

South Australian  
Commissioner  
for Children and  
Young People

[ccyp.com.au](http://ccyp.com.au)

# Annual Report 2021/2022



Commissioner  
for Children &  
Young People

## Acknowledgements

I am grateful to all the children and young people who participated in various activities undertaken throughout the 2021/2022 financial year, sharing their insights, experiences and suggestions for improvement with me.

It is my privilege to be able to convey their contributions to those who can make the changes needed at the systemic level to improve their lives. By providing recommendations that are fully informed by the voices of children and young people from across South Australia we are much more likely to make changes that will benefit them in the ways they would prefer and which reflect their real life experiences.

Thank you also to the various partners, stakeholders and contributors who have worked so closely with me and my team over the past twelve months to deliver on the various projects and initiatives reported upon here. This work will assist in persuading governments and other relevant industry and community stakeholders to make changes that will help to improve the lives of all South Australian children and young people, particularly those in our community who are the most vulnerable and whose voices are rarely heard.

## Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

The SA Commissioner for Children and Young People acknowledges the unique contribution of Aboriginal people's cultural heritage to South Australian society. Although participant details were not recorded specifically in relation to the cultural identity or background of ATSI participants, a significant number of children and young people who took part in projects initiated by the Commissioner identified as Aboriginal.

For the purposes of this report the term 'Aboriginal' encompasses South Australia's diverse indigenous language groups and recognises those of Torres Strait Islander descent. The use of the term 'Aboriginal' is not intended to imply 'sameness' between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island cultures, while recognising that similarities do exist.

## ISSN

2652-8592 (Online)

## Suggested Citation

Connolly, Helen. Commissioner for Children and Young People, South Australia.  
*Annual Report 2021/2022.*

## Copyright

© 2022 Commissioner for  
Children and Young People.  
All rights reserved.



The Honourable Blair Boyer MP  
Minister for Education, Training and Skills

28<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Dear Minister Boyer

I am pleased to submit my 2021/2022 Annual Report, which has been prepared for presentation to Parliament as per the requirements of the statutory reporting of the *Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016* (OAB Act).

It is divided into three distinct sections: Systemic Reporting, Project Reporting and Statutory Reporting.

The Systemic Reporting section provides an overview of the achievements of my 2018–2022 front and centre strategic agenda which came to a finish this year. It includes a review of the progress on recommendations made in my previous annual reports.

The Project Reporting section outlines the key projects, activities, and achievements of my office, during the reporting period.

South Australia's children and young people continued to generously share their ideas and concerns about their lives and those of their friends and family with me. As I commence my second term in the role of their Commissioner I feel pleased that many children are aware they have someone who is advocating for their rights on their behalf and I am committed to ensuring their voices continue to be heard and their ideas acted upon.

Through my advocacy work I aim to be influencing those who have the authority to make changes at the systemic level to address their concerns in the shortest possible timeframes. Where previous recommendations have not yet been actioned, I continue to seek to understand what the barriers are so they can be overcome. I remain optimistic that positive change will continue to be made by relevant government departments and other organisations who have been made aware of the system blindness, shortfalls, and failures there are in relation to the services aimed at or being delivered to children and young people across South Australia.

As increasing cost of living pressures impact on families, children and young people are likely to need additional support, particularly in regard to their mental health. These are challenging times and young people are relying on us to include them in the solutions that must fix the global and local problems we all face and which importantly were not of their making.

This report meets the requirements of Premier and Cabinet Circular *PC013 Annual Reporting* and is verified to be accurate for the purposes of annual reporting to the Parliament of South Australia.



**Helen Connolly**  
Commissioner for Children and Young People

# Contents

Introduction by the Commissioner	6
Key Achievements	12
Key Highlights	13
Key Outputs	14
<b>Systemic Reporting</b>	<b>15</b>
‘Front and Centre’ Achievements:	
Reporting on the outcomes of the Commissioner’s Strategic Agenda 2018–2022	17
Foundational Achievements	24
Issues Overview	26
Progress on Recommendations Made in Previous Years	27
<b>Project Reporting</b>	<b>35</b>
Major Projects and Initiatives	37
Rights Promotion and Protection	39
Awareness Raising of Systemic Issues	41
Engagement and Participation	48
<b>Statutory Reporting</b>	<b>52</b>
Role of the Commissioner	54
Key Responsibilities	54
Children and Youth Engagement	55
Direct Consultation	55
Promoting Participation	58
Surveys and Polling	60

External Relations and Communications	61
Submissions	62
Presentations, Speeches and Discussion Panels	64
Media Coverage	66
Websites, Social Media and Internet Coverage	68
Sponsorships and Grants	70
Committees and Boards	72
Summary of Enquiries	73
Reporting of Public Complaints	74
Organisational Structure	74
Legislation Administered by the Agency	75
Related Agencies	75
Work Health and Safety Issues	76
Employment Opportunity Programs	77
Executive Employment in the Agency	77
Contractors	77
Financial Performance Overview	78
Risk Management	79

## Introduction

As South Australia's Commissioner for Children and Young People my mandate is to give effect to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) as per South Australia's *Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016* which sets out the need to promote and protect the rights, interests and wellbeing of all children and young people throughout the state.

I work to give South Australian children and young people a 'voice' and to ensure their views are 'given due weight' according to their age and maturity.

A key focus of my work is on raising awareness of systemic shortfalls and failings that impact on children's development and wellbeing outcomes, and on identifying actions that will collectively fulfil principles outlined in relevant legislation and policy.

I also seek to influence and identify the responsibilities and roles that public, civic, and commercial sectors of our community have in relation to children and young people's rights. This includes emphasising the importance of listening to children and young people and taking their opinions seriously, as well as advocating for them to be positioned 'front and centre' in law, policy, practice, and service delivery.

This report is the last in my first term as South Australia's inaugural Commissioner for Children and Young People. This year, as in previous years, children and young people have told me that in addition to quality education and healthcare, they want relationships with adults who are trusting and who listen to and respect them as valued members of our communities.

When children and young people do find the courage to voice their concerns, they told me that they often feel they're not taken seriously, or that the issues they raise are not adequately addressed.

At the core of valuing and respecting South Australia's children and young people is acknowledging and legitimatising the view that they are critical stakeholders who have a right to have input into decisions that impact their lives. The more our institutions, businesses, schools, sporting clubs, religious and other organisations can reflect this, the better quality of life they will have.

They want us to see them as citizens whose wants, and needs are unique to them and distinct from those of adults.

Children and young people are passionate about their education and what it will offer them beyond school. Children understand that the quality of their education is influenced by their differing abilities, where they live, their family backgrounds and whether they require additional support to attend and remain in school.

Through the variety of ways children and young people connect to me they consistently report a desire for

fundamental changes in relation to how education is delivered. Many children and young people across all year levels are concerned by the lack of opportunities to be heard, to exercise choice and have influence in relation to their learning and school environment.

In keeping with significant bodies of research, they report that there is a direct relationship between their wellbeing and learning. They say they are more likely to engage in school and schoolwork when they feel heard, safe, and supported. Consequently, they report to me they want their schools to have more of a focus on wellbeing and not just on academic achievement.

They are asking for changes in how they learn, including teaching methods, hands-on learning opportunities, what they learn, including financial literacy and other 'life skills', relationships and sexual health education, civics and citizenship education, their learning environments and the support provided, including classroom learning supports, counselling and mental health supports.

Our ambition must be about empowering children to develop capabilities to build clear pathways to achieve their key goals and aspirations for the future. This requires investment in approaches that protect against mental health issues and support children and young people to engage with their peers.

As in other years, I received many individual matters and complaints from concerned family members, advocates and therapists related to children's experiences in the child protection, education, health, and youth justice systems. These matters tell the story of children whose lives have been negatively affected by issues of discrimination, barriers to access and poor treatment by individuals, services and programs, that have failed to deliver on their fundamental rights or meet our obligations under the multiple Conventions and Acts related to the education, rights, interests, and wellbeing of children and young people.

Given the primacy of education in children's lives, when children's health, wellbeing, safety, or citizenship outcomes are not met, then their education is nearly

always negatively impacted. This impact on educational outcomes can be long term and it can affect views of self, views of education, future aspirations, and relationships with peers and family.

As a system with a primary focus on children, it is therefore unsurprising that much of my systemic advocacy relates to systemic failures in education systems. This year the majority of my systemic reports have focused on the educational outcomes for specific groups of children, including those living in poorer families, those who identify as LGBTQIA+, those living with disability, those affected by parental incarceration and those impacted by sexism and stereotypes. Other specialist reports include two on health issues, COVID Vaccinations and Vaping, and a major report on children's experiences of organised sport.

During the reporting period the pandemic continued to affect the lives of everyone, regardless of age. Despite this, the voices and rights of children and young people continued to be missing from conversations and decision-making around the pandemic.

As COVID-19 vaccines became available to all South Australians aged 12 and over, it was an appropriate time to ensure we heard from young people so their ideas and lived experiences could be factored into decision making.

The COVID-19 Survey Report 2021 was a summary of young people's thoughts, experiences, and concerns, on COVID-19 vaccines and proposed restrictions, as well as where they currently get their information from, and what they need from adults to feel better supported during the pandemic.

Young people want adults to listen to them, to take their concerns seriously, and to provide information using language they understand. Although some young people noted that SA Health were doing a good job of challenging misinformation, they were concerned that the news and SA Health press conferences and websites 'use big words that most young children won't understand'.

Young people want information to be both online and offline where they spend their time, including at school and TAFE, either in lessons, via dedicated sessions ‘run by people who know what they’re talking about’ and the health curriculum, or through posters on toilet doors and around school grounds, as well as through Daymap or other school websites or dedicated press conferences that speak directly to children and young people in child friendly and youth friendly language and environments.

Amid growing public concern about the prevalence and impacts of vaping among teenagers in South Australia, I asked young people to share their thoughts on vaping. The voices, views and experiences of teenagers have largely been missing in adult conversations and media reports about vaping. As a result, many young people are feeling misunderstood, judged, shamed, blamed, and punished for vaping.

I was particularly interested in finding out from young people how common vaping is, whether they have any concerns about vaping, what they want adults to know about vaping, and how adults can best support young people in relation to vaping.

In the *Vaping Survey Report 2022*, they report a lack of information, education and support from the adults and institutions around them. It is hoped that decision makers in schools and across the community will be better informed as a result of this survey, and that they will consider young people’s insights and experiences when determining appropriate responses to make to address issues related to vaping regularly occurring in schools and the broader community.

In response to hundreds of conversations with children and young people about their perceptions and experiences of sport, I conducted a large-scale survey and targeted consultation and a report titled *More Than a Game: What Do Children and Young People Think About Sport?* It reports on what they enjoy about sport, what they dislike about it and what they would change in order to either improve their enjoyment of sport, or increase participation by themselves and others.

Children and young people often say their motivation for playing sport and the confidence sport provides is linked to their feelings of belonging. There are, however, contrasting views and experiences around how inclusive and safe organised sport is.

Where some children and young people describe the community surrounding sport as being ‘a place for everyone’, others highlighted the opposite – that sport is ‘not for everyone’ insofar as it can be ‘cliquey’, ‘exclusionary’ and ‘overly competitive’.

The report documents the stark contrasts between children and young people’s experiences, perceptions, and interest in sport including how difficult it can be to maintain involvement in sport over the long term.

The lifelong benefits of participation in sport on children’s lifestyle outcomes should not be left to chance. It is important that we recognise that sports participation is more than a game, and that it is the responsibility of all of us to remove systemic barriers and to nurture participation by providing a variety of strategies that add on to diverse motivations, values, and expectations, simultaneously adjusting the systemic issues around barriers to participation in sport.

One of the most marginalised groups of citizens in South Australia are those children and young people who are living with disability. To shine a light on the experiences of children and young people living with disability and to fulfil my obligations to represent their interests, I undertook a targeted listening project during 2020/2021 so that I could hear directly from this group of children and young people. This listening was done both online and face to face via more than 30 individual sessions undertaken in a range of education and community settings with children and young people aged 9–22 years.

To ensure the listening project was inclusive, I worked with Auslan interpreters, used alternative communication devices, Braille, writing, drawing, play, and Zoom, to enable as much participation by children and young people living with disability as was possible and allowing for COVID-19 restrictions.



The report on this engagement is titled *From Checkbox to Commitment: What Children and Young People with disability said about identity, inclusion, and independence*. It seeks to address some of the current knowledge gaps by reporting on what children and young people who are living with disability have said about the quality of their lives.

Through a process that intentionally privileged their perspective and input over other children and young people they were able to express their views and provide insight into how they perceive their world. Views expressed include both positive and negative personal experiences and reflected their individuality and commonalities.

It appears that whilst South Australian children and young people living with disability have contact with many services and systems, they have very little say in how the majority operate. There simply aren't enough opportunities for children and young people living with disability to be supported to participate in activities in the same way other people their age do, or be genuinely listened to. This is despite significant evidence that engagement not only improves the design and delivery of systems and services, but also increases individual confidence and capabilities, as well as enhancing physical and emotional safety.

By not involving children and young people living with disability in decisions that affect them, the "system" reinforces a perception that children can't, or don't want to express their views or make their own decisions. Over time this can become a self-perpetuating cycle.

Another vulnerable and hidden group are children with incarcerated parents. While the purpose of incarceration is to punish the offender, children whose parents are incarcerated are often called the 'innocent victims' of the criminal justice system. My report *Join the Dots: Considering the impact of parental incarceration on children and young people* provides a summary of what I heard during consultations with children, young people, and parents.

During my direct consultation with children and young people affected by parental incarceration, children described how their lives changed significantly when their parent was arrested and incarcerated. In many cases, this disruption was sudden and came 'out of the blue', with young people reporting how their lives took a 'u-turn' from 'stability to uncertainty' and 'everything does a flip'.

Currently, services place the onus on children and families to present themselves to service providers, often only when problems have already escalated. Yet families report that this is made difficult by barriers, including the stigma and secrecy surrounding incarceration, and a fear of intervention from statutory authorities that will not be supportive of keeping families together.

Indeed, many children and young people affected by parental incarceration said they were reluctant to tell others about their situation due to the fear of being shunned by friends or involvement by statutory authorities. Often, they are instructed to keep their experiences to themselves by those who care for them too.

Like many other adult-focused service systems, the criminal justice system is being challenged to consider the parenting status of the adults who it serves. This brings with it recognition of a need to move away from 'child-blind justice' where the impacts of decisions on a child are "neither foreseen, acknowledged or remedied by the system" towards 'child-friendly justice' whereby decisions at every stage of a system are centred on child rights in and of themselves rather than as an afterthought, or based on the personal circumstances of the offender.

One of the enduring cross-cutting themes that has repeatedly surfaced across all aspects of my work is the impact that sexism, gender roles, and gender stereotyping has on the lives of children and young people. Whilst it is clear the impacts are different for boys and girls, sexism and stereotyping still affects almost every aspect of a child or young person's

aspirations, relationships, and wellbeing. In my *Sexism and Stereotypes Report: The views and experiences of SA school students* South Australian children and young people expressed their frustration and concern that sexism and gender stereotyping are widely considered to be a normal party of school culture with sexism not generally reported due to a belief that nothing can or will be done about it. This impacts significantly on children and young people's wellbeing, relationships, participation, and behaviour expectations, as well as on their aspirations for the future.

To build our contemporary understanding of how sexism and gender stereotypes impacts on children and young people's lives, it is essential to include them in these conversations. Without their input, the effectiveness of any actions taken to challenge sexist and gender stereotyping norms and address problematic behaviours, will be limited.

Given too, that gender roles and stereotypes are taught and learnt, we must understand how systems perpetuate experiences of sexism and stereotyping. This means looking at how systemic sexism and discrimination play out at the classroom level, and more broadly within our educational institutions.

Children and young people have consistently raised with me concerns about what they consider to be the high costs of going to school. These costs include those associated with uniforms, digital devices, textbooks, transport, stationery, and other materials, as well as the cost of their participation in school camps, excursions, sports, and other extra curricula activities.

From what children and young people have told me, these cumulative costs are significant, with many of them talking about feeling 'embarrassed' and 'ashamed' when their families cannot afford them. Beyond the impact this has on their learning, this can have a significant impact on their participation and connection with their school and surrounding community.

It can also impact on their friendships, their sense of self-worth and belonging, as well as on how they

are treated by their peers, their peers' parents, and their teachers. In my report *Spotlight on the True Cost of Education*, financial insecurity was identified as a contributing factor in children's experiences of school exclusion and non-attendance.

Previous recommendations for critical antipoverty responses are again made in this report, as they continue to be unimplemented and relevant.

These recommendations pertain to a number of government departments. However, the Department for Education is ideally placed to take the lead in this area, working with public school communities to look closely at how the cumulative costs of going to school can be reduced for those families known to be experiencing financial hardship, and whose children's attendance, participation, and wellbeing, are being compromised as a result.

In my report titled *My Digital Life: Understanding the impact of digital poverty on children and young people* the lack of digital devices and data referred to as 'digital poverty' identifies the multiple challenges children in low-income families face in relation to their education.

Although the online world was created by adults for adults, the reality is that one in three internet users is a child or young person. The shift to a predominantly online existence, due to the impact of COVID-19, highlighted the issue of digital inequality across our communities.

It also exposed the multiple impact a lack of digital access has on children and young people, particularly in relation to their capacity to engage in their education. Although adult decision makers and policymakers speak of a 'digital divide' to describe the differing circumstances of people's involvement with digital technology, the reality for children and young people is that access to digital devices and data is much more complex and diverse than the notion of what a 'divide' implies.

Rather than reflecting a simple division between the 'haves' and 'have-nots', children and young people's levels of access fall within a diverse spectrum ranging from

having no digital access at all to having partial or full access at all times. For some children, their experience of digital poverty may be brief. For others it is intermittent. For another group of children, digital poverty is a persistent condition they are forced to face throughout their lives.

We must address issues of critical digital infrastructure in safe community spaces, to support connection to technology, receive information, and participate socially and economically. As we move to a more 'digital first policy' these strategies run on the assumption that customers, clients, or users, including children and young people, will find this easier and more convenient.

There is no more important time than now to bring the voices and experiences of children and young people to the fore as their views challenge many of these assumptions. Young people have said loud and clear that not everything needs to be online, given the disproportionate, significant, and multidimensional impact of digital exclusion on children and young people, a targeted digital inclusion strategy focused on their needs is required.

At the end of 2020, the Attorney-General proposed changes to the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984 SA*. The *Equal Opportunity (Religious Bodies) Amendment Bill 2020* sought to clarify that essential service providers, including religious schools, cannot rely on religious exceptions to justify discrimination. To inform my submission to the draft Bill, I created an anonymous online tool to ask young people about their thoughts on the experiences of LGBTQIA+ students in religious schools, including what they believed would make schools more inclusive for these students. Many young people told me that they feel unsafe in school environments, and that adults often don't show them the respect or protection they want or need.

Whilst I have heard and seen many examples of inclusion and respect for students who are sexually and gender diverse attending religious schools, I have also heard directly from young people who told me that peers who

identify as gay and non-binary are being discriminated against and subjected to bullying at their school.

*In No Exceptions: creating safer schools for LGBTQIA+ students* young people have told me they live in fear of being punished and excluded, of not belonging and of being treated unfairly and differently because of their sexuality or gender identity. This includes the stereotyping in class-rooms they experience and a tolerance of open discrimination and harassment that repeatedly goes unchallenged by teachers and students alike.

Beyond supporting academic learning, those in faith-based schools must provide emotional and physical safety for all students, including cultivation of their identity in nurturing environments. That any child should feel unsafe or insecure in their interaction with adults, whether at home, while in care, at school, or in other community settings, reflects directly on us as adults, and it is our responsibility to do something about it.

The reporting period marks the end of the work program set by children and young people as part of my 2017 Listening Tour and the focus areas established that have guided the projects, activities, engagement, and tone of my Commission. I have heard from tens of thousands of children and young people across South Australia over the past five years and I've made dozens of recommendations to government and others on what they have told me would make a difference in their lives.

My focus over the next three years is on advocacy that moves from recommendations to outcomes; advocacy that has a lasting impact on the lives of the current and future generations of South Australian children.

### **Helen Connolly**

Commissioner for Children and Young People

## Key Achievements

- Facilitated engagement and participation of **1,175** South Australian children and young people through advisory groups, citizen led research, community conversations and policy advocates.
- Generated direct feedback from **16,151** children and young people via **14** online and offline surveys, polls and feedback forms including **13,868** postcards received from South Australian children aged 8–12 years.
- Undertook **3** workshops, **7** longitudinal consultations and **1** significant event engaging directly with **1,063** children and young people throughout the reporting period.
- Increased awareness of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the work of the South Australian Commissioner for Children and Young People at **42** events as either a presenter, key speaker or guest panelist.
- Influenced public policy through **18** formal submissions of which **11** were submitted to the Commonwealth government and agencies, and **7** were submitted to State government agencies.
- Sought contributions from children and young people that directly informed recommendations made in **11** major reports.
- Responded to **62** individual requests for advice, advocacy, and intervention.
- Facilitated participation of an estimated **32,331** children and young people from government and independent schools, libraries, and community groups in the 2022 Commissioner's Digital Challenges: Learn to Speak Robot, Space to Dream and Zoom Out.



## Key Highlights

- Partnered with Flinders University College of Education – Psychology and Social Work and the Australian College of Educators to host **“Those who disappear – the Australian education problem nobody wants to talk about”** – a youth policy forum focused on young people across South Australia who are of compulsory school age, but who for multiple reasons, are not participating in a school or education program of any kind.
- Partnered with Flinders University College of Education – Psychology and Social Work and the Australian College of Educators to host **“Exploring the characteristics of a world class education system that works for ALL young people”** with Professor Pasi Sahlberg sharing his insights into the best ways of keeping children connected and engaged with their education.
- Hosted the **Exclusions Forum – Keeping Kids Connected to Learning and Schooling Summit 2** bringing together key stakeholders to provide their feedback on the recommendations made in the Graham Review. A **Feedback Report** summarising the discussions and diverse opinions expressed at the Forum is being prepared and will be sent to the the Minister for Education and Executives of the SA Department for Education.
- Established the **SA Student Representative Council** which convened for the first time in May 2022. The inaugural **SA SRC Summit** was held at the Adelaide Festival Centre with the majority of the 166 members (students from Years 10, 11 and 12) in attendance. They travelled from across the state to attend, working with their peers to determine a list of priority issues on which they would like to focus over the coming twelve months. The SA SRC is being provided with practical and financial support from the Commissioner and her team, who are working in partnership with the Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) and National Indigenous Youth Education Coalition (NIYEC) to ensure the organisation is student led with practical projects that link them with local community. SA Members of Parliament attended the Summit and spoke with SRC members from their electorates, thereby building a direct connection with these young people so that they felt comfortable to approach them with issues of concern and provide an avenue to have their points of view heard and where possible, acted upon.

## Key Outputs

- Released **Tapping into our talents: Leading for our Future Youth Symposium Report** looking at the barriers to employment for young people from CALD communities.
- Released the second **The Things That Matter report: Views of 8-12 year olds on life, school and community** reflecting the views of over 8,379 South Australian children on what is most important to them, including what changes they want to see that will make their lives better.
- Released snapshot reports summarising key issues raised by children including:
  - **What SA Children Say About School**
  - **What SA Children Say About Job Skills and The Future**
  - **What Worries SA Children Most**
- Released **My Digital Life: Understanding the impact of digital poverty on children and young people** reflecting the views of children and young people on the high costs of accessing digital products and services.
- Released **No Exceptions: Creating safer schools for LGBTQIA+ students** providing an overview of the views and experiences of LGBTQIA+ students who attend religious schools.
- Released **Spotlight on the True Cost of Going to School** highlighting the full range of costs associated with school going beyond tuition and uniforms to include excursions, digital devices, school camps, sports, music and other extra-curricular activities that ensure children and young people can belong fully to their school environment.
- Released **COVID-19 Survey: Key Findings** outlining what young people in South Australia think about COVID-19 vaccines and restrictions.
- Released the **2021 Child Rights Progress Reports** – the second series of annual Child Rights reports documenting South Australia's compliance with recommendations made by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child covering seven key areas that include: Child Health, Child Justice, Child Protection, Disability, Education, Environment and Physical Punishment.
- Released **Stereotypes and Sexism: The views and experiences of SA school students** in relation to gender stereotypes and their impact on student learning, aspirations, participation in activities/subject choices, and overall wellbeing.
- Released **Join the Dots: Considering the impact of parental incarceration on children and young people** and what can be done to ensure that children's needs are considered when they have a parent who is being sentenced.
- Released **From Checkbox to Commitment: What children and young people living with disability said about identity, inclusion, and independence** and what they think could be done differently to make a positive difference to the overall quality of their lives.
- Released **More Than a Game: What do children and young people think about sport?** examining their perceptions and experiences of sport and what systemic barriers to their participation exist such as culture, practices, cost and accessibility.



# Systemic





# Reporting



# 'Front and Centre' Achievements: Reporting on the outcomes of the Commissioner's Strategic Agenda 2018–2022

## Background

In 2017, as South Australia's first Commissioner for Children and Young People, I prepared a strategic agenda setting out the areas I would be focused on from 2018–2022.

In this agenda, I committed to advocating for the views, aspirations, and rights of all South Australian children, so that they would be affirmed, promoted, and protected through the work of this inaugural office.

The four key focus areas I identified as key priorities were as follows:

1. Placing the interests of children and young people front and centre in everyday life so that decision makers are actively engaging children and young people as stakeholders.
2. Prioritising the development and wellbeing of those doing it tough, so that the views of these children and young people are heard, and so they are given opportunities to inform key decision makers on the effectiveness of the "system" from their point of view.
3. Engaging and empowering young digital citizens so that children and young people and their families are better equipped to understand the digital world.
4. Strengthening children and young people's participation in society to ensure that children and young people have meaningful ways to participate and are able to make a contribution across public, civic and community life.

At the core of this foundational agenda was my commitment to place the needs, interests and welfare of South Australia's children and young people front and centre in collective thought, plans and actions being undertaken at the systemic level.

This core was underpinned by conversations I had with children and young people via a series of listening tours I undertook when I first came to office. The children and young people I spoke with represented various South Australian metropolitan, regional, rural and outback locations, backgrounds and socio-economic conditions, offering a range of opinions, views, and experiences as diverse as they were.

By speaking directly with South Australian children and young people I found some common threads that enabled me to devise the list of issues they see as priorities. I also took this opportunity to ask them what they wanted from their Commissioner. They told me that they wanted someone to communicate their views and ideas to decision makers and leaders who could make a positive difference to the quality of their lives, but particularly for those who they saw were doing it tough.

Within the four focus areas I made several commitments. These are set out on the following pages with a summary of achievements shown alongside each.

## Focus Area One:

Place the interests of children and young people front and centre in everyday life

Commitment	Achievements
<b>Develop a framework to support the implementation of child rights centric practice across business and community services.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Produced and distributed <i>Trust is a Must – what does it take to be child friendly and child safe</i> – a report outlining the key elements needed to implement a child rights centric practice in business and community services. The Child Safe Environments program currently being administered by the Department for Human Services (DHS) has distributed <i>Trust is a Must</i> to relevant South Australian businesses for use as a guide to best practice ways of engaging with children and young people.</li> <li>– Produced and distributed <i>Health Hub: Ideas for creating more child and youth friendly health services</i>. This comprehensive guide was distributed to relevant South Australian health care service providers and medical practitioners. It contains practical tips on ways to make changes to delivery of health services that will ensure they are more child and youth friendly.</li> </ul>
<b>Inform new and emerging professionals on what children and young people expect from them by co-designing and co-creating a series of “What You Need to Know” resources.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Produced and distributed a series of snapshots about <i>The Things that Matter to Children</i> summarising children's views in relation to school, work, and what worries them most.</li> <li>– Produced and distributed <i>What SA Kids Have Told Us About...</i> a series of fact sheets on a range of topics that include climate change, civics, transport, health, and education, to name a few.</li> <li>– Produced and distributed <i>Student Voice, Agency, and Wellbeing</i> guide to assist educators understand what it means to provide children and young people with opportunities to express their points of view and have their ideas acted upon.</li> </ul>
<b>Improve feedback mechanisms through partnering with children and young people on how they want to raise concerns, give feedback, and express their views and opinions on the services they receive.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Prepared and submitted a range of submissions to government departments and agencies providing advice and guidance on ways to improve feedback and complaints mechanisms to enable children and young people to have a say in the way services are being delivered to them, including what is and isn't working from their point of view.</li> </ul>
<b>Develop strategies to embed young people's perspectives and views into governance, leadership, and operational frameworks through collaboration with key business and community leaders.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Partnered with Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) and National Indigenous Youth Education Coalition (NIYEC) to establish the South Australian Student Representative Council (SA SRC). The SA SRC provides an opportunity for young people in years 10, 11 and 12 to participate in a student led organisation that determines which issues need to be prioritised and what actions will be taken to address them.</li> <li>– Partnered with Youth Inc. and CREATE to enable young people with lived experience of being in care to become Citizen Researchers.</li> <li>– Worked with members of the YMCA Youth Parliament to enable children and young people to be pro-active Policy Advocates.</li> <li>– Ran a series of workshops for members of the Governor's Leadership Foundation to provide ideas and tips on how best to engage with young people.</li> </ul>

... >

- Hosted a business challenge inviting SA business leaders to position the interests of children and young people front and centre in current and future business planning. This led to establishment of a series of subcommittees within the Committee for Adelaide (C4ADL) business leaders groups focused on furthering the interests of children and young people in relation to business operations, services, and product development.

## Focus Area Two:

### Prioritise the development and wellbeing of those doing it tough

Commitment	Achievements
<b>Inform policy makers and broader community of the early intervention and prevention strategies children and young people want to see implemented to support young people doing it tough.</b>	<p>In addition to coverage by media on a range of topics related to the importance of prioritising children and young people doing it tough across SA communities, the Commissioner has informed policy makers through 75 submissions addressing issues that include child poverty, school exclusions, young carers, digital access, and the importance of creating child friendly and child safe environments, to name a few.</p> <p>Consulted with a broad number of stakeholder groups consisting of children and young people who are facing situations and issues in their lives with which they need support. Reports were produced summarising their feedback and points of view from these consultations and included recommendations on what actions they believed would make a difference to the lives of children and young people if implemented. These reports were distributed to key stakeholders, leaders and decision makers in government, corporate and community sectors and the Commissioner is monitoring implementation of the recommendations made (see pages 28–34):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>Leave No One Behind – Poverty Report</i> (2019).</li> <li>– <i>The Blame Game – perspectives from children and young people on the impact of school exclusion</i> (2020).</li> <li>– <i>Take Care – what can be done at school to support children and young people with caring responsibilities at home</i> (2020).</li> <li>– <i>Trust is a Must: what does it take to be child friendly and child safe</i> (2020).</li> <li>– <i>My Digital Life: understanding the impact of digital poverty on children and young people</i> (2021).</li> <li>– <i>Spotlight on the True Cost of Going to School</i> (2021).</li> <li>– <i>Menstruation Matters: the impact of menstruation on wellbeing, participation, and school attendance</i> (2021).</li> </ul> <p>Convened a National Period Poverty Summit to discuss the impact of periods and menstruation on the lives of young people in June 2021. It included discussions regarding gender inequity and gender-based bullying surrounding menstruation, along with taboo and stigmatisation associated with having and managing periods, including the need to have easy access to free menstrual hygiene products at schools and across the community.</p> <p>Supported engagement with children and young people in relation to periods and menstruation through the Commissioner's Period Poverty Grants. The grant program was focused on supporting projects aimed at raising awareness of period poverty and menstruation more broadly. Dozens of community organisations received grant funds for projects ranging from installation of period product dispensers in sports rooms to production of high-quality information and education programs that aim to reduce stigma and taboo surrounding periods and menstruation and designed to be delivered to both girls and boys.</p>

---

**Improve legal systems and processes for children and young people through systemic monitoring of the views and input of young people who have had direct contact with the Family Court, Youth Court, Criminal Courts, and Tribunals.**

Monitored the legal system as it applies to children and young people and reported on the findings. Worked closely with child justice agencies, including the Youth Court and SAPOL advocating for the interests of children and young people who have had direct contact with SA's child justice system. To address issues associated with child justice the Commissioner:

- consulted with young people who have had direct experience of SA's child justice system, so that they could recommend what changes they would make to improve practices and processes
  - produced an animation video showing and describing the impact their experiences had on them, and distributed it to key stakeholders
  - produced and distributed a report summarising their experiences and recommendations for change – *Making Change in Youth Justice* (2020)
  - engaged closely with the Youth Court, SAPOL and the SA Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT) communicating recommendations relating to changes in information provision, practices and environments that would make them more youth friendly.
  - consulted with children and young people in relation to what they thought should happen when families separate and produced a report titled *Children and Young People in the Family Law System* (2019) summarising their opinions and recommendations and distributed it to key stakeholders
  - produced and distributed a suite of annual Child Rights Progress Reports monitoring the state's implementation of recommendations made by the UN Committee on the rights of the child in relation to child justice, child health, child protection, disability, education and physical punishment.
- 

**Partner with young people to identify how to best address their mental health, and their role as first responders.**

Listened to thousands of children and young people who voiced their concerns in relation to managing their own and their peers' mental health needs. To address their concerns, she has:

- made several submissions in relation to the State's Suicide Prevention Plan and provided guidance on other mental health matters upon request at state and national level
  - produced and distributed an annual *Child Rights Progress Report on Health* (including mental health) summarising the Commissioner's work of monitoring implementation of recommendations made by the UNCRC relating to mental health.
- 

**Improve policies and practices through awareness of the impact of educational exclusion and suspension on children and families.**

Undertook a School Exclusions Survey in 2019, which informed *The Blame Game report – perspectives on school exclusion* released in 2020.

Produced and distributed an annual *Child Rights Progress Report on Education* monitoring South Australia's progress around implementation of recommendations made by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, including use of exclusionary practices on vulnerable groups.

Undertook a series of forums in partnership with the Australian College of Educators (ACE) and Flinders University on exclusionary issues.

Hosted the Keeping Kids Connected Summit (March 2021) bringing together academics, teachers, and service providers to discuss findings from the Graham Inquiry, CCYP's *The Blame Game* report and the ACE *Earning and Learning* report.

Hosted a second Keeping Kids Connected Summit (May 2022) bringing together academics, teachers, and service providers to focus on disengaged and detached students in the context of decommissioning FLO and determining how alternative education positioned as an integral part of SA's education system is to be developed and implemented.

---



Established an Exclusions Network to discuss issues relating to school exclusion and the impact it has on young lives.

Partnered with UniSA, UNICEF and the Australian Secondary and Primary School Principals' Associations to conduct research into exclusionary policies and practices in Australian schools, and the impact they have on vulnerable children.

### Focus Area Three:

#### Engage and empower young digital citizens

Commitment	Achievements
<b>Raise awareness of the educational, social, and economic impact of gaming through a youth led conversation.</b>	<p>Produced and distributed <i>Community Building in the 21st Century– how to use collaborative gaming to build connection, confidence, and creativity</i> (2020).</p> <p>Undertook research into Play in Adolescence with Uni SA looking at what forms of 'play' are likely to be found on high school campuses, if any.</p> <p>Partnered with Professor Barbara Spears and her team from UniSA Education Futures to provide a deep dive into the global and local e-sports governance and positive e-sports behaviours.</p> <p>Partnered with Professor Amanda Third and her team from Western Sydney University, Deakin University and Victoria University to produce <i>Game On</i> – a report into the positive link between gaming and development of soft skills such as team work, strategy, collaboration, imagination and problem solving in children and young people who participate in online gaming.</p> <p>Partnered with Australian e-Sports Association (AESA) to present a series of online workshops featuring industry professionals who focused in on the career potential the e-sports industry offers beyond becoming a professional gamer. The workshops were aimed at those young people interested in other aspects of the e-sports ecosystem such as games development, content creation, commentating, hosting and event management.</p> <p>Spoke to young people attending an SA metropolitan high school about ways they suggest introducing and utilising e-sports gaming for competition, socialising, and relaxation amongst older young people.</p> <p>Convened a group of parents and e-sports participants to discuss best ways to support young people interested in getting into competitive e-sports and the gaming ecosystem, either as commentators, officials, twitch streamers, or amateur or professional players.</p> <p>Convened an e-sports governance forum with Price Waterhouse Coopers to look at ways in which young people can participate in the e-sports ecosystem.</p> <p>Funded the Northern Sound System to run a showcase gaming competition for SA councils.</p>
<b>Empower children and young people and support their preparation for the jobs of the future by creating an ongoing digital challenge.</b>	<p>Developed a range of resources for children, young people, parents, schools, and other organisations to support the Commissioner's Digital Challenges (CDC) – Learn to Speak Robot, Space to Dream and Zoom Out. Since 2018, it is estimated that close to 75,000 SA children and young people have taken part in CDC and used these resources to learn about computational, design and systems thinking to develop digital skills that enable them to create, design and problem solve with confidence, speak digital languages and use digital technologies.</p>

**Inform stakeholders on safety and relationship issues identified by children and young people arising from digital involvement and create opportunities to co-design responses.**

Following consultation with children and young people from diverse backgrounds, produced and distributed *Respecting Children's Online Rights – Tips for Organisations and Parents* (2021).

Produced and distributed *My Digital Life: understanding the impact of digital poverty on children and young people* (2021). This report provided an overview of how quickly children without digital access can fall behind with learning and education outcomes placing them at a lifelong disadvantage and the importance of ensuring equal access to digital technologies including opportunities to acquire digital language and problem solving skills.

**Resource families to support their young children to engage safely in the digital world.**

Produced *Quick Guides for Parents* on

- Children's Online Rights
- Instagram, and
- TikTok.

Wrote a series of articles aimed at parents and carers about ways to keep children and young people safe while they're online. The articles were published in South Australia's *Kidido Magazine* and reproduced online at [www.ccyp.com.au](http://www.ccyp.com.au)

## Focus Area Four:

Strengthen children and young people's participation in society

### Commitment

### Achievements

**Partner with business and community leaders to showcase contributions made by young people, grow their aspirations, and retain their talent in South Australia through multiple platforms.**

Highlighted the talents and achievements of young South Australians at events and online through:

- Get Around It – an online showcase of young South Australian thinkers, makers and doers presented on Instagram.
- [hub.com.au](http://hub.com.au) – an online space designed to appeal to young people aged 14–18 years. Hub is resourced by young people who contribute content that is topical and which covers their interests and issues, ranging from art to politics.
- Partnered with Adelaide City Council to present COVID Reflections (2021) – an exhibition capturing the impact of the pandemic on the lives of young South Australians. The exhibition was installed at the Adelaide City Library to raise awareness of young people's experiences.
- Partnered with MOD. to showcase top-rated entries in the Commissioner's Space to Dream Design Thinking Challenge in 2020.
- Partnered with the Australian Space Discovery Centre to showcase the top-rated entries in the Commissioner's Space to Dream Design Thinking Challenge 2021.
- Partnered with Libraries SA on the Space to Dream travelling exhibition showcasing the top-rated entries in the Commissioner's 2020 and 2021 Design Thinking Challenge.
- Partnered with Carclew to develop and produce a series of videos titled *What SA Kids Have Told Us About* (2021) summarising young people's opinions and concerns as they relate to the environment, work and work experience, play, inclusion and diversity, and civics and leadership.

---

**Inform regional institutions on how regional children and young people want to engage and participate in their communities now and in the future.**

Worked with agencies in Port Pirie to engage with local children and young people to find out what they need most.

Produced and distributed project reports summarising consultations undertaken with children and young people living in rural, outback and regional locations across South Australia:

- *Hopes and Dreams report* (2018).
  - *Growing Confident, Connected, Creative Regional Kids* (2019).
  - *Regenerating our Regions: increasing participation of young people in rural South Australia* (2020).
- 

**Future-proof participation in civil society through children and young people's direct engagement in political participation, civic engagement and policy development.**

Developed and launched yChange – an action civics resource for civics and citizenship educators (2021).

Partnered with SA Parliament's Education Unit to develop a Civics in the City Pilot Program to enable disadvantaged regional schools to visit Parliament House and learn about how Parliament works.

Partnered with SA Parliament's Education Unit to deliver a series of online Civics & Citizenship Seminars for SA Educators (2022).

Ran a Time to Vote online campaign to promote young people's enrolment, registration, and voting in both the State and Federal elections held in early 2022. A similar campaign is planned for Local Government Elections in late 2022.

Established a Civics Network of South Australian based civics educators and supporters to promote better opportunities for civics learning.

Launched the inaugural South Australian Student Representative Council (SA SRC) – a state-wide, student led body of 166 students from Years 10, 11, and 12 who come together to determine priority issues and work on associated actions that aim to address them across the SA community.

---

## Foundational Achievements

In addition to the achievements made across the four key focus areas as outlined, there have been a number of foundational achievements that have established the inaugural role in ways that will help to ensure its relevance and viability over the long term.

These include:

- Consultation and engagement with tens of thousands of South Australian children and young people throughout the state, including those from regional, rural and outback locations and from a range of cultural backgrounds, LGBTQIA+ kids, children who are in hospital, and those living with disability, to name a few. These children and young people are all aware that they have a Commissioner who is advocating on their behalf for their voices to be heard and their ideas acted upon and for their input into decision making around matters relating directly to their lives.
- Raising awareness of the particular challenges faced by children and young people with direct experience of SA's youth justice system including children of prisoners, as well as young carers, children and young people living with disability, those who are suffering with period poverty, and those who experience gender and sexuality-based bullying.
- Production of more than 220 public facing documents including 31 project reports, 75 submissions, 48 fact sheets and a range of position briefs, issues briefs, education resources and child rights reports for use by children and young people, educators, parents, policy makers and legislators so that the views of children and young people can be easily accessed and incorporated.
- Advocating for and monitoring progress of more than 100 recommendations made by children and young people across issues that range from youth justice to gender diversity, from public transport to poverty, from period poverty to digital access and from family law to school exclusions, to name just a few of the issues covered.
- Engaging with more than 6,000 adult stakeholders representing government, non-government and community and business organisations through policy forums and summits, publications, and awareness raising campaigns.
- Establishing the Commissioner's Digital Challenge (CDC) aimed at developing IT skills to support SA children and young people to become future job ready (including access to an unplugged version for early learners) with an estimated 75,000 students completing one or all three challenges since the initiative was launched in 2019.
- Showcased 71 SA young people and their talents via the Get Around It Instagram platform established in 2019.



- Established the statewide SA SRC a student led organisation with 166 members made up of young people in Years 10, 11, & 12 representing every electorate across the state, who regularly come together to identify and campaign on the issues that matter to them while learning the skills to achieve effective advocacy outcomes.
- Worked with a range of government departments and agencies to encourage and advise on effective engagement with children and young people focusing on what it takes to create child safe and child friendly environments and to improve the information, processes, and environments aimed at children and young people.
- Improved the capacity of children and young people to be active citizens through campaigns that encouraged them to enrol to vote, and to vote in State, Federal and Local government elections, as well as support them to run for local council positions, including mentoring individual campaigns for success.
- Established a number of educational resources and programs aimed at improving civics and citizenship outcomes including yChange – Action Civics resource for educators, Civics & Citizenship Seminars for Teachers, and Civics in the City program to help schools from disadvantaged areas undertake tours of Parliament House to engage students in active civics learning.
- Actively pursued changes to legislation, policy, and practice to support child rights in SA, including raising the age of criminal responsibility from 10 years to 14 years in line with international standards and removing corporal punishment being applied to children as an option for any adult.
- Scrutinised and monitoring of government legislation, policy, and practice in relation to the rights of SA's children and young people and monitoring of recommendations via a suite of annual child rights reports distributed to relevant stakeholders and policy makers to ensure SA fulfils its international obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

## Issues Overview

Throughout the year I have continued to inform Government Chief Executives, Members of Parliament, business leaders, community leaders, and the broader public about the concerns that have been raised with me directly by South Australian children and young people. These issues have been raised through consultations, forums, surveys, and polls and continue to reflect a system that is not placing children and young people's rights front and centre.

When decisions made at the systemic level fail to see the whole child or young person involved, it is a failure of that system – not the child or young person. Similarly, when services do not adequately attend to the needs and circumstances of children and young people being impacted by family breakdown, financial and social vulnerability, and/or poverty and conflict, it is a failure of the system – not the individuals.

Decision makers and service providers tend to focus on the symptoms of system failure rather than on the causes. By doing so they lose sight of who it is the system exists to serve, and instead risk creating programs that do not uphold a child or young person's rights, disregard their views and opinions, and are overly short-term or adult centric in their approach and actions.

System failings can also occur because of lags in service delivery, or responses that cannot meet the pace of change. Many of the political, economic, technological, and social changes that have occurred at the local, national, and global level have an immediate and far-reaching impact on the everyday lives of children and young people. These rapid changes also impact on their future aspirations, long-term health and wellbeing, education, and citizenship outcomes.

COVID-19 continues to impact on South Australian children and young people, and their families. Though the impact has not been as widespread as in other Australian states and territories, it has without doubt exacerbated many of the challenges already being faced by those across our community who are doing it tough.

## Progress on Recommendations Made in Previous Years

In last year's annual report, I made a series of recommendations relating to key systemic policy issues. These were in addition to the set of recommendations made in my 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 annual reports.

This section shows progress made on these recommendations and what actions have been taken to implement them.

**Recommendations are given a rating based on the engagement and actions taken by key stakeholders and decision makers as follows:**

 RED

No evidence of policy or practice changes since the recommendations was made. No improvement in children's or young people's experiences.

 AMBER

Some evidence of policy or practice change, but the recommendation has not yet been fully implemented.

 GREEN

Recommendation implemented and notable positive differences to the groups of children and young people for whom the changes were intended to benefit.

# System Blindness

## Policy and system blindness to the rights and needs of children of incarcerated parents.

<b>Recommendations Made</b>	<p>That the SA Department for Correctional Services (DCS) adopt a child rights and child safe environments approach to all relationships and interactions with children and young people.</p> <p>This includes family visits, provision of information for children on prison processes, prisoner reconnection, and reintegration with family.</p> <p>In addition, DCS should focus on the parenting status of offenders, and invest in parenting support initiatives for male and female prisoners, which aim to support incarcerated parents prevent their children from becoming involved in offending.</p>
-----------------------------	--

<b>Progress Rating</b>	<p>● AMBER</p> <p>Although establishment of the Strengthening Families Working Group is a step in the right direction the Commissioner would like to see an MOU between DCS and Department for Child Protection (DCP) put in place to ensure appropriate services, supports and the necessary protocols are put in place for parents who are in custody whose children interface with DCP.</p>
------------------------	--

<b>Response/s to Recommendations Made</b>	<p>During the reporting period the Commissioner released her <i>Join the Dots Report: Considering the Impact of Parental Incarceration on Children and Young People Report</i>. The recommendations made in this report are currently being considered. The call for a more joined up approach to delivery of services has been noted by the Department for Human Services (DHS) who highlighted their newly established Strengthening Families Working group. The group has been formed to support cohesive cross government approaches to incarcerated parents with children who are at risk. Membership comprises of the Department for Correctional Services, Department for Child Protection, Department for Education, Department for Health and Wellbeing and Department of Human Services.</p>
---	--

## Policy and system blindness to the rights and needs of children of young carers.

<b>Recommendations Made</b>	<p>That the Department for Education work with school leadership teams and carer support agencies to develop and implement a young carer support model for all SA schools. This model would include the adoption of a single point of contact for information and advice for students with a significant caring role at home, with the focus being on supporting them to maintain their academic levels and social inclusion, as well as their connection with peers and the wider school community.</p>
-----------------------------	--

<b>Progress Rating</b>	<p>● AMBER</p> <p>There needs to be a movement away from a reliance on children and young people self-reporting their role as young carers at home to a more proactive model developed by the Department for Education that has input from schools and young carers themselves. This will help to ensure young carers are being adequately supported so that they avoid reaching crisis points.</p>
------------------------	---

# System Blindness

## Response/s to Recommendations Made

When the term “young carers” is searched on the Education Department website there is some information for parents about how they can contact the school if their child is a young carer at home. There appears to be nothing online to advise students of this option.

In a response to the CCYP the Department for Education stated that:

- A Young Carers in Education guide booklet has been produced and is being made available in hard copy at all schools.
- Young Carers are able to seek support through school Student Wellbeing Leaders.
- For students who self-identify as young carers there are some school-based strategies in place that include:
  - development of individual learning plans
  - flexibility in assessment and attendance expectations
  - alternative education options such as Open Access College and Flexible Learning Options
  - eligibility for SACE recognition of young carer’s caring responsibilities through the ‘Community Learning’ module.

## Stereotypes and sexism in South Australian schools

### Recommendations Made

The Commissioner released her *Stereotypes and Sexism* Report with the following recommendations:

- All South Australian schools review existing relationship and sexual health education and bullying materials to ensure they specifically address sexism, sexual harassment, and gender-based bullying.
- Pre-service and practising teachers are supported through access to ongoing training in relation to the prevention of sexism, sexual harassment, and stereotyping in the classroom.
- All schools review existing procedures for reporting and resolving incidents of sexism and gender based bullying and sexual harassment against the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

### Progress Rating

● AMBER

Although there have been some positive movements at the Federal and Ministerial level with provision of \$77M in funding to boost teacher training in respectful relationships education and a commitment to mandating of holistic and age appropriate consent education from all State Ministers there has been minimal response from the Department for Education in relation to the recommendations made.

## Response/s to Recommendations Made

The Department for Education provided a short response acknowledging receipt and stating that the issues raised will be looked into.



## System Shortfalls

**Lack of options for young people under 15 years of age who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless, and who are not receiving the attention, resources and support they need.**

**Recommendations Made** That the Department for Human Services take a lead role in developing an interdepartmental response that ensures education, health care, youth justice, mental health and child protection services are all working together to formally plan and respond to the needs of children under 15 years of age at extreme risk of ongoing homelessness

### Progress Rating

● AMBER

Although some progress has been made for particular groups of children, there is a clear need for continued advocacy and public discussion that will lead to a statewide approach being taken to addressing issues of homelessness amongst SA's children and young people.

### Response/s to Recommendations Made

The Department through the Exceptional Needs Unit provides services to young people at extreme risk of homelessness, and with complex needs. However accommodation and support services remain inadequate for many young people.

**Lack of bail accommodation options for young people leading to unnecessary periods in custody.**

**Recommendations Made** That the State invest in a youth bail accommodation facility, with an independent lead agency to oversee its development and implementation. This facility needs to include capacity for monitoring of preparation of an individual release plan for every child and young person who is leaving detention.

### Progress Rating

● AMBER

Although some progress has been made there are still reports of children being held in police watch houses and in youth detention for those who have been denied police bail. Kurlana Tapa Youth Detention Centre is building an eight bed policy custody unit for children denied police bail.

### Response/s to Recommendations Made

The Child Diversion Program pilot has provided short term accommodation for young people who are in the youth justice system. The accommodation also provides services that can cater to short term intensive and quick support for families which aims to link the child or children to services that can meet their long-term needs. Phase one is completed and has resulted in 11 Aboriginal children and their families being given extra support to keep their families together and their children out of the justice system.

Phase two has commenced and will include an expansion of the team, growth of the premises, and broadening of the current criteria for children to be considered for the program.

# System Shortfalls

## Lack of data on police and court bail conditions applied to SA children and young people.

**Recommendations Made** That the Department for Human Services (or other appropriate department) collect transparent, year-on-year, whole of system data, to track police and court bail conditions for all children and young people who come into contact with the SA child justice system.

**Progress Rating** ● RED

**Response/s to Recommendations Made** This recommendation does not appear to have been progressed by DHS. Some data about the number and breakdown of children in Kurlana Tapa has been released by the Training Centre Visitor, but this detail has not been included in their annual report.

## Lack of systemic mental health supports for primary school aged children.

**Recommendations Made** The Department for Health and Wellbeing adopt a public health approach to children's mental health, increasing the number and variety of school-based mental health supports and interventions for primary school aged children.

**Progress Rating** ● AMBER

Although some progress has been made, it is the recommendations for amendments to the Mental Health Act that will follow the review currently being undertaken by the South Australian Law Reform Institute (SALRI) which is of most interest.

**Response/s to Recommendations Made**

There has been some progress made toward establishment of a Strengthening Families Working Group. The government has invested in extra staff at the Women and Children's Hospital (WCH) over the next four years, including 48 more doctors (17 of whom will be senior specialists) and 12 more nurses to boost cancer and mental health care for children and young people.

The government is also investing in a central pool of 100 new mental health and learning support specialists for SA schools.

In August this year the government announced that every SA government school will have a specialist autism teacher in place by 2023, as part of its nation-leading program to support children on the spectrum.

## System Failures

### Lack of timely support for young people from complex families who are falling through the cracks.

#### Recommendations Made

Government to establish an appropriate child-focused body resourced to work with government and non-government organisations and young people who are living with complex needs to implement a Young People at Risk Framework. This would be underpinned by formal agreements and include provision for long term case management, therapeutic interventions, and individualised support.

#### Progress Rating

● AMBER

Although establishment of the Strengthening Families Working Group is a step in the right direction what actions they recommend be taken and how quickly they can be implemented is critical to ensuring children and young people are adequately supported to enable them to thrive despite the complex family they are in and to remain within their family wherever possible.

#### Response/s to Recommendations Made

The Department for Human Services has advised that it has noted the recommendation for a joined-up approach to be put in place to support complex families more comprehensively. They pointed to the newly established Strengthening Families Working Group formed to support cohesive cross government support for parents with children who are at risk of being removed from their care. Membership of the group comprises representatives from the Department for Correctional Services, Department for Child Protection, Department for Education, Department for Health and Wellbeing, and Department of Human Services.

The Exceptional Needs Unit (ENU) established within DHS exists to help individuals and families navigate the support systems designed to assist them. Although not youth specific the ENU does focus on young people as a priority group to ensure they can engage with appropriate services providers in the shortest timeframes.

# System Failures

**A disturbing increase in the use of suspension, part time schooling and school exclusion as behaviour management strategies for children and young people who become disengaged with their education.**

## Recommendations Made

That the Department for Education undertake a policy and practice review of the use of school suspensions and exclusions, with an emphasis on creating opportunities for children and young people, and their families to have representation and direct involvement when suspensions or exclusions are being considered, particularly in relation to their use on children living with a disability.

## Progress Rating

● AMBER

Although progress has been made there are still far too many children being excluded from South Australian schools within minimal examples of adjustments made to meet the needs of the child or young person so they have access to their education.

## Response/s to Recommendations Made

The Department for Education continues to roll out the recommendations made in the Graham Report and the Commissioner's *The Blame Game* Report.

The former state government committed \$15 million over four years to a program of work that seeks to reduce the use of exclusionary discipline, including changes to policy, data collection, and provision of services and support for students, teachers, and leaders.

It is understood that the program of work proposed will continue under the current state government, with the \$15 million initially allocated extended for a further two years. The current government has also made additional commitments relating to support for programs that focus on student wellbeing, inclusion, and early intervention programs.

These include:

- an extra \$50 million over four years for 100 new 'mental health and learning support specialists to provide support and guidance for government primary and secondary school students and staff'
- an investment of \$28.8 million over 4 years to appoint an autism lead teacher in every government primary school
- a Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care, which will examine how universal quality preschool for three and four-year-old children can be delivered in South Australia; and
- establishing five new technical colleges across regional and metropolitan South Australia for students in years 10 to 12 to complete their SACE and transition to further training, education, and employment.

It is also understood that the government will be consulting the community later in 2022 on alternatives to Flexible Learning Options (FLO).

## System Failures

**Vulnerable children and young people, particularly those in residential care, are being caught up in the judicial system and becoming criminalised.**

**Recommendations Made** That the Department for Child Protection (DCP) implement systemic measures that refer children away from the judicial system as a first resort. This includes DCP working with police regions to implement local protocols between residential care units and police stations to ensure vulnerable children and young people receive treatment and care, not police involvement.

### Progress Rating

● AMBER

Although positive progress has been made in some areas with the introduction of specific programs and evidence of more inter-agency collaboration, it is unclear whether protocols and processes are being developed and introduced, or gaps identified to help prevent an over-representation of children who have been placed into residential care coming into contact with SA's youth justice system.

### Response/s to Recommendations Made

The DCP referred CCYP to the following programs which aim to demonstrate interagency collaboration to address safeguarding of missing children and young people under guardianship:

- Early intervention pathways, including Family Group Conferencing pilot to keep families together.
- Implementation of the Newpin project run by Uniting Communities.  
The Newpin program is an intensive therapeutic centre-based program for families with young children aged 6 years or under on a temporary care order, where reunification has been identified as an appropriate goal.
- The Missing Guardianship Children and Young People Steering Committee, which continues to drive policy and practice through the MOAA between SAPOL and DCP.

**A statewide systemic and service response for children who are displaying problematic or harmful sexual behaviours.**

**Recommendations Made** The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (RCIRCSA) found that child-on-child problematic or harmful sexual behaviour is a critical issue. The Commissioner noted that harmful sexual behaviour by children appeared to be more prevalent than previously thought. However, due to a lack of consistent national data collection there has been an under investment in appropriate primary, secondary and tertiary intervention at a systemic level.

### Progress Rating

● AMBER

The Commissioner has been working with government agencies and NGOs to develop systems and services to better respond to problematic sexual behaviour (PSB) in South Australia.

### Response/s to Recommendations Made

The recommendation has been acknowledged by government.





# Project R





# Reporting

# Major Projects and Initiatives

Throughout the 2021/2022 reporting year (with the support of my team) I undertook programs, projects, and initiatives across four key areas:

## 1 Rights Promotion and Protection

For all South Australian children and young people to be respected, valued, and heard, I inform children and young people, as well as the broader community, about their rights and the role my position as Commissioner plays in promoting, protecting, and supporting these rights. This includes amplifying children's and young people's voices, enfranchising children and young people's participation in public life, and making recommendations that expand opportunities for children and young people to enjoy meaningful participation in their community. I work to ensure that the interests of children and young people are placed front and centre in everyday life, so that decision-makers are actively engaging children and young people as stakeholders, particularly in relation to decisions and services that impact directly on them.

## 2 Awareness Raising of Systemic Issues

To achieve change it is sometimes necessary to shift attitudes on a specific issue toward a particular group of children and young people in our community. Through reporting and awareness raising, I seek to change community attitudes, public opinion, beliefs, and narratives, to create public support on an identified issue that children and or young people have brought to my attention. I partner with the broader community to substantiate these issues, enabling me to respond to and represent children and young people in a genuine way.

### 3 Systemic Advocacy

I utilise research, policy, advocacy and investigative methodologies to lead and complement government and community involvement in development, implementation and evaluation of laws, programs and policies that impact on children and young people. This includes, more specifically, social policy development, legislative change, operational policy, and practical improvement/s.

### 4 Engagement and Participation

I actively seek to engage, include, and empower children and young people in matters relating to them. This includes supporting them to be critical stakeholders in service and program planning, as well as in governance and operational delivery. This is achieved through direct representation of children and young people on issues they themselves identify, as well as through consultation with them on issues others have identified as being relevant to them. This enables me to speak on behalf of children and young people with credibility. I actively support individuals and systems to listen to, understand, and act on the views, experiences and information provided by children and young people. I also work to develop systems and structures that can actively involve children and young people in decision making, particularly in areas that impact on their interests and wellbeing directly. At all times, I seek to engage in meaningful dialogue and debate around issues that children and young people have identified as having a negative impact on their lives.



# Rights Promotion and Protection

## Major Projects

---

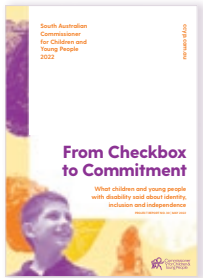
### The Exclusions Project

In May this year, the Commissioner hosted the second of her Keeping Kids Connected to Learning and Schooling Summit. The 2022 Summit followed on from her first, hosted in March 2021. It looked more closely at the reasons for students' disengagement and detachment from school, and workshopped ways of working toward establishing cross-sectoral responses to support children and young people who are known to be disengaged, or at risk of disengaging from their school and learning.

The forum attracted approximately 100 participants who included educators, principals, support workers, school principals, NGOs, parents and representatives from government departments and community organisations.

Partners in the Summit included:

- Centre for Research in Educational and Social Inclusion (University of South Australia)
- Flinders University
- South Australian Primary Principals Association
- South Australian Secondary Principals Association



### Children and Young People Living with a Disability

In May 2022, the Commissioner released *From Checkbox to Commitment: What children and young people with disability said about identity, inclusion and independence*.

The report is the culmination of a targeted listening project undertaken by the Commissioner throughout 2020/2021, specifically aimed at hearing directly from SA children and young people aged 9–22 years who are living with disability.

The Commissioner's report aims to amplify the voices of these children and young people and others like them. It documents, in their words, their diverse and unique perspectives on their own lives and the world around them. Although they have similar points of view on many issues as other young South Australians, when it came to their experiences of living with disability they raised issues that reflect their own priorities.

The report provided key messages from this group of children and young people that included details of some of the changes they would like to see made including:

- increased opportunities to participate in decisions and share their views on a broad range of topics that are not limited to living with disability
- more support to build friendships and attend social outings on their own terms with more opportunities to interact with “mainstream kids”; and
- commitment from government and community organisations, including education service providers, to addressing the issue of school exclusion that is so prevalent amongst children and young people with disability.

### Responding to Children Displaying Problematic Sexual Behaviour

Over the reporting period the Commissioner continued to chair the Problem Sexual Behaviour (PSB) Advisory Group and Working Group. The working groups identify and discuss issues and barriers that exist in relation to responses to PSB amongst South Australian children and young people.

During the year the group provided feedback to the Department for Education on their new guidelines, policies, and procedures for best practice responses to PSB occurring in schools.

The Commissioner also hosted two workshops on PSB. Presented in partnership with the Australian Centre for Child Protection, the aim of the workshops was to pull focus on development of

a framework to help inform an inclusive, multi-agency response to PSB in schools. The workshop brought together decision makers and front-line workers from health, justice, education, and human services, as well as representatives from non-government agencies and statutory bodies.

Advocacy and support will continue throughout 2022/2023 to ensure South Australia puts adequate primary, secondary and tertiary responses to PSB in place.

## Awareness Raising of Systemic Issues

### Major Projects

#### Children and Young People and Sport

The Commissioner released *More Than A Game* in June 2021 – a report examining the barriers to children and young people's participation in organised sport based on survey responses received from more than 1,500 SA young people aged 9–18 years.

*More Than a Game* complements the Commissioner's wider engagement with South Australian children and young people in relation to their broader attitudes and ideas about physical activity and experiences of playing sport. It also feeds into the work done on promoting Article 31 of the UNCRC covered in the Commissioner's *Press Play* report (2020), which provides a series of recommendations on ways to activate young people's health and wellbeing through play.

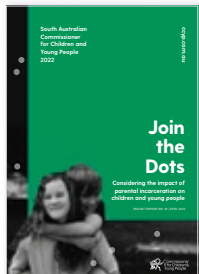
A series of recommendations were made in *More Than a Game* including government development of a Charter for Children in relation to their right to play sport in safe, healthy, and developmentally appropriate environments,

supported by adults who treat them with respect and who actively address discrimination and barriers to participation. This includes sporting clubs and associations ensuring principles of participation and non-discrimination are implemented into their club's governance and culture so that children and young people from diverse backgrounds and ethnic and religious minorities, those with illness and disability, and diverse body types, non-competitive children, LGBTQIA+ children and those with caring/work responsibilities who need more flexible arrangements are catered to.

The report also calls on sporting clubs and organisations to address barriers to children and young people's participation in organised sport by including initiatives that range from uniform recycling, non-branded uniforms, travel vouchers, extended fee relief schemes, community investment in low-cost play, and sports-based activities in line with young people's interests.



## Children of Incarcerated Parents



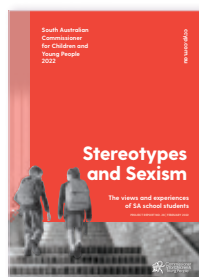
The Commissioner formally raised the issue of policy blindness towards children of incarcerated parents in her *2019/2020 Annual Report*. During direct consultation with children and young people affected by parental incarceration, children had described how their lives changed significantly when their parent was arrested and incarcerated. This led the Commissioner to want to find out more about the impact of parental incarceration on this vulnerable and hidden group of children.

She facilitated engagement with children and young people and incarcerated parents via a family fun day, two camps, two focus groups with young people, eight focus groups with incarcerated parents, and one joint session with incarcerated mothers and their children.

Responses from 66 children and young people aged between 10 and 22 years and 74 parents with whom the Commissioner consulted were summarised in her *Join The Dots* report launched in April 2022. In their own words children and young people describe the impact of having an incarcerated parent, and what they consider needs to change at each stage of the system to improve outcomes for them.

Key recommendations included children and young people receiving timely, age-appropriate information about their parent's situation that includes being told the exact whereabouts of their parent at all stages of their contact with the justice and correctional system, and about what support services are available to them.

## Sexism and Stereotypes



The impact of sexism, gender roles, and gender stereotyping on children and young people's aspirations, relationships, and wellbeing has been an enduring theme across all aspects of the Commissioner's work.

In February 2022, the Commissioner released *Stereotypes and Sexism: The views and experiences of SA school students*. Based on 18 consultations with 365 young people aged 11–19 years in schools and non-government organisations across metropolitan South Australia the report documents descriptions of the gender norms and stereotypes that impact young people's lives in relation to their education, career aspirations, participation, self-esteem, appearance, emotions, behaviours, and relationships.

Although gender stereotyping and sexism is prevalent well before children start school, the significance of school as a place where these mindsets are amplified and perpetuated is clear. Sexism is considered a normal part of school culture and is generally not reported upon due to an underlying belief that nothing can, or will ever, be done about it.

Children and young people identified several practical things they believed schools and teachers can do to promote gender equality and help create more gender inclusive environments at school, and thereby promoting physical and emotional safety for all students.



Three of the recommendations made by children and young people in *Stereotypes and Sexism* were about ensuring that both practising and pre-service teachers are supported to learn strategies and techniques for the prevention of incidents of stereotyping and sexism, including

how best to respond to harassment and gender stereotyping in the classroom. This pre-service training would include information relating to what a healthy relationship looks like and anti-bullying procedures that specifically address sexism and gender-based bullying.

## Child Rights Progress Reports

The Commissioner released the second series of seven *Child Rights Progress Reports* on 10 December 2021 (Human Rights Day). The suite of annual reports monitors South Australia's progress against the recommendations made by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in its report released on 1 November 2019.

The recommendations fall under seven areas; health, education, child protection, child justice, disability, environment and physical punishment. The Commissioner monitors the implementation of the recommendations to ensure South Australia is fulfilling its international obligation to “seek to give effect to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child”.<sup>1</sup>



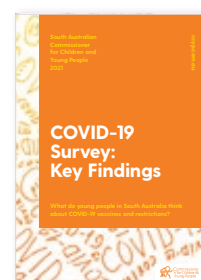
## Ongoing impact of COVID-19

The Commissioner published her *Reflections on COVID-19* report in 2021, capturing the impact of the pandemic on a group of young people who kept journals describing their experiences or who responded to a survey in 2020. To ensure the voices and rights of children and young people were included in conversations and decision-making around the pandemic in 2021 the Commissioner wanted to hear what young people thought about the introduction of COVID-19 vaccines and their availability to all South Australians aged 12 and over.

A survey to capture South Australian young people's thoughts, experiences and concerns during this time was created and distributed via social media. It asked children and young people aged 12–18 years about their views on COVID-19 vaccines and the proposed restrictions in place, as well as where they currently get their information from in relation to COVID-19 and its management.

The Commissioner also asked young people to tell her what they needed from adults to feel better supported during the pandemic and they told her they wanted more information about how safe the vaccines are, whether a vaccine is necessary, how they would be administered, whether they were safe for children of all ages and would be rolled out at school like other vaccines are?

A total of 506 young South Australians participated in the survey with the responses summarised in a report titled *COVID-19 Survey: Key Findings* released in October 2021 and distributed to key government and community stakeholders.



## Cost of Education



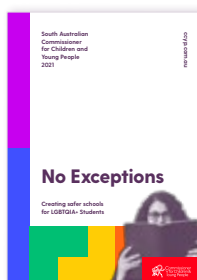
Building on previous work undertaken in relation to the true costs associated with going to school, the Commissioner gathered data from a sample of 108 government schools across metropolitan and regional South Australia to examine the differences between various regions and schools

In October 2021, the Commissioner published a spotlight report on *The True Cost of Going to School* highlighting the full range of items

parents are required to cover to ensure their child or children can participate fully in school programs and activities. These costs are in addition to the materials and services charge, cost of school uniforms and transport costs to include excursions, equipment for extra-curricular activities and sporting fees, to name a few.

In June 2022, the SA Government provided SA parents with a \$100 discount on their school fees to help with cost of living pressures

## LGBTQIA+ Children and Young People



While many LGBTQIA+ children and young people live happy, healthy lives, research consistently shows that they experience disproportionately poorer mental health outcomes when compared to the general population. This is directly related to their experiences of discrimination in society, including in school environments.

During the 2021/2022 year, the Commissioner's advocacy for this group of children and young people focused on the health, wellbeing, and safety of LGBTQIA+ children and young people, particularly while at school. Although there are noted examples of schools that actively promote and practice inclusivity, many LGBTQIA+ young people described feeling unsafe in their school environments, raising concerns about their own and others' experiences of direct and indirect discrimination that is occurring at school.

In August 2021, the Commissioner released *No Exceptions: Creating safer schools for LGBTQIA+ students*. The report captures the views of young LGBTQIA+ people living in South Australia

and their perceptions and experiences of discrimination in religious schools. The report included recommendations that if implemented they believe will make all schools more inclusive of LGBTQIA+ people.

The *No Exceptions* report presents the findings of a survey of LGBTQIA+ young people which the Commissioner undertook at the end of 2020. This survey findings were used to inform a submission to the Attorney-General relating to the proposed changes to religious exceptions under South Australia's *Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)*. Alongside the report, the Commissioner developed a resource to support educators to build inclusive school environments for LGBTQIA+ students and ensure they feel known, valued, and heard.

The insights gathered via the survey also informed the Commissioner's December 2021 submission on the *Religious Discrimination Bill 2021* (and related bills), and her June 2022 submission on the next National School Reform Agreement.

The Commissioner's recommendations in the *No Exceptions* report include ensuring that relationships and sexual health education is respectful of gender and sexual diversity, addressing gender and sexuality-based bullying within schools, and connecting all students but particularly LGBTQIA+ students with community-based health services and credible information sources.

The inaugural South Australian Student Representative Council (SASRC) is working on a range of campaigns one of which is focused on ensuring South Australian LGBTQIA+ students feel supported and celebrated in their school communities.

## Digital Inequality

Many young people describe digital access as being just as 'important' as access to transport and electricity, and to having 'digital skills' as being as 'basic' a requirement as 'reading and writing'.

The shift to a predominantly online existence in 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19, highlighted the issue of digital inequality across our communities. It also exposed the multiple impact a lack of digital access has on children and young people, particularly in relation to their capacity to engage in their education.

The Commissioner undertook hundreds of offline conversations and polls, interactive workshops, and online surveys about South Australian children and young people's relationship with technology, including their experiences of digital poverty. These were summarised in her

report titled *My Digital Life: Understanding the impact of digital poverty on children and young people* released in August 2021. As all levels of government, business, and service providers across the country begin to adopt what is commonly referred to as a 'digital first policy' there is a no more important time than now to bring the voices and experiences of children and young people to the discussion.

Given the disproportionate, significant, and multidimensional impact of digital exclusion on some children and young people, the Commissioner recommends development of a targeted digital inclusion strategy focused on needs of children and young people and featuring equal access to digital devices, data, and storage as key components, alongside digital literacy and digital citizenship.



## Refugee and Migrant Young People



The Commissioner is committed to ensuring that critical policymakers, business leaders and service providers hear what refugee and migrant young people say are the major barriers to achieving rewarding, sustainable, long-term employment.

In partnership with the Australian Migrant Resource Centre (AMRC) the Commissioner co-hosted *Tapping into Our Talents: Leading for our Future Youth Symposium* attracting approximately 200 young people from South Australia's Afghan, Iraqi, Filipino, Bosnian, Syrian, Vietnamese, Nepali, Eritrean, Bhutanese, Hazara, Rwandan, Zambian, Colombian, Myanmar, Yazidi, Chinese, Liberian, Congolese, Indian, South Sudanese, Burundian, Karen, Guinean, Han and Venezuelan communities.

Working in small groups the symposium encouraged attendees to design new projects aimed at "tapping into their talents" to overcome some of the critical barriers they face to employment such as targeting existing traineeships and apprenticeships to recognise the additional challenges in accessing opportunities; expanding networks to gain work experience; improving understanding of Australian workplaces; accessing employment readiness programs; and assisting employers to become more culturally capable.

The symposium built on similar work undertaken in October 2018 reflecting a significant collaboration between the Commissioner and the AMRC.

## Post Schools Transition

This year has seen CCYP partner with the Committee for Adelaide to create a video series called *Everyday Jobs SA*. The series of eight short-form videos feature stories of staff from Committee for Adelaide members, who explain their unique journeys to their current roles within a diverse range of industries.

The main message of the videos aimed at young people who will soon be transitioning from school to a career is that there are many rewarding and important jobs in South Australia that don't need a university degree and that there are many pathways to jobs that offer fulfilling and rewarding careers.

The videos will be disseminated via social media and other web platforms to form part of larger campaign that is aimed at letting young people know it's okay to try different things and that not everyone has a clear idea about what field they may wish to pursue right away.

The video forms part of Commissioner's advocacy around the importance of meaningful and accessible work experience for all high school students, and changing the narrative around pathways to careers, so it is framed as a time of exploration so that young people have time to work out who they are and what they want to do, rather than rush into a career they don't enjoy or are not suited to.

---

## Gender Diversity Model of Care

Over the past twelve months, the Commissioner has continued to engage with the Department for Health and Wellbeing to inform its Gender Diversity Model of Care major strategy and outcomes document.

The strategy, which is the first of its kind in South Australia, is being developed as a contemporary, state-wide model of care specifically designed to meet the needs of gender diverse young people and articulates how SA Health and its partners can deliver appropriate, timely and evidence-

based health services for children, adolescents and young adults across South Australia who are gender diverse and/or who experience gender dysphoria.

The Commissioner was invited to comment on the first draft of the strategy which included acknowledgment and references to the work of the Commissioner in this area; namely the *First Port of Call* report. The Commissioner will continue to partner with the department on the strategy and its implementation.

---

## Children and Young People Living with Chronic Illness

The Commissioner has remained a contributor to the work of the national Child Unlimited network, a national working group comprised of leading physicians, academics, health researchers, and health economists, all looking to find integrated solutions to the challenges facing children and young people who are living with chronic illness.

In parallel, the Commissioner has been working closely with the Commission on Excellence in Healthcare, particularly its Transition of Care Committee, and was named as a consulting partner on a number of grant applications. The Commissioner will also provide ongoing insight and feedback on the work of the Commission more generally.

Through partnerships established throughout the last year, South Australia is now planning to become part of a national health and social atlas with the aim of creating vastly improved data sets for researchers and clinicians involved in chronic illness outcomes.

During the reporting period the Commissioner undertook face-to-face consultation with young people living with chronic illness. The sessions were held concurrently with parents and carers, who were consulted separately to enable them to share their views on their child's challenges and experiences.

The Commissioner heard firsthand about the daily challenges that children living with common chronic illnesses face, especially in relation to accessing education and community spaces and activities. Young people described feeling unsupported and fatigued by constantly having to explain their diagnosis and manage their symptoms. They said adults including teachers did not often take the time to study their care plans or acquire the appropriate training or knowledge they needed to better support them.

The data from these critical conversations became the basis of a survey on chronic illness across South Australia, the results of which will further inform the Commissioner's advocacy work around this issue.



## Engagement and Participation

### Major Projects



#### South Australian Student Representative Council (SA SRC)

This year saw the launch of the Commissioner's engagement and participation platform for high school students in years 10, 11 and 12: the South Australian Student Representative Council (SA SRC).

In its pilot year, determining the shape and scope of the work of the SA SRC has been led by young people themselves who have met as a large group and in smaller issues-based groups post the inaugural Summit. This has been an iterative process to ensure young people and decision makers develop an engagement platform that has long term benefits for the whole State.

A partnership between the CCYP and the Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) supported by the National Indigenous Youth Education Coalition (NIYEC), the SA SRC is a body consisting of 166 student members from Years 10, 11 and 12 across the state, working together to create genuine, student-led change within their own communities.

Of these 123 SA SRC members came together at the Festival Centre in Adelaide in May, to identify priorities for the coming twelve months. They have subsequently met regularly online, supported by members of the CCYP, FYA and NIYEC to work out what actions they will take to address the issues that have been prioritised.

The SA SRC will support the launch of five new student-led projects aimed at creating a more just and equitable South Australia. Projects relating to youth voice, equality and inclusion, environment and transport, wellbeing, and education, which have been identified as key areas for reform. Over the course of their term, SA SRC members will work on campaigns, setting specific goals and asking decision makers to take actions on each.

Putting young people in positions of leadership in this way will allow them to advocate for the futures they wish to see and devise ways to achieve the changes they want made.

## Get Around It

The Get Around It (GAI) Instagram account continues to showcase young South Australians aged 14 to 22 years who are doing, thinking, and making great things. In addition to being profiled on GAI a number of young people were featured in a Get Around It section within Kiddo Magazine.

During the reporting period, twelve young people were featured on GAI. They represent a diverse range of projects across numerous fields that included mentoring, community leadership, activism, charity start-up, small business, visual arts, and new media enterprises.



## Hub Website Project

Hub arose out of the 2019 Youthful Adelaide Report as a new online space for teenagers in South Australia to 'get information, have their say and connect'. Initially hub was offered as a dedicated website with a variety of sections with a human rights' focus.

Launched in April 2020, hub has been redeveloped over the last twelve months as a space for young people aged 14–18 years. Importantly the style, content, promotion, and branding of hub is being directed by young people.



Partnerships with key interest groups around the State (including SA Public Libraries Association, the South Australian Certificate of Education Board, Music SA, Art Gallery of South Australia's Neo initiative, Carclew, Adelaide Youth Orchestra, Young Adelaide Voices, the Academy of Interactive Entertainment and the Australian Esports League) contributed to provision of content across the site, including curated ways for young people to participate.

The team of young interns are contributing to redesign and relaunch of the platform. The hub team are working to attract SA teenagers to submit content for upload onto the platform to express their points of view and ensure they can see themselves and their interests and activities represented.

## Policy Advocates

The Commissioner has partnered with YMCA's Youth Parliament Program to build a platform for young people interested in advocacy and policy creation. Participants experience meaningful opportunities to be directly involved in the advocacy and policy work of the Commissioner.

Building on the skills, knowledge and capabilities developed in young people, they create advocacy plans for bills worked on during their time with YMCA's Youth Parliament Program. They are also encouraged to contribute to the broader

agenda of empowering and supporting young people to influence the social policy direction of the State.

In late 2021, a group of Policy Advocates came together to work on advocacy around the post-COVID recovery period, and what a Future Generations agenda for SA would consist of.

In 2022, policy advocates are developing their own advocacy agenda based on an area of interest.

### The Commissioner's Student Voice Postcards Initiative



Since its launch in 2019, the Commissioner has invited all primary and combined schools across South Australia to support students in years 2–6 to participate in her annual Student Voice Postcards initiative. Through the annual initiative, the Commissioner is able to hear direct from 8–12 year-olds whose views and voices she had identified as a group who often went unheard.

The postcard asks children four key questions each year based on the following recurring themes: (1) what is important to you? (2) what are your aspirations? (3) what concerns do you have? (4) and, what would you change if you could?

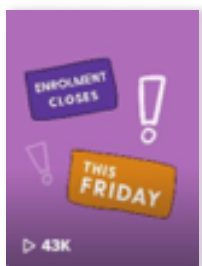
In 2021, the Commissioner received a record 13,868 completed postcards representing 289 Catholic, Independent, Government, Special, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander schools from across the state. Snapshot summaries of children's responses were prepared according

to region along with an overall summary that analysed the total data set. They cover Adelaide Hills, Barossa, Light and Lower North, Eyre and Western, Far North, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island, Limestone Coast, Murray and Mallee, Yorke and Mid North, as well as Metropolitan Adelaide.

Each year the findings from what are anonymous responses apart from age and gender are documented in the Commissioner's *Things That Matter* report. These reports are distributed to key decision makers who work with children and young people to inform them about what matters most to this age group.

In addition to *The Things That Matter 2*, snapshot summaries on what children said about school, job skills and the future, and what worries them most, were produced and distributed to key stakeholders.

### Time to Vote Campaign



Building on the Commissioner's 2018 *Democracy in Action* project, the Commissioner continued her commitment to civics engagement and advocacy by designing and disseminating two highly impactful *Time to Vote* campaigns delivered via social media for the 2022 federal, state and local elections.

Featuring videos from young South Australians, the messaging centred firstly on reminding young people to enrol to vote if they hadn't already done so, and secondly on providing a friendly reminder to vote on election day.

The videos incorporated footage from a variety of iconic South Australian landmarks and spoke to the importance of participating in democracy to affect the change you want to see in society. The campaigns were rolled out across Instagram and Tik Tok receiving a high level of engagement with over 40,000 views. In keeping with the recommendations contained in the *Democracy in Action* project, the Commissioner used young videographers to create the striking assets that were used in both campaigns, including casting young people to deliver the key messaging.

## The Commissioner's Digital Challenge

The Commissioners Digital Challenge (CDC) is an annual challenge that opens on the first day of the school year and closes on the final day of Term 3 each year. The Challenge was introduced by the Commissioner in direct response to the feedback from children and young people regarding the need for them to acquire digital skills in order to be future ready.

The Challenge has been designed to engage and empower young digital citizens because *'digital skills are life skills' critical for future jobs, social inclusion and to help build a more equitable world.*

Resources are made freely available to participants via a dedicated website accessible by all schools (primary and secondary) as well as by libraries and community groups (such as Scouts and Guides) and by children at home with their families. The website also features a library of free extended learning resources for both educators and those taking the Challenge at home.

Since its introduction, a total of 747 South Australian organisations have engaged with the Commissioner's Digital Challenge. Of these, 515 are schools and 42 are local SA libraries. It is estimated that between 2019 and 2022, approximately 75,000 South Australian children have taken part in one or more of the three digital challenges on offer.

The Challenge has recently starting organically attracting high levels of interest outside South Australia with 8 interstate schools and 70 international schools (from Canada, Costa Rica, China, Japan, Singapore South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam and the USA) also registering to take part this year.

### Learn to Speak Robot

#### (a computational thinking challenge)

In 2022, there were 113 unique schools (79 Government, 15 Catholic and 14 Independent in South Australia) plus 5 interstate schools who registered for the Challenge, along with 9 SA public libraries. Early Learning Unplugged has been downloaded by 247 libraries, preschools, and kindergartens as well as by 210 families at home and across South Australia, including those living in remote areas.

### Space to Dream

#### (a design thinking challenge)

In 2022, there were 112 schools (78 Government, 14 Catholic and 15 Independent in South Australia, plus 5 interstate and overseas schools) who registered for the Challenge, along with 6 SA public libraries.

### Zoom Out

#### (a systems thinking challenge)

In 2022, there were 96 schools (65 Government, 13 Catholic and 13 Independent in South Australia, plus 5 interstate and overseas schools) who registered for the Challenge, along with 6 SA public libraries.

**COMMISSIONER'S  
DIGITAL  
CHALLENGE**







# Statutory



# Reporting



## Role of the Commissioner

The Commissioner for Children and Young People is a statutory officer independent from direction or control by the Crown.

The Commissioner promotes and advocates for the rights, development and well-being of all children and young people in South Australia. The Commissioner is committed to advocating for children and young people's involvement in decision-making that affects them, with particular consideration given to those children and young people who are considered vulnerable and whose ability to make their views known is limited.

## Key Responsibilities

The Commissioner has a number of key responsibilities that include:

- promoting and advocating for the rights and interests of all children and young people in South Australia
- promoting the participation by children and young people in the making of decisions that affect their lives
- advising, and making recommendations, to Ministers, State authorities and other bodies (including non-Government bodies) on matters related to the rights, development and wellbeing of children and young people at a systemic level
- inquiring into matters related to the rights, development and wellbeing of children and young people at a systemic level (whether a Governmental system or otherwise)
- assisting in ensuring that the State, as part of the Commonwealth, satisfies its international obligations in respect of children and young people
- undertaking or commissioning research into topics related to children and young people
- preparing and publishing reports on matters related to the rights, development and wellbeing of children and young people at a systemic level; and
- such other functions as may be conferred on the Commissioner by or under the *Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016* or any other Act.

## Children and Youth Engagement

Under the *Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016* the Commissioner is required to consult and engage with South Australian children and young people. She does this in a variety of ways, including meeting with groups of children and young people face-to-face, as well as through surveys, polling, forums, and events.

Since her appointment in 2017 the Commissioner's primary way of engaging has been talking to children and young people directly. This continued in a reduced capacity throughout 2020/2021 and in part of the 2021/2022 reporting period, due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19.

### Direct Consultation

Throughout the reporting period the Commissioner spoke with 1,131 South Australian children and young people at workshops, in face to face meetings, and at forum events.

Date	Project	Engagement Type	Number
16 July 2021	Conversation with the Commissioner – Mental Healthy School	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	4
19 July 2021	High Stakes, High School consultations	Longitudinal consultation	7
30 July 2021	High Stakes, High School consultations	Longitudinal consultation	4
30 July 2021	High Stakes, High School consultations	Longitudinal consultation	8
9 August 2021	Session with Saint Peters College year 12 students	Workshop with the Commissioner	18
17 August 2021	Session with Playford YAC – Northern Sound System	Workshop with the Commissioner	16
19 August 2021	Consultation with students at St Frances School, Lockleys on Physical Activity	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	15
20 August 2021	High Stakes, High School consultations	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	11
23 August 2021	High Stakes, High School consultations	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	6

Date	Project	Engagement Type	Number
27 August 2021	Consultation with students at St Columba College on Physical Activity	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	9
2 September 2021	Policy Advocates 2021 – First Session	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	14
10 September 2021	Consultation with students at Crystal Brook Primary School on Physical Activity	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	19
19 September 2021	Consultation with students at School of the Nativity on Physical Activity	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	15
21 September 2021	Consultation with students at St Pauls College on Physical Activity	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	17
1 October 2021	Conversation with Gymnastics SA	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	6
6 October 2021	Conversation with Girl Guides on Friendship	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	64
7 October 2021	Policy Advocates 2021 – Second Session	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	14
11 October 2021	High Stakes, High School consultations	Longitudinal consultation	9
11 October 2021	High Stakes, High School consultations	Longitudinal consultation	7
12 October 2021	High Stakes, High School consultations	Longitudinal consultation	5
21 October 2021	High Stakes, High School consultations	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	14
22 October 2021	High Stakes, High School consultations	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	8
28 October 2021	Consultation at Gowrie Children's Centre on Friendship	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	36
29 October 2021	Consultation at Halifax Street Children's Centre on Friendship	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	31
2 November 2021	Consultation with students at Prospect North Primary School on Physical Activity	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	15
24 November 2021	Consultation with students at Annesley Junior School on Physical Activity	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	12
6 December 2021	Consultation with students at Heathfield Primary School on Physical Activity	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	15
8 December 2021	Conversation with Payneham Cricket Club	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	10
16 December 2021	Millicent Fun Day	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	21
20 December 2021	Conversation with The Rex – Barossa Aquatic and Fitness	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	6
10 February 2022	Conversation with St Clair Recreational Centre	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	8

Date	Project	Engagement Type	Number
23 February 2022	Conversation with Blackwood Netball Club	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	6
16 March 2022	Conversation with Golden Grove Football Club	Face to face conversation with Commissioner	8
17 March 2022	Consultation with Salisbury Youth Action Committee	Face to face consultation with Commissioner	7
5 April 2022	Consultation on Friendship – Koolunga Primary School	Face to face consultation with Commissioner	12
5 April 2022	Consultation on Friendship – Stirling North Primary School	Face to face consultation with Commissioner	11
5 April 2022	Consultation on Friendship – Whyalla Norrie Primary School	Face to face consultation with Commissioner	3
6 April 2022	Tumby Bay Youth Expo workshop	Face to face workshop with Commissioner	153
11 April 2022	Workshop on Respectful Relationships at Kadina Memorial School	Workshop with the Commissioner	21
14 April 2022	CREATE Citizen Researchers Meeting	Face to face meeting with Commissioner	6
26 April 2022	Information session for SA SRC metro students	Face to face consultation with Commissioner	81
13 May 2022	SA SRC Summit with students and MP's	Event	161
18 May 2022	Workshop on Respectful Relationships at Adelaide High School	Face to face consultation with Commissioner	12
21 May 2022	Conversation on Friendship with young people attending AGSA Neo event	Face to face consultation with Commissioner	28
28 May 2022	Consultation on Friendship – Girl Guides	Face to face consultation with Commissioner	24
2 June 2022	Commissioner's Advisory Panel	Face to face consultation with Commissioner	11
9 June 2022	Consultation on Friendship – Mark Oliphant College	Face to face consultation with Commissioner	14
21 June 2022	SA SRC Central Group	Longitudinal consultation	16
23 June 2022	SA SRC catch up – North Group	Longitudinal consultation	32
25 June 2022	CREATE Sibling Day at Latitude	Face to face consultation with Commissioner	71
26 June 2022	Consultation on Friendship – All Saints Catholic Primary School, Seaford	Face to face consultation with Commissioner	10

## Promoting Participation

Under the *Children and Young People's (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016* one of the functions of the Commissioner is to promote the participation of children and young people in decision making so that they have a say in the decisions that are impacting on their lives.

To facilitate their participation, the Commissioner has developed a variety of ways for children and young people to become directly involved in her work. These include being on advisory groups, undertaking citizen research, conducting community conversations, and being part of the Commissioner's Advisory Committee. A total of 1,163 SA young people informed and participated in the work of the Commissioner via these mechanisms.

Date ranges	Advisory Group	Description	Number	Topics
From August 2020 ongoing	Policy Advocates	Developed with YMCA's Youth Parliament this program is building a platform for young people interested in advocacy work by learning how to use formal processes to advocate for policy change at a system level and by choosing the issue they wish to advocate on.	18	Development of Future Generations Bill and Sexual Health Education advocacy
From July 2019 ongoing	Citizen Researchers	Young people supported by youth organisations use action research principles to engage their peers with lived experience on topics of interest to CCYP/young people aged 13–22 years.	14	There are currently three groups researching two different topics: the Department for Child Protection and Mental Health.
May 2020 to present	Commissioner's Community Conversations	These conversations have been created by using a collective impact approach, upskilling community agencies and young people to work together to identify issues and then come up with solutions that have input from young people themselves.	1,000 (approx)	Currently seven groups of young people aged 12–22 years representing four local councils, girl guides, a multicultural support organisation and a recreation agency.
August 2020 to present	Commissioner's Advisory Committee	A representative board that meets bi-monthly, informing the work of the Commissioner. Representatives are from youth focused organisations, clubs and groups.	9	Identifying the election priorities for young South Australians for the next election.

Other types of participation by children and young people included:

Date ranges	Participation type	About	Number
March 2020 to present	hub	A website encouraging interaction and connection from teenagers in SA using a student led model which allows them to determine what the content will be and catering to a diversity of views and experiences on topics of interest to young people.	Six young people aged 18–21 years undertook a twelve month internship to re-design the hub website. Contributions from approximately 15 young people were featured on the site across the arts, social issues, sport, youth opinion, news, stories and music categories.
March 2022 to present	SA SRC	First state-wide student advisory council launched in March	Over 123 young people from years 10, 11 and 12 attended the inaugural annual SA SRC Summit.



## Surveys and Polling

Throughout 2021–2022, the Commissioner designed and released several surveys and polls to gain a deeper understanding of children and young people's thoughts, experiences, and concerns around issues that ranged from voting to vaping.

The surveys and polls were undertaken both online and offline, with the Commissioner receiving an overall total of 16,374 responses from South Australian children and young. This total included the Commissioner's annual Student Voice Postcards initiative which recorded 13,868 responses in 2021 from 289 SA primary and combined schools.

Date	Project	Engagement Type	Number
August 2021	Young People and Voting	Polling	9
August 2021	Hub Survey: What would make media more youthful and engaging?	Survey	83
September 2021	COVID-19 Vaccines and Restrictions	Survey	506
October 2021	Friendship Poll – Girl Guides	Polling	64
November 2021	Friendship Poll	Polling	89
October–December 2021	The Year 12 Survey	Survey	223
August 2021–January 2022	2021 Postcards	Postcards to schools	13,868
January–June 2022	Managing Chronic Illness at School Survey	Survey	95
February 2022	Mental Health Poll	Polling	95
April 2022	Pandemic Poll	Polling	37
April 2022	Civic Participation Poll	Polling	45
May 2022	Playground Poll	Polling	164
May 2022	Gender Inclusivity Poll	Polling	146
June 2022	The Commissioner's Vaping Survey	Survey	950

## External Relations and Communications

The Commissioner interacts with a variety of stakeholders across government, private enterprise, and community organisations, with an active list consisting of approximately 6,000 decision makers, government officials, not for profit organisations and community leaders, who include educators, advocates and policy makers.

The Commissioner actively communicates key issues identified in relation to the promotion, protection, and prioritisation of the rights of South Australia's children and young people to key stakeholders who include decision makers, policy makers, government representatives, members of parliament, academics, advocates and other organisations and individuals working in child rights locally and nationally with some international engagement where possible and appropriate. She does this in a variety of ways that include making formal submissions and official comments; sending electronic direct messaging campaigns, letter writing, making speeches and presentations; and through opinion editorials, social media, and print and radio interviews and articles.

Younger children are engaged via notices sent to parents, carers, and educators and via the Department for Education e-newsletter to schools. Targeted mailouts to South Australian public and independent schools and libraries are also undertaken in relation to key initiatives which include the Student Voice Postcard initiative and Commissioner's Digital Challenge.

Teenagers are engaged via email, slack, Instagram, and Facebook with events and surveys distributed to young people via Humanitix, Eventbrite, and Survey Monkey.

Media releases announcing various project outcomes and the release of new reports are distributed to mainstream print, radio, television and online editors and journalists throughout the reporting period.

In addition, the Commissioner undertakes radio and podcast interviews, and pitches stories about her work to relevant journalists, seeking to have these published in metropolitan and regional newspapers. The Commissioner also self-publishes articles on her Medium blog, with these cross-posted to her LinkedIn profile where they achieve consistently high engagement and shares.

The details of the multi-faceted external relations and communications activities undertaken for this reporting period are summarised over the following pages.

## Submissions

The Commissioner's functions under the *Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016* include undertaking or commissioning research into topics related to children and young people.

The research informs future work, research, and advice to improve outcomes for children and young people in South Australia.

Part of this work involves the Commissioner preparing submission or comments on particular issues with these sent to national and state government agencies and organisations for their consideration and reflection.

The Commissioner made 18 submissions throughout the reporting period with half of these made to State government departments and agencies, and the other half to Commonwealth government departments and agencies.

Submissions covered issues that ranged from obesity prevention to road safety, from privacy to parental incarceration, and from climate change to disability inclusion, to name a few.

Date	To	Subject
28 July 2021	Department of Human Services	Draft DHS Accessible and Inclusive Toolkits – Engagement and Consultation Toolkit
18 August 2021	SA Members of Parliament	Electoral (Electronic Documents and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2021
20 August 2021	Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement Capabilities in relation to child exploitation (Cth)	Law enforcement inquiring in relation to Child Exploitation
27 August 2021	Department for Environment and Water, Climate Change Branch	Report on the Review of the Climate Change and Greenhouse Emissions Reduction Act
1 September 2021	Department for Transport and Infrastructure	Draft SA Road Safety Strategy to 2031
3 November 2021	Department for Health (Cth)	Draft National Obesity Prevention Strategy 2022–2032
4 November 2021	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (Cth)	Draft Online Safety (Baseline Online Safety Expectations) Determination 2021
5 November 2021	Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia (DASSA)	SA Alcohol and Other Drugs Strategy 2022–2026 Discussion Paper
11 November 2021	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (Cth)	Draft Online Safety (Basic Online Safety Expectations) Determination 2021
6 December 2021	Attorney-General's Department (Cth)	Privacy Legislation Amendment (Enhancing Online Privacy and Other Measures) Bill 2021
21 December 2021	Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights (Cth)	Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights: Religious Discrimination Bill 2021 (Cth) and related bills
10 January 2022	Integrity and Security Division, Attorney General's Department (Cth)	Review of the Privacy Act 1988

Date	To	Subject
15 February 2022	Department of the Senate (Cth)	Children and young people's views on COVID-19
23 February 2022	Department of Social Services, National Plan Delivery, Women's Safety Policy Branch (Cth)	National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032
24 February 2022	Attorney General's Department (Cth)	Strengthening the Criminal Justice Response to Sexual Violence and Other Measures Bill 2022
27 April 2022	The Secretary, Legislative Council, Legal and Social Issues Committee, Parliament of Victoria	Inquiry into children affected by parental incarceration
9 May 2022	Richard Dennis AM PSM	Review of the Disability Inclusion Act
18 May 2022	AV Roadmap Team, eSafety (Cth)	Age Verification Roadmap to Mitigate Harms Associated with Young People's Access to Online Pornography

## Presentations, Speeches and Discussion Panels

Throughout the reporting period the Commissioner attended 42 events where she either made a presentation, gave a speech or participated in a panel discussion.

The events covered a range of topics aimed at raising awareness around the issues and aspirations of South Australia's children and young people.

Below is a summary of these presentations, speeches and panel discussions.

Date	Project	Engagement Type
1 July 2021	SACOSS Annual Treasurer's Breakfast	Panel Member
13 July 2021	Centre for Research. Education CRESI Seminar re: Experiences of School Exclusion	Panel Member
14 July 2021	Sex Education in SA – SHINE	Speaker
19 July 2021	Cardijn College	Key Speaker
30 July 2021	YMCA Leadership Development Program	Key Speaker
13 August 2021	AISSA REL Group/SCRG joint spotlight session re: Sex, Health and Respectful Relationships Education	Panel Member
16 August 2021	Better Future Forum	Panel Member
30 August 2021	Office of Small Business Commissioner	Guest Speaker
3 September 2021	Growing Global Citizens – University of Melbourne	Key Speaker
8 September 2021	Daniel Morcombe Webinar. Respecting Children's Rights – National, State and Territory perspectives on "responding to harmful sexual behaviour"	Panel Member
9 September 2021	NAPCAN NCPW Webinar "How can we ensure children and young people with disability receive a fair go"	Key Speaker
9 September 2021	Local Government Emergency Management Seminar	Key Speaker
16 September 2021	Daniel Morcombe – Changing Futures Online Forum	Panel Member
23 September 2021	Loreto College "Consent: from theory to practice"	Panel Member
15 October 2021	Inclusive Play Forum	Key Speaker
18 October 2021	Karoonda Youth Room Opening	Key Speaker
20 October 2021	Launch of St Vincent de Paul Anti-Poverty Week Forum	Panel Member
22 October 2021	Launch of Children's Week	Official opening speech
26 October 2021	Torrens University	Key Speaker
4 November 2021	Regenerating our Region – Port Pirie Stakeholder Meeting	Key Speaker
17 November 2021	Tonsley Energy Summit Committee for Adelaide	Panel Member
17 November 2021	Investigator Lecture	Panel Member
1 December 2021	Appearance before the Legislative Review committee re: Local Government Land By-law members	Witness
7 December 2021	Our Lady of the Sacred Heart	Key Speaker
LOCKDOWN from 4/1/2022–1/2/22		



Date	Project	Engagement Type
2 March 2022	Roundtable facilitation: COVID Impact on women's and children's safety	Guest Speaker
8 March 2022	Youth Policy Forum	MC and Key Speaker
9 March 2022	Bright Ideas Summit	Key Speaker
14 April 2022	ACE Conference for Master Of Teaching Students	Guest Speaker
26 April 2022	CREATE Voice in Action Conference	Panel Member
6 May 2022	Schools Summit – U-City	MC and Key Speaker
6 May 2022	7NEWS Young Achiever Awards @ Hilton Hotel	Guest Speaker
7 May 2022	North West Junior Soccer Association Coaches Training	Guest Speaker
17 May 2022	ARA Settlement Action Network Meeting	Guest Speaker
24 May 2022	White Paper Launch for “what's the Bloody Big Deal” via Zoom	Speaker
26 May 2022	Global Citizens Workshop	Guest Speaker
26 May 2022	HDA Adelaide	Key Speaker
8 June 2022	LEA Conference	Key Speaker
14 June 2022	Civics & Citizenship Professional Development	Presentation
16 June 2022	UniSA Research Partnership	Presentation
27 June 2022	Breakthrough Foundation	Filmed Interview
30 June 2022	Doing School Differently – Centacare	Key Speaker
30 June 2022	Power Community Ltd – Primary Prevention Program	Presenter

## Media Coverage

During the 2021/2022 reporting period the Commissioner was interviewed for radio/podcasts on eight occasions. She had 42 articles relevant to her work published in metropolitan and regional newspapers, with articles also appearing in 15 specialist publications/magazines throughout the year.

Below is a summary of the media coverage achieved this year:

Date	Type	Outlet/Publication
15 July 2021	Move to lower youth levy for \$178m Victims of Crime Fund	InDaily
19 July 2021	School Children stay posted on issues that matter to them	The Advertiser
11 August 2021	The birds and the bees – what kids want to know about periods and sex w/ Helen Connolly Podcast	TABOO on spotify
12 August 2021	Teens Crave Face-Time	The Advertiser
16 August 2021	Boys Worse Off in Care	The Advertiser
27 August 2021	Gender Clash Grips Schools	The Advertiser
29 August 2021	What can we Learn from Country Kids?	The Advertiser
30 August 2021	Noticing Your Child's Career Interests Early	Kiddo Mag
01 October 2021	Children. Contemporary canaries in the coal mine?	Medium
17 October 2021	Public Schools' Hidden Cost	Sunday Mail
22 October 2021	Kids want to get jab for COVID	The Advertiser
26 October 2021	One in five SA children unlikely to get vaccinated	InDaily
05 November 2021	A Call to Action	Medium
21 November 2021	Time we listen to our children	Sunday Mail
08 December 2021	Word on the Street: Commissioner surveys young people about COVID-19 vaccines and restrictions	Kiddo Mag
08 December 2021	Meet the Makers	Kiddo Mag
11 December 2021	Child safety in spotlight	The Advertiser
13 December 2021	Hawker student wins space race	The Transcontinental Port Augusta
04 January 2022	We tell children they are important, and that they are the future, yet our actions reflect the opposite	The Advertiser
12 January 2022	Teachers call for two-week delay to school return	InDaily
13 January 2022	Word on the street with Helen Connolly: Not being listened to worries children the most	Kiddo Mag
15 January 2022	Criminal age must rise, SA child advocates say	The Advertiser
16 January 2022	Rights of Kids 'under threat'	Sunday Mail
6 February 2022	Let us be the voice of our state's future	The Advertiser
7 February 2022	Interview with Jade Robram and Tom Webster for SA SRC	5AA
8 February 2022	Interview for SA SRC	ABC North and West
13 February 2022	Sexism in schools: Commissioner finds classroom gender stereotypes reminiscent of the 1970s	Sunday Mail

Date	Type	Outlet/Publication
13 February 2022	Time to end sexism in our schools	Sunday Mail
14 February 2022	Interview with Graham Goodings about Sexism in schools	5AA
15 February 2022	What SA Kids say makes a great school	Kiddo Educate
15 February 2022	Noticing Your Child's Career Interests Early	Kiddo Educate
16 February 2022	New model gives students a voice in education policymaking	The Educator
21 February 2022	Co-ed schools perpetuate out-dated sexual attitudes	The Educator
04 March 2022	Stereotyping and sexism at school: the pervasive nature of these issues and how they perpetuate gender inequality	The Forum Network (OECD)
18 March 2022	Advocate says hitting kids should be criminal offence	The Advertiser
18 March 2022	Interview with Graham Goodings about outlawing corporate punishment	5AA
18 March 2022	Campaigns and costings will not increase young people's participation at the ballot box	Medium
24 March 2022	Warrants for 12-year-olds	The Advertiser
7 April 2022	Podcast: The Voice of a Child – Helen Connolly in Conversation with Phil Cummins Part 3	Game Changers Podcast
26 April 2022	'More than just blood': Call to keep SA siblings together in care	InDaily
05 May 2022	Word on the Street: A nudge not a nag to get kids more active	Kiddo Mag
05 May 2022	Meet this month's doer	Kiddo Mag
05 May 2022	Sibling Connection in South Australia	Create Foundation
08 May 2022	The hidden victims of our parents behind bars	Sunday Mail
13 May 2022	Pupils provide thought school	The Advertiser
17 May 2022	Helping more young voters stand up and be counted	InDaily
13 May 2022	ABC Radio Interview with Narelle Graham: SA SRC Inaugural Summit	ABC Radio
17 May 2022	ABC Radio Interview with Peter Goers: Young People Enrolling to Vote	ABC Radio
29 May 2022	Smoked Out: Shocking scale of school vaping	Sunday Mail
29 May 2022	Period pants to pad up	Sunday Mail
11 June 2022	Girls Plead for Period Talk	The Advertiser
29 June 2022	SA school TikTok scandal: Online bullying recommendations not implemented	The Advertiser
30 June 2022	Cyberbullying rife, review rots	The Advertiser

## Websites, Social Media and Internet Coverage

Most of the Commissioner's initiatives have their own dedicated websites as follows:

### **commissionersdigitalchallenge.net.au**

Provides information and downloadable content for educators and community organisations supporting students of all ages to participate in the Commissioner's annual Digital Challenges (Learn to Speak Robot/Space to Dream/Zoom Out) run through schools, as well as through community libraries and Scouts and Guides clubs.

### **commissionerspostcards.com.au**

Showcases and provides information on the Commissioner's annual Student Voice Postcard initiative for all South Australian primary school children aged 8–12 years so they can tell the Commissioner what matters to them most.

### **hubadl.com**

Created specifically for 14–18 year olds, hub is designed to be an online youth club facilitating interactions between young people through polls and surveys, competitions, blogs and opinion pieces that they contribute. During the reporting period [hub.ccyp.com.au](http://hub.ccyp.com.au) was re-designed by a group of young interns to become 'an online co-creation space that values connection and community for young people'. The aim of the website is to facilitate opportunities for young people to connect through online content, workshops, events and more. The work of the SA SRC has also been incorporated as has content from the original website where relevant. Approximately 15 young people have contributed to the new website with this number expected to grow over the next twelve months.

### **endperiodpoverty.com.au**

Raising awareness in relation to the issues of stigma and shame surrounding period poverty and menstruation more broadly. The website offers a range of resources on ways to advocate for South Australia to introduce an accessible, nonstigmatising supply and distribution

scheme for a range of free hygiene and sanitary products that will reach the SA young people who need them.

### **yChange.com.au**

A portal to the Handbook and lesson plans for South Australia's first curriculum aligned action civics resource for primary and secondary educators, which was developed with input from students, educators and civic experts.

### **CCYP\_SA YouTube**

The Commissioner produces videos for various projects. These can viewed from the Commissioner's YouTube channel (CCYP\_SA YouTube) with the highest number of views (1,617) being for the Commissioner's Space To Dream Digital Challenge.

### **Medium/LinkedIn**

The Commissioner wrote and published three articles on her Medium blog. These were cross posted to her personal LinkedIn profile achieving significant engagement. Posts were also made to the CCYP LinkedIn profile with some good engagement.

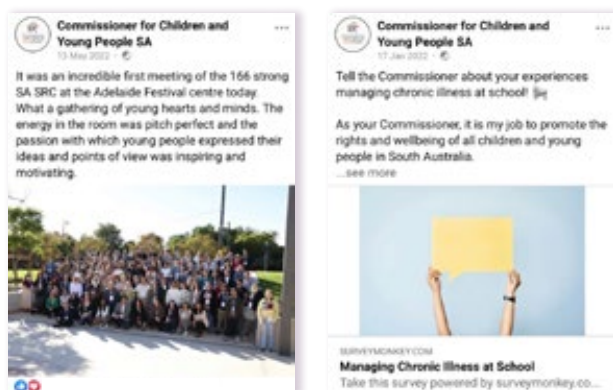
### **Electronic Direct Marketing**

Stakeholders, community leaders, government officials, decision makers and policy makers from government, corporate and not-for-profit organisations were sent a variety of emails throughout the year via HubSpot. The emails announced new initiatives and the release of major reports and were target to relevant stakeholders. The open rate averaged between 68% of the 41 communiques sent to an average of 341 recipients per campaign. Topics ranged from disability, digital poverty, COVID-19, health, and various initiatives, including SA SRC, Student Voice Postcards, the Commissioner's Digital Challenge, menstruation, and civics.

## Facebook

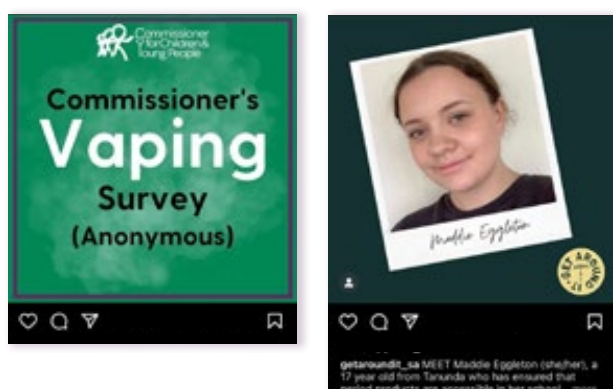
Throughout the year, Facebook followers increased by 223 to reach 1.9k followers, shifting towards a younger audience, with 42.2% of users within the ages of 18–34. There was a total of 3.6k total page visits and a reach of approximately 87.8k. The 2021/2022 reporting period saw a decrease in advertising spend from \$1,536 to just \$410 on Facebook. Post content achieved 931 reactions, 101 comments, 218 shares, and 585 link clicks.

Organic reach increased from approximately 53.2k to 76.5k, an increase of 23.3k on the previous reporting period with content and initiatives such as the SA SRC being the highest engagement and finding younger audiences.



## Instagram

Instagram followers increased by 290 for the year to total 1,155 and shifting throughout the year toward a younger audience with approximately 52.4% of followers within the 18–34 age range. Instagram had a total of 39.2k reach over the reporting period with 475 shares. Post content achieved 1,395 likes and 24 comments. The most successful post was the Vaping Survey, which was the only boosted post for the reporting period and accounting for 1,422 click-throughs to the survey.



## Get Around It

The Get Around It Instagram profile appeals to a younger audience with 68.8% of followers falling within the ages of 13–34. Achieving 8.6k reach, posts also amassed 859 likes and 207 shares. Followers increased by 62 throughout the year.

- 66% of followers identify as women and 34% identify as men.
- 38.8% of followers are aged between 13–24 with the largest age bracket being 18–24 (32.1%) followed by 25–34 (30%).
- Instagram followers have reached 761 from 699, an increase of 62.

## Tik Tok

A CCYP Tik Tok was used during the State and Federal Election campaigns to encourage young people to enrol to vote, and to remember to vote in the elections.

The Tik Tok Election Campaign video recorded a reach of 43K people with 162 engagements, and 370 likes, following a \$25 advertising spend.

## LinkedIn Statistics

LinkedIn followers totalled at 512 for the year and achieved 49 shares, 359 reactions and 9 comments.



## Sponsorships and Grants

The Commissioner runs an annual community sponsorship program that is designed to support organisations to consult with young people in their communities in relation to service delivery, planning, and decision making that impacts directly on children and young people. During the reporting period the following organisations applied for and received sponsorship funding up to a maximum of \$5,000.

Recipient	Initiative/Project
African Women's Federation of SA	Period Poverty Grant – Menstruation and periods education and product provision
Aldgate Cricket Club	Period Poverty Grant – Sports uniforms/product provision.
Angle Vale Netball Club	Period Poverty Grant – Sports uniforms/ product provision.
Australian Refugee Association (ARA)	Community Conversation Grant for a series of conversations relating to ways to create culturally supportive school environments for refugee and migrant young people.
Basketball SA	Period Poverty Grant – Education and product provision.
Berri Barmera Landcare	Community Conversation Grant for series of consultation sessions with children and young people relating to a local landcare project development and associated potential environmental impacts and issues.
Children's University	Community Conversation Grant – covering the costs of transport for children to attend Children's University events
Circobats	Period Poverty Grant – Awareness raising re issues associated with management of menstruation and periods incl tackling stigma and taboo.
City of Charles Sturt	Developed a series of school consultation templates to engage children and young people in matters that are important to them.
City of Onkaparinga	Period Poverty Grant – Awareness raising re issues associated with management of menstruation and periods including tackling stigma and taboo including product provision
City of Onkaparinga	Funding enabled the Council and its youth advisory committee (YAC) to co-design a series of engagement activities to explore topics that matter to children and young people – Mental Health, Environment & Sustainability, Access & Inclusion.
City of Onkaparinga – Neporendi Aboriginal Forum	Funded Art/Music programs where participants designed and produced songs to express themselves.

Recipient	Initiative/Project
City of Playford	Support for Kindness in Action project
City of Playford	Sponsorship of a game related holiday activity
City of Salisbury	Conducted a comprehensive youth engagement process to facilitate conversations and focus groups with diverse youth groups to inform the Council's 2022 Strategic Youth Action Plan
Connecting Foster & Kinship Carers	Community Conversation Grants to support consultation with Foster and Kinship Carers
Create	Program research and development – Siblings Workshops
District Council of Karoonda East Murray	Funded 50% of a 0.2FTE position for a dedicated person to lead the YAC
District Council of Streaky Bay	Funded hire of a facilitator to coordinate student jury meetings, where young people discussed community issues
Girl Guides SA	Period Poverty Grant – Statewide awareness raising about menstruation and periods issues and management
Goodwood Cricket Club	Period Poverty Grant – Sports uniforms/product provision
Goodwood Saints Football Club	Period Poverty Grant – Product provision
Goolwa Surf Life Saving Club	Period Poverty Grant – Education and product provision for club members
Marion Cricket Club	Period Poverty Grant – Sports uniforms/ product provision.
Marree & District Progress Association	Period Poverty Grant – Product provision
Mental Health Coalition of SA	Sponsorship of 2021 Festival of Now for mental health month awareness raising
MYSA	Facilitate with direct participation of C&YP in communities for social cohesion conversations
NEO	Sponsorship – Facilitate with costs relating to after-hours events
News Limited	Student Voice Initiative Partnership with <i>The Advertiser</i>
Parliament SA	Sponsorship – Funding for pilot program of tours of Parliament House and Civics education for disadvantaged schools in SA
Port Pirie Regional Council	Period Poverty Grant – Education sessions and product provision relating to menstruation and periods
Raising Literacy Australia Inc.	Funding support to undertake qualitative research into literacy in SA
Save the Children	Funded consultation with children from 4 to 10 years old regarding their insights into emergency management.
SHINE SA	Period Poverty Grant – Awareness raising campaign
Tea Tree Gully Gymsports	Period Poverty Grant – Education and product provision
TransMasc SA	Funded consultation sessions about gender diversity, upskilled trainers and bought collateral material
True North	Sponsorship – Contributed toward the costs of tuition for children and young people
Wattle Range Council	Community Conversation Grant for a “Fun Day” at the local park to undertake consultation with children and young people relating to infrastructure improvements
Whyalla Hockey Association	Period Poverty Grant – Education and product provision

Recipient	Initiative/Project
Workskil	Sponsorship – Minecraft Project
Wudinna District Council	Community Conversation Grant – Funded an arts event based on information received through consultation with children and young people
YMCA	Sponsorship – Assistance with costs of travel for children and young people attending YMCA programs and activities
Youth Opportunities	Sponsorship – A graduates engagement program delivered via a series of workshops on topics of importance identified by young people

## Committees and Boards

Throughout the year the Commissioner attended ongoing committees that included the following:

- Reconciliation SA Board
- Statutory Authorities and Rights Protection Group – Chair
- Child Development Council
- Australia New Zealand Children's Commissioners and Guardians – Chair
- Victim's Rights Consultative Committee
- Antipoverty Week – Co-Chair
- Advancing Youth Foundation
- Human Rights and Coercion Reduction Committee

## Summary of Enquiries

A total of 62 enquiries into matters concerning potential rights protection issues related to the safety and wellbeing of South Australian children and young people were received from the general public and stakeholders throughout the 2021/2022 reporting period. This is 22 enquiries more than last year.

Some new issues arose, including concerns for children and/or their families at risk of homelessness (6), a complaint from an advocate supporting a young person in care who wanted to change his lawyer, NDIS concerns, many concerns about family violence including children being assaulted in the family home and child safety and wellbeing more broadly.

The nature of these enquiries were as follows:

Description of concern or request	Number
Foster/Kinship concerns or request for support	6
Concerns about children in the care of the state (DCP)	12
Concerns about child's safety and/or wellbeing	17
Concerns about a child living with a disability	5
Family court system concerns	4
Concerns about children in education about safety, bullying, being excluded, restraining children, discrimination and privacy	13
Children being denied or restricted from having relationships with parents/grandparents/siblings	6
Concerns about how SAPOL respond to matters pertaining to children and young people	1
Concerns about the responses of agencies not being child-safe	2
Other	16

The Commissioner sometimes requests further information to highlight systemic concerns.

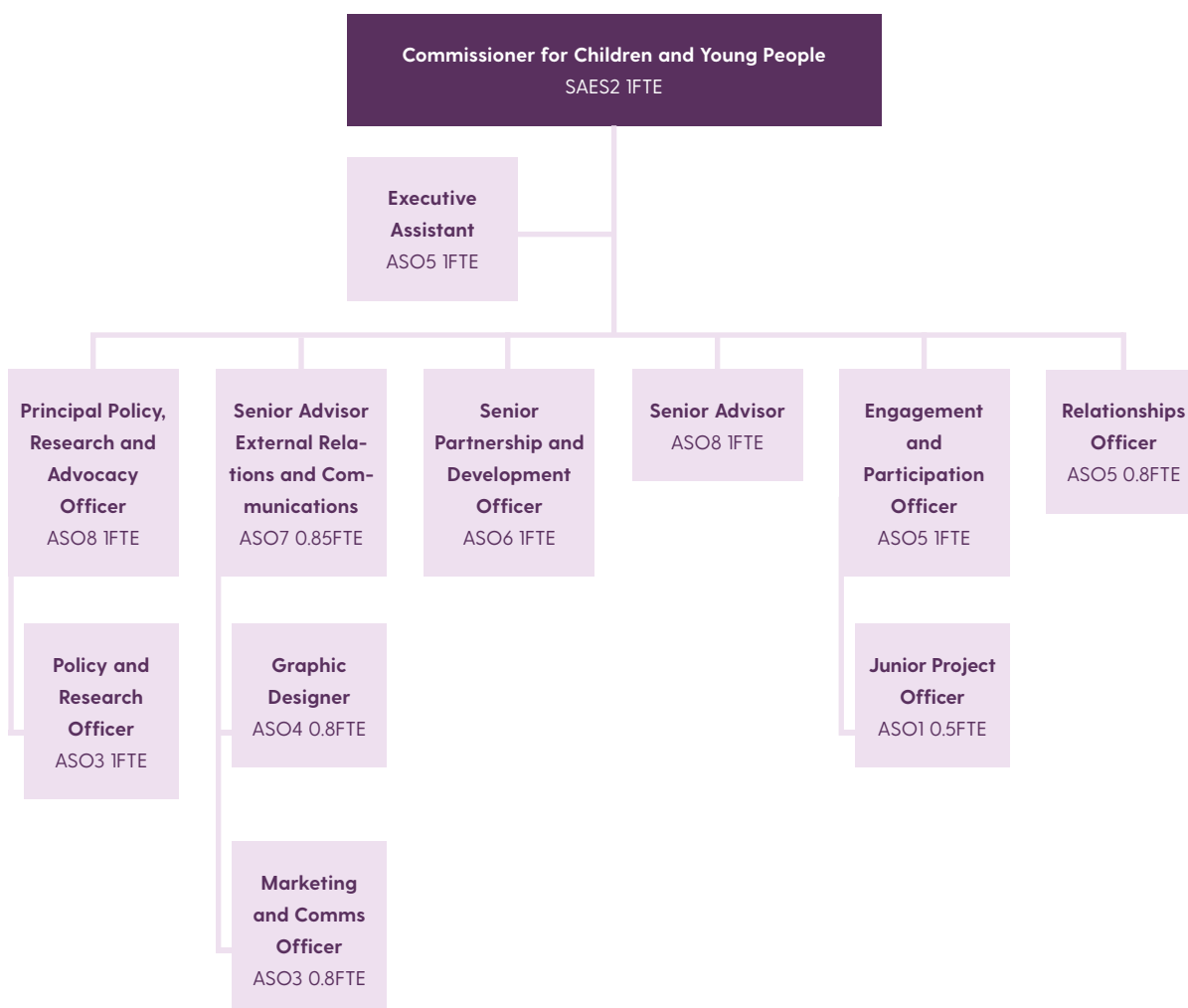
At times the Commissioner followed up on inquiries she determined were systemic in nature.

Department	Concern	Outcome
DHS, Department for Education, SAPOL and DHS	The response made by government departments in relation to an incident that resulted in a child being accused of problem sexual behaviour.	Issues were reviewed by all Departments

## Reporting of Public Complaints

Category of complaints by subject	Number of instances
Customer service complaint	0
Alleged breach of legislation	0

## Organisational Structure



## Legislation Administered by the Agency

Not applicable. The Commissioner's role is established under the *OAB Act* and does not administer any legislation.

## Related Agencies

The CCYP is administratively and operationally funded and supported by the Government of South Australia through the Department for Education.

The CCYP has a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Department for Education. This formal agreement defines the business relationship between the parties.

Some services included in the SLA are charged on a fee for service basis.

These include:

- 1 Injury Management and WHS
- 2 Information and Communication Technology
- 3 Financial Services – auditing, management reporting

Other administrative arrangements are directly under CCYP control and are paid from the CCYP budget.



## Work Health and Safety Issues

Workplace injury claims	Current year 2021/2022	Past year 2020/2021	% Change (+/-)
Total new workplace injury claims	0	0	0%
Fatalities	0	0	0%
Seriously injured workers*	0	0	0%
Significant injuries (where lost time exceeds a working week, expressed as frequency rate per 1000 FTE)	0	0	0%

Work health and safety regulations	Current year 2021/2022	Past year 2020/2021	% Change (+/-)
Number of notifiable incidents ( <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2012, Part 3</i> )	0	0	0%
Number of provisional improvement, improvement and prohibition notices ( <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2012 Sections 90, 191 and 195</i> )	0	0	0%

Return to work costs**	Current year 2021/2022	Past year 2020/2021	% Change (+/-)
Total gross workers compensation expenditure (\$)	0	0	0%
Income support payments – gross (\$)	0	0	0%

\*\*before third-party recovery

## Employment Opportunity Programs

Program name	Result of the program
CCYP Work Experience	One school student had the opportunity to undertake work experience with CCYP.
CCYP Volunteer Internships Program	Seven volunteers provided support to CCYP staff on the hub magazine website project.

## Executive Employment in the Agency

Executive classification	Number of executives
SAES2	1

## Contractors

There were no contractors with a contract value below or above \$10,000 during the 2021/2022 financial year.

## Financial Performance of the Agency

The financial operations of this office are consolidated into and audited through the Department for Education.

Accordingly, full financial reports are not provided as part of this annual report. A summary view of expenditure is provided below:

### Financial summary of expenditure 2021/2022

#### Commissioner for Children and Young People

Item	Actual (\$ 000)
Salaries and wages	\$1,422,784
Grants and subsidies	-
Goods and services	\$425,571
Investing payments for property, plant and equipment	-
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	\$35,846
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>\$1,884,201</b>
Commission received	\$364
Other revenue	\$0
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>\$364</b>
<b>Net operating</b>	<b>\$1,883,749</b>

# Risk Management

## Fraud detected in the agency:

Category/nature of fraud	Number of instances
Type of fraud	0

NB: Fraud reported includes actual and reasonably suspected incidents of fraud.

## Public Interest Disclosure

There were nil occasions on which public interest information was disclosed to a responsible officer of the agency under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2018*.

## Strategies implemented to control and prevent fraud

The CCYP applied the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy prepared by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment. This policy outlines the requirement by public sector staff to commit to the prevention and management of fraud, corruption and other criminal conduct, misconduct and maladministration, and the promotion of ethical and honest behaviour in the workplace including the creation and maintenance of an appropriate workplace culture.

## Compliance Statement

Commissioner for Children and Young People is compliant with Premier and Cabinet Circular 039 – complaint management in the South Australian public sector	Yes
--	-----

Commissioner for Children and Young People has communicated the content of PC 039 and the agency's related complaints policies and procedures to employees.	Yes
---	-----

## Endnotes

- 1 Section 5 of the *Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies Act) 2016*.

