



Commissioner for Children and Young People
Western Australia

All enquiries

Telephone: (08) 6213 2223
Email: lucy.ledger@ccyp.wa.gov.au
Our reference: 21/4841

Department of Social Services
GPO Box 9820
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Via email: Nationalplanfeedback@dss.gov.au

To Whom It May Concern

RE: Consultation submission - National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children

I would like to thank the Department for inviting my office to participate in a consultation with other State and Territory Children's Commissioner's and Guardians on 5 July 2021 regarding development of the successor plan to the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children.

In addition to participating in that consultation I wish to draw the Department's attention to a forthcoming publication from my office that will provide detailed and comprehensively researched information about the decline in wellbeing of Australian girls. This publication will include information that I believe will be of great value to the Department's present consultation and will be released in August 2021, shortly after the consultation period ends.

As the Commissioner for Children and Young People WA, I have a statutory responsibility to monitor the wellbeing of children and young people under 18 years. Pursuant to this responsibility, my office undertook the inaugural Speaking Out Survey in 2019 which heard from close to 5,000 children and young people from across the State about their views on their health, safety in the community, family and school life and how they see their place in our society.

A key finding of this inaugural survey was that female young people in WA rated their wellbeing less favourably than male young people. These findings were across multiple areas of wellbeing including mental health, self-perception, relationships, personal safety and experiences of independence.

The forthcoming publication builds on these findings and outlines current evidence regarding female young people's wellbeing to better understand the reasons for the wellbeing gap between male and female young people. The research covers sexual health and safe, respectful relationships amongst young females as well as a range of other themes that are pertinent to the questions in the Department's present consultation.

I will provide this report to the Department as soon as it is published and hope you will consider it alongside the information gained from consultations.

Please contact Ms Lucy Ledger, Manager Policy, on 6213 2223 or by email at lucy.ledger@ccyp.wa.gov.au if you have any queries in relation to the above.

Yours sincerely

COLIN PETTIT

Commissioner for Children and Young People WA

20 July 2021