

2020 Student Wellbeing Survey

20 October 2020

The Commissioner for Children and Young People Leanne McLean said the Department of Education 2020 Student Wellbeing Survey is a welcome insight into how Tasmania's children and young people are travelling.

"I commend the Department for actually asking students how they are travelling – this is one of the best ways to judge their views as well as showing them we care about their wellbeing," Ms McLean said.

"The 2020 data is particularly important because it provides for the first time a comparison between last year's student cohort in Tasmanian Government Schools and this year's cohort, which has experienced one of the most disruptive years of their lives, given the COVID-19 pandemic.

"There has been a substantial increase in the numbers of students who tell us they have an important adult in their school, who they know and trust. This is a very important statistic, because it indicates that by and large, schools have been ensuring students know who they can go to, even though for many students, some of the school year has been at home."

Ms McLean said unsurprisingly – but sadly - the Survey shows a decline in wellbeing in the areas of happiness, optimism, satisfaction with life, emotional regulation and absence of sadness.

"These areas have all declined by 2%. Further, the deeper analysis of the data provided this year indicates that particularly in years 7-10, or for children aged 12-16 in Tasmanian Government schools, there is a worryingly low result for how students feel about the 'climate' in their schools and their sense of belonging in their schools.

"It's not possible to definitely say at this point, whether these results are due to the impacts of Covid-19 or are due to something else."

Ms McLean said the results of the Survey cannot be ignored.

"Collectively, I believe they indicate a need for students to have a greater voice in how their schools operate. Children and young people in Tasmania have a right to have a say about all matters which impact on their lives, including their schooling.

"I note the Government's commitment to develop a strategy to improve the wellbeing of Tasmania's children and young people and look forward to contributing to its development by ensuring its co-design with the children and young people of Tasmania."

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