



November 2021

Moderator
Rev Andrew Gunton

Committee Secretary
Community Support and Services Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Committee Secretary,

Inquiry into the Criminal Law (Raising the Age of Responsibility) Amendment Bill 2021

The Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod (Queensland Synod) and its service delivery agencies, UnitingCare Queensland and Wesley Mission Queensland, welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to the Community Support and Services Committee on the Inquiry into the *Criminal Law (Raising the Age of Responsibility) Amendment Bill 2021*. We are committed to contributing to services and programs aimed at prevention and early intervention for children and young people and their families, who are experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage.

The Queensland Synod is a general member of the national #Raise the Age alliance. We advocate for raising the age of criminal responsibility in Queensland to 14 years, consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child to which Australia is a signatory. The ACT Legislative Assembly has committed to raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility, with legislation to be drafted in 2022. We support the *Criminal Law (Raising the Age of Responsibility) Amendment Bill 2021* in its entirety.

In addition, we support the alternative non-criminal model proposed to address problematic behaviour by children under 14, which includes early intervention and prevention, therapeutic responses to antisocial behaviour, and intensive case management for serious problematic behaviour.



The Queensland Synod would welcome future opportunities to discuss this submission further. Should you require any more information, I can be contacted on 07 3377 9705.

Yours sincerely,

Rev. Andrew Gunton
Moderator, Uniting Church in Australia Queensland Synod

Supported by:

Craig Barke
Chief Executive Officer, UnitingCare

Jude Emmer
Chief Executive Officer, Wesley Mission Queensland