

# Keep Them Safe

A shared approach to child wellbeing

## Regional Engagement Tour

### MEDIA RELEASE

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## Keep Them Safe tour to visit Campbelltown

Nearly 200 senior executives from Government and non-Government agencies and organisations operating in the local area will gain firsthand insight into NSW's eagerly anticipated *Keep Them Safe* reforms as part of a regional engagement tour arriving in Campbelltown today.

*Keep Them Safe* is the NSW Government's action plan to drastically change the way children and families are protected and supported.

Linda Burney, the lead Minister for *Keep Them Safe*, said this is the sixth of 11 forums being held across NSW during September and October to promote discussion and generate awareness around the reforms. More than 800 people have attended forums so far.

"This initiative highlights a new unified approach towards child and family wellbeing, as advocated by the Honourable James Wood AO QC in his *Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection in NSW*," Ms Burney said.

The three-hour forums are facilitated by Julie McCrossin and feature a hypothetical case study, panel discussions and interactive discussions. Senior representatives from Government and non-Government agencies are on hand to answer questions about the reforms, on issues such as the new mandatory reporting threshold, Child Wellbeing Units and Family Referral Services. Further details on upcoming training initiatives to occur between October to December 2009 for mandatory reporters will also be announced.

The tour is an initiative of the NSW Government in partnership with the non-Government sector and is being coordinated by the Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA).

"This state has embarked on significant reforms in child protection that require the backing of senior management in all the Government agencies and NGOs that work with children and young people," Ms Burney said.

"We will soon be running training programs for over 200,000 mandatory reporters across the state, so that they understand the new system. The engagement tour is the opportunity for school principals, regional department heads and local leaders in the non-Government sector to find out what will be involved and to give it their full support."

ACWA CEO Andrew McCallum said the path to truly successful reform rests upon a strong spirit of collaboration between the state's Government and non-Government sectors.

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"Only by working together can we create a better future for our community's most vulnerable," Mr McCallum said.

"It is a message we are promoting loud and clear as we travel around the state on this regional engagement tour."

Bill Pritchard, Executive Officer of the NSW Aboriginal Child, Family and Community Care Secretariat (AbSec), has welcomed the opportunity for local Aboriginal agencies to participate in the *Keep Them Safe* dialogue and embrace the new shared approach to child wellbeing.

"*Keep Them Safe* contains a number of significant recommendations relating to better outcomes for Aboriginal child and families and I encourage local Aboriginal organisations to seize this opportunity to contribute to this most vital of discussions," he said.

NCOSS Acting Director Samantha Edmonds said the tour is the first step in what needs to be a comprehensive suite of measures to ensure everyone involved in child wellbeing understands the implications of *Keep Them Safe* and what their roles will be under the new system.

"We need to keep in mind that Commissioner Wood said child wellbeing is everyone's responsibility, and it is essential that there is strong communication between all parts of the sector, both government and non-government, so we can ensure that all children are happy, healthy and well cared for," she said.

The *Keep Them Safe* Regional Engagement Tour will next visit Armidale on October 2. For more details visit: [www.acwa.asn.au](http://www.acwa.asn.au) and [www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au](http://www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au)

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### Upcoming *Keep Them Safe* Regional Engagement Tour Forums

October 2	Armidale
October 6	Penrith
October 12	Dubbo
October 13	Broken Hill
October 16	Wagga Wagga