

## **PRESS RELEASE**

25 May 2007

### **'HIGH TIME VICTIMS' VOICES WERE HEARD', SAYS CCPAS OVER RECENT ABUSE CASES IN THE CHURCH**

#### **"independent reviews needed in every diocese to prevent repetitions"**

The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS), one of the UK's leading experts in advising and training Christian and secular organisations in child protection practices, today welcomed the fact that some of the victims of child abuse within the Church of England now felt able to speak out.

David Pearson, Executive Director of CCPAS, said: "In the wake of the Halliday, Smith and Norris cases, we believe it is now high time that the victims' voices were heard – especially as some insensitive comments from the Church of England over the last few weeks have only served to exacerbate their hurt. Independent reviews should be convened to consider decisions taken in these cases for the sake of the victims and to ensure that lessons are learned and applied widely.

"Following CCPAS' open letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, which called upon him to use his influence to ensure all C of E dioceses review historic cases of abuse, we are pleased that the Church is now actively considering matters at the highest levels. We welcome the Bishop of Manchester's recent decision to appoint an independent lawyer to examine past records, some dating back many years. Each Diocese should consider similar arrangements as a matter of urgency and any matters of concern which arise should be reviewed with the police".

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#### NOTES TO EDITORS:

CCPAS is an independent Christian charity providing professional child protection advice and support across church denominations and organisations throughout the UK.

CCPAS was established in 1977. It assists churches, organisations, social services and other child care agencies as well as individual children and families by:

- helping churches and other organisations adopt safe practice in order to protect children from abuse – and youth workers from the possibility of false allegations
- advising on individual cases, giving ongoing help to leaders and others.
- training across the UK and providing “in-house” training and other resources
- acting as external consultants to denominational/organisational child protection advisors
- counselling individual adults or children about past or present abuse.

For more information, please see [www.ccpas.co.uk](http://www.ccpas.co.uk)