

South Australian  
Commissioner  
for Children and  
Young People  
2024

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# Seen But Not Heard

The experiences of South Australian  
young people in Years 8, 9 and 10

PROJECT REPORT NO. 40 | APRIL 2024

Teach  
us  
life  
skills.

being  
and kinder  
everyone  
(including  
teachers)

Let us  
listen  
music

ch us  
ut how  
deal  
th people

Space to go  
when feeling  
upset.

More Youth  
themed activities

Being  
included in  
decisions  
that impact  
students

Have more  
trust in  
students.

More  
Well-Being  
Lessons.

Respect  
Student's

Less strict  
on uniforms

more  
shelter

Teachers  
LISTENING



Commissioner  
for Children &  
Young People

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## The Commissioner's Role

The South Australian Commissioner for Children and Young People is an independent statutory position, established under the *Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016* (the Act). The Commissioner's role includes advocating for systemic change to policies, programs and practices that impact the rights, development and wellbeing of South Australia's children and young people. This work is informed by the experiences and issues of children and young people themselves, with a specific focus on those who struggle to have their voices heard.

The Commissioner's strategic agenda was formulated with direct input from children and young people. In particular, children and young people asked the Commissioner to facilitate their involvement in decision making, and to create opportunities for them to experience authentic participation. The Commissioner is working with a number of partners on this agenda, including ways in which children and young people can have greater input into the design and delivery of policies, processes and practices that relate to delivery of services aimed directly at them.

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## Acknowledgements

Thank you to the South Australian young people who contributed their insights, ideas and suggestions in relation to their experiences of Years 8, 9 and 10. Please note that all quotes used in this report are reproduced verbatim.

Special thanks to the leadership teams, staff and students at the following schools and services, who so warmly welcomed and supported my engagement. Without their assistance and commitment to student voice and agency this consultation would not have been possible.

- Adelaide Secondary School of English
- Balaklava High School
- Banksia Park International School
- Birdwood High School
- Christies Beach High School
- Clare High School
- Endeavour College
- Findon High School
- Gladstone High School
- Kapunda High School
- Mitcham Girls School
- Modbury High School
- Mount Carmel College
- Murray Bridge High School
- Nuriootpa High School
- Oakbank Area School
- Parafield Gardens High School
- Pinnacle College
- Prescott College
- Sacred Heart College
- Salisbury High School
- Salisbury East High School
- Seaview High School
- St Peter's Girls' School
- Tatchilla Lutheran College
- The Hills Montessori School
- Thomas Moore College
- Valley View Secondary School

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# Commissioner's Foreword

No young person should be launched into adulthood without a good education, which is why access to education is enshrined within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as a fundamental human right.

Keeping young people engaged with their education is a priority. It requires investment by governments, communities and families to resource and support young people's ongoing participation in school, and to ensure school is rewarding and inspiring for all children and young people.

No matter what their individual circumstances most children and young people want their school to be a place where they are known and valued, where they have a voice, and where they see the value in what they are learning.

Children and young people's overall wellbeing is inextricably linked to their life at school and their opportunities for participation in school life. These experiences impact their sense of self, their engagement in education, and their feelings of inclusion and potential.

Whilst many South Australian schools are positive environments that offer children and young people a sense of belonging, connectivity, purpose and wellbeing, this is not the case for all children and young people.

For those with vulnerabilities due to disability, illness, trauma, gender and sexual diversity, race, and complex family circumstances, school is not always experienced as a safe and nurturing environment.

These young people report that they do not feel respected or protected, that they are being discriminated against, bullied and marginalised. They describe school as places that 'pick on them', humiliate them and focus on their deficits rather than on their strengths. This in turn impacts their motivation to attend and engage with learning.

Feeling connected to school and having positive relationships with teachers and peers becomes more difficult as children get older, particularly around the transition from primary to secondary school. From what children and young people tell me, the combination of navigating and responding to multiple relationships with large numbers of peers and teachers, changes to their friendship groups, expectations on them to be more independent, and peer pressure to take on more risk-taking behaviours can make this major transition difficult. Add to this, the physical and hormonal changes that occur in adolescence and it's easy to see that Years 8, 9 and 10 present a challenging time for young people.

To respond effectively schools must implement more student-focused and reward-based strategies that are designed to build better school engagement with young people during these significant teenage years.

It is also important for schools to acknowledge that school serves different purposes for each young person.

Unsurprisingly having different expectations and experiences of school can be a significant source of conflict between young people and their teachers. It can lead to students expressing their frustrations through distracting others and class disruption. Other students will react to their feelings of being misunderstood by disengaging from school and isolating themselves from the school community and friends.

The young South Australians in Years 8, 9 and 10 who I spoke with want to see changes made to the way in which their schools and teachers engage with them. They universally said they want more opportunities to be involved in influencing how their education is being delivered, including how their school subjects are actually being taught.

They're seeking to build better connection with school leaders, teachers and support staff, so that these relationships can work to build trust and a sense of respect and belonging between them. When young people experience respect and feel valued in their classroom and school, their engagement with their education and overall wellbeing improves.

Given how critical schools are in young people's lives, it is incumbent on all of us to make active efforts to challenge disempowering school cultures and practices, and instead foster positive learning environments that reinforce engagement with learning. We can do this by finding ways to model and scaffold healthy respectful relationships between students, teachers and other school staff.

From February to October 2023, I undertook a series of face-to-face consultations with groups of Year 8, 9 and 10 students attending 28 South Australian schools.

What was common to most young people with whom I spoke was that they all wanted to be seen and heard. They also wanted their school to provide them and their peers with a much more positive learning experience.

Achieving these outcomes requires strong leadership and resources that support a more personalised learning environment – one that is both educational, socially responsible and focused on community inclusion. It is a school environment in which there is a focus on fostering stronger engagement with individual students for the benefit of the whole year level and broader school community.

From what young people in Years 8, 9 and 10 told me, above all else they want leaders, teachers and school support staff who:

- show care and praise them for their efforts and achievements
- understand the challenges they face
- provide guidance and support to try new things outside their comfort zone; and
- involve them in discussions and decision making, thereby exposing them to new ways of thinking and being.

More participatory and inclusive classrooms, more kind and welcoming environments, more engaging and meaningful lessons, and more trusting and respectful relationships between young people and teachers can only be a good thing.

The purpose of this report is to bring the voices, experiences, and perspectives of these Year 8, 9 and 10 students to the fore. By examining their insights into their experiences of school, and by listening to their ideas alongside the challenges they face during these years, we can begin to find ways to work with them to build their feelings of safety, trust, and wellbeing, essential to having a positive learning experience while at school.



**Helen Connolly**

Commissioner for Children  
and Young People



to treat us  
gent than  
rs because  
r religion

about how  
we look  
but not  
about us

practice  
work.

Inside areas  
available during  
lunch / recess

Have a  
Cassette of  
all the kids to  
come together  
and eat!

more  
understanding  
abt mental  
health etc.

Teach  
us  
life  
skills.

More  
camps &  
excursions

People being  
nicer and kinder  
to everyone  
including  
(teachers)

Surveys don't work  
a teacher or  
spokesperson should  
come around and  
ask in person.

Teacher's  
not being  
so strict.

Change  
the bell  
noise.

teachers  
remembering  
your name.

Lower  
canteen  
price

Let us  
listen to  
music

Being able  
to eat  
in class

NO litter  
or graffiti

Principal  
over  
out.

Actually use  
people's opinions  
and change  
what's wrong.

I want  
words on  
report cards.

A feedback box  
where students can  
express their concerns.

Teachers should  
a pay rise  
also help  
parents more.

Less boring  
assembly

Teach us  
about how  
to deal  
with people

Homework  
can't relax

Allowed to  
carry our  
bags around

Phones at  
School



# Context

Access to an education that develops individual personalities and talents to the full is a fundamental human right of all children, which is why it is enshrined in Articles 28 and 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Education is not just a human right in and of itself. It is also a means of realising other human rights, supporting social and emotional development, and building fair and inclusive societies. Universal access to education is also recognised for its potential to reduce inequality and poverty.

The Mparntwe Education Declaration articulates Australia's national goals for education. It establishes that education systems must promote equity as well as excellence in educational outcomes, while also preparing all young people to become confident and creative individuals, successful lifelong learners, and active and informed citizens.

A good education is the key to lifelong physical and mental health and wellbeing, social inclusion, employment prospects and economic security – meaning schools are critical environments in the lives of all children and young people.

How young people experience school culture, practices and environments, and their views on how to improve them, are vital to system improvement and to achieving better student engagement.

For too long the education system has been measuring wellbeing and engagement in preference to listening to the firsthand experiences, perceptions and ideas that

students themselves have about the ways in which schools can improve students' learning experience.

In South Australia the Wellbeing and Engagement Collection (WEC) Survey helps the Department for Education measure the wellbeing and engagement of students in Years 4 to 12. The survey asks students about their views on wellbeing and engagement at school, and what they think and feel about their experiences outside of school. The results have been made available to all schools since 2013.

The WEC Survey questions cover the following:

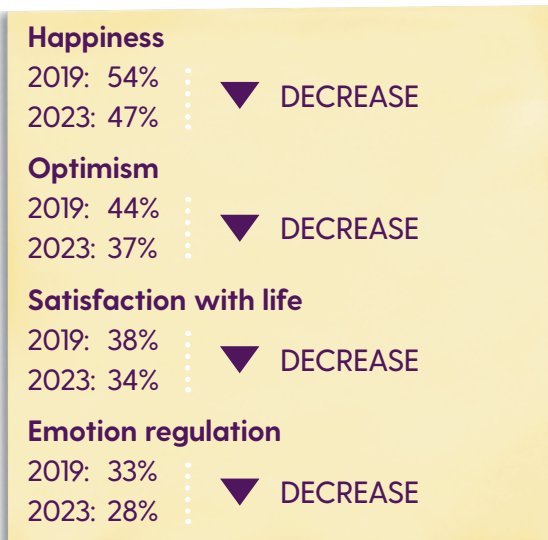
- Overall emotional wellbeing, including questions about happiness, levels of optimism, satisfaction with life, emotional regulation, sadness, and worries.
- Engagement with school, including questions about the importance of adults in schools, connectedness, emotional engagement, school climate, school belonging, friendships, and bullying.
- Engagement in learning and learning readiness, including questions about perseverance, cognitive engagement, and academic self-concept.
- Health and wellbeing outside of school, including self-assessment of the student's health, nutrition, sleep, participation in music, arts, sports, and other organised activities.



WEC Survey results over the past five years show a decline in the wellbeing of students in Years 8, 9 and 10 across several emotional wellbeing measures, including happiness, optimism, satisfaction with life, and emotion regulation.<sup>1</sup>

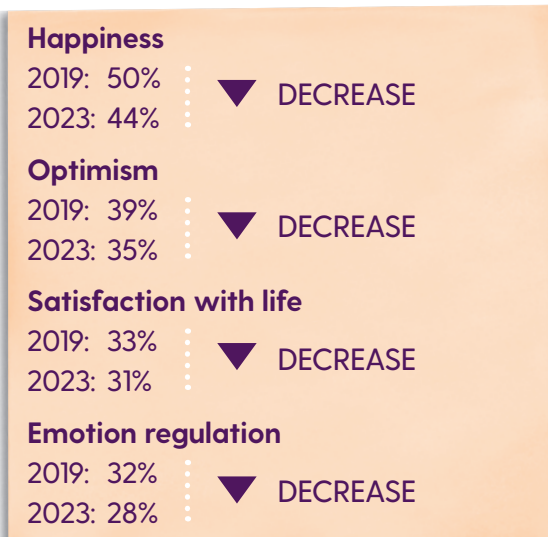
Comparing 2019 and 2023 WEC Survey results for individual year levels shows a decrease in the proportion of Year 8 students reporting high levels of wellbeing across four domains of emotional wellbeing:

**Wellbeing: percentage of Year 8s reporting high wellbeing**



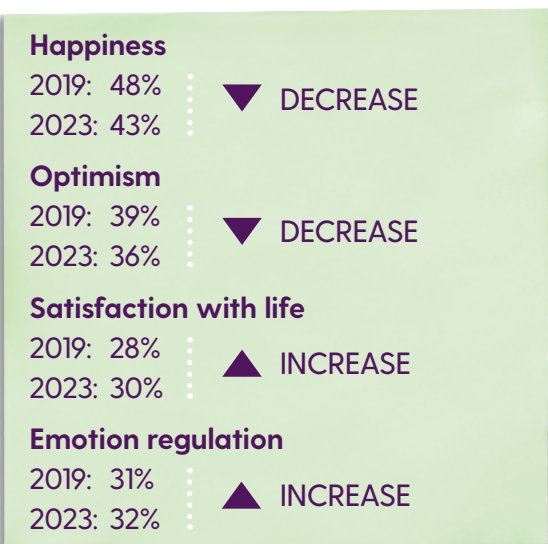
There is a similar story in relation to Year 9 students:

**Wellbeing: percentage of Year 9s reporting high wellbeing**



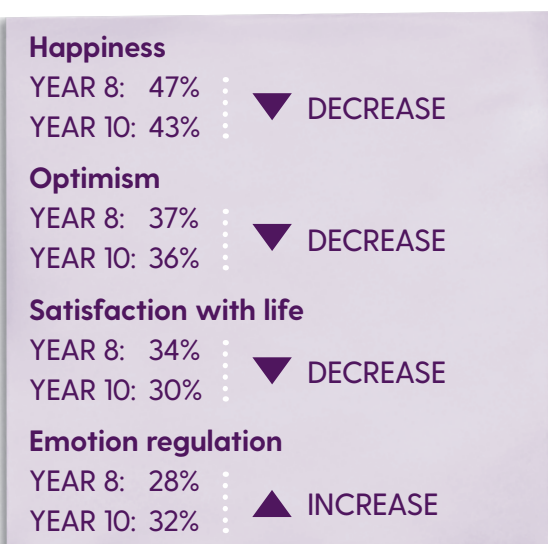
Students in Year 10 saw a decline across two of the four domains:

**Wellbeing: percentage of Year 10s reporting high wellbeing**



Examining the 2023 results by year levels shows a decline across three of the four domains as young people progress from Year 8 to Year 10:

**Wellbeing: comparing Year 8 and Year 10 in 2023**



A very important factor impacting on young people’s wellbeing is their engagement with school and with the adults within their school.

Between 2019 and 2023, the proportion of students in Years 8, 9 and 10 able to identify an 'important adult at school' has improved:

- from 44% of Year 8s in 2019 to 49% in 2023.
- from 44% of Year 9s in 2019 to 47% of Year 9s in 2023.
- from 43% of Year 10s in 2019 to 46% of Year 10s in 2023.<sup>2</sup>

However, it is noteworthy that approximately half of students in Years 8, 9 and 10 surveyed in 2023 reported that they could not identify an important adult at school.

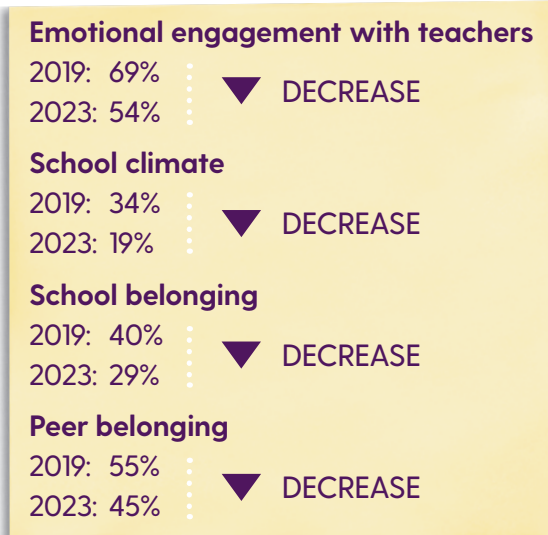
The proportion of all students surveyed who could identify an important adult at school increased from 56% in 2019 to 59% in 2023.<sup>3</sup> Yet this overall proportion hides significant differences between year levels, which shows that students appear to lose connection with an adult at school as they get older.

For example, while three quarters (75%) of Year 4 students and 71% of Year 5s surveyed in 2023 could identify an important adult at school, this was the case for only 49% of Year 8s, 47% of Year 9s and only 46% of Year 10s.<sup>4</sup> This is consistent with a recent study of trends in WEC results, which found that wellbeing measures for students in Years 8 and 9 were worse than those in Years 4 and 5 across the six years between 2017 and 2022.<sup>5</sup>

Although the 'important adult at school' measure appears to be improving among students of the same year level across time, many other 'engagement with school' measures are declining over time in children of the same age.

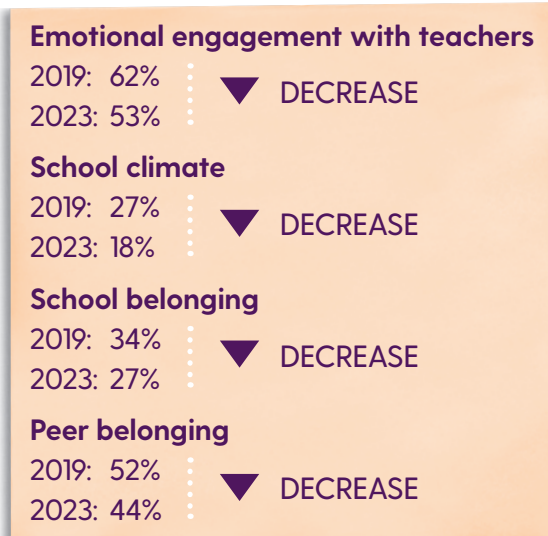
Between 2019 and 2023, there was a sharp decline in the proportion of Year 8s reporting high wellbeing across the following measures of 'engagement with school':

**Engagement with school: percentage of Year 8s reporting high wellbeing**



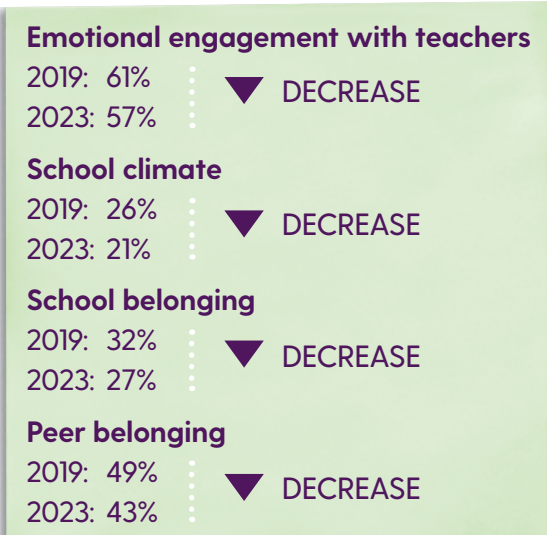
There was a similar decline in wellbeing across several 'engagement with school' domains for Year 9 students:

**Engagement with school: percentage of Year 9s reporting high wellbeing**



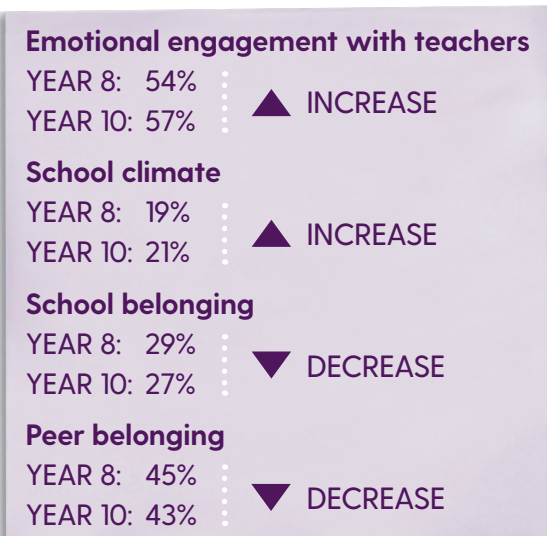
There was a similar decline in wellbeing across several 'engagement with school' domains for Year 10 students:

### Engagement with school: percentage of Year 10s reporting high wellbeing



While emotional engagement with teachers and school climate measures improved between Year 8 and 10, measures of school belonging and peer belonging declined between Years 8 and 10.

### Engagement with school: comparing Year 8 and Year 10 in 2023



Too many children and young people report that their experiences at school are not conducive to positive wellbeing, and that they do not consider their schools to be inclusive, safe, and nurturing environments.

Too many children report discrimination, derogatory comments, jibes, bullying and harassment occurring while they are at school, negatively impacting on their lives both at school and outside of school.

When young people report that their school environments are not supporting their health and wellbeing, and/or making them feel safe, schools must listen and take action to create school communities that focus on promoting student health and wellbeing. This involves scaffolding positive respectful relationships and actively addressing discrimination and inequality as well as ensuring cultural safety is promoted across all aspects of school life.

Schools must enhance their focus on participation, attendance, and achievement of all students, especially those, who for a variety of reasons, are excluded or are at risk of being marginalised.

This approach to wellbeing and engagement must include the practical strategies young people have told us will make a difference. If they are ignored, key wellbeing at school indicators will continue to decline. This is problematic, not just for young people as individuals, but also for their families, peers and broader communities.

# Key messages

South Australian young people in Years 8, 9 and 10:

- Talk about the impact a good teacher can have on their educational success and on their lives. They describe good teachers as those who genuinely care about a young person's wellbeing and who take the time to understand their lives and the issues they face, both as a generation and as individuals.
- Want teachers to find the balance between treating them as competent human beings and being mindful of their developmental needs and levels.
- Enjoy spending time with teachers who are open minded and who listen if they are stressed or just need someone to talk to.
- Say they are more likely to be involved and engaged in school and schoolwork when teachers show empathy and compassion toward them.
- Want to have a say in their schooling, and share ideas on ways to improve their schools, their education, and create positive change to the school rules and environment.
- Want their ideas to be considered through more opportunities to be seen as co-designers and collaborators in the way their school is run.
- Want school environments in which they feel safe, and where they don't have to worry about being judged or 'cancelled' by adults or peers for saying or doing something 'wrong' and are able to make mistakes in a learning environment!
- To be heard and taken seriously by the teachers and adults around them.



# Recommendations

The two practical actions to improve student learning and overall wellbeing throughout Years 8, 9 and 10 are:

## 1

### **Work with all young people in the year level to develop a shared vision and Charter for the school year.**

At the beginning of the school year, secondary schools could develop a tailored Student Charter for each new year level cohort. Development of the Student Charter would involve all students in that year level, working with the relevant school leadership, teachers, and wellbeing staff.

The purpose of a Student Charter is for students to create a shared vision for the year ahead and to identify how they will work together to make this vision a reality.

It can work as an active tool that enables and fosters student voice, agency, and ownership by simply asking students what strategies, behaviours, and standards they would like to see modelled by each other, as well as from their teachers and the broader school community.

The Student Charter should set out the agreed collective and shared expectations, rights, and responsibilities of the members of that year group 'community' and establish their commitment to working together to support student learning and wellbeing of all students in their year.

The Student Charter needs to be an agreement that is regularly referred to, freely shared, and well communicated amongst the whole year level community, including the parents and families of all student's involved.

**See an example of a Student Charter at Appendix A. See 'Tips on how to develop a Charter' at Appendix B.**

## 2

### **Improve wellbeing through a focus on the issues and ideas young people identify as important.**

All schools need to recognise that they need to respond to the drop-off in happiness, optimism, and life satisfaction that is evident amongst students in Years 8, 9 and 10. They also need to put in place ways to address the issues young people in their school identify as being the most important and which are impacting on their overall wellbeing.

This needs to involve students in identifying and implementing strategies to help build student engagement with their input. Young people suggested these strategies could include teaching more life and workplace skills; using alternative interactive learning methods; providing more outdoor based learning, such as going on excursions and camps; utilising more guest speakers; and providing more brain breaks and team-based activities throughout each school day.

Other creative ideas for wellbeing that young people from Years 8, 9 and 10 said they would welcome in their classrooms include the use of support animals, peer supporters, and sensory or 'rage rooms' that enabled students who needed to regulate their emotions from time to time, somewhere to go and 'let it all out' without fear of being judged or negatively impacting those around them.

Young people also expressed their desire for more play spaces in high schools saying this would help them to be more physically active and thereby help to improve their overall health and wellbeing.

# Listening to young people in Years 8, 9 and 10

The school years 8, 9 and 10 can be difficult for young people. These are the years in which they experience significant change in their social, physical and mental development while simultaneously working to demonstrate how they can now be trusted with greater independence and autonomy. Add to this the hormonal changes that reaching puberty brings, and it becomes easy to see why these changes impact so profoundly on a young person's sense of their own identity and place in the world.

It is also easy to understand why the relationships young people have with their peers and teachers throughout these three years are so crucial, and that they will influence and shape what future choices they make, what opportunities they get, and what general direction their life will take.

It is often the case that during these years young people will question the value of their schooling most, and want to understand its relevance to their wellbeing and future direction.

If young people in Years 8, 9 and 10 are to be successful learners and know what it feels like to experience positive wellbeing, they first need to be given an opportunity to have an active role in the way their learning experiences are delivered.

While it is important to listen to the individual voices of children and young people, it is also important to look at each year level as a distinct group. Young people within each year group receive the same lessons and program options

as their peers do. So, in determining new and different ways in which they would like their education and learning to be delivered, it makes good sense to enable young people to engage as individuals within their cohort.

As well as providing opportunities for a year group to have input, schools and teachers should also find ways to ensure the individual needs, interests, and passions of each young person are being considered wherever possible. This involves creating opportunities to get to know individual students and to making a commitment to learning more about their lives including what challenges they face individually as well as within their year group.

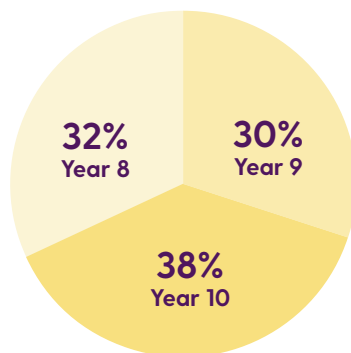
Smaller schools may find it more helpful to take a multi-year or whole of school approach to empowering input into their school's teaching and learning approaches.

## What we did...

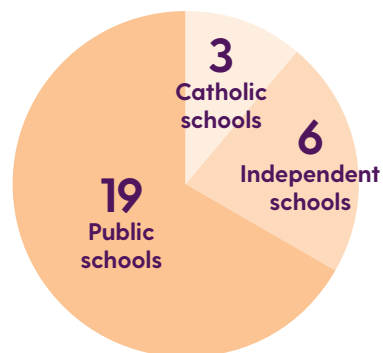
Through a series of face-to-face conversations undertaken throughout 2023, I spoke with 549 young people who were enrolled in Years 8, 9 and 10 at 28 public and private schools across metropolitan and regional South Australia.

These young people shared with me, their experiences, feelings, and reflections on being at school, and what it took for them to navigate the highs and lows of each school day.

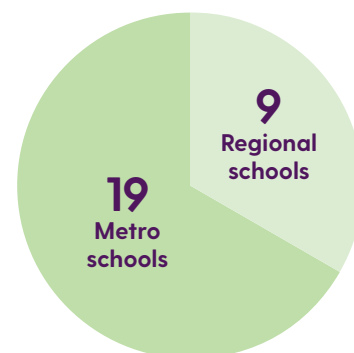
**549**  
young people involved:



**28**  
schools involved:



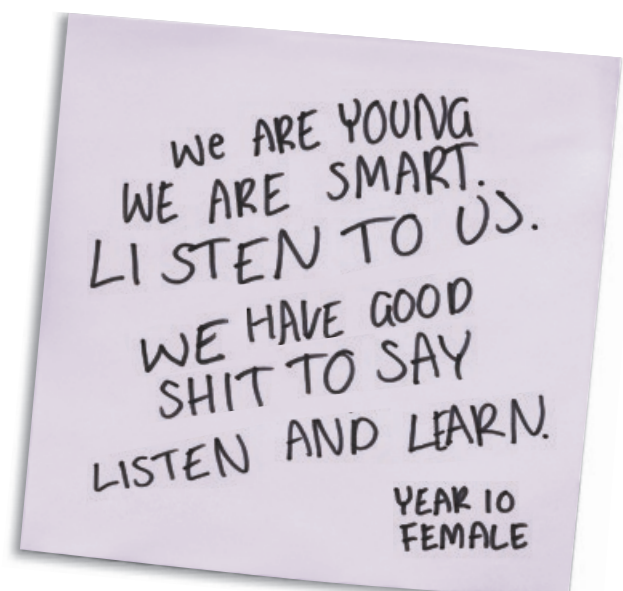
**Breakdown of school location:**



## What young people said...

South Australian young people in Years 8, 9 and 10 are diverse. There is no 'one' thing that all young people think, do, or feel. While there are some broad trends and similarities, the biggest takeaway from this consultation was just how diverse young people in these year levels are, and how they want their teachers and schools to see them as individuals and not just students in year levels.

That said, there were common likes and dislikes that students in the same year level shared. These are summarised on the following pages.



## Year 8

### Like:



1. Friends
2. Supportive teachers
3. Trying different subjects

For many young people in Year 8, good teachers and good friends are the most important factors impacting their overall school and learning experience. They enjoy being able to try a range of different subjects, with many mentioning their favourite subjects and classes.

“ The best thing about my year level is nice teachers and friends.”

“ That I can spend time with my friends. Good supportive teachers.”

“ getting to try lots of subjects.”

“ learning new things that I haven't learnt yet.”

### Don't like:



1. The drama
2. Bad teachers

While friends were the best thing about Year 8, 'the drama' of interpersonal relationships was seen as the worst thing about being in this year level. Largely referred to as the behaviour of peers that included bullying and relationship conflict, they also mentioned experiencing or witnessing homophobia, racism and sexism from teachers and peers.

'Bad teachers' were commonly referred to as 'the worst thing' about school amongst this year level.

“ Racist relief teachers, some relief teachers are racist or bias towards some kids.”

“ The worst thing about my year level is teachers that are unorganised and homework.”

“ Some teachers that get mad. Unplanned classes.”



## Year 9

### Like:



1. **Close friends and knowing more people**
2. **Choosing subjects**

For young people in Year 9, friendships are starting to consolidate with many young people knowing most people in their own year level. Year 9 students attending smaller schools valued the sense of community that their school offered.

Year 9 students said that getting to choose their subjects, followed by having closer friends were two of the best things about their year.

They explained that choosing subjects provides them with a sense of control over their education because it offers them independence while at the same time providing them with the opportunity to explore passions and engage with their own individual interests.

“ **Because I love food tech and Japanese.”**

“ **I can do music for 2 semesters.”**

### Don't like:



1. **Disruptive peers and bad teachers**
2. **Expectations**
3. **The work and workload**

The worst thing about school for Year 9 students is the lack of respect they experience from peers and some teachers and the immaturity of some of their peers. Many see these two factors as being reasons for poor student-teacher relationships.

Other challenges young people said they face include teacher driven expectations and the pressure to meet standards of behaviour, appearance, and academic results.

The ‘workload jump’ was a real concern for many in Year 9, as were difficulties juggling work, school and home commitments, while also managing the ‘competition’ that was more prevalent between themselves and their peers at this age.

“ **When others goof around in class no one gets anything done. Meaning ones who want to learn can't.**”

## Year 10

### Like:



1. **More opportunities and freedom/maturity**
2. **Genuine friends**

Young people in Year 10 expressed an increased sense of freedom and an appreciation for opportunities to engage in activities both at and beyond school. These included gaining work experience, choosing electives, going on excursions, selecting from advanced study options, as well as having more opportunities to explore their personal interests and strengths in greater depth.

Like students in Years 8 and 9, young people in Year 10 said that having close friends is the best thing about going to school. They said they were pleased to be experiencing more genuine friendships that could be relied upon and enjoyed more deeply.

“ I love my friends as they give me a lot of joy.”

“ I feel like people can go to each other. It's nice when we can just hang out with each other.”

### Don't like:



1. **Stress/workload/pressure**
2. **Bullying and vaping**

As the workload increases in Year 10, so does the stress and pressures on a majority of young people. Not only do they want to do well at school, young people in Year 10 needed to be deciding on their post school pathways. The focus on school shifts away from tests to assignments and this creates new challenges for young people as they also try to balance casual or part-time work commitments with an increased school workload.

Young people in Year 10 also viewed the worst thing about school being poor behaviour of some of their peers who they said took up teacher time and whose bullying, gossiping, vaping, racism, sexism, and drug use had negative impacts on the whole year level.

“ The loud, rude, show off & disrespectful kids that annoy me & stop the teachers from helping me.”

“ If you think anti-bullying PSAs work, think again. Kids can be tyrants.”

# Key findings

## Young people want to work together and create a better school culture

### More needs to be done to address bullying, sexism, racism, and homophobia in schools.

Across all school sectors, regions and socio-economic demographics, young people reported that more needs to be done to address bullying, sexism, racism, and homophobia in their school.

Young people with lived experience of sexual or gender diversity, neuro diversity, or those from a non-Anglo background, reported persistent sexist comments, homophobia and bullying both within and outside of school that included feelings of being excluded from the broader school community.

Several female students spoke about the ongoing sexist and gendered commentary they are expected to put up with in relation to their appearance received from both male and female students and which they know occurs due to societal expectations. They felt that the persistent nature of sexual stereotyping and harassment had a cumulative impact, with many young people saying they felt it would never stop. Given the importance of peer acceptance, when students felt a lack of acceptance from their peers and teachers, there were many who said this was a reason that they wanted to leave school altogether.

Although many educators believe banning access and use of mobile phones during the school day has had a positive influence on

classrooms and student behaviour, many young people felt it had not stopped or reduced bullying at all. They said it had simply changed the time of day when it occurred, with online bullying now occurring more often in the evening outside of school. Other students said they felt there had been an increase in physical bullying during school hours since mobile phones had been banned.

Bullying, sexism, racism, and homophobia ultimately impact on young people's sense of belonging to their school community. It also impacts on the capacity for young people to be heard and to contribute their ideas for addressing these issues in their school.

Although young people hear about opportunities for their participation and the importance of having a voice, the majority say they are rarely asked for their ideas or suggestions for positive change, and that when they are their suggestions are rarely acted upon.

They feel tokenised by schools that do not truly engage with them, particularly around issues that affect them directly such as the school environment and learning approaches.

Young people are very aware that something needs to change and they are offering many ideas for positive change. These include schools implementing stricter rules and punishments for

incidents of racism and homophobia; looking more closely at what was behind the behaviour in the first place rather than only addressing the symptoms.

“ Stricter rules and punishments for racism to fully prevent it and bring the community together as a whole.”  
– Male, Year 10

“ I think that people should learn to be respectful to others.” – Female, Year 8

“ Stop reacting to symptoms and actually solve the problem. Namely people’s attitudes toward learning and bullying and friend groups.”  
– Male, Year 9

“ I believe that all students should get a say in what they believe should change or stay the same in their own school.” – Male, Year 10

“ I think that when the school decides to make a big change, they should actually ask the students what they think.” – Female, Year 8

“ More young people’s voices actually turning into actions.” – Female, Year 10

“ Our opinions [are] not being heard and implemented into the school.”  
– Male, Year 10

### Young people in Years 8, 9 and 10 said they would like to see their school:

- Demonstrate their commitment to diversity and inclusion by displaying signs and symbols of acceptance, and by speaking openly with us on issues of inclusion.
- Give us more of a say in the development of school behaviour policies, how these are enforced and how everyone relates to each other.
- Make it mandatory for all teachers to undertake Diversity and Inclusion Training
- Don’t pretend there is choice if there isn’t, and explain any limits to the decisions we are being invited to make.
- Support our community efforts on causes and issues that matter to us.
- Use a range of ways to include all of us in decision-making opportunities (not just student leaders) and ensure that student representatives are given time to consult with and report back to the whole student body.
- Give us real roles in the classroom, year level and whole school, such as leading school assemblies, producing school newsletters and contributing to school social media.



## Young people want to shape their school environments

### Better bathroom environments and bathroom access

Bathrooms were a hot topic amongst students in all three years, including the level of cleanliness, access, privacy, and use of school bathrooms as self-regulation and wellbeing spaces. There was also much discussion about the vaping that occurs in school toilets.

School bathrooms are not just places where students go to use a toilet. They are integral to the school experience. Being able to use clean bathrooms and access adequate bathroom products is very important to all young people.

Students vaping in the school bathroom was often raised as a significant challenge to many young people who want to find ways to make bathrooms vape free. As schools have sought to respond to vaping, many have implemented rules around bathroom access that involves locking bathrooms to help reduce vaping. However, young people are concerned that this approach is impacting on their access to essential facilities and is creating an unhelpful power dynamic between the school and its students, particularly given some school bathrooms are now being locked during class times. Locking bathrooms was viewed very negatively and seen as authoritarian and disrespectful to students overall.

Privacy was another issue young people consistently raised in their conversations. Many young people said they wanted to have access to individual toilet cubicles to remove the anti-social aspects of the school bathroom. They would also like better cubicle doors that lock, and walls that peers can't see through, come under or jump over.

When young people were asked about safe and private places they could go to regulate their emotions, calm down or have a good cry 'the school bathroom' was mentioned repeatedly as the only place in their school where they felt they could do this.

Other young people said bathrooms have become places to hangout during breaks. Many young people said schools should provide designated chillout spaces where students can hang out, so that toilets can be left open and usable by all students.

Young people said that they would like to be involved in the development of a new vision for school bathrooms; one that addresses the issues of vaping, access, and restoring school bathrooms to their primary purpose.

**“ More individual stalls so less people going in there and vaping.” – Male, Year 10**

**“ Provide space for students to go so that they don't feel like they need to hide in the toilet.” – Female, Year 10**

### More fit-for-purpose wellbeing spaces

As an extension of the conversation around bathrooms, it emerged that most designated wellbeing spaces in schools are not accessible to students. Instead they tend to be waiting spaces outside offices being used by the school's wellbeing staff. These spaces were generally not what students considered to be 'spaces in which they can focus on their own wellbeing' or that of their peers. They also described feeling pressured to get back to

class rather than take time out when they really needed to.

In many newly designed wellbeing spaces, the amount of glass that has been used is making many young people feel they are being 'watched' by teachers and other peers, and that they have very little privacy. Young people reported that the openness of the design is creating more anxiety than helping to alleviate it.

For other young people, gaining access to their school's wellbeing staff was a significant barrier, saying they often needed to make appointments weeks in advance, which didn't therefore, provide them with the much needed support or advice they had needed at the critical time – when the incident or problem was occurring.

Young people had a range of ideas about how wellbeing spaces could be designed and operated to better serve their particular needs. Their ideas included having home like spaces to calm students down and allow them time to chill and listen to music or read and reflect. They wanted access to these spaces to be made available without them having to answer a series of questions on why they needed to be there.

Others wanted sensory/panic rooms designed for neurodivergent young people, or those who were facing mental health challenges while at school. While they appreciated the need for student safety, they were keen for this kind of space to be designated a teacher free zone.

Other creative ideas for wellbeing included allowing more support animals at school, introducing a program of peer supporters, building a rock-climbing wall to relieve stress, as well as providing sensory or rage rooms that can help students who need to regulate their emotions. Young people also expressed their desire for play spaces in high schools to increase teenage wellbeing and that these could be co-designed with older students.

**“ We should have an area like a 'quiet room' or something, so that we can have a place to chill out, study, listen to music and more. No teachers allowed in the quiet room but there will be a cctv for safety. And a box of fidgets...” – Female, Year 10**

**“ Having the designated wellbeing space would make the students not stay in the bathrooms.” – Female, Year 10**

### Young people in Years 8, 9 and 10 said they want teachers to:

- Allow us to walk around the classroom more and to take short breaks when we need them, and when we can feel ourselves tuning out. We want teachers to understand that we may not be able to concentrate all the time and may just need a moment now and again to refocus.
- Allow us to change classrooms, including having lessons outside from time to time, and arrange excursions that will help 'mix things up a bit'.
- Allow us to use fidgets, food, music, and/or doodling to help us engage with schoolwork. Being allowed to do these 'distracting' things can actually help us become calmer and more focused.

## Young people want improved relationships with teachers

Across all schools and year levels young people reported that they wanted better relationships with their teachers and to be respected more by their whole school community.

Whilst Year 8 students mentioned relationships with their teachers as something they like about their school experience, students in more senior years tended to describe their worst school experience as being the relationships they have with their teachers.

Young people want their teachers to be respectful, understanding, funny (and fun), enthusiastic, helpful, and easy to talk to. They want them to seek input, control the class (without being mean), understand what they are teaching and not be sexist, homophobic, racist or ableist.

Young people were clear that from their perspective there is no place for school teachers who are inconsiderate or closed minded. Nor do they want anything to do with educators who yell at students or give punishments for no good reason.

**“ We need class meetings and teacher performance sheets. Every week there should be a meeting for us to have a say and talk about the problems they faced!” – Male, Year 9**

### Understanding and respecting young people as individuals

Across all three-year levels young people expressed a desire for more opportunities to get to know their teachers. Not only did they feel this would enable them to be better understood and supported, they felt it would help to build trust and mutual respect between themselves and their teachers.

While some young people described positive relationships with a single teacher or teachers, there was agreement overall that greater respect between teachers and young people is needed.

Many young people said that while they are expected to respect their teachers, they felt the mutual respect they sought in return was lacking. They also suggested the whole school community would benefit from learning how to build and show more respect to each other, to teachers, and to the wider community.

Many young people shared their frustrations about their teachers rarely making the time to get to know them, saying that being known for who they are is linked to whether they felt understood and included by their teacher/s.

Whatever their circumstances, young people want people around them who they can trust. They want their teachers to care about them as individuals and ask how they're going in their day to day lives. They want teachers to show enthusiasm for them as individuals, enquiring about their situations, and following up to see if they're okay if they've heard they've had a tough time.

Young people understand that teachers are being pulled in many directions, with many demands being placed on their time. They know that these limitations make it difficult for teachers to prioritise student needs, particularly as they juggle direct instruction time, behaviour management and administration. However, they also want teachers to acknowledge that as young people they are juggling a lot at this time in their lives too.

Young people want school staff, particularly teachers, to be more aware of the challenges they are facing, and to be responsive to their diverse and sometimes substantial needs.

They want teachers to understand how busy and complex their young lives are, acknowledging that at times 'outside' factors can impact significantly on their everyday behaviour, mood, and attention at school. They would like this to be factored into their learning environment in ways that support them, rather than teachers adding further stress to their lives.

They want teachers to be able to pick up on key behaviours that might signify emerging problems, and to establish support networks that have been co-designed with student input that can help them get through 'tough times'. Students say they need 'dedicated and qualified counsellors who aren't already part of the teaching staff' to provide them with the high quality support they need, and for these counsellors to be much more available.

They also want individual coaching and support made available to young people who need it on a regular basis, both inside and outside of school.

Young people say that when teachers value their wellbeing and learning, they explain themselves better and set tasks they can understand. This approach ensures students are not made to feel stupid or somehow 'less than'. They want teachers who will advocate on their behalf to senior leadership, and help explain difficult situations they may have found themselves in to other adults in their lives, but only when this support is needed and has been asked for.

**“ Young people need to feel more connected with teachers to make a real change. Teachers need to listen more to us.” – Male, Year 10**

**“ Teachers need to be less homophobic and be actively understanding about LGBTIQ issues and people.” – Male, Year 10**

### Young people in Years 8, 9 and 10 want their teachers to:

- Realise it is difficult for us to ask for help and that we want teachers to be more proactive in reaching out to us when we are struggling.
- Provide more opportunities for us to work with and support our peers, and act as brokers between leadership and students on the things that matter to us most, including how school can better support us.
- Smile and make eye contact with us every school day.
- Be proud of us and put up our assignments and artwork in prominent places throughout the school to celebrate our achievements.
- Give us information about the 'other things' we need to know, like where to get support for mental illness, or what to do if we urgently need a period product, and to make sure these essential hygiene items are available in different places throughout the school so we don't have to ask teachers or other school staff for them.



### Wellbeing before uniform

Many young people said that the constant focus on ensuring they conform with school uniform rules was unnecessary and out-of-balance with what they see as the purpose of being at school. Students said they felt uniform rules were being too strictly policed at their school, and that this was being done at the expense of addressing more serious behaviour issues. The preoccupation with issuing uniform breaches was seen to be causing a significant wedge between positive teacher and student relations.

While young people generally agreed there was a clear need for rules and procedures to be put in place across the school environment, they felt the focus on some rules came at the expense of managing others, which students viewed as being more important. Many said they couldn't really understand the 'why' behind many of the school rules.

Many young people in Years 8 and 9 said that having staff enforce these rules often got in the way of them feeling supported and understood by their teachers.

When a lack of understanding is coupled with a perceived lack of care and an over emphasis on following rules, young people interpret this as disrespectful and to mean that adults have no regard for their wellbeing.

Young people in Years 8, 9 and 10 told the Commissioner they would like to be regularly asked for feedback on how to improve their school and learning, including how to implement changes to school rules. They want to have a say on ways to address issues that are of concern to school leadership. They also want to be given meaningful data to analyse and discuss these concerns so that they can make informed suggestions.

“ I don't think the school has its priorities right, they should be focusing on getting students to school, not how they look at school.” – Female, Year 8

“ The focus of the school should be pulled away from the wrong things such as vaping + uniform, etc. and onto our learning, improvement and relationship with teachers + peers.” – Female, Year 9

## Young people want to have input into the way their education is being delivered

One of the key areas in which young people would like an opportunity to provide feedback on their school experience, is on the effectiveness and variety of teaching methods currently being used in their classrooms. Young people commented that some teachers don't seem to understand the importance of applying effective teaching methods that will engage students in different ways, and thereby cater to different learning styles.

They want teachers who are prepared to take time to listen to their concerns, and to work more closely with them to create goals that align

teaching more closely with their chosen interests and future career prospects. They want support that is more tailored to individual learning needs, and suggested that regular check-ins to measure progress against mutually agreed learning goals established at the start of each year, would be advantageous.

**“ More tailored and practical learning is needed in schools. We will always learn more from mistakes than a whiteboard.” – Male, Year 9**

### Young people in Years 8, 9 and 10 said they want their teachers to:

- Support us to have conversations with each other in the classroom so that we can learn how to work together as a team.
- Establish home groups that cover more than just school administrative tasks and instead include other things such as a wellbeing focus.
- Involve us in providing constructive feedback on how teachers can better meet individual needs and interests, including what our teachers can learn from us about other aspects of our lives.
- Provide more opportunities for us to have a say in the way our classroom functions, including more opportunities to make task choices, share more of what we know, vote on options, and introduce more fun and interesting ways to learn.

### More interactive and engaging learning

The word that young people used most to describe their learning experience at school across each of the sectors and year levels was 'boredom'. Young people said that they are often bored in their classrooms and that they want to feel more engaged in their learning.

They want to have more involvement in and opportunities to discuss ways to inject fun and interest into their learning experiences. For some students this meant taking a more hands-on approach to learning. For others it meant having opportunities to apply what they are learning to their day-to-day lives, along with options for outdoor learning to occur on a regular basis.

Young people said they wanted more individualised teaching to cater for different learning styles, with teachers applying a greater understanding of the challenges students with diverse learning needs and disabilities face to stay engaged with school. They suggested that teachers should meet with each student one-on-one at the beginning of the school year to gain an understanding of what their interests are, and how they like to learn best. If teachers did this they would be able to align curriculum examples in ways that have much greater relevance to their students' lives.

“ Part of the reason why so many people dislike school is because the school never asks what we want and need. If the school asked how they could support us and help us learn our school would be a lot better. Students are constantly changing and the school never asks for feedback, so a lot of people struggle to cope or learn because the way the school works... If the school adjusted their way of teaching grades participation and a lot more would improve.” – Female, Year 9

### Learning for the reality of adulthood

Young people want schools that make them feel welcome, that value diversity, demonstrate kindness and trust, and actively involve them in decision-making. They also want an education that is relevant to the lives they are living now.

Young people often struggle to feel motivated by what they are being taught. They report that it often feels as though the lessons they are given don't relate to the 'real world' in any way. They stress how important it is for them to be able to understand the connection a lesson has to their success outside of school, and for applicable life skills to be taught while they're still at school.

Young people universally said they wanted to be better prepared for adulthood before leaving school. Specifically, the majority wanted greater financial literacy. This included gaining an understanding of how taxes work and how best to manage their personal finances. Classes on nutrition and cooking, driving, parenting, self-defence, better sex education, as well as how to be safe online, at clubs and at parties, were commonly requested.

“ Teach me how to buy a house, get a higher credit score, how to pay bills, not that the savannah has acacia trees.” – Male, Year 9

### More camps and excursions integrated into their learning

The impact of COVID-19 meant many young people who are now in Years 8, 9 and 10 missed out on school camps and excursions for several years in a row. They also missed out on some of the iconic end of primary school events and beginning of high school milestone experiences over recent years.

When talking about camps and excursions, young people in Years 8, 9 and 10 said they had a simple need for more school excursions to specific places that they want to visit.

While they said they would like camps and excursions to be better integrated into their learning, they also wanted these to cater to diverse learning styles, highlighting their importance in building deeper connections between individual students, teachers, and peers. A focus on learning team building skills and conflict resolution techniques were seen as being particularly important.

Overall, young people view camps and excursions as a positive part of their school experience and would like more of them. They're very aware that cost of living pressures mean some students are not able to attend camps and excursions. They're calling for affordable excursions that would enable all students to participate.

“ **WE NEED CAMPS! Covid is a[n] issue, we understand that. But we need the opportunity to do team building and get to know each other.**” – Female, Year 10

“ **Having excursions a lot more that is imbedded in the curriculum. People need different types of learning.**” – Female, Year 10

# Where to next?

It is clear from the contributions made by 549 students in years 8, 9, and 10 who participated in this consultation that young people have many ideas on ways to improve their school learning experience.

They want schools to find ways to support teachers to get to know them better so that their school learning experience is more individual and not just about being in a large student year group. Young people need more opportunities to put their ideas forward and to have their suggestions for change and improvement explored and implemented.

We know there is no one size fits all solution. Student groups are diverse with many learning styles, and teachers have many competing demands on their time.

However if schools were able to take some time at the beginning of each school year to work with young people in their year level groups to devise a Student Charter, this will have a positive impact on teacher students' relationships and overall capacity to engage with school and learning.

Devising a Student Charter by year level won't be a silver bullet, but it will demonstrate respect for young people and that they are valued by the school community. It also provides a mechanism for young people to have input into the culture of their school, with opportunities for staff and students to work together to co-design their education experiences.

Young people in years 8, 9 and 10 want to go to schools that focus on including their input into shaping a positive learning culture at their school.

They want opportunities to help ensure the school environment is encouraging and supportive of students, reflective of their individual interests, but also aware of the common needs of each student group.

Regardless of what approach a school may take, young people are clear that schools finding more time for teachers to make themselves available to listen and get to know individual students better will make a significant difference to their wellbeing.

A whole school approach to student wellbeing is needed; one that supports young people and teachers to have the best relationships possible, and which is committed to enhancing student learning experiences.

We all have a responsibility to ensure South Australia's young people are both seen and heard within their school environments. We know that when young people experience respect and feel valued in their classrooms and school, their engagement with their education and overall wellbeing improves. These are the outcomes that schools must be striving to achieve for the benefits they will bring to individuals students, their year groups, their families and the broader communities in which they live and learn.



## Appendix A: Example Year 10 Student Charter

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### Who we are:

We are 98 students from 30 countries representing 32 different language groups.

We are students, gamers, drummers, clarinet players, hikers, readers, photographers, water polo players, soccer players, soccer followers, painters, cooks, coders, skateboarders, netballers, hip hop dancers and language learners.

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### Our vision for a great Year 10:

- As a group we want to feel respected, connected, and equal.
- We want our teachers to see us as hard workers, mature, trustworthy, and persistent.
- We want our relationships to be friendly, trusting, and healthy (socially and mentally).
- At the end of Year 10 we want to look back and say, “our year was a success with good grades, new friends and where we tried new things.”

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### How we will make this happen:

#### To value student voice:

- We will encourage friends to speak up.
- We won't be afraid to voice our opinions or talk to a teacher or peer.
- We will keep negative opinions to ourselves.
- We will be good listeners and respect other people's opinions, property, beliefs, and cultures.

#### To build positive and healthy relationships with our teachers:

- We will always communicate calmly and respectfully (no yelling, swearing, arguing).
- We will listen and not distract others.
- We will show kindness and respect to teachers.
- We will encourage our teachers by being attentive.

#### To create a culture of belonging:

- We will treat everyone equally.
- We will never judge someone for having different perspectives and will try to see things from their point of view.
- We will check-up on others.
- We will educate each other on our culture and religion.
- We will make sure our school is a safe place for everyone.

#### To create safe and supportive relationships with our friends and peers:

- We will stand up to bullies and won't be bystanders.
- We will push/encourage friends to keep going when they're put down.
- We will help friends when they need support without drawing attention to the issue.

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## How our school community can back us:

### How we would like to be consulted on things that affect us:

- We would like to make sure students' opinions are being heard.
- We would like a student vote before making changes.

### How we would like to be spoken to and encouraged in our learning:

- We would like to be spoken to respectfully and calmly and be encouraged to aim high in our learning.
- We would like teachers to have a kind approach when explaining tasks, so we feel more involved and supported.

### How we would like bullying addressed/behaviour management approached:

- We would like teachers to give students more warnings.
- We would like House Leaders to follow up our issues more quickly and for them to take them more seriously.
- We would like teachers to understand and listen when we have issues.

### How we would like to be supported through more activities or opportunities:

- We would like a soccer and football club.
- We would like cheaper canteen food.
- We would like jumpers with hoods.
- We would like casual day every month.

### How we would like our success as a year group celebrated:

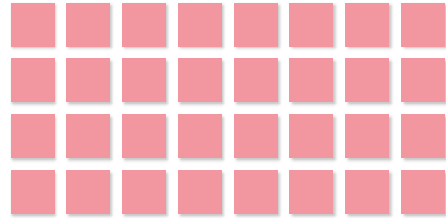
- We would like more excursions.
- We would like a sleepover with our year group.
- We would like a class party or grand occasion to make our year more memorable.

## Appendix B: Advice on preparing a School Charter

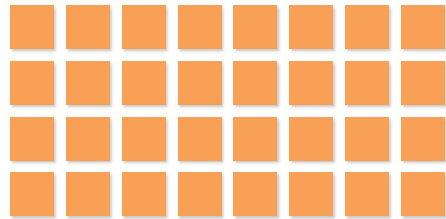
### Tips and tricks:

- We recommend co-designing the Charter workshop with students themselves, and having students help run and facilitate the activities on the day. This could be students in the same year level or older student leaders.
- Active teacher involvement throughout the co-design process is recommended. This should include Year Level Coordinators, Wellbeing Leaders and relevant Senior Leaders.
- Include the whole year level in the workshop, which should be broken up into small groups of 6–10 students who work together sharing their ideas throughout the day.
- Plan fun breaks and activities between sessions.
- The workshop could also be run over a series of days, culminating in the final Charter and signing activity.
- We highly recommend utilising an online whiteboard tool to facilitate real-time student input, the co-design approach, and voting – like this...

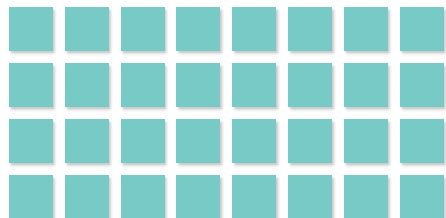
#### HOW WE WANT TO BE SUPPORTED



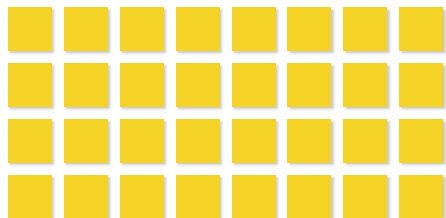
#### HOW WE WANT TO BE CONSULTED ON THINGS THAT AFFECT US



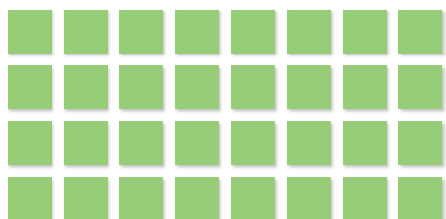
#### HOW WE WANT OUR SUCCESS CELEBRATED



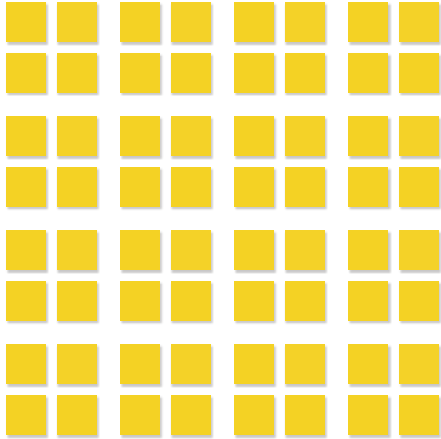
#### HOW WE WANT TO BE SPOKEN TO/ COMMUNICATED WITH



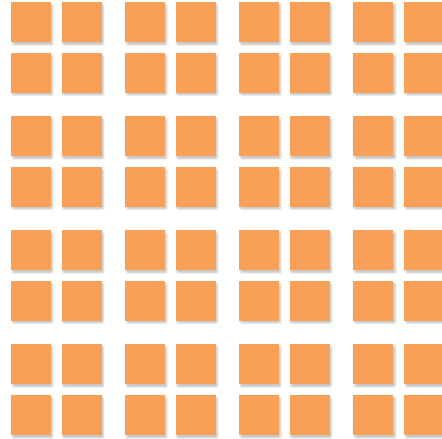
#### HOW WE WANT BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT APPROACHED



THE THINGS WE'RE PROUD OF

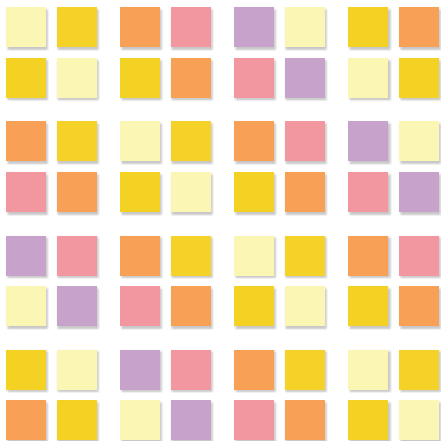


THE 'STUFF' WE NEED TO GET BETTER AT

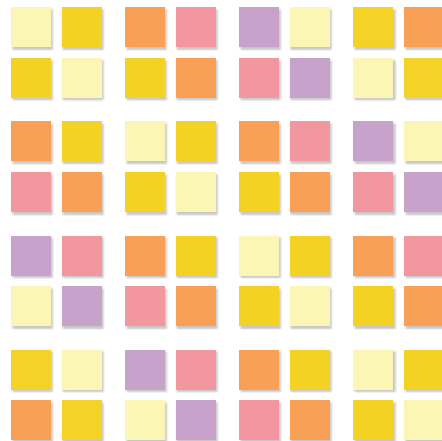


WE, THE STUDENTS OF [SCHOOL NAME]

The languages we speak...

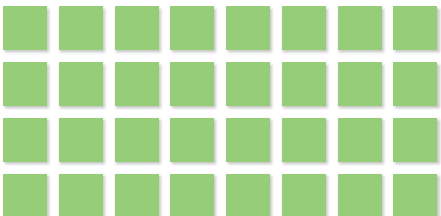


The countries and cultures that make us who we are...

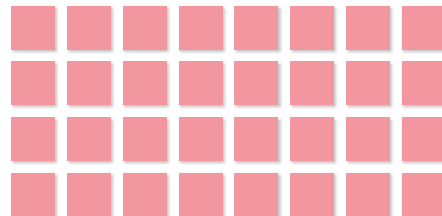


WHAT WOULD MAKE THIS YEAR GREAT?

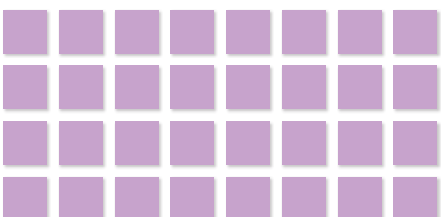
We want to feel...



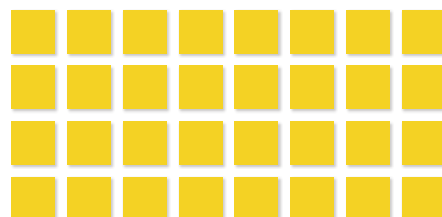
We want our experiences to...



We want our communities to see us as...



We want our relationships to...



### **Suggested approach: Welcome and icebreaker**

- Outline the purpose and the 'why' of the day.
- Make it fun! It's a day for students to be heard and shape their year.
- Develop an icebreaker that captures students' interests (with the intention to include some of their interests in the Charter's opening statement).

### **Session 1: Strengths mapping – understanding who we are**

Things to discuss could include:

- The things that make our year group great.
- The things we like about our teachers.
- The things about our school that we're proud of.
- What we need to improve on or get better at.

### **Session 2: Developing our vision**

#### **Vision activity:**

#### **What we want from our Year Level in 2024**

Students to finish these sentences with one word:

- As a group we want to feel...
- We want our teachers to see us as...
- We want our relationships with our peers to be...
- At the end of the year we want to look back and say, "our year was..."

Discuss in groups, then add top words to online whiteboard and vote on the most important ones in groups.

### **Session 3: Building our Charter**

#### **How we will make this (our vision) happen**

Groups to each choose an area each to discuss and develop statements for such as:

- To value student voice we will...
- To create a great learning environment we will...
- To build a welcoming and inclusive community we will...
- To support student health and wellbeing we will...

Discuss in groups, then add 'we will' statements to online whiteboard and vote on top ideas.

#### **How our school can support us (to enable our vision)**

Groups to each choose an area to discuss and develop statements for:

- How we would like to be consulted on the things that affect us.
- How we would like to be supported.
- How we would like to be spoken to and communicated with.
- How we would like behaviour management approached.
- How we would like our success celebrated.

Discuss in groups, then add 'we would like' statements to online whiteboard and vote on top ideas.

### **Session 4: Signing the Charter**

Read the Charter to the Year Group.

Students all sign the Charter in a creative way, such as on canvas or a wall mural.

alot of judgement

Laptops available at home

Flexible uniforms

More grass and trees.

Need our own chill out spot for year levels

NEW PROJECT

Endnotes

- 1 Department for Education, South Australian Wellbeing and Engagement Collection: All SA Students Survey Year: 2023, accessed 23 January 2024, <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/docs/system-performance/data-reports/wec-results-report-2023.pdf>, pp 20–22; Department for Education, South Australian Wellbeing and Engagement Collection All SA survey students Survey Year: 2019, accessed 23 January 2024, <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/docs/system-performance/data-reports/wellbeing-and-engagement-collection-2019-results.pdf>, pp 18–20.
- 2 Department for Education, South Australian Wellbeing and Engagement Collection: All SA Students Survey Year: 2023, pp 20–22; Department for Education, South Australian Wellbeing and Engagement Collection: All SA survey students Survey Year: 2019, pp 18–20.
- 3 Department for Education, South Australian Wellbeing and Engagement Collection: All SA Students Survey Year: 2023, p 12. Note: While 'all students' in the 2019 survey included Year 4 to Year 10 students, 'all students' in the 2023 survey included Year 4 to Year 12 students.
- 4 Department for Education, South Australian Wellbeing and Engagement Collection: All SA Students Survey Year: 2023, pp 16, 17, 20, 21, 22.
- 5 D Dumuid, B Singh, J Brinsley et al, 'Trends in Well-Being Among Youth in Australia, 2017–2022', *JAMA Network Open*, 2023 6(8): 1–14.

toastie machines + microwaves all classrooms

different time system Starts at 9:00 or 10:00 work all the way through no breaks finish school at 1:00 or 2:00

When people actually listen to you

I feel like I am not supported. I often feel depressed at school.

more say in what excursions we do.

people not being mean

Make the pressure to finish work a little less harsh

More Workshops on Aduthood

Senior teachers that can be flexible with students

Chill out Space.

Undercover buildings and/or building blocks for warm or cold weather.

teachers caring about kids as people not just students

less pressure and less assignments

Students choose what they want to learn.

more engaging and fun assignments.

Canteen prices lower

Less homework = less stress

How to handle Money and use it wisely

more bins

Cafeteria and big long tables

chill vibe -happy





Ability to use the toilets without being accused for vaping.

less vapes

class pet.

It doesn't need to be a stereo type that teacher have to yell and tell students off all the time.

More practical work.

More practical lessons (more lessons where you actually do stuff)

Sometimes people treat us different than others because of our religion

They care about how we look but not about us

We don't like to sit still.

When teachers are realistic with their students; not treated like toddlers & belittled.

Have a Casseria of all the kids to come together and eat!

Inside areas available during lunch / recess

more understanding abt mental health etc.

flexible seating  
• No seating plans  
• Able to work in more peaceful spaces

Surveys don't work a teacher or spokesperson should come around and ask in person.

More camps & excursions

People nicer to include (te

N!!!

Sanitary items (females)

Teacher's not being so strict.

Change the bell noise.

teachers remembering your name.

us en to music

More gender and sexual diversity

Lower canteen price

Being able to eat in class

NO litter or graffiti

No sexism please

not as many student

Principal never gets out.

Actually use people's opinions and change what's wrong.

I want words on report cards.

A feedback box where students can express their concerns

Paint the girls toilets, make them closer to classrooms.

People ignore how much bullying over your sexuality occurs (A LOT of homophobia)

teachers should get a pay rise also help students more.

Less boring assembly

Homework can't relax always stressed

Allowed to carry our bags around

Phones at School

Teach about to wi