



Child sexual abuse can be prevented and treated with a conscious, sustained effort. Stop the Silence provides that effort.

Stop the Silence: Art as Advocacy Program¹ - To Kill A Kelpie, 2013 and beyond

Stop the Silence: Stop Child Sexual Abuse (Stop the Silence, www.stopcsa.org) is an international organization that began in 2002. The **Mission** of Stop the Silence is to expose and stop child sexual abuse (CSA) and help survivors heal worldwide. Our goals, accomplished through evidence-based programming, are to: 1) promote CSA awareness, prevention and healing; 2) stop CSA and related forms of violence; and 3) celebrate the lives of those healed. We focus broadly on the themes of Awareness, Prevention, and Healing. The community of those affected by CSA is huge, and is comprised of both the enormous numbers of child and adult survivors of CSA, as well as all those affected around them. More than 1 out of 4 girls and 1 out of 6 boys are sexually molested in the U.S. by the time they are 18 years old, and survivors are (under) estimated at over 40 million in the U.S. alone (not including surrounding individuals, families, communities). Those affected cut across all genders, ethnicities, cultures, sexual orientations, etc. Outcomes can be quite severe (from poor school performance to psychological problems to drug and alcohol abuse to suicide and homicide to chronic disease) and can last for decades and over a life time. Stop the Silence embraces the power of art's advocacy and educational value to raise awareness about, prevent, and heal CSA.

Matthew McVarish, an accomplished Scottish playwright, actor, and musician, and survivor of CSA was inspired by the work of Stop the Silence when, in 2008, he went looking for help and healing options online and found our website (www.stopcsa.org). *To Kill A Kelpie* (www.tokillakelpie.com) is about two grown brothers who, following the death of their uncle, break their silence about a secret, and their realization that his gruesome tales of a child-devouring monster were simply a climate of fear created to ensure their quiet and cooperation during years of child sexual abuse. *To Kill a Kelpie* journeys through a family album filled with life shaping events and conflicting memories, deftly handling huge themes and fine details with an equal measure of care.

Mr. McVarish completed the script in 2008 and it was performed in Scotland (Phase 1), where it received rave reviews. In 2011, DHHS and Adam and Partners Investment Advisors provided the backing to bring the play to San Francisco, Chicago and Washington, D.C. (Phase 2). Audiences were invited via partnerships with community-based groups and media. As a part of the production, accompanying and evaluated after-show presentations/discussions raise awareness, and educate and catalyze action about CSA by tapping into the audience's emotional openness after the play. In April 2012, Part 1, Phase 3, brought the production to Off-Broadway in collaboration with Poorboy Theatre Co. in Scotland and with support from Creative Scotland. The goal was to reach a savvy theatre audience and generate professional reviews, which it did (see accompanying NYC reviewer's comments). *Kelpie*'s next stop was in San Diego, as a part of the International Conference on Violence, Abuse and Trauma in September 2012, to reach an audience of professional peers. *Kelpie* was again received with high acclaim. This constituted the production's international kick-off and completed Phase 3.

In the summer of 2012, award-winning Scottish director Edward M. Smith oversaw the making of *To Kill A Kelpie*, the film (see the trailer at: <https://vimeo.com/69371750>), which was field-tested and evaluated in the Fall of 2012 at Cornell, Emory, Indiana, and George Washington Universities, while other theater groups began performing *Kelpie* elsewhere. Phase 4 involves productions and screenings of *Kelpie* and the after-show presentations/guided discussions and question/answer sessions with university/community audiences across the U.S. and the world. The full program "package" involves the establishment of on-going community-based programs through outreach to non-profit and other groups to raise awareness and educate in the vicinity of each showing, and the training of service providers. The overall program integrates arts and culture with public health information to move forward a highly innovative community-building effort while maintaining the highest standard of artistic merit. **To bring this program to your community, contact Pamela Pine, PhD, MPH, Founder and Director, ppine@stopcsa.org or for a quicker response, through her personal email, write to pamelajpine@gmail.com.**

¹ Developed by Pamela Pine, PhD, MPH