

Media Release

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NATION-LEADING LAWS TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE, FAMILIES STRONG

Labor is making sure children grow up in secure, stable homes and that families have the chance to reunite safely.

Two landmark pieces of legislation passed the Victorian Parliament this week which remove the strict time limit for Family Reunification Orders, as well as creating a nation leading shared responsibility across Government to improve outcomes for children, young people, and families.

The *Children, Youth and Families Amendment (Stability) Bill 2025* removes strict time limits for family reunification orders, acquitting Recommendation 25 of the Yoorrook for Justice report.

This means that parents have additional time to access support and make changes to have their children returned to their care, where it is safe to do so and in the best interests of the child.

The Stability Bill also removes adoption from child protection case planning objectives, aligning legislation with longstanding practice in Victoria that adoption is not proactively pursued by child protection.

In addition, the *Children, Youth and Families Amendment (Supporting Stable and Strong Families) Bill 2025* establishes - for the first time in Australia - a new model of shared responsibilities modelled off the Scottish 'Corporate Parent' model.

Government support for care leavers and at-risk children and families should not be the responsibility of Child Protection alone – this change will enable them to receive comprehensive support.

The Supporting Stable and Strong Families Bill establishes responsibilities for all Ministers and Departments to improve outcomes for at-risk children, young people, care leavers and families.

The scheme also requires the tabling of plans and progress reports in Parliament, to ensure accountability across the government.

Together, these nation-leading changes mean that the safety and best interests of children and young people are enshrined in law as a priority.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Children and Minister for Disability Lizzie Blandthorn

"Every child deserves safety and every family deserves a fair chance - these nation-leading laws deliver both."

"We're giving families the time and support they need to reunite safely and making every part of government accountable for delivering it."