

**19 NOVEMBER
WORLD
DAY**

prevention of Child Abuse



World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse 19 November 2008

Annual Geneva Conference Report

(Translated from presentations made in French)

“Children and young people, partners in prevention?”



WWSF Women's World Summit Foundation - Children's Section
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Program

Wednesday 19 November 2008

Centre International de Conférences Genève CICG, Rue de Varembeé 17, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland

Conference

“Children and young people, partners in prevention?”

Progress in preventing child abuse - Annual review VIII

✓ 17h00 **Opening**

- Prof. Hatem Kotrane, Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
- Ms. Elly Pradervand, WWSF Executive Director
Launch in Geneva of the WWSF Guide “Prevention is Key!”

Presentation of the WWSF Prize for prevention of Child Abuse laureate organizations - Report of the international coalition 2008

- Ms. Laure Maitrejean, WWSF Children’s Section Coordinator

✓ 17h40 **Conference**

- Ms. Christine Panchaud, Association romande CIAO
- Dr. Jean-Dominique Lormand, Service Santé Jeunesse
- Ms. Rosemonde Rossel, DIS NO - Association pour la prévention de la maltraitance et des abus sexuels envers les enfants
- Ms. Eva Saro-Nydegger, Fondation images et société

✓ 19h30 **Refreshments & Interviews**

Two concerts in Geneva

✓ 20h30 **Le Quatuor Terpsycordes, Temple de la Madeleine**

- Organized by CTAS Association, Centre de consultation pour les victimes d’abus sexuels

✓ 20h00 **Pascal Rogé, Conservatoire de musique de Genève**

- Organized by Krousar Thmey, Fondation d’aide à l’enfance cambodgienne défavorisée

Thursday 20 November 2008

Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

WWSF, 11 Avenue de la Paix, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland (1st floor) - 17h00-19h00

Workshop

Presentation of the WWSF Guide “Prevention is Key!”

Conference - 19 November

“Children and young people, partners in prevention?”

Every year, in Geneva and worldwide, the World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse is commemorated on 19 November. Since 2000, WWSF Women’s World Summit Foundation, convener of the Day, organizes an



annual conference-debate in Geneva on the theme “Progress in preventing child abuse - Annual review”. In 2008, WWSF chose to focus on child participation and entitled the conference “Children and young people, partners in prevention?”

✓ [Welcome remarks](#)

Ms. Elly Pradervand, WWSF Executive Director



After the showing of the WWSF TV Spot, aimed at promoting the World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse, Ms. Pradervand welcomed the audience and thanked the panelists for their kind participation as well as the sponsors for their support.

Ms. Pradervand reminded the audience that the World Day was created **in response to an article published in a Swiss Newspaper “Le Temps”**, which mentioned that every year, on the Internet, 25 April was commemorated as the day of paedophilia. The article also explained that 340 paedophile organizations asked for sex with children under 12. *“This unacceptable piece of news so shattered us that we decided to create a World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse. We chose 19 November to be in synergy with the 20 November, anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,”* she underlined. Ms. Pradervand then shared the **new WWSF publication, “a Guide for NGO and citizen action, because prevention of abuse and violence against children is the responsibility of all!”**

The Guide, entitled **“Prevention is Key!”**, is aimed at all citizens - men, women and children – worldwide. This Guide embraces all civil society organizations, in particular non-governmental organizations (NGOs), educational settings, grassroots groups, faith-based organizations, the media and various networks dealing with child abuse, child rights and development issues. It presents **25 types of abuse** and includes **definitions, some statistics and examples for action for NGOs, citizens, children, young people and governments**. Ms. Pradervand concluded by reminding the audience that WWSF particularly encourages **child and youth participation**. *“It is essential that their point of view and opinion be taken into account in creating policies for the elimination and prevention of child abuse,”* she said.

Ms. Laure Maitrejean, WWSF Children’s Section Coordinator



[Report on the WWSF international coalition and laureate organizations awarded with the WWSF Prize for Prevention of Child Abuse](#)

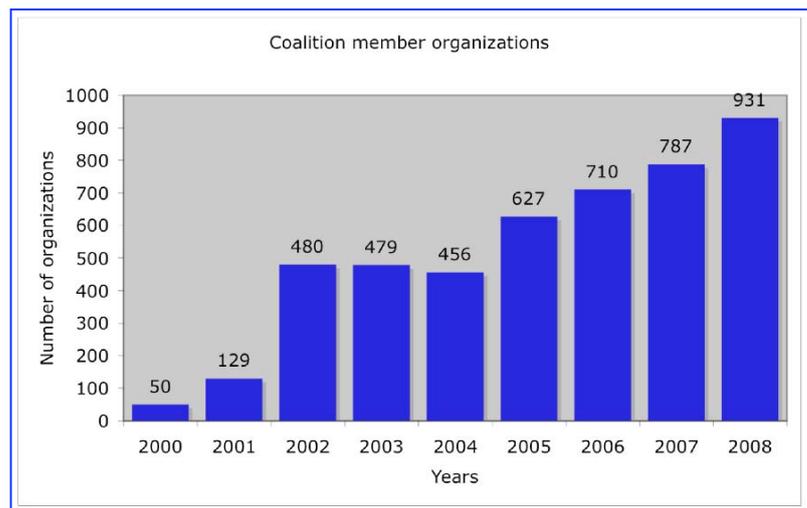
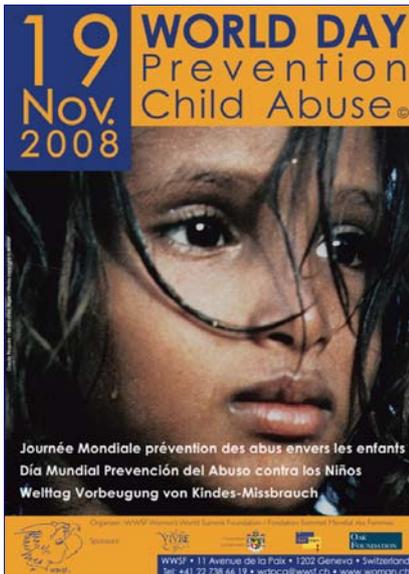
“Today, in Switzerland, as well as in 134 other countries, 933 organizations mark the World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse,” stressed Laure Maitrejean, before she added that **the number of the WWSF Children’s Section partners continues to increase since the beginning of the campaign, from 50 members in 2000 to 933 in 2008.**

Laure Maitrejean then reminded the audience that in 2000, the year of the launch of the World Day, the notion of prevention seemed so abstract that only a few dared to venture in this direction. *“Today, thanks to many activities such as ours and the ones of tonight’s panelists, **prevention of child abuse as a priority has finally been recognized**, notably at an international level. For example, one of the recommendations of the UN Study on Violence against Children invites States to prioritize prevention.”*

To reinforce the idea of making prevention a priority, WWSF created in 2003 a **Prize for Prevention of Child Abuse**, awarding organizations for their innovative activities in the field of prevention and for encouraging ongoing efforts to develop and increase new approaches. Laure Maitrejean presented the activities organized by the **five laureate organizations that received the Prize in 2008**, bringing the number of prizewinners to 21.

Laure Maitrejean then mentioned some examples of activities organized worldwide and shared a collection of pictures giving an idea of the global mobilization catalyzed by the World Day campaign.

Ms. Maitrejean concluded by thanking all coalition member organizations for their support, commitment and awareness raising work, which gives the initiative such a global impact. *“I take this opportunity to also thank the media who are more and more aware of this campaign (WWSF was interviewed by several radios). I invite them to become and remain special partners to make prevention a priority.”*



Progress Chart of coalition members

✓ [Opening speech](#)

Prof. Hatem Kotrane, Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child



Prevention of violence against children, an essential tool of the protection of the child rights system (Situation analysis and perspectives)

After thanking WWSF for giving him the opportunity to speak *“on this particular day, 19 November, the eve of the celebration by the international community of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child”*, Professor Kotrane introduced the aim of his presentation, i.e. explaining the main results of the UN Study on Violence against Children; understanding the impact of abuse and violence on children’s lives, survival and development; and referring to intl Human Rights standards, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Professor Kotrane then underlined the importance of *“not only focusing on a holistic approach that gives rise to the interdependence of all the rights of the child in analyzing and dealing with prevention and protection issues, but also raising awareness of the importance of prevention as an indispensable and indivisible tool for the protection of children against all forms of abuse and violence.”*

The UN Study on Violence against Children

Professor Kotrane shared with the audience important information about the Study, including the adoption of a resolution calling for the appointment of a **Special Representative**, responsible for its follow-up. *“The Special Representative will be a kind of world lawyer for children to be protected from all forms of violence. He will work with international bodies and NGOs to make sure that prevention of child abuse and protection of children against all forms of violence will be an issue that permanently mobilizes private and public partners,”* he specified.

He then reiterated that **abuse and violence are a universal problem** and mentioned some facts and figures: *“We estimate that 300 million children are victims of abuse in the world and millions of others are exposed to all forms of violence as they do not receive any appropriate protection, nor is there an effective prevention system.”*

Professor Kotrane continued, quoting the **five settings in which violence occurs** (in the home and family; in schools and educational settings; in care and justice institutions; in the community; and in places of work), as well as several **intersectorial problems** that increase children's vulnerability (violence in the media and other virtual places; harmful traditional practices; violence against children from ethnic minorities, migrant or immigrant communities; children infected with HIV/AIDS and children who commit acts of violence against other children).

The Committee on the Rights of the Child

Professor Kotrane presented the Committee's role and work, including the days of general discussions it organizes (notably on violence) and the two general comments it issued: N°8, on the rights of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment and N°10, on children's rights in juvenile justice.

Difficulties met

Professor Kotrane then presented the difficulties in terms of abuse and violence:

- Lack of databases and disaggregated statistics. The main reason is the silence around the issue in most of the countries. Abuse and violence are seen as a fate linked to the social or cultural context, implicitly agreed upon and denied by the collective consciousness. Children do not talk because they are ashamed, they feel guilty and sometimes they believe that they deserve what they endure. They are unaware of their rights.
- Lack of specialized centers for children to be informed and heard, as well as a lack of experts able to talk to the child, to take note of his/her testimony and to report. Adults do not report abuse and violence they know about because of their inability to assess the abuse and/or because of the culture of tolerance in their social environment.
- Lack of information campaigns in the media and of awareness raising programs for parents, decision-makers, women, children and society as a whole.
- Lack of effective prevention mechanisms. According to Professor Kotrane, the penal response is insufficient. Most experts acknowledge the fact that penal law does not suffice and that a prevention system is needed. Laws must not come too late when a child is already a victim. Laws must come sooner so that effective reporting and intervention mechanisms can be put in place to stop abuse in time and find a solution that is not necessarily putting a father in jail. Professor Kotrane reminded the audience that States, associations, and the social system are not there to replace the parents but to raise awareness of their responsibilities towards children.

So, how to prevent and protect children from abuse and violence?

Professor Kotrane mentioned that children who are victims of abuse and violence have rights and that the Committee called upon the State parties to take the necessary legislative measures to eliminate all forms of violence against children, including physical and mental violence and corporal punishment. He then shared several examples including the necessity for effective procedures: **1)** Investigate maltreatment cases. **2)** Prosecute their authors and make sure that the child is not treated in an offending manner and that his/her private life is protected. **3)** Provide care to victims for their rehabilitation. **4)** Give training to teachers, social workers, judges, law specialists and health professionals to help them identify, report and deal with maltreatment. **5)** Take into account the recommendations the Committee adopts on the General Day Discussions.

The Tunisia example

Professor Kotrane mentioned his country as an example. *"In 1995, a Code for the protection of the child was adopted (before, the only reaction was of penal nature). It is based on principles such as the best interest of the child, the parents' responsibility and active involvement, the respect of children's opinion and their participation in all social and judicial measures in their favor. The Code is also turned towards prevention since it created "delegates responsible for childhood protection" as well as a duty to report, involving everybody (lawyers, judges, social workers, etc.). There is no professional confidentiality anymore". He continued "Today, the Committee calls to remove the physicians' professional confidentiality and tries to find solutions in the families and to have the child participated."*

Professor Kotrane concluded with the following statement: **"When they were small, our children looked at us. Once an adult, they judge us, and sometimes they forgive us."**

✓ Panelists presentations

Ms. Christine Panchaud, Director, Association romande CIAO



Involving children in prevention on the Internet: how and what are the implications for adults?

Ms. Panchaud first presented CIAO, an association that manages a website www.ciao.ch for children (age 13 to 20) and for adults who take care of children. "Since 1997, the Internet has become so popular in homes that all young people can visit our website. But professionals, adults and parents are also concerned. Teachers can use the website as an educational resource and adults can invite young people to visit this safe and trustworthy website when they don't know how to answer their questions. It is a **complementary tool** to other existing structures," she underlined.

Young people find on ciao.ch more than 2000 pages with information from experts and can ask in an anonymous and free way questions on **14 different themes**: sexuality, health, relations, violence, racism and generally accepted ideas, work and training, money, Internet, etc. All (or almost all) the questions are published on the website.

CIAO works in partnership with several institutions to help young people find the information they need on a single website. Partners include Profa (Lausanne), that works on sex education in the Canton de Vaud; the Service Santé Jeunesse, that gives young people answers on sexuality, relations and violence; the Centre d'Etudes et de Prévention du Suicide; and the Institut suisse de prévention de l'alcoolisme et autres toxicomanies.

CIAO allows young people to express themselves in their own words and as freely as possible. The children register with a pseudonym. CIAO only asks for their age, gender and canton. The questions come directly to an extranet site where the CIAO experts publish replies within three days. The CIAO team then reads the answers to make sure that the ethics charter is respected, discusses the ones that do not comply with the charter and plans a rewording.

Young people are looking for personal answers or for advice from experts. They can also read the questions other young people ask and the answers those young people receive. This CIAO service allows young people to learn from others' experiences and to understand that they are not alone with their problems. "CIAO takes all the questions", underlined Ms. Panchaud. "None is considered banal nor of minor importance because if they come and ask, it's because it is important to them." Answers are given with respect and without any taboo.

CIAO also publishes testimonies where young people thank CIAO and explain a difficult or desperate situation they overcame thanks to this service. In this question and answer model, there is no direct contact between young people. Nevertheless, CIAO also provides thematic forums where young people can write to each other in an anonymous way. CIAO oversees the publication of these messages.

Ms. Panchaud then touched on **the issues of abuse and violence** including **1)** abuse and violence in the couple, family, school, street, district, leisure activity, etc. **2)** abuse and violence against oneself with auto destructive or high risk behaviors (eating disorders, alcohol and other substance abuse, auto mutilation, suicide attempts, etc.). **3)** racism. **4)** discrimination. **5)** and violence on the Internet (virtual dates that ended badly, abusive dissemination of private pictures or information, threats). The youths who write are victims, witnesses or authors of abuse and violence. In 2007, questions about abuse and violence represented 3 % out of 6500 questions asked. "Only 3 %. Fortunately, it's not more. Because what is important is not the number of questions but the kind of questions."

CIAO's philosophy is to help young people to think and use their own resources so that they can adopt responsible, independent and respectful behaviors. Oftentimes, users return to the website, and CIAO can follow their inquiries. Some developments are very positive, and some situations really improve.

So, what about our responsibilities as adults? "It is fundamental to be where young people are, and today, they are on the Internet. Our responsibility is to provide them with websites of quality, where they can express themselves in safety," she said. She then added humorously: "What to answer to a young boy about pornography? We explain that it is not real life. We tell him: If you go and see a circus show, you will not tighten 2 ropes between buildings and walk on a tight rope. Pomo movies look like circus. There are acrobatics, but the difference is that circus is not rigged, while porno often is."

In conclusion, she highlighted that "Today, children have more freedom and rights, but they are also more alone, in a society where it is much more difficult to know what is right, good and what limits they must respect."

Dr. Jean-Dominique Lormand, Doctor and Director, Service Santé Jeunesse SSJ



Prevention of abuse against minors, the SSJ's role

Dr Lormand first presented the SSJ's **competence in dealing with all issues related to minors' hygiene and health** (in particular those from public and private schools). He then mentioned that in 1995, Dr Paul Bouvier, his predecessor, together with people from the hospital and the judicial power (penal), created a Geneva survey to measure the importance of abuse and sexual abuse. They chose a secondary school classroom (cycle d'orientation - 9th grade - children aged 13 to 17) with a cross-section of 1200 students and distributed a questionnaire. 34 % of girls said that they already suffered sexual abuse. 6 % out of the 34 % were victims of violence with penetration. Boys were less touched; 11 % revealed abuse cases.

Afterwards, Dr. Bouvier worked on **programs involving young people by giving them tools to resist abuse and to become resilient**. 1) Systematic classroom programs were created (as of the age of 7). 2) For 9-year-olds: training on life history focusing on the child's intimacy and development. 3) For 11-year-olds: promotion of the notion of sexual health. 4) For 13-year-old: programs on sexual violence, entitled "Et toi et moi" (You and me) and "Parlez-moi d'amour" (Talk to me about love). 5) Additional programs were also created for the 7th, 9th and upper grades. "*When we speak about prevention and to have an impact, we imperatively need to run intense and sustained activities. Fortunately, here in Geneva, we can influence young people's lives from kindergarten to the end of their schooling. We accompany them in their development [...] with documents of quality. We also go further by reinforcing the messages each year,*" he highlighted.

SSJ works in partnership with other associations: Action Innocence, on prevention of paedophilia on the Internet; CTAS Centre de consultation pour les victimes d'abus sexuels and the Association Suisse pour la Protection de l'Enfance on a project entitled "Mon corps est à moi" (My body belongs to me), which is an interactive exposition to spark off questions coming from pupils (about a hundred classrooms have visited the expo so far). A few days ago, 6 children from a class of 15 revealed having been victims of violence. The expo coordinators deal with these revelations in a serious manner. They talk to the child and inform the SSJ nurse who will then contact the school nurse, the teacher and the SSJ doctor if necessary. The case will then possibly be transmitted to the Minors' protection service and to the legal system. "*We are lucky to have all these possibilities but it's not enough. The seriousness of the issue is continuous,*" he underlined.

Dr. Lormand then shared one of the **tools** SSJ uses for the 7 year olds, in the form of **petals of a flower** where some **fundamental notions are depicted**, including: I am important; My body belongs to me; I live together with others; I respect them and they must respect me; I am allowed to say what I feel, etc. The flower image is completed every year, according to the grade. The following year, SSJ reinforces its messages with the "Mon corps est à moi" program: I trust my feelings; I know the difference between pleasant and unpleasant touch; I can find some help, etc. The year after, SSJ again evolves with "L'histoire de la vie" (The story of life), and so on such as in the 6th grade where the messages are linked to self-esteem; self-confidence; the right to say no; how to ask for help; rights and duties, etc. "*It is about a fundamental basic and prevention work by SSJ during the children's schooling. During all these years, we amplify, make more complex and try to make sure that the young people got the tools to face the reality of life,*" highlighted Dr. Lormand.

He concluded by mentioning the SSJ latest publication, a document on prevention of gender violence, on violence in covered playgrounds, entitled "Parlez-moi d'amour" (Talk to me about love).

Ms. Rosemonde Rossel, General Secretariat, DIS NO - Association pour la prévention de la maltraitance et des abus sexuels envers les enfants



New measures for prevention

Ms. Rossel first presented DIS NO, an association that has worked for prevention of child mistreatment and sexual abuse since 1995. Its mission is to **prevent, inform and support** with the following motto: **For "good treatment" of children, we inform adults**. Its activities cover all French-speaking parts of Switzerland and consist of helping people to publish their experiences, creating and making available material and resources, organizing conferences, answering, supporting and accompanying them. DIS NO guides those who ask for help towards official organizations or competent associations. It only intervenes when all available sources have been exhausted. "*Prevention is a priority for DIS NO. Initially, its objective was to teach the children to say NO. Today, DIS NO turns towards adults, convinced that they are the ones who can act for children's well-being,*" stressed Ms. Rossel.

Ms. Rossel then presented **two events DIS NO organized in October 2008 in Lausanne: a conference for the general public** on the theme "Sexual abuse by minors: What did we make of our children? Understand to prevent!" and **a symposium for professionals** on the theme "Prevention of sexual abuse: let's get out of the way of children! Yes but... How to do so?" Two experts participated: Professor Hubert Van Gijseghem, a psychologist and psycho-legal expert, and Dr Christopher Mikton, World Health Organization representative.

- **Prevention programs for children.** They started in Switzerland in the 1990s. Their objective was to prevent, detect and reinforce the ability to find help. *"10 years later, there are more prevention programs, more tools, more financial means, more experts and more children who benefit from the campaigns. The way to speak has also changed,"* stated Ms. Rossel. As an example, she mentioned a press release on the "Mon corps est à moi" prevention campaign (My body belongs to me): "Prevention measures in the information and education field have been limited to warning children against potential attackers or unknown people. This kind of advice gives a deceptive security feeling. It creates vague fears in children and limits their freedom of movement. To be efficient, prevention must take into account that most of the sexual assaults happen in the family or in close social environments. So, whom can children trust?"

To the question: "**Do prevention programs change children's behavior towards adults?**", Professor Van Gijseghem answered YES. According to him, the programs give knowledge on sexuality (a traditionally adult prerogative) and can develop anxiety in children. **Then, should the prevention programs continue?** He thinks that we must consider the inability of young children to understand complex messages and to say NO. We also have to acknowledge that some studies prove that prevention has no real effect.

- **Prevention programs for adolescents.** They are a population at risk because of hormonal developments causing physical and emotional changes. To the question: "**Are there more abuse perpetrators among adolescents today?**", Professor Van Gijseghem answered YES without hesitation. The proportion of abuse committed by minors exceeds 40 % in Switzerland. Adolescents are the only category of perpetrators on the increase while the number of abuse cases tends to decrease. This rise seems to be linked to the fact that our society is more and more sexualized. According to Professor Van Gijseghem, adolescents at risk are those who have few friends of their age group, who spend more time with younger children, who have physical contact with children (fights, tickles), who babysit, who give presents and who make children their special friends. To the question: "**Do prevention programs target adolescents?**" he answered that he did not find any research study in Canada.
- **Prevention programs for abuse perpetrators.** It is important to classify abuse perpetrators (often wrongly considered as paedophiles - only a few of them are), to develop different treatments depending on the perpetrator typologies and to agree that some cannot be cured.

Ms. Rossel concluded by giving **new prevention avenues** such as encouraging self-protection programs and using existing school lessons to develop critical thinking. She then shared that DIS NO will create prevention programs for adolescents and will take an interest in potential abuse perpetrators, persuading them to ask for help before committing an act.

"Protecting children, is it not the role of adults?" she asked before mentioning that DIS NO is creating a **think tank on new prevention measures** involving several professionals from the Lausanne region.

Ms. Eva Saro-Nydegger, Project Director, Fondation images et société



Abuse and violence here and elsewhere: What do students say?

After a brief presentation of her Foundation, aimed at providing practical tools for decoding visual messages and encouraging a critical eye, Ms. Saro shared the results of a workshop she conducted in several Geneva schools on the theme: **The influence of the media and visuals on young people.**

110 students aged 13 to 15 and 50 students aged 16 to 18, participated in the **creation of headlines to be printed on blank newspaper front pages** (kindly provided by "20 Minutes"). The messages she retained included: Child abuse / Laws to be implemented • Exploited children / Help them, support them • Verbal and physical violence / Let's talk about it • Violence between classmates / Stop belittling • Exploiting children / Governments! Help the poorest instead of making war! • Reducing violence in schools means respecting each other's speaking time • Students note: "Respect means being able to speak and to listen" • Prevention of violence / More information, less advertising • Porn and us / A false idea of the real world • Porn on Internet and mobile phones / The abnormal becomes normal • Porn and children / More cyberpolice for better protection.

A few words on the workshops in schools

A questionnaire helped to highlight that young people were particularly aware of child abuse but thought that the issue was too big for them and that they felt helpless. The debate continued on topics they were most interested in, such as verbal and physical violence between young people and pornography, which has become very accessible and more and more acceptable.

As a basis for thinking and to explain how headlines are put into words to attract the public, Ms. Saro showed the students several **newspaper front pages**. Some topics on violence showed the different ways of formulating ideas. She noted that **young people did not read the daily newspapers such as “Le Temps” or “la Tribune de Genève”, and that they regularly read free newspapers and especially “peoples’ pages”**. *“It is incredible to learn that their main information comes from the internet and that the time they spend on Internet is up to 6 hours per day. The average time is 1 to 3 hours a day,”* she underlined. *“Even if older students are more interested in news, they also read a lot of “peoples’ pages”. There is a confusion about behavior, relationships, sexuality and body language they are regularly exposed to”,* she added.

Ms. Saro also asked them whether they noted the visual contrasts in pages. It appeared that they did not much pay attention and that they were used to **switching from dramatic information to softer content**. *“Young people’s thoughts often start with: “My God! How horrible! We can’t do anything.” They are fatalistic. Adults have to support them and give them suggestions,”* Ms. Saro noted.

The pornography issue was often mentioned. It appeared that young people did not feel concerned at all by porn models. They do not know how a porn film is made, with, for example, image accelerations and they believe that “It is a film like any other.” *“It is very difficult to encourage them to stand back, but they agree to think about how to speak of that issue to their younger brothers or sisters,”* she underlined.

The workshops lasted **90 minutes**. *“45 minutes for discussing these issues is not much. I invited them to work as advertising teams: put all the ideas together and get to the heart of the matter,”* she stated. She gave young people selected pieces of information such as a page featuring Salma Hayek, who everybody remembers because of her low-neck dress but not because of her commitment to end tetanus .

The discussions generated by the workshops are very important. They provide an excellent way to reflect. Although more time would have been needed to go deeper, she feels encouraged by some teachers’ commitment to continue with such workshops during their “Media Education” classes.

In conclusion, Ms. Saro specified that the **newspaper headlines will be displayed in libraries and by teachers**. *“I hope we will have more support information for young people who think we can’t do anything. If they would have participated in this conference, they would have seen that many efforts are put in place in terms of prevention,”* she closed. The newspaper front pages are also displayed at the WWSF office (11 Avenue de la Paix, 1202 Geneva).



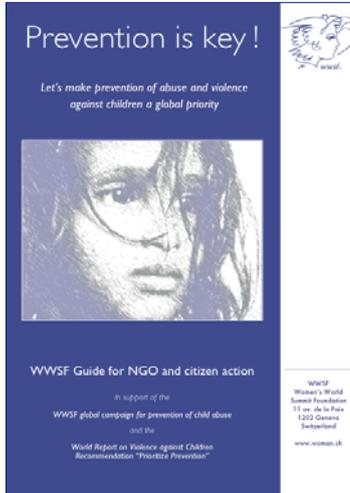
1st line: Headlines created by students

2nd line: Official headlines discussed by students

Workshop - 20 November

Presentation of the WWSF Guide “Prevention is Key!”

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, WWSF organized a workshop at 11 avenue de la Paix to present its newly published Guide “Prevention is Key!”



Why this guide? Prevention of abuse and violence against children is the responsibility of all.

Objective of the guide: to inspire and mobilize NGO and citizen action to:

- **Create** a global culture of prevention
- **Increase** prevention measures
- **Help implement** the framework provided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- **Follow-up** on the recommendations of the UN SG Study on Violence against Children
- **Empower, inform** and **facilitate** the participation of young people in preventing abuse and violence against them
- **Lobby** governments.

The guide is aimed at all citizens - men, women and children – worldwide. This embraces all civil society organizations, in particular non-governmental organizations (NGOs), educational settings, grassroots groups, faith-based organizations, the media and various networks dealing with child abuse, child rights and development issues.

WWSF especially encourages the participation of children and young people. "It is essential that their views are taken into account when formulating abuse and violence prevention and elimination policies. Research shows that most children suffering abuse and violence do so silently, and therefore special efforts are required to make it possible for them to feel safe enough to discuss violent incidents...". www.violencestudy.org

The Guide was launched at the DPI/NGO Conference (Paris, 3-5 September 2008) and at the III World Congress against sexual exploitation of Children and Adolescents (Rio de Janeiro, 25-28 November 2008). It is one of the WWSF empowerment programs for its international coalition member organizations and partners that mark the World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse - 19 November, and the Prevention Education Week 13-19 November with activities and events, as well as for organizations that work for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child.

The Guide is available on Internet in English, French and German www.woman.ch. A Spanish version is in preparation.