



Commissioner for Children and Young People

2019-2020 Annual Plan

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The office of Commissioner for Children and Young People is established under the *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2016* (CCYP Act). The Commissioner's functions, which are set out in section 8 of the CCYP Act, include:

- (a) advocating for all children and young people in the State generally;
- (b) acting as an advocate for a detainee under the *Youth Justice Act 1997*;
- (c) researching, investigating and influencing policy development into matters relating to children and young people generally;
- (d) promoting, monitoring and reviewing the wellbeing of children and young people generally;
- (e) promoting and empowering the participation of children and young people in the making of decisions, or the expressing of opinions on matters, that may affect their lives;
- (f) assisting in ensuring the State satisfies its national and international obligations in respect of children and young people generally;
- (g) encouraging and promoting the establishment by organisations or appropriate and accessible mechanisms for the participation of children and young people in matters that may affect them.

In performing these functions or exercising a power under the CCYP Act, the Commissioner is required to:

- do so according to the principle that the wellbeing and best interests of children and young people are paramount; and
- observe any relevant provisions of the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

Unless otherwise specified, when performing a function or exercising a power under the CCYP Act or any other Act, the Commissioner is required to act independently, impartially and in the public interest.

Section 7 of the CCYP Act requires that no later than the 31st of March in each year, the Commissioner for Children and Young People is to prepare an annual plan describing the Commissioner's proposed program of work and activities for the following financial year and provide a copy of that plan to the Minister. The below table, sets out streams of activity beneath identified priority areas of work for 2019-20, which relate to the Commissioner's functions as outlined above.

Further information about the work of the Commissioner for Children and Young People can be found at <https://www.childcomm.tas.gov.au/>

For further information about this document, please contact the Commissioner for Children and Young People:

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The Hon Roger Jaensch MP
Minister for Human Services
Parliament House, Hobart, 7000

PRIORITY	Listening to and promoting the voice of children and young people	Promoting and monitoring the wellbeing of children and young people	Independent monitoring of Tasmania's out-of-home care system	Systemic advice and advocacy on matters affecting children and young people	Individual advocacy for children and young people detained under the <i>Youth Justice Act 1997</i>
ACTIVITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing and publishing a suite of resources to promote awareness of the role of the CCYP and of the rights of children and young people. • Developing an expanded consultation mechanism in collaboration with children and young people including regular engagement. This mechanism will fulfil the legislated requirement to establish a Children and Young People Consultative Council. • Regularly and creatively engaging with children and young people (and those who support them) from diverse cultures, backgrounds and regions around Tasmania to understand the key issues of importance or concern to them. • Promoting and facilitating opportunities for children and young people to communicate their opinions on matters which affect them to political leaders and to other key decision-makers. • Celebrating Tasmanian organisations which actively promote the participation of children and young people in their decision - making processes. • Engaging in communication/media opportunities to promote awareness of the importance of children's participation in decision-making processes and of them expressing opinions on matters which affect them. • Preparing and publishing an annual report on the Commissioner's engagement and consultation activities with children and young people in Tasmania. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting the importance of valuing and improving the wellbeing of Tasmania's children and young people, including through discussions with government, government agencies, peak bodies, advocacy groups and other stakeholder groups and through public commentary. • Obtaining and analysing data relevant to the wellbeing of Tasmania' children and young people, including data requested from Tasmanian Government agencies. • Monitoring, contributing to and assisting to promote strategies which have the potential to improve the wellbeing of Tasmania's children and young people. • Hosting forums and a speaker series to promote the wellbeing of children and young people in Tasmania. • Collaborating and forming partnerships to develop a new approach to publicly reporting on the wellbeing of Tasmania's children and young people. • Promoting the importance of the first 1,000 days of a child's life, including early learning opportunities through the B4 Coalition. • Undertaking a Listening Tour across Child and Family Centres, Neighbourhood Houses and other organisations whose work affects the wellbeing of Tasmania's children, young people and their families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishing the first report of the CCYP OOHC Monitoring Program, including an in-depth exploration of what it means to "be healthy" in OOHC. • Developing and publishing the agenda for the 2019-2020 OOHC monitoring period. • Monitoring and where appropriate, contributing to, implementation of the <i>Strategic Plan for Out of Home Care in Tasmania 2017-2019</i>. • Conducting regular monitoring of the OOHC system in Tasmania, including by analysing the regular, routine flow of information from Tasmanian Government agencies, OOHC service providers, advocacy organisations and other stakeholders. • Conducting an in-depth exploration of a particular theme of significance to children and young people in OOHC in Tasmania, based on one of the six wellbeing domains of the <i>Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework</i>, noting also the <i>Outcomes Framework for Children and Young People in Out of Home Care</i>. • Engaging with OOHC stakeholders, including through monitoring visits to OOHC providers and to relevant advocacy groups and peak bodies. • Seeking the views of children and young people in OOHC to inform ongoing monitoring activities and advocacy. • Holding regular meetings with the Expert Panel for the CCYP OOHC Monitoring Program. • Where necessary and practicable, investigating any particular areas of concern identified through the OOHC monitoring function. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing advice and comments on existing or proposed legislation, policies and practices that affect or have the capacity to affect the rights and wellbeing of children and young people in Tasmania including by responding to media and public inquiries. • Monitoring and where appropriate contributing to the implementation of reforms including: <i>Strong Families Safe Kids</i>, changes to the family based care system and the <i>Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework</i>. • Monitoring and where appropriate contributing to the implementation of the recommendations of the <i>Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse</i>. • Promoting the importance of child safe organisations and the <i>National Principles for Child Safe Organisations</i> endorsed by COAG. • Participating in external reference groups, other groups or forums where the focus of work is relevant to the rights and wellbeing of children and young people in Tasmania. • Undertaking research, contributing to consultative processes, providing advice to government and making public comment on particular areas of concern, reform or advocacy. • As required by section 13 of the CCYP Act, establish a Children and Young People Advisory Council to assist with the Commissioner's general advocacy role. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing individual advocacy for children and young people detained under the <i>Youth Justice Act 1997</i> including by undertaking regular visits to Ashley Youth Detention Centre (AYDC) and responding to telephone or written requests for advocacy. • Providing advice to inform the development and implementation of therapeutic approaches to care for children and young people detained at AYDC. • Providing advice and monitoring the redesign and upgrade of AYDC. • Developing and distributing new posters, brochures, cards and an introductory video for residents at AYDC to help them understand their rights while they are in youth justice detention. • Working collaboratively to ensure that the rights and wellbeing of children and young people detained under the <i>Youth Justice Act 1997</i> are understood and protected.