

Re-engaging young with citizenship

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COMMISSIONER for Children and Young People Helen Connolly last week launched yChange – South Australia's first curriculum-aligned, project-based, action civics resource for primary and secondary educators.

Students and teachers from two northern schools - Mark Oliphant College at Munno Para and Elizabeth Vale Primary School – were involved in a pilot program last year that was significant in shaping the final content of yChange.

Designed to empower SA young people with the attitudes, skills and knowledge they need to become active, responsible citizens, yChange delivers a different way to teach civics and citizenship by taking an action civics approach to lessons and learning.

The launch of yChange coincides with SA Youth Week resonating with this year's theme of Our Voice – Our Future, which

encapsulates one of the key reasons for developing yChange in the first place; "providing children and young people with opportunities to have voice, choice, influence and agency".

Developed over 18 months, yChange is the Commissioner's response to the most recent test scores from the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship (NAP-CC). The scores reveal when it comes to understanding the importance of our democracy and appreciating our national values, the performance of Australian students has plateaued.

Conversely, SA children and young people have told the Commissioner they would like to understand the systems they are in, know how to engage in the world around them, and acquire the skills they need to transition into adulthood. yChange is designed to close this civics education gap.

Through yChange, students go



Commissioner for Children and Young People Helen Connolly.

PHOTO: Supplied

on a five-part learning journey that equips them with the knowledge of systems and practical skills they need to access, analyse and communicate information.

They learn to link civics and citizenship education with ways in which they can take action on issues in their local communities they would like to see addressed, and on which they work as a class to identify.

Flexible enough to be scaled to suit primary or secondary school students, yChange has been mapped to the Civics and Citizenship skills and knowledge strands of the Australian Curriculum and aligns with the aims of South Australia's Youth Action Plan.

Apart from Mark Oliphant College and Elizabeth Vale Primary, Marryatville High School was also involved in the pilot plan.

Meanwhile, schools can apply for a yChange Action Grant of up to \$500 to implement student action plans. Once a class has completed its yChange project, it is encouraged to enter the Governor's Civic Awards for Schools and upload the project presentation into

the yChange Project Showcase to be promoted to decision-makers and influencers across the state.

Schools from the Education Department, Catholic Education and independent schools systems have access to the free yChange Resource Pack via a simple registration process. Supportive partners include the Commonwealth Parliamentary Education Officer, State Parliament, History Trust of South Australia and the Centre of Democracy.

Ms Connolly is encouraging educators to complete yChange with their students and help close the civic engagement gap that currently exists within South Australia.

To view the Intro to yChange video, visit [youtube/H_SUCEZM-w5M](https://youtube.com/H_SUCEZM-w5M)

To find out more about yChange, visit www.ychange.com.au

For further information on the work of the Commissioner, visit www.ccyp.com.au