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Friday, 6 December 2024 6:07 PM
sentencingcouncil

As a survivor, I am writing to support the #YourReference AintRelevant campaign and call for the removal of good character references in sentencing for crimes like child sexual abuse, domestic violence, and rape.

Hearing my father the perpetrator "good character" referenced during the legal process was deeply retraumatizing. It sent the message that his reputation mattered more than the harm he caused me and my sisters he raped. These references diminish the severity of the crime and fail to acknowledge how convicted perpetrators often use their perceived trustworthiness to commit these acts.

Good character references should have no place in cases like mine. By allowing them, the justice system risks retraumatizing survivors and undermining the accountability offenders should face.

I urge the Sentencing Council to recommend the removal of good character references from sentencing in all of these cases. It's time for the legal system to prioritise survivors and reflect the reality of these crimes in its processes. Thank you for considering my submission.