

Young South Australians repeatedly call for climate change action

Climate change is consistently raised in the top 5 issues South Australian children and young people raise with their Commissioner, Helen Connolly. It is an issue they care deeply about and one that is causing them considerable concern and worry.

They want to see urgent action being taken on climate change now with more focus placed on developing and transitioning to renewable energy solutions faster to eliminate the world's dependency on fossil fuels.

Concerns about climate change come up in conversations between the Commissioner and young people during almost all consultations, meetings, focus groups and events, and across a range of topics that include poverty, health, education, and transport. The continual focus young people have on climate change highlights the significant worry it is causing them, particularly in relation to the choices they will or won't be able to make about how they live their lives.

Children and young people want to have their voices heard and be able to participate in decision-making processes that relate specifically to climate change policy. They say that not being able to have direct input is frustrating and is eroding and undermining their trust and confidence in adult leaders and institutions who they believe aren't doing enough to address the climate crisis.

Key to children and young people's interest in the environment is their sense of justice. They are acutely aware that climate change disproportionately affects those who are already marginalised, and that it heightens social and economic inequalities. They worry about those who are less fortunate, and those whose livelihoods and living conditions will be impacted most. Climate change also has a disproportionate effect on children and young people's everyday lives as they learn to live with more floods, droughts, heatwaves, and bushfires and witness extreme weather incidents occurring more often and with greater severity across all regions of the world.

Young people see clearly what climate change means for the people, places, and animals they care about and are experiencing a real sense of despair because of it. They see a lack of action on the part of adults who they believe can make changes right now that will protect the environment and mitigate against further impact from climate change into the future.

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Some young people are concerned that it's 'too late' to do anything at all and say they are rarely told about success and initiatives being undertaken at the national and international level that may allay some of their fears and concerns.

Quotes attributable to the Commissioner for Children and Young People, Helen Connolly:

Children and young people repeatedly raise their serious concerns with me about the current and future state of the environment. As adults and leaders, we must do more to ensure children and young people are provided with opportunities, information, and support to participate in decision-making processes that inform South Australia's climate action policy."

What South Australian children have told the Commissioner:

"At this rate, our job in the future will be to live with the impact that past generations have left on our Earth. The government needs to address things such as climate change and realise that isn't science fiction – it's real life and if we don't do anything about it soon, it will be too late."

"Not many people listen to us and climate change will be worse for us."

"SA looks very nice now I would like it to stay like that for [the] future. This is very important because when I was little, I used to always go to the hills with my family on walks and bike rides. I want others to have the same opportunities as me."

Download the **What SA Kids Told Us About Climate Change** Fact Sheet [here](#)

Find out more about the work of the Commissioner [here](#)

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