

PROVISION OF ALCOHOL TO MINORS

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Mr Bruce Notley-Smith MP
Chair
Social Policy Committee
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Mr Notley-Smith

Thank you for the opportunity to consider the Social Policy Committee's May 2013 Discussion Paper to support formulation of recommendations following the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into the Provision of Alcohol to Minors.

The Commission appreciated the opportunity to provide submissions to this Inquiry and our views are accurately reflected in the Discussion Paper.

Consumption of alcohol in risky ways is a serious health and social issue for a significant minority of NSW children. Many children who use alcohol, particularly younger adolescents, do so through secondary supply by parents and consume alcohol outside of licensed premises, including in the family home and in the homes of friends.

Overall, the Commission supports appropriate measures intended to restrict or limit children's access to alcohol and minimise the harm associated with this, including introducing provisions into the *NSW Liquor Act* which might influence parents who wish to supply alcohol to their children to do so in a manner that is consistent with responsible supervision of the child. In addition to legislative reform, the Commission favours multiple strategies, including effective family based interventions, educative measures targeting parents and children and early intervention, treatment and rehabilitation measures for children who use alcohol harmfully.

Many of the specific issues under consideration by the Committee require weighing the evidence of harms against the practicality, feasibility and expense of providing or enforcing proposed protective measures. The Commission is not in a position to comment on the detail of each proposed recommendation but we would be happy to make ourselves available should the Committee wish to raise any particular issues with us. Please feel free to contact the Commission's Director of Policy and Research, Mr Gregor Macfie

Yours sincerely

Kerryn Boland
Children's Guardian and A/Commissioner for Children and Young People

28 June 2013