

Committee on Children and Young People
Public hearing – 29 April 2021

Responses to questions taken on notice
SHINE for Kids



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We are **passionate** about **transforming** the lives of **children**, young people and **families** affected by the **criminal justice system**

SHINE for Kids Response to the Question on Notice – Transcript of evidence - Support for children of imprisoned parents

David Shoebridge – “They have both said, in one form or another, that we basically need a commission—some kind of statutory body—to have responsibility to pull those different elements together and be able to redirect funding where it is needed. It may be outside the scope of this inquiry, but do you have a view about that need for a fundamental change and a statutory body to direct resources and work across agencies?”

Do you want to take that on notice and have a look at those two recommendations from the Tune report and Family is Culture report—specifically those two recommendations, in one form or another, about a family commission?”

SHINE for Kids Response

SHINE for Kids has reviewed the recommendations from both the Tune Report & the Family is Culture report and can confirm that it supports the recommendation in the Tune Report of a NSW Family Investment Commission and that Children of Prisoners should be a specific cohort group given the interaction of this group with OOH & children at risk of significant harm (ROSH) and vulnerable families more broadly.

Attached is an extract from the Tune Report of that recommendation.

A NSW Family Investment Commission

To achieve these fundamental changes, a dedicated and focused new entity is required with sufficient scope and authority and single Ministerial accountability. The Review therefore recommends that a new NSW Family Investment Commission be established to lead this transformation (with resourcing drawn from existing agencies) and that a Minister be given responsibility for it. Reliance on the existing governance arrangements, with all the systemic deficiencies noted above, would place implementation of the Review recommendations at great risk.

The NSW Family Investment Commission would coordinate and lead the reform to achieve better outcomes for vulnerable families in NSW by:

- driving the establishment of personalised support packages for vulnerable children and families;
- developing an outcomes framework for vulnerable children and families;
- implementing the investment approach;
- setting the strategic direction for outcomes, resource allocation and prioritisation;
- holding cross-agency funding, appropriated to the Commission;
- setting the parameters and outcomes for local commissioning; and
- providing the system stewardship to build capacity of the service sector, mitigate risk and seek opportunities.

Local Cross Agency Boards would be established in each district to provide advice and commission services in accordance with the Commission's priorities and defined outcomes.

Local Cross Agency Boards would:

- provide advice on district performance against the outcomes framework and local needs and service gaps;



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- implement the Commission's decisions for specific cohorts; and
- commission and procure services provided under the personalised support packages.

The Commission would be responsible for defining and improving outcomes for specific population groups, beginning with children and young people in OOHC and families with children at imminent risk of entering OOHC. Its focus should expand to include additional population groups within five years, including children at risk of significant harm (ROSH) and vulnerable families more broadly.

Implementation of these recommendations will be a major challenge and it will take time to achieve results. However, over time, it should start to reverse the ongoing growth in expenditure on OOHC and deliver better outcomes for vulnerable children and families.

Without them, the system will continue to 'bounce along' with incremental reform but with no realistic chance of achieving these outcomes.

The establishment of a NSW Family Investment Commission would enable the Governance recommendations 74-76 in SHINE for Kids submission to be actioned.

Governance Recommendations

Recommendation 74: That the Premier urge the Prime Minister develop a 'Prevention of Intergenerational Involvement with Criminal Justice System Fund' to support the development of a NSW strategy and the rollout of a national strategy for children of prisoners.

Recommendation 75: That the Premier develop a State Committee and urge the Prime Minister to commission a national study on children of prisoners to be undertaken by the National Children's Commissioner.

Recommendation 76: That the Premier direct the Department of Communities and Justice to meet with SHINE for Kids to develop policies and programs to meet the needs of children of imprisoned parents.