



**MEDIA RELEASE  
FROM THE ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP OF ADELAIDE  
JEFFREY DRIVER**

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The Anglican Archbishop of Adelaide has called on State and Federal Governments to address the growth of what he has termed “corporate paedophilia” in Australia.

Archbishop Jeffrey Driver told the Synod of the Diocese meeting in St Peter’s Cathedral last night that he was alarmed by the premature sexualisation of children through marketing and advertising. He called for a review of codes of practice and legislation relating to advertising, television programming and children’s magazines in order to address the issue.

In using the term “corporate paedophilia”, Archbishop Driver said he was referring to advertising and marketing that presented children “in sexually suggestive ways, or seeks to sell products to children using overt forms of adult sexuality.

“There are strong suggestions that this premature sexualisation of children could play a role in grooming children for paedophiles – preparing children for sexual interaction with older teenagers or adults. Children have a right to their childhood, but it is being taken from them through the hyper-sexualised environment in which they now grow up.

“At an increasingly early age our children are being caught up in the adult culture of sexuality, body image, drugs and violence. Children’s clothing has become highly sexualized, mini versions of adult fashion. There are gossip magazines for five and six year old girls, telling them how to look hot and catch a boy. One in five 12 year old girls in Australia is using vomiting and fasting to keep down weight. About 100,000 of our children are being treated for depression, a fourfold increase in 30 years”.

“Protecting children from abuse and exploitation is a responsibility we must share as a community”, the Archbishop said.

Archbishop Driver also welcomed an announcement by the State Government providing a more generous response to the survivors of abuse in State care.

“Nearly two weeks ago I met with the Attorney General, The Hon. Michael Atkinson, to discuss concerns about the State Government’s approach to this matter. Last weekend Mr Atkinson announced a more compassionate approach, based on greater accessibility to ex-gratia payments within the Victims of Crime provisions. I understand also that there will be an additional allocation of \$7m to assist in dealing with claims. These are welcome developments.

“The Anglican Church has learnt, painfully, that a speedy and gracious response to people who have been abused is critical to a genuinely healing outcome. I call upon the State Government to ensure its response to survivors named in the Mulligan Report has an emphasis on healing rather than legal process, and that delays and issues of accessibility continue to be addressed”, the Archbishop said.

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