

# MEDIA RELEASE

## New evidence laws for children giving evidence in child sex abuse cases introduced in NSW



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Francis Sullivan, CEO of the Catholic Church's Truth Justice and Healing Council, has welcomed moves by the NSW Attorney-General, Gabrielle Upton, to make it easier for victims of child sexual abuse to give evidence in court.

Under new laws introduced by the State government this week child sexual abuse victims will be able to pre-record all of their evidence.

They will also be supported through the court process by a qualified expert who will help them through the trial process and give advice on the appropriate questioning of children.

Mr Sullivan said the new laws are designed to help children as they get through the traumatic and confronting process of giving evidence.

"Anything that makes it easier for a child to give evidence and any way of providing these children with further support is welcome.

"The NSW Government should be congratulated for working towards making it easier for children who are going to court.

"This initiative will hopefully reduce the stress and trauma when a young child gives evidence and it will also mean, that at a very difficult, time they will receive trained and expert support.

"It may also mean that children will be prepared to go to court in an attempt to get justice, where under the previous traumatic conditions, they would not.

A three-year pilot will operate in the NSW District Court in Sydney and Newcastle from March next year.

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The Truth Justice and Healing Council is coordinating the Catholic Church's engagement with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

For more information on the Truth Justice and Healing Council go to: [www.tjhcouncil.org.au](http://www.tjhcouncil.org.au)

For information on the Royal Commission go to: <http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/>