



Gareth Ward

Minister for Families and Communities
Minister for Disability Services

MEDIA RELEASE

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STRENGTHENING CHILD PROTECTION LEGISLATION

Children will be better protected by legislation introduced in Parliament today which builds on the NSW Government's response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services Gareth Ward said the *Children's Guardian Bill 2019* will strengthen the independent regulator and help build more accountable, child safe organisations.

"Protecting children and young people is a top priority for our Government and this Bill sends an unequivocal message to all child-related organisations," Mr Ward said.

"Organisations and agencies that engage contractors who work with children, as well as religious bodies, will be brought into the Reportable Conduct Scheme, with new penalties for anyone who fails to comply.

"The Bill will give the Children's Guardian greater authority and oversight to help organisations create safer environments for more than 1.5 million children in NSW."

The reforms will implement a number of recommendations of the Royal Commission to ensure the Children's Guardian has the legal powers to keep our kids safe.

The NSW Government has had the most comprehensive response of any state or territory to the Royal Commission, with more than \$570 million invested to protect children and support survivors of child sexual abuse.

Anglican Archbishop of Sydney Glenn Davies welcomed the changes, which he said would close the loopholes in legislation identified by the Ombudsman.

"The Anglican Church, along with other churches, has been very supportive of this move and I am glad that the highest level of protection for children in our state, will be maintained," Archbishop Davies said.

The Office of the Children's Guardian is an independent Statutory Authority that works to protect children and young people by promoting and regulating quality, child safe organisations and services.

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