

Engagement Policy

Purpose

This policy ensures that engagements appropriately support the Commissioner for Children and Young People (the Commissioner) in performing their functions and exercising their powers under the *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2016* (Tas) (CCYP Act).

Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to the Commissioner, their staff (CCYP staff), contractors, volunteers and any other authorised persons engaged by the Commissioner.

Policy statement

The Commissioner, under the CCYP Act, promotes and empowers the participation of children and young people to express their views on matters that may affect their lives.

This policy is about how the Commissioner's staff engage with and support children and young people to share their views and opinions about matters that affect them, consistent with their participatory rights under the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (UNCRC), including:

Article 12: Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.

Article 13: Every child must be free to say what they think and to seek and receive all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.

Article 14: Every child has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

This policy covers all engagements conducted by the Commissioner's staff, including formal and ad hoc engagement.

Formal engagement refers to planned, structured activities – such as consultations, workshops, surveys or consultative council sessions – that are intentionally designed to seek the views of children and young people on specific issues or projects. Ad hoc engagement refers to spontaneous, informal or unplanned interactions – such as brief conversations, incidental discussions or opportunistic moments – where staff listen to or gather the views of children and young people outside of a structured engagement activity.

Under this policy, ad hoc engagements must align with the Commissioner's engagement principles and other relevant policies.

Cultural safety needs to be considered in all engagement activities for all participants, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants. Cultural safety can be understood as an environment or relationship where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people feel safe to be themselves, their aboriginality is respected, and their sense of self and identity is nurtured and encouraged.



The Commissioner's functions under the *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2016* include promoting and empowering children and young people to participate decision-making and express their views on matters that may affect their lives. The Commissioner's functions also include promoting and encouraging organisations to establish appropriate and accessible mechanisms for children and young people to participate in matters that may affect them.

The Commissioner's work must be conducted in accordance with the principle that the wellbeing and best interests of children and young people are paramount, and the Commissioner must observe any relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Children have a right to have a say in decisions that affect them and to have their opinions considered. This "right to participate" is set out in Article 12 of the UNCRC

In all our engagement activities, it is important we:

- Consider and promote the best interests and wellbeing of children and young people
- Treat children and young people with respect
- Uphold children and young people's right to privacy and confidentiality (to the extent permissible by law).

Engagement principles

Three principles inform and guide the design, delivery and evaluation of engagements.

Principle 1: Safeguarding the rights and wellbeing of children and young people

Staff work to safeguard children and young people in all engagements by respecting, protecting and upholding their rights and promoting their wellbeing.

This means staff:

- have a current Registration to Work with Vulnerable People (RWVP) clearance
- uphold the rights of children and young people under the UNCRC
- create safe, respectful, inclusive environments where children and young people feel able to express their views
- identify, assess and minimise risks to physical, psychological, emotional and cultural safety
- respond appropriately to any concerns, disclosures or indicators of harm
- ensure information is handled in a child-safe, trauma-informed way.

Principle 2: Demonstrating leadership

Staff model, promote and champion high-quality child and youth participation across all aspects of the Commissioner's work.

This means staff:

- actively create opportunities for children and young people to influence decisions that affect them
- promote child voice and participatory rights in interactions with stakeholders, agencies and communities



- challenge practices or environments that limit safe and meaningful participation
- ensure that engagement processes are ethical, rights-based, and grounded in best practice standards.

Principle 3: Continuous learning

Staff adopt a culture of continuous learning, enhancing engagement practices to ensure meaningful and effective participation.

This means staff:

- use feedback from children and young people to refine engagement approaches
- reflect on what worked well and what could be improved in each engagement
- build capability in culturally responsive, inclusive and trauma-informed practice
- stay informed about emerging research, best practice and community expectations
- share learnings across the organisation to support high-quality participation.

Legislation

- *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2016* (Tas)
- *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023* (Tas)
- *Personal Information Protection Act 2004* (Tas)
- *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013* (Tas)

Related policies and procedures

CCYP

- Child Safe Policy
- Consent Policy
- Digital and Social Media Policy
- Engagement Procedure
- Reporting and Responding to Child Safety Concerns, Disclosures and Incidents Procedure

DECYP (some links may not be accessible outside DECYP's systems)

- Safeguarding Framework – Safe. Secure. Supported [Conduct and Behaviour Policy](#)
- [Schedule 1: General Conduct and Behaviour Standards for all Workers](#)
- [Schedule 1.4: Conduct Standards for Workers in all Other Settings](#)

Supporting information and tools

- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [Voice of the Child Toolkit](#)

Authorisation

Authorised by: Ros Cornish, Interim Commissioner for Children and Young People

Last significant review: June 2026

Review due: June 2027