

## **Children’s wellbeing book launch May 2021**

The Commissioner for Children and Young People Leanne McLean invites the Tasmanian media to the launch of “*When I wake up I smile*” – a children’s book of wellbeing – at **9.30am, at New Town Primary School on Monday, May 24.**

Ms McLean said “*When I wake up I smile*” was devised with the input of 156 Tasmanian children.

“*When I wake up I smile* will be presented to Premier Peter Gutwein as part of a community consultation with children to codesign Tasmania’s first ever whole-of-government Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy,” Ms McLean said.

“The strategy, once finalised, will aim to improve the wellbeing of children and young people across Tasmania.”

Ms McLean said the book arose from a series of creative consultations on wellbeing conducted with young Tasmanian children in late 2020.

“I am so proud of what the children have produced.”

“It’s not just a ‘picture book’ – and a really beautiful one at that - it’s also an incredibly insightful and honest look from a child’s perspective at what Tasmanian children want and need to be happy, healthy and secure and to have the very brightest futures Tasmania can offer them.”

Ms McLean said to create the book, school children aged 4-8 years participated in creative workshops.

“With the help of artists from community arts company, All That We Are, they explored six themes of wellbeing:

- Being Safe and Loved
- Having Material Basics
- Being Healthy
- Learning
- Participating
- Having a Positive Sense of Culture and Identity

“I also visited Child and Family Centres, Early Learning Centres and Launching into Learning sites around the state to speak with younger children under the age of 5 and their parents about wellbeing, their hopes for their or their children’s futures and the support needed to realise them.

“Listening to children, no matter how young, is vitally important when developing government policies for improving their wellbeing.”



Ms McLean said she hopes the children's input will be taken on board during the strategy development:

"Children are experts in their own lives. They bring their own perspective to an issue."

"They know what works and what doesn't work for them, so it's important to find developmentally and age-appropriate ways to get their opinions and to really understand their viewpoints. Inclusive consultations of this kind can only make for better policy and better outcomes."

"The issues that were raised with me by children, young people and their carers will also form the basis of my advocacy in the coming months to ensure that Tasmanian children and young people have access to what they need to have the very brightest futures".

Seven Tasmanian schools participated in the creative consultative project to create "***When I wake up I smile***":

- Glen Dhu Primary School, Launceston
- Lindisfarne Primary School, Hobart
- New Town Primary School, Hobart
- Nixon Street Primary School, Devonport
- Mountain Heights School, Queenstown
- St Helens Primary School, St Helens
- St James Catholic College, Cygnet

Electronic versions of the book will be available on the Commissioner for Children and Young People's website at <https://www.childcomm.tas.gov.au/>.

The book is accompanied by a learning resource to assist educators, carers and parents to explore the book and the concept of wellbeing with children.

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