

Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform

committed to preventing tragedy that arises from illicit drug policy

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08 November 2019

MEDIA RELEASE

Pushback against the NSW coroner's findings in favour of pill testing confirm why her recommendations must be implemented immediately!

"Our satisfaction with recommendations released today by the [NSW coronial inquest](#) into six young deaths at music festivals across that State at music festivals is exceeded only by our dismay at the punitive mindset of the New South Wales government and police," declared Bill Bush, president of Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform.

He welcomed the comprehensive criticism by the New South Wales coroner of the current law enforcement approach to drug use.

"No wonder the NSW cops [summarily dismiss with a flick](#) on the day of its release the considered report of the NSW coroner when their [police minister says](#) he "would want" officers to strip-search his children." "You have to wonder," Mr Bush added, "whether the leaking in late October of the draft coroner's report was a deliberate attempt to warn her off doing her duty of carefully gathering and assessing the evidence of how six deaths occurred during the previous music festival season."

Mr Bush added that strip searching is experienced as sexual abuse. "There should be no more tolerance of that behaviour by the police than there is of sexual abuse in the rest of the community."

He added that if the government and the police can't see their way clear to adopt measures that save lives at music festivals then there is something to be said for the Premier's initial call for music festivals to be banned. Law enforcement conduct of the type described by the coroner is more dangerous than the drugs they are vainly seeking to deter people from using.

According to Families and Friends, the dismissal of the coroner's findings is the most egregious rejection of evidence as the guide to drug policy since the rejection by the Prime Minister in 1997, of a trial of medically prescribed heroin. Countries where that approach has been taken have seen a reduction in crime and incarceration.

Who loses out by that?

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