

# Snapshot 2024-25

## Western Australia has approximately 652,890 children and young people

who make up 22 per cent of the State's population

I'm Jacqueline McGowan-Jones, WA's Commissioner for Children and Young People and I'm excited to share some of highlights of my latest Annual Report with you.

My office provides support to WA children and young people like you by:

Making sure your rights, voices, and ideas are heard and respected.

Keeping an eye on the wellbeing of children and young people across WA and speaking up for them.

Making sure the voices of all children and young people, including our most vulnerable like those in youth detention, out of home care, from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds, and those living in poverty, are heard.

Part of my role as Commissioner is to listen to children and young people about their worries and their ideas to help them to be happy, healthy and safe.



# 99,300



children and young people living below the poverty line in WA. It was estimated that the child poverty rate increased to **15.2 per cent** of children and young people in 2024.

# 11,670



Western Australian children and young people consulted on issues that affect them. More than **10,000** of those were in-person consultations, with the remainder online via surveys or digital submissions.

### Priority areas

I continued to speak out in the media about important issues including youth justice, health and mental health child protection and education in WA. I consulted with children and young people to help develop our Policy Position Statements on these four areas. For the first time I also developed **Policy Priorities** that talk about the most urgent areas that need action. These priorities highlight direct links between what you have told us and what needs to happen next.



Commissioner for Children and Young People  
Western Australia



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## Acknowledgement of Country Project

I asked you to help me design an **Acknowledgement of Country** that reflected the voices of children and young people and you delivered!

During Youth Week WA 2025 WA children and young people were asked to showcase their talent and creativity through words and/or drawings to share their respect for Traditional Custodians and the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples to Country, land and waters.

Some amazing entries were received, and I was thrilled to release a new Acknowledgement of Country for my website as part of National Reconciliation Week 2025. It features a combination of wording from different submissions made by the children and young people and many of the artworks appear in my annual report.

**The Commissioner for Children and Young People proudly acknowledges and pays respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters across Western Australia and acknowledges the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation upon whose lands the Commissioner's office is located.**

She recognises the continuing connection to culture, lands, skies and waters, families and communities for all Aboriginal peoples. The Commissioner and her team also pay their respects to all Elders, past and present and emerging leaders.

They recognise the knowledge, insights and capabilities of Aboriginal people, and pay respect to Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing.

## Listening Tour

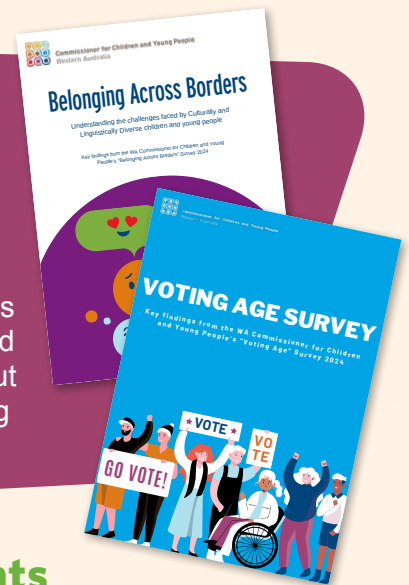
I've met with more than 1100 children and young people across metropolitan and regional WA during visits to schools and community organisations.



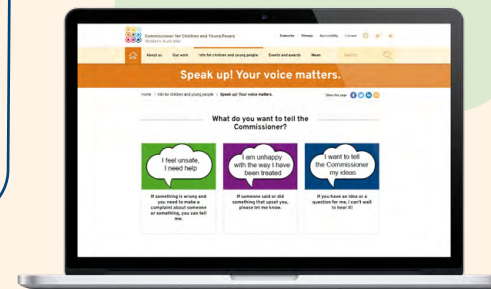
## Surveys

This year I published two reports outlining the results of our **Voting Age** and **Belonging Across Borders** surveys.

Approximately 3000 children and young people responded and shared their thoughts on whether the voting age in Australia should be lowered to 16 or gave their insights about the challenges and highlights of immigrating to and living in Australia.



**Didn't want to look ungrateful or be seen as a child by complaining about something minor and insignificant."**



## Complaints

It is vital that children and young people feel safe to speak up and have their voices heard. This year my team overhauled our complaints web pages to make it easier for you to share your concerns with us and access important resources.

We also consulted with children and young people for the '**Monitoring of Child-Focused Complaints Systems Report**', which analysed the how easy or hard it is for children and young people to make complaints to and about government and community service organisations in WA.

We held focus groups with children and young people who told us how important it was for them to have ways of making complaints that were safe, easy to use and understand, gave good responses and empowered them to speak up.

