

For the children

24 February 2023

The Australian Law Reform Commission

The Honourable Members of the Federal Parliament and the Australian Government,

Thank you for pursuing peace and unity for Australians. Bringing peace and unity to Australia will be found when all people love their neighbour as they love themselves.

I ask you to consider what is in the best interest of Australian children and generations yet to be born. Children and students must be protected from any kind of exploitation (United Nations Convention Rights of the Child, 3 and 36). Children should not be mandated to learn diverse sexual expressions and diverse sexual identities as part of the school curriculum.

In the UN Siracusa Principles, limits to religious freedom must be found to be **necessary**. However, with thousands of jobs available in public educational institutions, it is not necessary to change the present Religious Educational Institutes and Discrimination laws for non-government schools. It is not necessary to reduce the freedoms of religious educational institutions. It is not necessary to mandate the teaching of diverse sexual expressions and identities in the requirements of the school curriculum for all schools.

Children should be free to enjoy their childhoods and their innocence. Exposing children to a curriculum which includes diverse sexual expressions and diverse sexual identities is harmful and abusive to children. Children should be free to enjoy the innocence of their childhood without the agitation of sexualised messages embedded within the school curriculum. Parents should be free to choose what they believe is best for their children in this matter, where diverse opinions exist. I believe that it is not appropriate for sexualised messages to be explicitly taught to children, nor in any underpinning, hidden curriculum. Many other parents believe the same. Their freedom of choice should be assured.

"A Christ-centred learning community is one where, because of love and respect for each other, there is the opportunity for discussion, sharing of ideas and putting ideas into practice. This happens as teacher and students grow in relationship with Jesus Christ and his body, the community of God's people" (Friskin, 2013, p. 121).

“Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?” Jesus replied, “‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.”

Love the children of Australia and those yet to be born. I ask that you allow children and families to continue to benefit from the education and community of authentically Christian educational institutions. Please allow Christian educational institutions to continue with the present freedoms. Please allow all Australians to continue to have freedom of choice in how they live and how they educate their children.

Thank you for considering my submission and the many submissions of other people from different religious and family backgrounds.