



AUSTRALIAN FAMILY ASSOCIATION

South Australian Branch

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Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Family and Human Services
House of Representatives
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

To Whom It May Concern,

Inquiry into the impact of illicit drug use on families

The Australian Family Association (SA Branch) wishes to make a brief submission to the inquiry into the impact of illicit drug use on families.

In addition to remarks previously submitted by our colleagues interstate, we simply wish to state our complete opposition to the so-called 'harm minimisation' policy.

It has proved to be an abject failure and has done immense damage to families and to the Australian social fabric, turning a blind eye to (or even encouraging) self-destructive behaviour. It has also made Australia an inviting place for drug traffickers to do business.

We would encourage the Committee to explore the policies of nations such as Sweden, the country with the lowest illicit drug use in Europe.

One of the key benefits of the Swedish programme is the power of courts to mandate detoxification and rehabilitation – a much better course than abandoning citizens (particularly vulnerable youth) to lives of addiction where the state seeks to 'minimise harm'.

If the Committee has not already seen a copy, we would encourage it to obtain the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime report *Sweden's Successful Drug Policy: A Review of the Evidence* (September 2006 – from www.undodc.org).

PO Box 460
Fullarton SA 5063
Ph: 8379 0246
Fax: 83799206
nccafa@chariot.com.au

The Committee's findings may well prove to be a milestone in the sad story of illicit drug use in Australia. We would therefore encourage it to do everything in its power to turn to policies which actively divert people from drug use, thereby helping their families and the wider community, rather than the hopeless 'harm minimisation' policies of the past.

Damian Wyld
State Secretary

PO Box 460
Fullarton SA 5063
Ph: 8379 0246
Fax: 83799206
nccafa@chariot.com.au
