

# Deb Foskey MLA

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## Age of criminal responsibility

Greens MLA Dr Deb Foskey will move to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 12 years when the Children and Young People Bill is debated later today.

“The ACT Greens are generally supportive of the ACT Government’s Children and Young People Bill, having been involved in its development over a number of years” Dr Foskey said today.

“However I will move an amendment tomorrow to lift the minimum age of presumed criminal responsibility from 10 to 12 years, consistent with international justice and human rights thinking.”

“The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, for example, is strongly of the view that children of 10 are generally too young to understand the nature and the implication of their actions.”

“In ACT criminal law, children between the ages of 10 and 14 are presumed to be incapable of understanding the criminal nature of their actions. I don’t want to change the upper limit of 14 for criminal responsibility, but I agree with international human rights experts who consider that the lower limit should be raised to 12 years old.”

“I understand that the ACT Government is working towards a national approach, but we shouldn’t be backwards in being forward when it comes to protecting the interests of children, and the ACT with its Human Rights Act can and should take the lead” Dr Foskey said.

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