

WEBINAR SERIES

COVID-19 and Children's Rights

3rd edition: "Intrafamily violence"

Programme



22 November 2021

Building a Europe
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Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF)

Webinar Series on COVID-19 and Children's Rights

3rd Edition: 'Intrafamily Violence'

Where and When?

When :	Monday 22 November 2021 - 2:00-3:30 pm (CET)
KUDO on-line platform:	<i>link to be communicated at a later stage</i>
Working languages:	English and French
Organised by:	Secretariat of the CDENF
Any question can be sent to:	children@coe.int

What is the subject of the webinar?

At its plenary session in November 2020, the CDENF approved the organisation of three practical webinars in 2021. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, this series of webinars aims to provide a platform for exchanges on the most urgent issues related to children's rights and to facilitate a focused exchange on national good practices in terms of responses to specific challenges. The focus areas selected for these exchanges are: 1) **access to education**, 2) **protection from intra-family violence with a focus on children at risk**, and 3) **addressing children's mental health and their need for specialised support services**. A first webinar entitled "[Overcoming Education Challenges](#)" was successfully held in March 2021, while the 2nd and 3rd upcoming editions, which will take place on 22 November, will be focusing on children's mental health and intrafamily violence respectively.

The third online webinar on 22 November 2021 will bring together CDENF members, participants and observers with other experts for an in-depth exchange of views on the theme of "**intrafamily violence**" during the pandemic. This webinar is also a contribution of the Council of Europe to the celebrations of the 7th edition of the European Day for the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, with this year's theme "Making the circle of trust truly safe for children".

The objectives of this webinar will be to reflect together and develop guidance on:

- i. Prevention, detection and reporting of violence within the family
- ii. Sexual violence in the family circle
- iii. Support to children and families by professionals during lockdown (child contact constraints, reporting etc.).

The data available shows that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the vulnerability of children to violence. The reasons behind the increased incidence of child abuse are complex and multi-dimensional. According to UNICEF, 98% of children worldwide have been confined to their homes for different lengths of time. Restriction measures have curtailed contact with 'traditional' reporters of abuse (such as teachers, doctors, social workers), with a decline in the detection of abuse and reporting. Access to health care, prevention services and assistance - especially in schools - or follow-up have also been hampered. For children and families in a pre-existing situation of vulnerability, the pandemic has also increased risk factors. In addition, it has inevitably created more family conflict, and/or contact between children and their potential abusers in the family sphere.

Other causes of the increased incidence of child abuse during the COVID-19 crisis are to be found in the family and societal environment: the economic disorder and financial hardship resulting from the health crisis may have compromised parental mental health, as well as positive parenting.

Finally, as the digital environment has become an increasingly important part of their lives, the risks of children to become victims of violence through information and communication technologies have multiplied. Interpol and Europol have also confirmed that the sharing of child sexual abuse content has increased dramatically.

This webinar aims, among other things, to reflect on how the health crisis may have led to a children's rights crisis, and on how to better prevent and respond to new forms of violence against children and future crises. It will also look at measures to build resilience and rehabilitation, as well as examining alternative solutions that have been adopted in States.

A call for good practices, identifying interesting programmes or measures to be shared with other delegations, has been circulated among CDENF members, participants and observers after the 13-15 October 2021 meeting.

Programme - Monday 22 November 2021 - 14:00-15:30 (CET)

14:00	<p>Opening by the moderator</p> <p>Ms Christel de Craim, Chairperson of the Committee of Parties to the Convention on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (Lanzarote Committee)</p>
14:05	<p>“Setting the scene”: the increase in intrafamily violence against children during the COVID-19 health crisis</p> <p>Ms Theoni Koufonikolakou, Chairperson of the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children</p>
14:15	<p>The multiplication of risk factors and reporting abuse during lockdown measures</p> <p>Ms Florica Chereches, President of the Romanian National Authority for the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Children and Adoptions</p> <p>Ms Joan Mullan, National Manager for Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence Services, Tusla Child and Family Agency, Ireland</p>
14:35	<p>Protecting children from sexual abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic</p> <p>Baroness Doreen Massey, member of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)</p>
14:45	<p>Video “The Lake” produced by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe</p>
14:50	<p>Special measures adopted to prevent and respond to sexual violence against children in the context of the pandemic</p> <p>Ms Maria José Castello-Branco, Vice Chairperson of the Committee of Parties to the Convention on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (Lanzarote Committee)</p> <p>Ms Marion Escudier, Legal Officer, General Criminal Policy Office, Directorate of Criminal Affairs and Pardons, French Ministry of Justice</p>
15:00	<p>Round table (questions and answers)</p>
15:25	<p>Closing remarks by the moderator</p>

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