



Alister Henskens
Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services

MEDIA RELEASE

Saturday, 18 September 2021

PROTECTING CHILDREN THROUGH INNOVATION

At-risk children are being prevented from slipping through the cracks when their families move interstate with a new database helping child protection authorities access critical information from interstate agencies.

Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services Alister Henskens said NSW child protection workers used the landmark digital platform, Connect for Safety, more than 800 times in the last month alone.

“The simple act of sharing information across borders could be the difference between preventing child abuse or neglect, and having it go undetected,” Mr Henskens said.

“This world-leading platform has been developed in NSW and is creating a stronger safety net for at-risk kids, by enabling the exchange of data quickly, easily and securely between state and territory child protection agencies.”

Prior to the pandemic, on average about 330,000 Australians moved interstate each year. Vulnerable children are often at heightened risk of harm if their background in a previous jurisdiction is unknown, or not easily accessible to child protection authorities.

All state and territory jurisdictions, except Tasmania, are currently sharing information on *Connect for Safety*, with Tasmania to come onboard later this year.

Under the roll out, every statutory child protection officer in Australia will have access to Connect for Safety by July 2022.

Federal Minister for Social Services Anne Ruston said the ground-breaking project is about preventing children falling through the cracks.

“This national approach will make it easier for child protection caseworkers to get clarity around a child’s life story and provide an effective response,” Ms Ruston said.

“Our aim is to improve outcomes for children no matter where they live, with inter-jurisdictional information exchange a vital part of keeping kids safe.”

Connect for Safety aligns with the National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2009-2020 and goes towards addressing recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

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