



## Media Release

### Inquiry into child protection and social services system

Last year a staggering 77,026 children assessed by the Department of Communities and Justice to be at risk of significant harm were not followed up.

These are children the subject of real neglect, children who don't get fed or clothed, children whose parents or carers might be dysfunctional as a result of mental or physical illness, drug addiction or alcohol abuse or, in the worst of cases, children who are in danger of, or who have been, bashed or sexually abused.

Every single one of these 77,026 children were not followed up by the current child protection system at precisely their time of greatest need.

Over the last four years the number of these ignored children has increased from 54,577 to 77,026. A 41 percent increase over 4 years.

The Joint Committee on Children and Young People will inquire into how the current child protection and social services system responds to these vulnerable children and their families.

The Committee will consider the respective roles and responsibilities of health, education, police, justice and social services and assess what are the optimum evidence based prevention and early intervention responses for these vulnerable children and families.

The availability and adequacy of current funding for prevention and early intervention services will also be considered.

A copy of the Committee's terms of reference is attached.

More information, including the inquiry's terms of reference and how to make a submission, is available on the Committee's [webpage](#).

The closing date for submissions is Friday, 11 December 2020.

**Media: The Hon Matthew Mason-Cox, Committee Chair – 0409 228 886**