

From: [Jody Smith](#)
To: [sentencingcouncil](#)
Subject: Submission to Good Character at Sentencing
Date: Friday, 14 February 2025 1:15:32 AM

To whom it may concern,

As a survivor of childhood sexual abuse I am writing to support the #YourReferenceAintRelevant campaign and the removal of good character references in sentencing for crimes such as child sexual abuse, domestic violence, and rape.

I wholeheartedly believe these references give offenders the power to use their so-called "good reputations" and "good character" as weapons against their victim survivors in the courtroom setting, and in arena of society via media reporting.

In the allowing of good character to mitigate sentencing we survivors are retraumatized, and the severity and public perception of the weight of these offences is drastically undermined.

The justice system, not only in New South Wales but Australia wide, has to do better. We should not have to endure a process that prioritises offenders' reputations over our voices and the harm we have endured.

I urge the Sentencing Council to deliver positive, meaningful reform through recommending the abolition of good character references in such cases.

It is about time the legal system truly prioritises justice and the well-being of survivors.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Kind regards,

Jody Smith

