

From: [Samantha White](#)
To: [sentencingcouncil](#)
Subject: Your Reference Ain't Relevant
Date: Monday, 8 July 2024 9:51:51 PM

Dear Mr. McClellan and the NSW Sentencing Council,

I am writing to provide my perspective as an educator on the review of section 21A(5A) of the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 (NSW) and related provisions concerning the use of "good character" in sentencing, specifically in cases of child sexual abuse.

In my experience as an experienced educator, I have witnessed firsthand the devastating impact that child sexual abuse has on young victims. The trauma inflicted has lifelong consequences, affecting their emotional well-being, academic performance, family structure and overall development. Allowing character references to mitigate sentencing in these cases sends a dangerous message that undermines the severity of the abuse and fails to prioritise the needs of the child. It is imperative that our legal system reflects a zero-tolerance approach to such heinous crimes and ensures that perpetrators are held fully accountable for their actions.

I strongly support the 'Your Reference Ain't Relevant' Campaign's advocacy to remove provisions allowing for the consideration of good character in sentencing for child sexual abuse. This change is crucial to maintaining trust in our justice system and ensuring that it serves the best interests of our communities, particularly our most vulnerable members.

Thank you for considering my perspective on this important matter.

Sincerely,
Samantha Allen