

# TV this week

Sunday, June 18, 2017

**Benjamin Law creates and writes hit SBS comedy *The Family Law*, loosely based on his upbringing in a Chinese-Australian family. He tells DANIELLE McGRANE what it's like juggling two families and how much of the show is based on real life.**



**Family values:** Trystan Go plays Benjamin Law while Fiona Choi plays his mum on *The Family Law*.

## Laying down the Law

Benjamin Law knows how to turn tragedy into comedy. The writer and creator of *The Family Law* made his family problems the subject of the popular TV show which is returning for a second season.

“What we’ve made is a comedy about one of the

saddest things possible, it’s a comedy about divorce,” Law says.

“I was 12 when my parents split up. It’s like a huge tear in the fabric of family and of your existence, but there’s that saying that time plus tragedy equals comedy, and when you look back on those instances as an adult,

as I’ve been writing the TV show, you can see the kind of grim comedy in a lot of these situations.”

The first season of the show followed the exploits of the Chinese-American Law family, loosely based on what Law and his family really went through. But, as the second season magi-

cally lands itself in the present day, the writer/creator stresses that this is not an on-screen play-by-play of his childhood and teenage years.

“It’s not a documentary series and also the fact that we’ve moved and dragged the story to present day, that was kind of a wink to the

audience to say, ‘Not everything is necessarily true’. It’s not like I grew up in 2017, but it’s inspired by a lot of things that happened to me,” Law says.

“What we’re really wanting to represent is an emotional truth – what does it feel like when your parents have split up? What does it feel like when your kids have grown up and you’re not prepared to let them go? What does it feel like when your parent, who only recently separated, hooks up with someone else?”

“Those are really complicated things that I can definitely relate to because of real things that have happened in my life with my family.”

Season one ended on a slightly optimistic note. After a summer spent wondering if Ben’s parents, Jenny and Danny, would repair their marriage and get back together, they decided to go their separate ways believing some parents work better apart.

But, as Law points out, season two will look at the fact that separations don’t generally run smoothly, especially when people embark on new relationships.

“We look at some of the practical realities about what’s happened in a divorce. We also want to look at the fact that one of the other big challenges with a

family is letting new members into it,” he says.

“When you’ve got five kids, not everybody’s going to react the same way.”

One of the show’s central characters is Ben’s mum Jenny, played by Fiona Choi. She’s written as an incredibly strong and, at times, overbearing character who is based on Law’s real-life mother.

“The people who know the real Jenny say it’s probably one of the rare instances where the on-screen version is slightly tamer than the real-life version,” he jokes.

But Law also acknowledges that this is one of the core relationships in the show and it’s going through some changes this season.

“In series two, Ben’s a teenager and teenagers can be really awful to their parents, and parents can have a really tough time letting go of their children as they become teenagers – they can be over-invested. So in series two we wanted to see what a fight between Ben and Jenny would look like,” Law says.

“I know when I was a teenager I fought with my mum a lot. So we want to move into that territory as well and look at horrible teenagers and the way they mistreat their parents.”

■ **The Family Law**  
Thursday, 8.35pm on SBS

## SUNDAY, JUNE 18, 2017

<p><b>NINE</b></p> <p><b>6.00</b> PAW Patrol (R, CC) <b>6.30</b> Dora (R, CC) <b>7.00</b> Weekend Today (CC) <b>10.00</b> Sports Sunday (PG, CC) <b>11.00</b> NRL Sunday Footy Show (PG, CC) <b>1.00</b> Full Cycle (CC) <b>1.30</b> Surfing Australia TV (CC) <b>2.00</b> Surfing. (CC) World League. Rip Curl Pro. <b>3.00</b> Rugby League. (CC) NRL. Round 15. Parramatta Eels v St George Illawarra Dragons. <b>5.30</b> Motor Racing. (CC) Targa Tasmania. Classic. Highlights. <b>6.00</b> Nine News. (CC) <b>7.00</b> The Voice. (PG, CC) <b>9.00</b> 60 Minutes. (CC) <b>10.00</b> Challenger Disaster: The Lost Tapes. (PG, CC) <b>11.00</b> Inside The World's Toughest Prisons. (Mln, R, CC) <b>12.00</b> House (Madms, R, CC) <b>1.00</b> Getaway (PG, R, CC) <b>1.30</b> The Avengers (PG, R, CC) <b>2.30</b> Global Shop <b>3.00</b> The Baron (PG, R) <b>4.00</b> Good Morning America: Sunday (CC) <b>5.00</b> News (CC) <b>5.30</b> Today (CC)</p>	<p><b>SCTV DARWIN</b></p> <p><b>6.00</b> NBC Today (CC) <b>7.00</b> Weekend Sunrise (CC) <b>10.00</b> AFL Game Day (CC) <b>11.30</b> Bewitched (R, CC) <b>12.00</b> Chimpanzee (R, CC) <b>1.30</b> MOVIE: Sharpay's Fabulous Adventure (R, CC, 2011) <b>3.30</b> The Zoo (R, CC) <b>4.00</b> Better Homes And Gardens (R, CC) <b>5.00</b> Seven News At 5 (CC) <b>5.30</b> A Moveable Feast (PG, CC) <b>6.00</b> Seven News. (CC) <b>7.00</b> House Rules. (PG, CC) <b>8.30</b> Sunday Night. (CC) <b>9.30</b> The Suspects: True Australian Thrillers. (M, R, CC) (Final) <b>10.30</b> Britain's Busiest Airport: Heathrow. (Ml, CC) <b>11.30</b> Wanted. (Mv, R, CC) <b>12.30</b> Winners &amp; Losers. (Mav, R, CC) (Final) <b>1.30</b> Harry's Practice. (R, CC) <b>2.00</b> Home Shopping (R) <b>3.30</b> Harry's Practice (R, CC) <b>4.00</b> NBC Meet The Press (CC) <b>5.00</b> Seven Early News (CC) <b>5.30</b> Sunrise (CC)</p>	<p><b>ABC</b></p> <p><b>6.00</b> Rage (PG, CC) <b>7.00</b> Weekend Breakfast (CC) <b>9.00</b> Insiders (CC) <b>10.00</b> Offsiders (CC) <b>10.30</b> World This Week (R, CC) <b>11.00</b> Compass (PG, R, CC) <b>11.30</b> Praise (R, CC) <b>12.00</b> Landline (CC) <b>1.00</b> Gardening Australia (R, CC) <b>1.30</b> Delicious (Malv, R, CC) <b>2.15</b> Jill Bilcock (Mlv, R, CC) <b>2.45</b> The Mix (R, CC) <b>3.15</b> Australia Wide (R, CC) <b>3.45</b> Aust Story (R, CC) <b>4.15</b> The Checkout (PG, R, CC) <b>4.45</b> Father Brown (PG, R, CC) <b>5.30</b> Ask The Doctor (PG, R, CC) <b>6.00</b> Anh's Brush With Fame: Jack Charles (PG, R, CC) <b>6.30</b> Little Lunch (R, CC) <b>7.00</b> ABC News (CC) <b>7.40</b> Doctor Who. (PG, CC) <b>8.30</b> Poldark. (PG, CC) (Series return) <b>9.30</b> Death In Paradise. (PG, R, CC) <b>10.30</b> The Doctor Blake Mysteries (Mv, R, CC) (Final) <b>11.25</b> MOVIE: Healing (Ml, R, CC, 2014) Don Hany. <b>1.20</b> Rage (MA15+adflnsv) <b>2.25</b> Mad Dogs (MA15+dl, R, CC) <b>3.10</b> Death In Paradise (PG, R, CC) <b>4.10</b> Murder, She Wrote (PG, R, CC) <b>5.00</b> Insiders (R, CC)</p>	<p><b>SBS</b></p> <p><b>6.00</b> WorldWatch <b>7.30</b> Italian News <b>8.10</b> Filipino News <b>8.40</b> French News <b>9.30</b> Greek News <b>10.30</b> German News <b>11.00</b> Spanish News <b>12.00</b> Arabic News <b>12.30</b> Turkish News <b>1.00</b> Speedweek (CC) <b>3.00</b> The Bowls Show (CC) <b>4.00</b> FIFA World Cup 2018 Magazine (CC) <b>4.30</b> InCycle (CC) <b>5.00</b> Small Business Secrets (CC) <b>5.30</b> Invasion: The Outbreak Of World War II (PGa, R, CC) <b>6.30</b> SBS World News. (CC) <b>7.35</b> Riddle Of Petra. (CC) <b>8.30</b> The Putin Interviews. (CC) <b>10.30</b> The Baulkham Hills African Ladies Troupe. (PGa, CC) <b>12.05</b> MOVIE: Air Doll. (MA15+, R, 2009) <b>2.05</b> MOVIE: Dead Man Walking (MA15+av, R, CC, 1995) Sean Penn, Susan Sarandon. <b>4.15</b> Food Lovers' Guide To Australia (R, CC) <b>4.50</b> SBS Flashback (R, CC) <b>5.00</b> CGTN English News (CC) <b>5.15</b> NHK World English News (CC) <b>5.30</b> Deutsche Welle English News (CC)</p>	<p><b>TEN DIGITAL</b></p> <p><b>6.00</b> Mass (CC) <b>6.30</b> Hillsong (CC) <b>7.00</b> Joseph Prince (CC) <b>7.30</b> Joel Osteen (CC) <b>8.00</b> GCBC (R, CC) <b>8.30</b> Everyday Gourmet (R, CC) <b>9.00</b> My Market Kitchen (R, CC) <b>9.30</b> St10 (PG, CC) <b>12.00</b> The Doctors (PGa, CC) <b>1.00</b> iFish (R, CC) <b>2.00</b> MasterChef Australia (PGI, R, CC) <b>3.00</b> Cruise Mode (CC) (Series return) <b>3.30</b> RPM (CC) <b>4.00</b> Motor Racing. (CC) Supercars Championship. Round 6. Darwin Triple Crown. Race 12. Highlights. <b>5.00</b> TEN Eyewitness News (CC) <b>6.00</b> Family Feud: Sunday. (CC) <b>6.30</b> Modern Family. (PG, R, CC) <b>7.30</b> MasterChef Australia. (CC) <b>9.10</b> Bull. (Ma, CC) <b>10.10</b> NCIS: New Orleans. (MA15+v, CC) <b>12.00</b> 48 Hours: Eleven Hundred Miles To Murder. (Ma, R, CC) <b>2.00</b> Home Shopping. (R) <b>4.00</b> The Home Team. (R, CC) <b>4.30</b> CBS This Morning. (CC)</p>
<p><b>GO!</b></p> <p><b>6.00</b> Children's Programs <b>1.00</b> Beyblade Burst <b>1.30</b> Steven Universe <b>2.00</b> Yu-Gi-Oh! <b>2.30</b> Yu-Gi-Oh! <b>3.00</b> The Powerpuff Girls <b>3.30</b> We Bare Bears <b>4.00</b> Justice League Unlimited <b>4.30</b> Power Rangers Ninja Steel <b>5.00</b> Ben 10 <b>5.30</b> Clarence <b>5.45</b> MOVIE: Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret Of The Ooze (1991) <b>7.30</b> True Story <b>8.00</b> Big Bang <b>8.30</b> MOVIE: The Dark Knight (2008) <b>11.30</b> Bad Robots <b>12.00</b> Adult Swim <b>12.30</b> Black Jesus <b>1.00</b> Container Wars <b>1.30</b> For The Love Of Cars <b>2.30</b> Children's Programs</p>	<p><b>7TWO</b></p> <p><b>6.00</b> Morning Programs. <b>7.00</b> Tomorrow's World <b>7.30</b> Leading The Way <b>8.00</b> David Jeremiah <b>8.30</b> It Is Written <b>9.00</b> Shopping <b>9.30</b> Harry's Practice <b>10.00</b> NBC Today <b>11.00</b> Home And Away Catch-Up <b>12.30</b> Life On The Edge <b>1.30</b> Travel Oz <b>2.15</b> Free Range Cook <b>2.45</b> Adam's Pasta Pilgrimage <b>3.15</b> Pubs That Built Britain <b>4.00</b> House Rules <b>5.30</b> One Foot In The Grave <b>6.15</b> Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em <b>7.00</b> Border Security: Int. <b>8.00</b> Coastwatch Oz <b>8.30</b> A Touch Of Frost <b>10.30</b> Escape To The Country <b>12.30</b> Late Programs</p>	<p><b>ABC2</b></p> <p><b>6.00</b> Children's Programs <b>5.45</b> Floogals <b>6.00</b> Ben And Holly <b>6.10</b> Go Jetters <b>6.20</b> Little Roy <b>6.35</b> Peter Rabbit <b>6.50</b> Shaun The Sheep <b>7.00</b> Spicks And Specks <b>7.30</b> River Monsters <b>8.20</b> Gruen Planet: Cutdowns <b>8.30</b> Whovians <b>9.05</b> The Miracle Hunter <b>9.55</b> Louis Theroux's Weird Weekends <b>10.45</b> The McCanns And The Conman <b>11.30</b> An Idiot Abroad <b>12.15</b> The Home Show <b>1.05</b> River Monsters <b>1.55</b> News Update <b>2.00</b> Close <b>5.00</b> Tinga Tinga Tales <b>5.10</b> The WotWots <b>5.20</b> Mouk <b>5.35</b> Children's Programs</p>	<p><b>NITV</b></p> <p><b>6.00</b> Morning Programs <b>9.00</b> The Dreaming <b>9.30</b> Cities Of Gold <b>10.00</b> Maori TV's Native Affairs <b>10.30</b> Small Business Secrets <b>11.00</b> Jazz@Metropolis <b>12.00</b> Tangaroa <b>1.00</b> Bush Bands Bash <b>2.00</b> Rugby Sevens. Ella 7's. <b>2.30</b> Rugby League. NRL State Championship. Northern Territory v Western Australia. <b>3.30</b> Football. NEAFL. <b>5.00</b> Te Kaea <b>5.30</b> The Point Review <b>6.00</b> The Mulka Project <b>6.30</b> The Tipping Points <b>7.30</b> Going Places <b>8.30</b> Cut-Off <b>9.30</b> Gideon's Army <b>11.30</b> Always Have And Always Will <b>12.00</b> Volumz</p>	<p><b>ONE</b></p> <p><b>6.00</b> Shopping <b>8.00</b> Rugby Union. Test Series. Australia v Scotland. Replay. <b>10.30</b> Escape Fishing <b>11.00</b> Reel Action <b>11.30</b> Cruise Mode <b>12.00</b> World Sport <b>12.30</b> Operation Repo <b>1.00</b> 4x4 Adventures <b>2.00</b> Monster Jam <b>3.00</b> Undercover Boss <b>4.00</b> Megastructures <b>5.00</b> Puppy Academy <b>5.30</b> iFish <b>6.00</b> M*A*S*H <b>7.00</b> Scorpion <b>8.00</b> Motor Racing. Supercars Championship. Round 6. Darwin Triple Crown. Race 12. Highlights. <b>9.00</b> MOVIE: The Sentinel (2006) <b>11.15</b> Bear Grylls: Mission Survive <b>12.15</b> Late Programs</p>
<p><b>GEM</b></p> <p><b>6.00</b> TV Shop <b>6.30</b> Leading The Way <b>7.00</b> New Hope Ministries: New Hope On The Road <b>7.30</b> Beyond Today <b>8.00</b> Key Of David <b>8.30</b> TV Shop <b>10.00</b> Domestic Blitz <b>11.00</b> MOVIE: The Naked Spur (1953) <b>1.00</b> Getaway <b>1.30</b> MOVIE: Ride, Vaquero! (1953) <b>3.30</b> MOVIE: A Hole In The Head (1959) <b>6.00</b> Secret Dealers <b>7.00</b> To The Manor Born <b>8.10</b> New Tricks <b>9.20</b> MOVIE: Seven (1995) <b>11.50</b> The Closer <b>12.50</b> GEM Presents <b>1.00</b> TV Shop <b>2.00</b> Global Shop <b>2.30</b> New Tricks <b>3.30</b> The Closer <b>4.30</b> Joyce Meyer <b>5.00</b> Seaway</p>	<p><b>7MATE</b></p> <p><b>6.00</b> Home Shopping <b>6.30</b> River To Reef <b>7.30</b> Home Shopping <b>9.30</b> Dream Car Garage <b>10.30</b> Combat Dealers <b>11.30</b> The Fishing Show <b>12.30</b> Mark Berg's Fishing Addiction <b>1.30</b> BBQ Pitmasters <b>2.30</b> Seinfeld <b>5.55</b> MOVIE: Godzilla (1998) <b>8.40</b> MOVIE: Pirates Of The Caribbean: On Stranger Tides (2011) <b>11.30</b> Rude Tube <b>12.00</b> Jail: Las Vegas Jailhouse <b>12.30</b> Ink Master <b>1.30</b> What Went Down <b>2.00</b> Dream Car Garage <b>2.30</b> Dream Car Garage <b>3.00</b> Mark Berg's Fishing Addiction</p>	<p><b>ABC ME</b></p> <p><b>6.00</b> Children's Programs <b>12.05</b> Gortimer Gibbon's Life On Normal Street <b>12.30</b> Backstage <b>12.50</b> Children's Programs <b>4.35</b> Japanizi: Going, Going, Gong! <b>4.55</b> Children's Programs <b>5.45</b> The Bagel And Becky Show <b>6.05</b> TMNT <b>6.30</b> The Legend Of Korra <b>6.50</b> Trip For Biscuits <b>7.00</b> Horrible Histories <b>7.35</b> Wonders Of The Universe <b>7.40</b> Doctor Who <b>8.25</b> Yonderland <b>8.45</b> Adv Time <b>9.05</b> Total Drama World Tour <b>9.50</b> Rage <b>2.25</b> Close <b>5.00</b> Arthur <b>5.25</b> Sally Bollywood <b>5.35</b> Almost Naked Animals <b>5.45</b> Children's Programs</p>	<p><b>ABC NEWS</b></p> <p><b>6.00</b> Australia Wide <b>6.30</b> Weekend Breakfast <b>8.30</b> Insiders <b>9.30</b> Weekend Breakfast <b>10.30</b> News <b>11.00</b> World This Week <b>11.30</b> News <b>12.00</b> The Mix <b>12.30</b> News <b>1.00</b> The Drum Weekly <b>1.30</b> News <b>2.00</b> Offsiders <b>2.30</b> News <b>3.00</b> Landline <b>3.30</b> News <b>4.00</b> One Plus One <b>4.30</b> News <b>5.00</b> Australia Wide <b>5.30</b> ABC News <b>5.55</b> Foreign Corre <b>6.30</b> ABC News <b>7.00</b> The Mix <b>7.30</b> Insiders <b>8.30</b> ABC News <b>9.00</b> Australians Of The Year: In Conversation <b>10.00</b> Planet America <b>10.30</b> News <b>11.00</b> The Link <b>11.30</b> Late Programs</p>	<p><b>ELEVEN</b></p> <p><b>6.00</b> Toasted TV <b>6.05</b> Littlest Petshop <b>6.30</b> Pokémon <b>7.35</b> Treasure Island <b>8.05</b> Jar Dwellers SOS <b>8.30</b> Sanjay And Craig <b>9.00</b> TMNT <b>10.00</b> Random &amp; Whacky <b>10.30</b> TMNT <b>11.00</b> Brady Bunch <b>12.00</b> Family Ties <b>1.00</b> Neighbours <b>3.30</b> Raymond <b>4.30</b> King Of Queens <b>5.30</b> Frasier <b>6.30</b> MOVIE: Penguins Of Madagascar (2014) <b>8.15</b> Russell Coight's All Aussie Adventures <b>8.45</b> The Graham Norton Show <b>9.45</b> Whose Line Is It Anyway? Australia <b>10.15</b> How I Met Your Mother <b>10.45</b> Raymond <b>11.35</b> Late Programs</p>

Classifications (P) Preschoolers (C) Children (G) General (PG) Parental Guidance (M) Mature Audiences (MA+15) Mature Audiences Only (AV15+) Extreme Adult Violence (CC) Closed Captions (R) Repeat Consumer Advice (a) Adult Themes (d) Drug References (h) Horror (s) Sex References (l) Language (m) Medical Procedures (n) Nudity (v) Violence. Programming is subject to change