



## **WOMEN URGED TO PROTECT THEIR CHILDREN FROM EMOTIONAL DISTRESS**

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### **KADUNA, NIGERIA -**

Women have a major role play in the protection of children from emotional distress, bad habits formation and criminal tendencies; Rev. Sr. Ann Falola OLA, the Executive Director of Women Interfaith Council (WIC), has declared. She made this remark in her presentation at four-day training of trainers (TOT) workshop organized by the council for executive members and leaders of faith groups in Kaduna, recently.

The training which focused on educating women on how to detect signs of radicalism, aggression and extremism early in children, was aimed at reducing radicalism and extremism among children in the country. At the workshop, it was established that on the average, more men, women and children die as a result of violence every year than from storms or droughts, which means that people live in greater danger from people around them than from natural disasters.

Reverend Sister Ann Falola, who is a Sister of the Our Lady of Apostles Congregation said the council is concerned with the issue of violence, extremism and radicalization and decided to help women detect signs when a child is being brainwashed by an outsider. According to her, mothers who are able to effectively educate their children about positive life skills and build strong communication channels with them can guide them away from harmful and potentially radicalising influences and strengthen their resilience so that they recover from distress more quickly.

“By improving your family habits and routines such as tolerance, creativity, fun and team work, you can build welcoming, enjoyable families and counter the allure of gangs and substance abuse as well as recruitment into extremist groups. “Young ones are often attracted to such behaviours to fill an emotional void in their lives,” she added.

According to her, the signs to look for include when a child becomes secretive and the parents are unaware of his/her friends; when children surf the internet for a long period of time and become jumpy when a person appears. She noted that these occur as a result gap in communication between the child and the parent. “Many of us do not create close relationship with our children by trying to know their teachers, friends and people they mingle with;” the speaker added.

Preparing this generation for marriage also formed part of the discussions at the workshop so that the participants could become aware of motherhood; how to be good wives and also how to balance all of that with their career. Also discussed was the issue of prejudice premised on religious differences.

The general coordinator of WIC, Hajiya Amina Kazaure, said the essence of the workshop was to provide women with a safe space to talk, articulate their concerns and share their experiences. She said it also aimed to guide mothers to become change makers and act in small purposeful ways right from their homes. She urged women to play their roles well in ensuring a peaceful and stable society.

In another development, the Kaduna based Women Interfaith Council has called on the Federal Government to expedite action at securing the release of the 110 abducted Dapchi School girls in Yobe State and the remaining Chibok girls by the Boko Haram insurgents.

At a press conference jointly addressed by WIC General Coordinator, Hajia Amina Kazaure, Rev. Sr. Ann Falola OLA, Executive Director; Ahmed Aliyu WIC Muslim Coordinator and Mrs. Elizabeth Abuk, WIC Christian Coordinator, the

organization used the occasion of this year's International Women Day's celebration to appeal to the government noting that: "It is worrisome that the abduction came similar to the one in Chibok nearly four years ago."

They added: "We abhor the culture of using women and girls as objects of war and tools to perpetuate political violence; we know that our religions, Islam and Christianity are not in support of this uncivilized practice."