

MEDIA RELEASE



“Take notice, believe us and act!” – Commission of Inquiry report on children’s views on safety in organisational settings

24 February 2023

The Commissioner for Children and Young People Leanne McLean today welcomed the launch of the Commission of Inquiry's report about children's views on safety in organisational settings.

The report, “Take notice, believe us and act!” presents the research by Professor Tim Moore and Emeritus Professor Morag McArthur with almost 60 children and young people in government schools, hospitals, youth detention and out-of-home care.

Ms McLean said the findings again reinforce that to be safe and to feel safe in organisations, children and young people need to feel respected, valued and empowered to have a say in decisions that affect them, and to raise concerns.

“Children’s participation is the fundamental component of being a child safe organisation. It is the right of all children to have a say in matters that affect them, and for their views to be taken into account,” Ms McLean said.

“Many of the themes in the report have been noted before, both through my work with children and young people and though the research of the previous Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

“What is concerning to me is that in the five years since the Royal Commission, Tasmania still has not embedded or resourced a child safe organisational framework or reportable conduct scheme.

“We have lost time and we need to put the accelerator down to ensure that children are safe and feel safe in the organisations that care for them and educate them.

“What we hear loud and clear is that children need someone who is in their corner. Someone who is there for them, who will believe them, and will act for them. This is particularly important for children who are in out of home care or youth justice detention.”

Ms McLean said the report also demonstrates that access to individual advocacy for children, especially in out of home care and youth justice detention is critical to children’s sense of safety.

“The report goes into detail about how children feel about the Commissioner’s role in advocating for them in the youth detention environment, and the Child Advocate’s role for children in care.

“They value these roles. They know that these people are there for them, that they listen to them, believe them and act on what they say.



Individual advocacy for children in out-of-home care, and youth justice detention must be independent, child-centred, and sustainably resourced to ensure children can be given the space and time necessary to raise concerns with someone they trust."

The report is here: [Children's Report \(commissionofinquiry.tas.gov.au\)](http://Children's Report (commissionofinquiry.tas.gov.au))

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