



Work Plan 2018

Strategic Priorities

- Promoting the rights, voices and contributions of children and young people
- Monitoring and advocacy to strengthen the wellbeing of all WA children and young people
- Prioritising the needs of children and young people who are our most disadvantaged and vulnerable

Current Projects

Current Projects	Overview	Priority Link		
		1	2	3
Child Safe Organisations: Harmful Sexual Behaviours	A significant piece of ongoing work supporting organisations to be child safe in their policy and practice, and cultivate a strong organisational commitment to child safety. An important finding from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse is the need to understand and respond appropriately to harmful sexual behaviours exhibited by some children and young people. Our work will address this recommendation and focus on supporting organisations to develop policy and practice.		√	√
Engagement in Education	This project aims to identify and analyse the factors that help children and young people positively participate in education and learning and the barriers they experience. The first phase of this project is the School and Learning Consultation, which provided WA school students the opportunity to have their views and ideas heard. A report on this consultation was tabled in the WA Parliament in January 2018, with follow up policy briefs developed to progress advocacy for the important findings of this report.	√	√	

Young Aboriginal Leaders project	<p>This project seeks to advance the findings from <i>Listen to Us</i>, a report of the Commissioner's 2014 consultation with Aboriginal children and young people. A key component will be to ensure the voices of Aboriginal children and young people are involved in decision making to address issues that affect their wellbeing and community. A toolkit to guide and support the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in service design and delivery will be released in early 2018, and further work to support emerging young leaders in the Aboriginal community is currently being planned.</p>	√		√
Monitoring Framework	<p>Work has commenced on developing a monitoring framework to track the wellbeing of children and young people and review the strategies and responses to critical areas of concern. The new wellbeing project has three components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A demographic profile of WA children and young people, which was published in December 2017, includes a section that reports the data on children and young people deemed vulnerable or in hardship. 2. A report on indicators of wellbeing that focus on the domains essential for every child or young person's wellbeing, growth and development. 3. A register to track strategic policy frameworks and recommendations for action aimed at addressing areas of concern, including the progress of implementation and evaluation of effectiveness. This will also track the Commissioner's recommendations from work such as the School and Learning Consultation, Mental Health Inquiry and the Oversight of Services for Children and Young People in Western Australia report. 		√	√

Vulnerable Children and Young People Report and Speakers Series	Drawing on a number of previous and ongoing consultations undertaken by this office, the Commissioner is developing a discussion document to inform and challenge current thinking on factors that influence vulnerability and poorer outcomes for children and young people. A series of seminars involving national and international speakers throughout 2018 will seek to explore how best to address the issues raised to inform effective strategic responses.	√	√	√
Homelessness in young people under the age of 16	In partnership with Edith Cowan University, the Youth Affairs Council of WA and Youth Futures, this project seeks to better understand the pathways and experiences of young people under the age of 16 years who are independently homeless. A research paper is due for release in March 2018.	√	√	√
Children and young people in the legal process	This project will involve a consultation with children and young people who have experience of legal processes with the aim of identifying ways in which courts can ensure the views of children and young people are heard and responded to regarding the issues that impact on their wellbeing.	√	√	
Children and young people within the LGBTI community	In 2018, the Commissioner’s two Advisory Committees will work to develop approaches for schools and other organisations to better support children and young people identifying as LGBTI, and to promote understanding diversity and tolerance across the community.	√	√	√

Ongoing work

The Commissioner will continue to undertake a substantial body of work on an ongoing basis, including publishing submissions, supporting research, seminars and presentations and media activity, to advocate for what is in the best interests of WA children and young people across a range of issues.

2018 Priority Issues

Child protection	Youth justice	Disability	Mental health
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aboriginal-led child protection• Family carer support• At risk young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effective diversion programs• Detention facilities• Police custody	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NDIS implementation• Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• System capacity• Suicide• Trauma informed work

In undertaking this work, the Commissioner will draw on his ongoing program of meetings with children and young people, their families and service providers in metropolitan and regional areas, in addition to contemporary research and evidence of existing and emerging issues.

The Commissioner is also planning for future work as resources are made available. These are listed below as Horizon Projects. The first two projects listed are dependent on additional funding. Should one or both be successful, some of the projects listed will have their timelines adjusted accordingly.

Horizon Projects

Horizon Projects	Overview	Priority Link		
		1	2	3
Student Health and Wellbeing Survey	In partnership with Telethon Kids Institute and a number of key government agencies, the Commissioner will develop a survey for children and young people from eight to 18 years of age. The survey will be based on similar activity in other countries, giving a voice of children and young people and data to inform government and non-government decision-making.	√	√	√
Inquiry - Placement, monitoring and support for children and young people in family out-of-home-care placements	A request to fund an Inquiry into the placement, monitoring, support and outcomes for children and young people placed with family carers is essential to understand how to inform best practice and make the child protection system more responsive, effective and efficient. The inquiry will be the first of its kind in Western Australia and provide clear evidence of how to address an expanding issue for government while supporting some of WA's most vulnerable children and young people.	√	√	√
Consultation with CYP on the Impact of Reduction in Populations in Rural Communities	A number of children and young people living in rural communities have expressed concern about the diminishing opportunities they face when their communities reduce in size. This consultation will investigate what may be possible to support children and young people in these communities, with a focus on their health and wellbeing.	√	√	√