

From: [REDACTED]
To: [sentencingcouncil](#)
Subject: Removal of Good character references in sentencing for child sexual abuse
Date: Friday, 14 February 2025 9:22:16 AM

Dear NSW sentencing council,

I am writing to share my support for the removal of good character references in sentencing, particularly in cases of child sexual abuse.

As someone who provides primary prevention education programs to young people and the adults in their lives about relationship violence I see the great need for the removal of character references. When providing education about the nature of grooming in particular I highlight the ways in which appearing of good character and being a respectable member of the community is part of what makes the abuse possible. Someone publicly being of good character is key in ensuring they are not suspected of child abuse, and it a plot used by many in making families and supporting adults of young people feel comfortable with their young people being around them. Thus to include character references in sentencing diminishes the seriousness of these crimes, and negates the fact that being of good character is in some matters essential to the facilitation of the crime. Alongside this, survivors hearing about the good character of a perpetrator after they have been found guilty has the potential to compound the re-traumatizing nature of the court process. Additionally the provision of good character references undermines the severity of these crimes and shifts the focus away from the harm caused to victims.

I wholeheartedly support the your reference aint relevant campaign and its call to remove good character references for cases of child sexual abuse.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Kind regards,
Libby
She/her