**Investing in the Wellbeing of Tasmania’s Children and Young People Report**

**Date**

Tuesday, 11 February 2020

The Commissioner for Children and Young People Leanne McLean today called for the wellbeing of children and young people to be the cornerstone of Tasmanian government policy and decision-making.

At the launch of the ***Investing in the*** ***Wellbeing of Tasmania’s Children and Young People*** report, Ms McLean said investing in the wellbeing of children and young people upholds their rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and provides the foundation for prosperity for all Tasmanians.

“Having happy, healthy, safe, well-educated children and young people ensures our future adults are healthier, more productive and better connected within their communities. Investing in our young people’s wellbeing now is investing in Tasmania’s future,” Ms McLean said.

“I applaud the efforts of current and previous governments to improve the wellbeing of Tasmania’s children and young people.

“However, many wellbeing outcomes of children and young people in Tasmania have remained stagnant or worsened, despite our best efforts.”

In her report, Ms McLean says the reason for this lack of progress is multifaceted.

“Contributing factors include a lack of coordination between government departments and other organisations supporting children and their families, and investment being focused more on crisis intervention than prevention and support.

“A new approach is clearly required. I am calling for a whole-of-government strategy lead by the Cabinet of the day to prioritise and improve the wellbeing of Tasmanian children and young people.

“To improve wellbeing outcomes requires a coordinated approach to be implemented by all agencies dealing with children, young people and their families.

“In particular, there must be greater investment and earlier intervention in the first 1000 days of children’s lives. Further, we need improved collation, sharing and analysis of child and youth wellbeing data across all sectors to allow long-term monitoring of progress in Tasmania.

“Finally, as is the case in any situation relating to children and young people, they must be involved in decision-making that affects their wellbeing.

“Only if we put children and young people’s wellbeing at the centre of government strategy can we hope to achieve positive outcomes not only for children and young people but also for the wellbeing of our community as a whole.”

The Commissioner’s report includes the following key recommendations:

* A long-term cross-partisan strategy to improve the wellbeing of Tasmanian children and young people, led by the Cabinet of the day, that coordinates effort across agencies, and provides effective monitoring and analysis of wellbeing outcomes.
* Data collected for monitoring children’s wellbeing should be publicly available, simple, concise, and relevant to populations locally and state-wide.
* Immediate priority actions required include more supports in the first 1000 days of children’s lives, including during pregnancy, and reducing fragmentation of effort in service delivery.

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