

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

**Minister for Community Services**  
**Minister for Women**  
**The Hon. Linda Burney MP**



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**Tuesday, 6 October 2009**

The NSW Ombudsman today released his report into the role of various government agencies in Ebony's life and what could have been done to prevent her tragic death.

"This little girl's death was a shocking crime. I share in the community's horror at her parents' wilful murder and neglect of their young daughter," Minister for Community Services Linda Burney said.

"It is impossible to imagine the suffering Ebony endured.

"As was said at the time and as I say today, although it was her parents who killed this little girl, the system let Ebony down.

"It is clear that while several government agencies had worked to help this family, the full seriousness of the situation was not recognised and critical opportunities to intervene were missed.

"Following Ebony's death, the Government asked the NSW Ombudsman to investigate what went wrong, and what could have been done to prevent her death.

"The Ombudsman provided government agencies with an interim copy of this report some time ago, so that his recommendations could be actioned as soon as possible.

"Community Services has implemented or is in the process of implementing each and every one of those recommendations.

"In addition to the Ombudsman's investigation, the Government also asked former Supreme Court Judge, Special Commissioner James Wood, to undertake an extensive, independent review of the child protection system.

"The Government accepted almost all of Commissioner Wood's 111 recommendations. We have embarked on major reforms to address some of the issues that this case highlighted; for example, we have changed privacy legislation to enable agencies to share information.

"This Government has committed \$750 million to fund *Keep Them Safe*, our action plan to reform the child protection system. We have also given a record \$1.6 billion to help Community Services support vulnerable children and families."

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