



## **"Our Children: A Chronicle of Resilience Against Child Abuse"**

### **ORGANIZATION CREDIBILITY:**

Stop Child Cruelty Trust (SCC) is a registered charitable Trust dedicated to eradicating violence against children, in alignment with SDG 16.2. Established in 2018, SCC has spearheaded discussions on corporal punishment through extensive awareness campaigns, training, and advocacy efforts. Notably, SCC has garnered support from a record number of countries advocating for children's rights prioritization and the unequivocal abolition of all forms of abuse, including corporal punishment, at the 42nd session of the UNHRC Universal Periodic Review in Geneva on February 1, 2023. SCC collaborates with internationally acclaimed organizations such as End Violence Against Children, the Global Initiative to End Corporal Punishment of Children, and UNICEF. SCC's Founder Chairperson, Dr. Tush Wickramanayaka, is the first Sri Lankan recognized as the Global End Violence Champion at the Children & Youth (CY21) event convened by UNICEF. SCC pioneered the formation of Sri Lanka's FIRST Child Protection Alliance (CPA), a coalition of credible organizations committed to protecting and promoting children's rights, established in September 2021.

### **CONTEXT AND JUSTIFICATION:**

Approximately 5.1 million (25%) of Sri Lanka's population is under 18 years old. The Child Protection Alliance (CPA) campaigns for urgent action to address the alarming escalation of child abuse in the country. Shockingly, from 2020 to 2022, seventeen children fell victim to physical or sexual abuse and murder. Statistics from the National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) reveal a concerning increase in reported cases of child abuse over the past decade, with cases of physical abuse tripling during this period. The Sri Lanka Police report that a child is sexually molested every two hours on the island.

### **THE BOOK:**

"Our Children" is a poignant collection of real-life stories narrated by victims and survivors of child abuse, providing them with a platform to voice their traumatic experiences. Many share their stories for the first time, marking a significant step in their healing journey. The narratives cover various forms of abuse—physical, sexual, and mental—and include one tragic account of suicide, recounted by the grieving mother.

Each story carries a unique message to the public, supported by evidence-based insights from experts in legal, child psychology, education, and law enforcement fields. Co-authored by the winner of the inter-school debate competition 'A Generation's Appeal' to end child abuse and reputable authors, the book will be published in Sinhala and translated into Tamil and English, approved by the Ministry of Education for distribution in schools recommended for children aged 12 and above.

The book launch will occur in two stages:

#### Stage 1:

- Official Launch on November 20, 2024, commemorating 'Universal Children's Day', with negotiations underway for translation into UN recognized regional languages.
- Art Competition Award Ceremony, showcasing winning entries on the book's cover and interior, accompanied by an art exhibition.

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Stage 2:

- Storytelling sessions at public libraries in key cities of Colombo, Kandy, Anuradhapura, Batticaloe, and Jaffna, complemented by visually captivating presentations.

**KEY STAKEHOLDERS:**

- Children and Parents affected by abuse
- National Child Protection Authority, Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs
- Ministry of Education, Teacher Unions
- Sri Lanka Police, Women's and Children's Bureau
- Members of Parliament of Women's and Children's Caucus
- Professional Organizations: Sri Lanka Medical Association, College of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, etc.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Identify at-risk children and improve child rights awareness.
- Increase public awareness to reduce child-related crimes.

**OUTCOME:**

- Empower children with knowledge of their rights and welfare.
- Foster a change in public attitudes through sustained awareness programs, fostering collective social responsibility for child safety.
- Decrease crimes related to physical, sexual, and mental abuse through effective implementation of laws and regulations by government authorities.

**COST ESTIMATION:**

Rs 1.5 million

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