

Your Ref:
Our Ref: 812

22 March 2021

The Hon Roger Jaensch MP
Minister for Human Services
Parliament House
HOBART TAS 7000

Dear Minister

Commissioner for Children and Young People Annual Plan 2021-2022

I'm writing to provide you with a final copy of the Commissioner for Children and Young People's Annual Plan for 2021-2022.

Provision of this plan is in accordance with section 7 of the *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2016* which requires that by no later than 31 March in each year, the Commissioner 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 you, as Minister for Human Services.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss my Annual Plan 2021-2022 with you in our regular meeting.

Yours sincerely



Leanne McLean
Commissioner for Children and Young People



Commissioner for Children and Young People

2021-2022 Annual Plan

Commissioner for Children and Young People 2021-2022 Annual Plan

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 31 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 table below sets out streams of activity beneath identified priority areas of work for 2021-2022, which relate to the Commissioner's functions as outlined above. The Commissioner's program of work and activities will take appropriate account of challenges and restrictions related to our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

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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Submitted on 22 March 2021 to:

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

All activities outlined in this Annual Plan will take appropriate account of challenges and restrictions related to our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic

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 (OOHC) system	Advice and advocacy on matters affecting children and young people	Advocacy for children and young people detained under the <i>Youth Justice Act 1997</i>
ACTIVITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting awareness of the role of the CCYP and of the rights of children and young people. Engaging with children and young people around Tasmania through the CCYP Ambassador Program. 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. Empowering children and young people to communicate their opinions on matters which affect them to political leaders and other key decision-makers, including on COVID-19 related issues. Encouraging and supporting Tasmanian organisations to actively promote the participation of children and young people in their decision - making processes, including through innovative and creative mechanisms. Engaging in communication/media opportunities to promote awareness of the importance of children's participation in decision-making processes and their right to express opinions on matters which affect them. Promoting and sharing child friendly information and resources relating to our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting the importance of improving the wellbeing of Tasmania's children and young people, including through collaboration with stakeholders and both targeted and broad communication strategies. Monitoring and analysing data relevant to the wellbeing of Tasmania's children and young people, including data requested from Tasmanian Government agencies. Monitoring, contributing to, influencing and assisting to promote strategies to improve the wellbeing of Tasmania's children and young people. Contributing to and monitoring the development of the Tasmanian Government's Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy. Advocating for prevention and early intervention strategies to improve the wellbeing of Tasmania's children and young people. Promoting the importance of the first 1,000 days of a child's life, including through the B4 Coalition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring the Tasmanian OOHC system including by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - analysing information from Tasmanian Government agencies, OOHC service providers, advocacy organisations and other stakeholders; - conducting an in-depth exploration of a 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>; - monitoring the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the provision of OOHC in Tasmania. An Expert Panel has been established to inform this monitoring activity. Engaging with stakeholders, including children and young people in OOHC and their carers, as well as through monitoring visits to OOHC providers and to relevant advocacy groups and peak bodies. Seeking the views of children and young people in OOHC and those with an OOHC experience to inform ongoing monitoring activities and advocacy. Monitoring the development and implementation of Tasmanian Government reform agendas and other initiatives relevant to Tasmania's OOHC system. Where necessary and practicable, investigating any particular areas of concern identified through OOHC monitoring or communicated to the Commissioner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging in strategic advocacy and providing advice to promote the rights and wellbeing of children and young people in Tasmania. This includes advocating for appropriate services and supports for children and young people who are disadvantaged or vulnerable. 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. Monitoring and where appropriate contributing to the implementation of reforms relevant to the rights and wellbeing of children and young people in Tasmania. Focus areas include reforms to improve access to mental health and drug and alcohol services, the development of a therapeutic youth justice system in which detention is a last resort, advocacy on the minimum age of criminal responsibility, homelessness, and ongoing reforms to the OOHC system and to the child safety system generally. Monitoring, and where appropriate contributing to, the implementation of the recommendations of the <i>Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse</i>, noting in particular work underway or planned to develop and implement a Child Safe Organisations framework and Reportable Conduct Scheme in Tasmania. 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. This includes advocacy on issues of national importance affecting children and young people in Tasmania through membership of the Australian and New Zealand Children's Commissioners and Guardians (ANZCCG). Participating in any review of the <i>Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2016</i>. 	<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 via alternative communication mechanisms. Providing advice to inform the development and implementation of therapeutic approaches to caring for children and young people detained at AYDC. 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.