

Community Support and Services Committee

From: Mary Bastable [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 30 November 2021 11:03 AM
To: Maiwar Electorate Office
Cc: Community Support and Services Committee; Maiwar Electorate Office
Subject: Submission: Criminal Law (Raising the Age of Responsibility) Amendment Bill 2021

Dear Michael Berkman MP,

To the Community Support and Services Committee, CC my local MP:

This brief personal testament strongly supports legislation introduced to Queensland Parliament by Michael Berkman, M.P. to raise the age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 14 years; and further, notes my firm support of the range of strategies proposed by The Greens to the extent that they are based on First Nations community-informed strategies. Only such strategies will address the challenges for the youth justice system when children are criminalized.

At 68, I've had a 40+ year career in Human Services and Higher Education (from Inner London Social Services departments in the early 1970s to Enable Southwest (W.A.) in 2009-12 'Learning to Listen' research project, working alongside First Nations groups and workers to address the ongoing failures of disability and other human services to provide accessible and appropriate services to Indigenous people and their associates.

I later worked for the South West Aboriginal Medical Service in W.A., alongside inspirational persons who knew exactly what must be done, and are sometimes formally recognized:-

<https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fbringingthemhomewa.com%2F2017%2F10%2F07%2Fjim-morrison-awarded-john-curtin-medal%2F&data=04%7C01%7Ccssc%40parliament.qld.gov.au%7Cb8324a9cbb0b45b5dab408d9b39d1790%7C234f33c1f5a34c5d8628a50c061ce055%7C0%7C0%7C637738309569994994%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoImNC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6Ikl1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000&reserved=0>

From the time of working with Jim: 'Build Communities not prisons jobs... housing... education' is the t-shirt I'm looking at that speaks some clear necessities..

- and I worked with First Nations women friends who worked so hard for their families and in educating and inspiring the wider community. They included a grandmother of my age, intergenerational carer, whose life ended before the children in her care even reached the age of 'criminal responsibility'.

THIS LEGISLATION IS AN ESSENTIAL FIRST STEP in addressing the systemic failure inherent in any youth justice system which criminalizes children.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Mary Bastable M.Ed. Hons ; Ph.D.
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