

# Hey Dad survivor backs campaign over sex case silence

## Star slams 'absurd' law



IMPORTANT: Former child star Sarah Monahan.

NINA FUNNELL

FORMER *Hey Dad!* child star and sexual abuse survivor Sarah Monahan has joined the #LetHerSpeak campaign for sexual assault law reform in Tasmania.

"The 41-year-old who lives in Palm Beach, Florida, says the Tasmanian laws which prohibit media outlets from naming sexual assault survivors — even with their full consent — are "absurd".

"I had no idea that was a thing. Victims are normally already silenced by their perpetrators. To have the



government punish them for speaking up is revictimisation," she said.

In March 2010, Monahan publicly disclosed she had been sexually abused on the set of *Hey Dad!* by Robert Hughes, the actor who played her on-screen father.

The abuse did not happen in Tasmania, which is why Monahan could choose to be named in media. The disclosure en-

couraged other women to come forward.

Hughes was arrested in London in August 2012. He was extradited to Australia and in April 2014 convicted of 10 sexual and indecent assault charges against girls in the 1980s. He was jailed for six years.

In 2016 Monahan published a book about her experiences.

"Being allowed to tell your truth in your own words is hugely important to healing and recovery," Monahan said.

"I think survivors in Tasmania should be able to speak because it's important to put into your own words what hap-

pened to you. It's taking back your truth, your power, and your right as a human to have your own voice."

The #LetHerSpeak campaign for law reform is a collaboration between End Rape On Campus Australia, Marque Lawyers and News Corp.

At the weekend the *Sunday Tasmanian* published the story of a gang rape survivor from Burnie, who is unable to speak out using her real name, because of Tasmania's gag laws. Two of the woman's attackers were found guilty over the 1993 Christmas Day attack.

The woman — who was 16 at

the time of the gang rape — says that the gag law which prevents her from being named is "cruel and almost insulting".

The woman plans to appeal to the Supreme Court for a special exemption, allowing her to be identified.

Last week Tasmanian Attorney-General Elise Archer released a discussion paper on Section 194K of the Evidence Act, calling for submissions from the public.

If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexual assault, support is available by calling 1800 RESPECT on 1800 737 732.

## Petition backs ousted priest

LORETTA LOHBERGER

AN online petition has been launched calling on Hobart Archbishop Julian Porteous to reinstate Fr Nicholas Rynne who was removed from a Northern Tasmanian Catholic parish last week.

"Catholics of the world" are being asked to add their names to the petition that had received 170 signatures yesterday afternoon.

Fr Rynne was removed as Meander Valley parish administrator following "disturbances" in the parish since his arrival in February.

He is on leave and no decision has been made about his future.

It is understood many parishioners were unhappy because they felt a conservative brand of Catholicism was being forced upon them by Fr Rynne who came to Tasmania from Sydney.

Retired Melbourne bishop Peter Elliott conducted an investigation into the parish, hearing from 86 people.

After his report was received, Archbishop Julian Porteous announced Fr Rynne's departure.

The archdiocese has said it would not release the report because it contained "sensitive and personal information".

In a Facebook post that has since been removed, Fr Rynne threatened Archbishop Porteous with legal action if the Archbishop did not hand over Bishop Elliott's report.



What's the best part of high school so far?

Being able to do new subjects that you wouldn't be able to do in primary school.  
Amelie Buddle, 12

Finding new opportunities and meeting new people.  
Tayah Hayes, 12

Having a variety of teachers and different classes.  
Jordana Drew, 12

Having more independence because you've got to make sure you're organised and that's quite empowering.  
Isabella Metwari, 12

The teachers are nice, you get to see tonnes of more people, you've got all different friends in the classes.  
Tiffany O'Connor, 12

Having so many people there to help and having so many great opportunities.  
Lucy Booth, 12

Picture: NIKKI DAVIS-JONES

## School days pass student test

AMINA MCCAULEY

SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLMENTS STARTS PAGE 19

TASMANIAN students might be below the national average when it comes to NAPLAN testing, but these St Mary's Grade 7 students are all smiles, saying the enjoyment of school comes from

connections and opportunities.

St Mary's is one of the schools featured in today's liftout in the *Mercury* — a guide for enrolments in

schools around Hobart.

Amelie, Tiffany, Taylah, Jordana, Lucy and Isabella have this year entered high school, and said they were feeling positive about the

changes. Isabella Metwari said she already feels the independence that she didn't quite require in primary school.

"You've got to make sure

you're organised, and that's quite empowering," Isabella said.

The other girls commented on the fun that comes with the variety of subjects, the new opportunities and all the different friends and teachers they had met.

## Smarter payphones set to make comeback

PUBLIC payphones were all the rage in the 1980s and '90s, when you could reverse the charges to mum and dad if you were caught without transport. Plans are afoot to give them

a reboot in the digital age. The nation had 82,673 payphones in 1995 but that has plummeted by 80 per cent. As at June 30 last year, Telstra only had 16,220 payphones across Aus-

tralia — with 487 in Tasmania. Telstra says it now has plans to upgrade about 1800 payphones across major capital cities with "more advanced communication technologies".

## Crushed tree feller loses his battle for life

A MAN critically injured in a tree-felling incident in northern Tasmania has died from his injuries.

Tasmania Police said a report on the death of Rowland

Michael Chilton Howe, of Nunamara, would be prepared for the Coroner.

"Our thoughts are with his family and loved ones at this difficult time," police said.

The 28-year-old was flown to the Royal Hobart Hospital with serious spinal and lung injuries on Sunday after he was crushed by a tree at a property in Neils Rd, Nunamara.