



9 August 2023

Statement

WA, SA & NT CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONERS AND GUARDIANS CALL FOR UNITED APPROACH TO CHILD SAFETY

The WA Commissioner for Children and Young People Jacqueline McGowan-Jones, SA Guardian for Children and Young People, Shona Reid, and A/ Children's Commissioner of the NT, Nicole Hucks will meet with NPY Women's Council (NPYWC) this week in Alice Springs.

The Commissioners and Guardian join NPYWC in calling for a collaborative approach between State, Territory and Federal Governments regarding vulnerable children moving between jurisdictions.

NPYWC have made it clear that there are child protection service gaps putting children at risk, and that there is a critical need for jurisdictions to formalise the systems in which they interact in order to address these gaps in a way that is measurable and accountable.

The Commissioners, Guardian and NPYWC CEO Liza Balmer will be holding a media conference this Thursday at NPYWC to speak directly on these issues.

**MEDIA CONFERENCE
3PM THURSDAY 10 AUGUST
NPY Women's Council
3 Wilkinson Street, Alice Springs**

Quote attributable to Nicole Hucks, A/ Children's Commissioner NT:

- The current barriers for cross-border collaboration and support for our vulnerable children and families is a critical issue. We call on State, Territory and Federal Governments to address these practice gaps through policy, protocol or legislative amendment as a matter of urgency.

Quote attributable to Jacqueline McGowan-Jones, Children's Commissioner WA:

- We must put children at the centre of the approaches to improving outcomes for them. While legislative change may be a barrier, it should not prevent a cohesive and collaborative effort to ensure our children are safe and connected to family, culture, language and community. This issue can wait no longer for action.

Quote attributable to Shona Reid, Guardian for Children and Young People SA:

- Matters relating to cross jurisdictional collaboration are not new, there have been a number of attempts to establish ongoing robust systems to ensure the interests of vulnerable children and young people are attended to.
- It is essential that all jurisdiction place children and young people at the centre of their decision making.
- Ultimately, it's the children and young people that bear the consequence for jurisdictional and bureaucratic misalignments, miscommunications and poor service coordination.

Quote attributable to Liza Balmer, NPY Women's Council CEO:

- We want to go forward together, work together. Stand together, hold hands and move forward together.
- We should have one voice, umbrella to look after us in the 3 states. We can't walk in 3 states. We want to stand in one place, and do it the Anangu way. Right now, 3 different welfare laws for Anangu. Hop, skip, jump back, backwards and forward, there should be one law for 3 states. Come together as one, to make one law. Instead of taking kids, they should make one law for all 3 states.

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