

Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform

committed to preventing tragedy that arises from illicit drug use

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MEDIA RELEASE

Bronwyn Bishop's drug report a recipe for disaster

"The House of Representative's Family & Community Affairs Committee Report released this morning is a disgrace", said Brian McConnell, President of Families & Friends for Drug Law. "It flagrantly disregards existing evidence and research but worse still does not listen to alternative views and proposes defunding of any organisation that attempts to promote the development of drug policies based on evidence.

The report calls for:

- the complete reversal of Australia's harm minimisation policy in preference for the failed US policy of zero tolerance which maximises harm,
- compulsory treatment for addiction for which there is no evidential support,
- restrictions on methadone maintenance programs which are the gold standard for opiate addiction treatment,
- removal of children from parents who use illicit drugs which will drive people away from treatment, and
- overall, a relentless drive to be drug free in respect of illicit drugs but is totally silent on alcohol.

This report, far from being "The winnable war on drugs" as its title claims, is a road map to disaster which would bring untold additional harm and misery on young people and the Australian community.

It is a disgrace that a committee of our national parliament should display the ignorance that it has done and close its mind to reason and science. The course of the inquiry has been a scandal with the committee refusing to consider a mountain of scientific evidence that is out there in support of existing drug policy. It has been an inquiry driven by ideology, not open minded enlightenment.

"The committee throughout has sought to assassinate the character of those who argue for the minimisation of drug harms on the ground that they preach amorality. **What is amoral is that the report says that the lives and well being of our young people and of the whole community are less important than forcing people to become drug free.**

Being drug free is an objective that members of Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform would dearly wish for their children. It is obscene though, that this be pushed at the expense of their life and well being which is what this report prescribes. Life and well being must have top priority.

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