

# What you have told me about issues that are important to you...



## School

You said that relationships and sex education, online safety, menstruation, inequality, climate change, job skills, and inclusion and diversity were not being taught adequately. You told me there is too much pressure on young people these days and that you want more time for recreation and play – along with places to hang out and play where you are welcomed and trusted to be without adult supervision. You told me that exclusionary practices at school only made students fall further behind, and that issues relating to managing menstruation caused you to sometimes be absent from school.



## Diversity and Inclusion

You told me that you want better outcomes for LGBTQIA+ people. Suggestions you made to improve the lives of all students included creating an inclusive and gender diverse curriculum. By teaching everyone about gender diversity and normalising this in the classroom, you were confident this would change school culture in a positive way. Your suggestions include changing the language being used by some students and teachers to help breakdown stereotyping and be more gender inclusive so that schools are safe environments for all children and young people.



## Leadership

You told me that you want to be included in the decision-making process and to be consulted on issues that impact you. You want to be listened to when speaking about problems you face and for decision makers to take action on issues that matter to you. Becoming leaders yourselves is also important to you, as you see yourselves as a generation that will be bringing change and equality because changes must be made. You also want conversations with leaders on how COVID-19 will affect your life, and for you to be listened to about its current impact.



## Digital Environment

You want equal and fair access to technology including greater availability of access to free public Wi-Fi. You want laptops and data to be made available to those who are already struggling and you want education about how to remain safe while you're online so that young people are better protected from the risk of exploitation by adults who are misrepresenting themselves in this space.



## Sex Education and Health

You want to understand unhealthy and healthy relationships, how to protect yourselves against violence, how to identify peer abuse and exploitation, and how to address the stigmas and lack of education that exists around sexual health and menstruation. You also want greater access to menstrual products free of charge and would like mental health services that take a more inclusive approach.

Some of the online places and spaces you interacted with me and contributed to my work:

end  
period  
poverty,  
period.

COMMISSIONER'S  
DIGITAL  
CHALLENGE



hub



## Focus Areas in 2021 were...

- How to make school more affordable to families.
- Providing greater support to young people living with **disabilities** so you can participate in more activities and not be excluded from education.
- Providing more inclusive **relationship and sexual health education** so that young people are safer and more informed. This includes improving menstruation education to address issues of stigma and taboo.
- Helping those of you who face barriers to accessing digital **devices** to ensure you are not disadvantaged or being left behind.
- Understanding the impact that COVID-19 is continuing to have on your lives as distinct from the impacts it has on adults and particularly in relation to mental health.

## Focus Areas for 2022 are...

You identified some new issues that you would like me to look at next year. These include:

- Teenagers and Work
- Sport and Physical Activity
- Understanding Voting
- Having a Voice

## Thank you for sharing your ideas and opinions with me.

By doing so you have enabled me to work on building support amongst decision makers and service providers to help bring about improvements in your lives in ways that you have asked for. **I promise to keep listening in 2022.**

**Helen Connolly**

Commissioner for Children and Young People, South Australia