



Criminal detention no place for 10-year-olds say child advocates

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The Australian and New Zealand Children's Commissioners and Guardians (ANZCCG) have called on the Australian Council of Attorneys-General to raise the age of criminal responsibility from 10 years of age to the internationally recognised standard of 14.

In a media statement released ahead of the Council of Attorneys-General meeting in Adelaide on 29 November, the ANZCCG said the practice of holding young offenders aged between 10 and 13 in criminal detention in Australia should stop.

The statement noted that children and young people in contact with the youth justice system are some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of our communities, and we know that contact

with the system at such an early age further entrenches that vulnerability.

Statistics show children who come into contact with the justice system before the age of 14 are less likely to complete schooling and find employment. They are also more likely to move into the criminal justice system as adults, the ANZCCG said.

"A disproportionate number are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Australia, and Māori children in New Zealand," the statement said.

[Read the ANZCCG media statement \(223.6KB\)](#)