



MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, 18 November 2024

Compassion Takes Centre Stage: NSW Peak Body Calls for Heartfelt Leadership at Drug Summit

Fams, the peak body for family and children's services in New South Wales, is urging a transformative shift in drug policy at the forthcoming NSW Drug Summit in Sydney.

The peak body is calling on the Parliament to lead with compassion and implement cohesive strategies prioritising child safety and wellbeing while keeping families united.

“Our current punitive approaches to drug policy are tearing families apart and leaving communities worse off,” says Fams CEO Susan Watson.

“By championing family-centred approaches to alcohol and drugs, we can create a supportive environment that empowers families and protects our children.

“There's an urgent need for enhanced, evidence-based rehabilitation services for parents that maintain family and communities.”

Ms Watson emphasised the emotional toll of family separation, noting that the pain parents feel can lead to increased substance use and harmful behaviours.

“Stigma and discrimination only worsen these challenges. We need an equitable, person-centred approach that meets families' unique needs while preserving their connections to children and culture,” she said.

Fams believes that turning parental love into action through early intervention is crucial to preventing crises.

And that mobilising resources before issues escalate can help families navigate their struggles and avoid the pitfalls of existing support systems.

“Early intervention not only addresses immediate challenges, but it also disrupts the cycle of intergenerational disadvantage and violence, reducing ongoing involvement with child protection agencies,” Ms Watson said.

Fams is calling for increased funding, improved collaboration, and cross-sector training between child protection and drug services.

“Our systems must prioritise prevention and nurture the bonds that matter most, but this is only possible if community services are funded and resourced to provide the support that families deserve,” Ms Watson said.



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About Fams

Fams is the peak body for family and children's services in New South Wales. Our mission is to advocate for improved policies and resources for early intervention and prevention NGOs that support NSW children, families, and their communities.

Fams works collaboratively with Government, Policy and decision-makers, non-government organisations, academic organisations, peak bodies, family and community services sector, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and organisations working with diverse communities. We advocate for improved policies and resources for children, young people, families, communities and services.

For more information about Fams go to www.fams.asn.au