldova  
Monaco  
Montenegro  
Netherlands  
Norway  
Poland  
Portugal  
Romania  
Russia  
San Marino  
Serbia  
Slovakia  
Slovenia  
Spain  
Sweden  
Switzerland  
"The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"  
Turkey  
Ukraine  
United Kingdom

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A political organisation set up in 1949, the Council of Europe works to promote democracy and human rights continent-wide. It also develops common responses to social, cultural and legal challenges in its 47 member states.

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(\* ) The visual identity and the various media for “The Underwear Rule” have been developed free of charge by the Amsterdam-based advertising agency, Grey.

**Practical information:**

- The campaign launch is scheduled for 11 am on Monday 29 November and will be followed by a **press conference at 12.30 pm**;
- Journalists are asked to obtain **accreditation** from the press department of the Italian Ministry for Equal Opportunities (see contacts below).

Further information can be found at: [www.coe.int/oneinfive](http://www.coe.int/oneinfive) (including **webcast of the launch**) and [www.underwearrule.org](http://www.underwearrule.org)

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