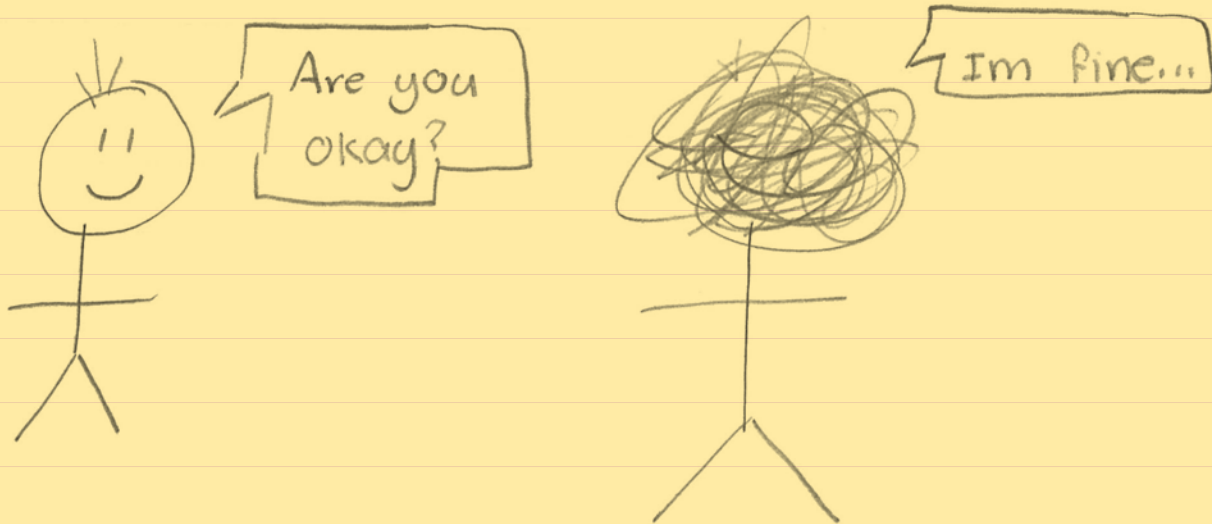# Missing Voices

Mental health challenges as described by primary school children

This booklet draws on responses from students aged 8–12 years who participated in my annual Student Voice Postcards initiative via their school.

Answers and drawings are unedited and are in response to open-ended questions about their lives. This booklet is representative of the hundreds of responses that reflect the mental health concerns, worries and challenges of children.
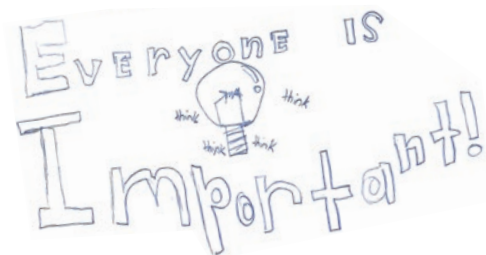
Since commencing this initiative in 2019, I have received almost 50,000 postcards from South Australian students aged 8–12 years, across Government, Catholic, and Independent primary schools.

These postcards have enabled me to better understand what children are doing, what matters to them, and what concerns they have.

The postcards are just one way to ensure South Australia is meeting its obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, specifically in relation to providing children with opportunities to express their views on all matters affecting them (Article 12).

For further information on what worries children see the Snapshot *What Worries SA Children Most...* report available at ccyp.com.au/guides-and-fact-sheets/

For further information on the Student Voice Postcards initiative visit commissionerspostcards.com.au

What worries kids?

my school work.
I find it hard to keep up and
get work done on time.
I feel alot of presure
I worry I'm not good
enough.

– 11 year old girl

being unconfident and my appearance because being a tween girl is hard. It's a time where you feel like you don't love yourself. **– 12 year old girl**

Getting bad Anxiety

– 10 year old boy

What people think about me.
not being enough.
Trying to be me without
being Judged

– 10 year old girl

Dying mental health, My Social anxiety, My friendShips, My depression, my health, my mental breakdowns and Panic attacks

– 11 year old non-binary

Im allways sold

– 12 year old boy

Being lonely and having no friends.

– 10 year old boy

Being lonly and afraid of so many things.
I not good enough

– 11 year old girl

things I shoudn't be worrying about
because I overthink and just
treating and self-talking to myself badly.

– 11 year old girl

Not feeling okay to talk to my mum/dad because im worried they will not understand and take it out on me.

– 12 year old girl

Not finishing something of school and getting in trouble, teachers make it seem like a big deal to make you do it but it's just more stress

– 11 year old boy

being a faluire, Schoolwork,
not being enough and the
sad things in the world.

– 10 year old girl

Overloaded School work in highSchool and
Scared that i dont have a high iq

– 12 year old boy

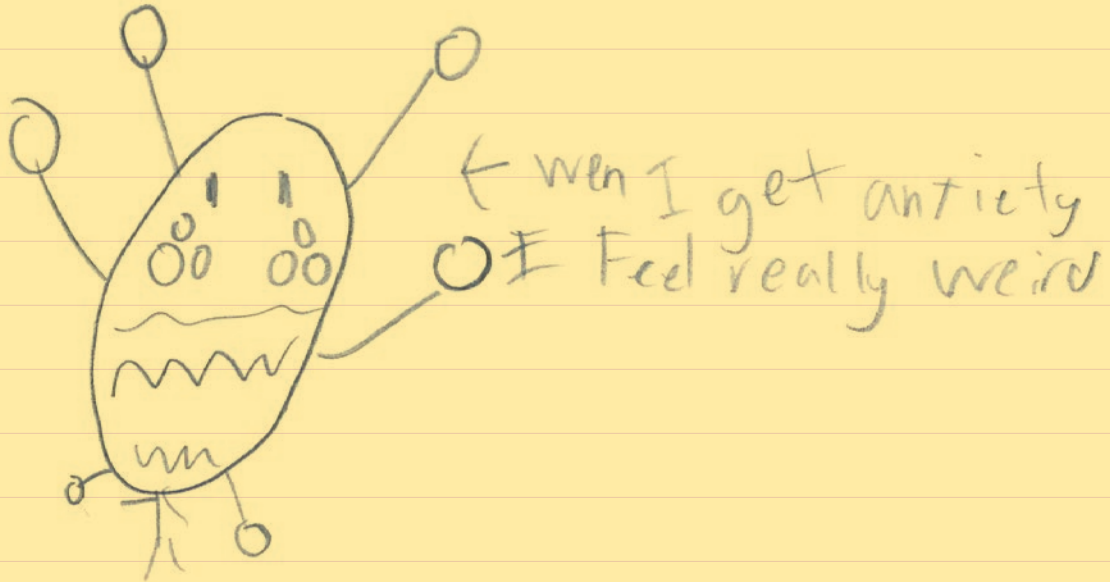Being bullied about my weight or my ~~height~~ hight

– 12 year old girl

If I don't do well in school, I'll end up homeless and die and my whole life would have no meaning

– 12 year old boy

I worry about Failing in life, getting stressed because I have responsibility's falling part in new thing and meeting new people

– 11 year old girl

What kids want grownups to know

← wen I get antiety I feel really weird

that i have anxicty and social anxicety
so i am shy a lot of times.

– 12 year old girl

I get sad really easy.

– 10 year old boy

that sometimes when, specifically a girl, says "i'm fine", it typically means they're not. :(

– 12 year old girl

Children hide the state
of their mental health
So please Beaware.
Instead of yelling
teach US not harm us

— 11 year old boy

you should talk to kids about thier mental health

– 11 year old girl

I have social anxiaty and sometimes I can't do stuff incase I have an anxiaty attack

– 10 year old girl

work n life gets annoying, lonely and hard.

– 10 year old girl

There is more to solving an issue than saying "Dont worry about it."

– 11 year old girl

that I have depression, that I struggle to Pay attention that I have Panic attacks and Social Anxiety

— **11 year old non-binary**

I get sick when i worry

— **9 year old boy**

That I have bad and sad thoughts most of the time and I feel bad.

– 10 year old boy

That when I say im okay im usually not I just dont want to talk to them.

– 12 year old girl

that I and kids overthink a lot
and people has been insecure from
people bulling or bodyshaming them.

– 11 year old girl

There is lots of stress and
I play games to relieve it but
but it's still there. I hide it
to make my self feel better
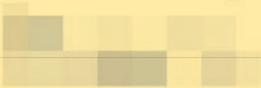but it's still
there. — 11 year old boy

I want grown ups to know Im
scared of the future of what might
happen and telling the truth. **– 12 year old boy**

that i got bulied
and that I hate my life
and basicly everyone.
in it

– 10 year old girl

That not all kids are perfect and need
to not push them over the top
of what they can do. — 11 year old girl

Im not all ADHD and am
Still ███████ — 10 year old boy

that all kids aren't the same and
need help in different areas.
take it easy on kids! **– 11 year old girl**

that sometimes kids/~~children~~ have
really bad ~~anity~~ anxiety ~~anxity~~ and need
more help then just hugs
and kisses

– 11 year old girl

that I haven't had the best life and
I have O.C.D and I ~~don't~~ hate
germs because of it **– 11 year old boy**

that as much as they think they're
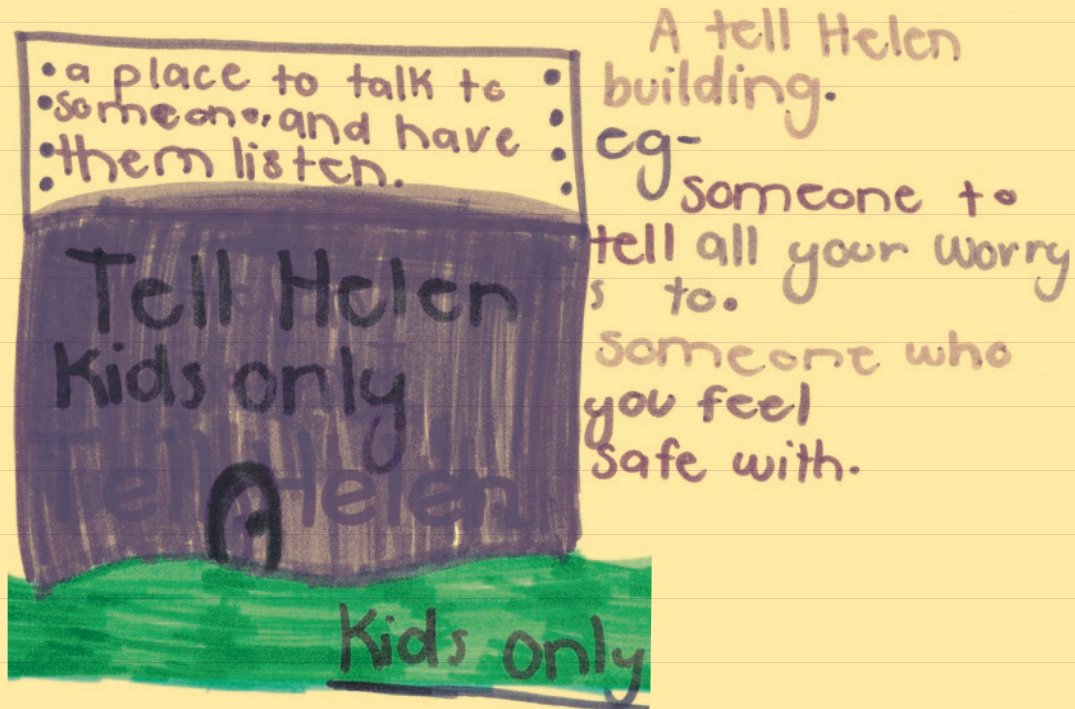understand us, chances are they don't.

– 12 year old girl

I have very bad anxiouty
and anger issues issues.

– 12 year old girl

that im not ok and I'm strugiling to go onbut im pashing thraw for my family and futcher

— 12 year old girl

What could make things better?

people left me alone, and I
didn't have to be the best.

– 10 year old girl

there was no pollution,
no homelessness or self harm
surrounding us.

– 12 year old girl

If people were nice to me would
I not get bullied from being skinny.
If they knew what I
going through.

– 12 year old boy

the internet would stop making people that are a bit over weight fell insicure and have to be skinny to be butifull

– 11 year old girl

Someone was always there for your and you felt safe most of the time.

– 11 year old girl

we got more free time for mental health

– 11 year old boy

If grown ups could listen to what kids actually had to say.

– 11 year old girl

< fake a smile

not allowed to
scream it all
Out

Help fix
Mental help

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CPSN SVB0272-2023-02-03

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