

# MEDIA RELEASE



## Listening to Children and Young People

May 2020

The Commissioner for Children and Young People Leanne McLean today released the [Listening to Children and Young People in Tasmania Report 2019](#).

Ms McLean said the Report will help to inform advocacy for Tasmanian children and young people now and into the future.

"The Report captures the voices of almost 200 children and young people involved in the CCYP Ambassador Program in 2019, as well the many other meetings and forums I held Statewide," Ms McLean said. "It shines a light on the matters they believe need greater attention by decision-makers."

Ms McLean said seven key themes emerged throughout 2019.

"The themes relate to education and opportunities for children and young people, their safety, the natural environment and climate change, their access to basic services and supports, their mental health and the bullying many experience, their ability to participate in their communities and society, and their wish to be recognised as valued members of the Tasmanian community, no matter who they are or where they come from."

Ms McLean said in 2019 she and her team engaged with hundreds of children and young people through the Statewide Listening Tour, the Out-of-Home Care Monitoring Program, her advocacy for young people detained under the *Youth Justice Act 1997* and the establishment of the new CCYP Ambassador Program.

"One of the four guiding principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is that children have the right to express their views and to be heard in all matters affecting them - and for adults to give their views due weight in accordance with the child's age and maturity."

"A key message I heard through the Listening Tour was that we must do better at improving the wellbeing of our children and young people. We owe it to them to support them to grow to be happy, healthy and productive adults so that Tasmania can prosper into the future."

Ms McLean said she met the members of the CCYP Ambassador Program at three rounds of regional meetings in Devonport/Burnie, Launceston and Hobart.

"CCYP Ambassadors also attended a statewide event in Launceston in October attended by political leaders and representatives from Tasmanian Government departments and non-government organisations."

Ms McLean said the seven key themes highlighted in the Report were:

### 1. Education and Opportunities

Although many 2019 CCYP Ambassadors were happy with their experience at school, CCYP Ambassadors also expressed their views and ideas on how their experience could be improved.



## **2. Equity and Diversity**

In 2019, CCYP Ambassadors expressed their views, ideas and vision for a fairer and more equitable experience for all children and young people in Tasmania.

## **3. Climate Change and the Environment**

CCYP Ambassadors were clearly concerned about climate change and the natural environment and were passionate about improving awareness and finding solutions at a community and global level to collectively address this issue.

## **4. Participation and Recognition of Children and Young People**

CCYP Ambassadors wanted children and young people to be recognised as valued and contributing members of the Tasmanian community. They emphasised the benefits that flow when their right to have a say is upheld.

## **5. Safety**

CCYP Ambassadors were concerned about both individual and community safety and have lots of ideas for creating a safer Tasmania.

## **6. Access to Necessities, Services and Supports**

CCYP Ambassadors identified the pressing need for improved access to support services, housing, public transport, financial support and material basics for children, young people and their families and carers. They highlighted their willingness to be part of the solution to improve the circumstances for many children, young people and their families in Tasmania.

## **7. Bullying and Mental Health**

CCYP Ambassadors saw bullying and supports for mental health and wellbeing as intrinsically linked. They conveyed strong messages that current support systems and strategies for addressing and responding to bullying and/or mental health concerns were not working as well as they could be. They also had suggestions for how things could be improved.

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