

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Commissioner for Children and Young People Tasmania Annual Report 2022-23

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Young People Tasmania), 2023

Acknowledgement of country

The Commissioner acknowledges and pays respect to the palawa people of lutruwita as the original and ongoing custodians of this land and for the more than 40,000 years they have cared for their country and their children.



09 November 2023

President
Legislative Council
Parliament House
HOBART TAS 7000

Speaker of the House
House of Assembly
Parliament House
HOBART TAS 7000

Dear Mr President
Dear Mr Speaker

Annual Report for 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

The Commissioner for Children and Young People Annual Report is presented to Parliament in accordance with the *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2016*, section 19(2).

Yours sincerely

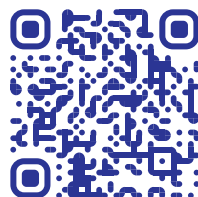
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leanne McLean'.

Leanne McLean
Commissioner for Children and Young People



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MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER



This Annual Report summarises my efforts during 2022-23 to uphold, protect and promote the rights and wellbeing of children and young people in Tasmania.

A significant priority for my office this year has been contributing to the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings. I take this opportunity to personally thank the Commissioners, the staff of the Commission, the expert witnesses, and all who have been involved in undertaking this historic Inquiry into what the Tasmanian Government must do to better protect children from sexual abuse in institutions.

I express my deep and sincere gratitude to the many victim-survivors of child sexual abuse in Tasmania who came forward to courageously share their experiences with the Commission of Inquiry and the broader Tasmanian community. I also acknowledge with deep respect the many victim-survivors who did not participate in the Inquiry. I acknowledge the ongoing impact of child sexual abuse on children, their families, and friends. And I am deeply thankful to the children and young people who contributed their views to inform the Commission's work.

As we look forward to the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry, we face a watershed moment in how we value our children and work together to protect and promote their human rights and wellbeing. We should be aiming for systems which take us far beyond ensuring the safety of children and young people in organisational settings. Our aim should be to improve children's access to their rights across the entire community. To put it simply, when children's rights are upheld, their safety and wellbeing will improve.

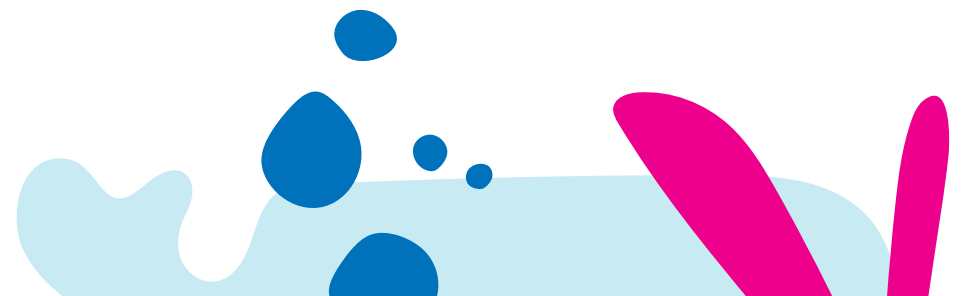
This past year has also brought cause for celebration as we have increased opportunities for children and young people to share their views to influence decision-making. These opportunities have included working with the CCYP Ambassadors to co-design a statewide event specifically aimed at influencing decision-makers on matters including mental health, climate change and the environment, and education. Young people with experience of the youth justice system have also bravely shared their experiences of the system and made suggestions for change through the Voices Project. Many children and young people with experience of Tasmania's out-of-home care system contributed to our first own-motion investigation into changes to the case management of children and young people in care.

Having the ability to be heard and influence change is fundamental to the ability of children and young people to access their human rights. Article 12 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child, or the right to be heard, is commonly known as a 'gateway right', meaning it enables children's access to all other rights. I am so thankful to the children and young people who have participated in these opportunities. In doing so, you are helping to influence laws, policies, programs and services for the benefit of all Tasmanian children and young people.

This year, we have also seen significant legislative changes to better uphold the rights of children in Tasmania. In December, new legislation governing the searches of children in police, prison and youth justice custodial settings commenced. Pleasingly, we have seen a dramatic decline in the number of unclothed searches taking place. However, there is still much work to be done to ensure that the rights of individual young people in detention are upheld. This report includes, for the first time, a snapshot of advocacy services provided to young people in detention by the Advocate for Young People in Detention.

My work to influence the Government in adopting a rights-based therapeutic approach to youth justice also continued. Significantly, I delivered comprehensive advice to the Tasmanian Government on raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility in Tasmania, which I note is now also a recommendation of the Commission of Inquiry. I look forward to the Government's response to my advice that it adopt a new non-criminalising response to prevent and respond to children's harmful behaviour.

Finally, I want to highlight the incredible work of the team in the Office of the Commissioner. It is an extraordinary pleasure to work with such capable, dedicated, and passionate individuals, who have displayed extraordinary resilience in the face of what has been a challenging year. It is a great pleasure to work with you to uphold, protect and promote the rights and wellbeing of Tasmania's children and young people.



ROLE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Tasmania was one of the first Australian states and territories to have a children's commissioner. The role was initially established under the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997*, with the first Commissioner commencing on 16 October 2000. In 2016, standalone legislation established the current role and functions of the Commissioner for Children and Young People (the Commissioner).

The Commissioner is an independent and impartial statutory officer established under Tasmania's *Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2016* (CCYP Act).

The general functions of the Commissioner under the CCYP Act are to:

1. advocate for all Tasmanian children and young people
2. act as an advocate for young people detained under the *Youth Justice Act 1997*
3. research, investigate and influence policy development in areas relating to children and young people
4. promote, monitor and review the wellbeing of children and young people
5. promote and empower children and young people to participate in the making of decisions, and to express opinions about matters that affect their lives
6. help ensure Tasmania meets its national and international obligations in respect of children and young people
7. encourage organisations to establish child-friendly mechanisms to assist children and young people to participate in matters that affect them.

The Commissioner's role is generally systemic in nature. The Commissioner advocates for laws, policies and practices that uphold, protect and promote the rights and wellbeing of children and young people.

The Commissioner cannot investigate or review decisions made in respect of an individual case or specific circumstances, unless formally requested to do so by the Minister for Education, Children and Youth. The Commissioner's ability to advocate for the rights and wellbeing of individual children and young people is limited to advocating for children and young people detained under the *Youth Justice Act 1997*. The Commissioner has no functions regarding the regulation of organisations working with or caring for children and young people.

The Commissioner regularly speaks with, and hears from, community members, including children and young people, about a range of issues concerning young Tasmanians. Information received in this way helps inform the Commissioner's work and systemic advocacy on behalf of children and young people. The views of children and young people are reflected in the books, reports, submissions and other media issued by the Commissioner.

The Second Reading Speech for the Commissioner for Children and Young People Bill 2015 anticipated that there would be a review of the CCYP Act within five years, 'to ensure it satisfies the needs and expectations of the Community'. The CCYP Act commenced on 1 July 2016 and the review is now well overdue.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In carrying out a function or exercising a power under the CCYP Act, the Commissioner does so according to the principle that the wellbeing and best interests of children and young people are paramount. The Commissioner's work is guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Commissioner's work is performed according to the following principles:

- Children and young people are entitled to live in a caring and nurturing environment and to be protected from harm and exploitation.
- The interests and needs of children and young people who are disadvantaged for any reason or vulnerable should be given special regard and serious consideration.
- The contributions made by children and young people to the community should be recognised for their value and merit.
- The views of children and young people on all matters affecting them should be given serious consideration and taken into account.
- Parents, families and communities have the primary role in safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people and should be supported in carrying out their role.

The Commissioner's work is also guided by the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.



KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Increased individual and systemic advocacy for children and young people in youth detention.

Successfully advocated for laws to require consultation with Tasmanian children and young people on the development of climate change action plans.

Welcomed the start of new laws responding to the Commissioner's recommendations to ensure personal searches of children and young people in custody uphold their rights and wellbeing.

Contributed to increased transparency of Tasmania's out-of-home care system through publication of a monitoring report, which included key data on the system.

Commenced an own-motion investigation into a change to the case management for children and young people in care.

Increased opportunities for children and young people to exercise their right to have a say, including through the launch of Your Engagement Place (YEP!) hub, the Voices of Young People in the Youth Justice System Project, and the 'Diamonds' Hip-Hop Project at Ashley Youth Detention Centre.

Co-designed, with children and young people, the CCYP Ambassador Program statewide event.

Launched a new child-focused, accessible and contemporary website with content designed for young Tasmanians.

Delivered comprehensive advice to the Tasmanian Government on the age of criminal responsibility in Tasmania.



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND ANNUAL PLAN

Each year before 31 March, the Commissioner is required to prepare a plan describing the proposed program of work and activities for the following financial year. My Annual Plan for 2022-23 is available at:

[2022-2023-CCYP-Annual-Plan-FINAL-.pdf](#)

To provide a medium-term strategic focus for the activities of the Office of the Commissioner, and to guide us in our day-to-day work and priority setting, we developed a Strategic Framework for the years 2022 and 2023. The Strategic Framework states our vision: *That all children and young people in Tasmania have their rights upheld and live their best lives.* Towards achieving this vision, it also sets out our mission: *We uphold, protect and promote the rights and wellbeing of children and young people in Tasmania.*

The Strategic Framework describes our values as an organisation:

- child-centred
- equity
- integrity
- collegiality
- courage
- kindness.

And it identifies our key enablers:

- children and young people
- our strategic partnerships and networks
- our people (i.e. the staff of the Office of the Commissioner).

The Strategic Framework for 2022 and 2023 is available at:

[childcomm.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/CCYP-Full-Strategic-Framework-20222023.pdf](#) A shorter, more accessible summary of the Strategic Framework is available at:

[CCYP-Strategic-Framework-Summary-20222023.pdf](#)

In this annual report, I have described my activities and initiatives, and the outcomes achieved, during the reporting period against the four priority areas outlined in the Strategic Framework:

- Aboriginal cultural awareness
- communication and engagement
- monitoring
- advocacy, research and advice.

The Annual Plan for 2023-24 was submitted to the Minister on 31 March 2023 and is available at: [FINAL-2023-2024-CCYP-Annual-Plan.pdf](#)



OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

As a result of machinery of government changes, on 1 October 2022 the Office of the Commissioner transitioned from the Department of Communities Tasmania to the new Department for Education, Children and Young People. While my role as Commissioner is independent of government, this machinery of government change is relevant to the business operations and support provided to the Office of the Commissioner, including human resources, finance and budget, payroll, information technology and facility services.

I am assisted in my work by a small multidisciplinary team of dedicated and passionate professionals. The budget for the Office of the Commissioner for 2022-23 was \$1,764,000. This represents a fixed-term increase on the previous year's budget of \$1,386,000. The fixed-term increase has enabled the provision of additional advocacy services for children and young people in youth detention during the transition to the closure of the Ashley Youth Detention Centre, and ongoing engagement with the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings. Additional fixed-term funding over four years was also provided through the Tasmanian Government's *Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy* to enable me to increase participation opportunities for all children and young people in the state.

During my term, I have noted a considerable increase in the size and scope of the policy and monitoring work of the Office of the Commissioner. However, my December 2022 request for additional funding to support information and business management, additional research and data analysis was unsuccessful. Resourcing constraints have hampered my ability to undertake certain activities in the performance of my functions under the CCYP Act. In December 2022, I made the decision to initiate an own-motion investigation in response to matters identified through programmatic monitoring of the out-of-home care system. This decision was not taken lightly, and the reality is that the investigation has had a significant effect on the resources available to me for other important policy, monitoring and advocacy work during the year.



In our Strategic Framework, we highlight that a key enabler for the achievement of our objectives is that *'our team is equipped with the skills, capabilities and knowledge required to deliver on our strategic priorities'*. Given the breadth and scope of the functions of the Commissioner, the complex policy and legal landscape in which we operate, and our extensive engagement with children, and other community members, many of whom have experienced trauma, we have invested significantly in building the resilience and skills of our team. Staff are offered individualised performance development including coaching and mentoring; opportunities to learn about other roles in the office and to chair meetings; opportunities to attend conferences; and opportunities to participate in self-paced and/or face-to-face professional development. In addition, I supported several whole-of-office or team training and development opportunities during the year, including:

- Sexual Assault Support Services - Keeping Kids Safe (22 July 2022)
- Blue Knot Foundation - Foundations for Building Trauma Awareness (12 August 2022)
- Creative Facilitation - virtual facilitation (September 2022)
- 26TEN - Plain English workshop (7 October 2022)
- Child Advocate for children in care - Child Participation: Putting Principles into Practice (2 November 2022)
- First Aid Pro - First Aid + CPR (25 November 2022)
- Blue Knot Foundation - Trauma Responsive Leadership (3 March 2023)
- Project Paradigm - Understanding and Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation (4-5 March 2023)
- Frontline Mind - Customised workshop on team resilience (29 June 2023)
- Australian Childhood Foundation - Safeguarding Children (self-paced)
- University of Tasmania - Child Safety: Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention (self-paced)
- Department for Education, Children and Young People - Reporting Child Abuse (self-paced).



DELIVERY AGAINST OUR 2022 AND 2023 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Aboriginal cultural awareness

During the year, we have increased our understanding of Tasmanian Aboriginal culture and history, including through listening to Aboriginal children and those who support them in their communities. I have also continued to advocate for equity and self-determination for Tasmania's Aboriginal people, with a particular focus on child safety, out-of-home care, and youth justice systems.

Strengthening our understanding of Tasmanian Aboriginal history and culture

I was delighted to be invited to attend the Welcome Ceremony at piyura kitina / Risdon Cove to mark the opening of the 2022 National Indigenous Legal and Health Justice Conference in December 2022. I supported members of my office to attend the conference, which was presented by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre. Through our participation, we strengthened our understanding of Treaty, Voice and Truth-Telling; the over-representation of children and young people in care and detention; and the challenges facing legal aid and access to justice for Aboriginal people.

As part of the Voices of Young People in the Youth Justice System Project (Voices Project), discussed in more detail below, I have heard the voices and experiences of young Aboriginal Tasmanians with experience of the youth justice system. The stories of these young people describe how they have been let down by the systems and supports that should have been there to help them. We must do better to ensure all children and young people have what they need to grow and thrive. The voices and experiences of these young people have significantly informed my advocacy for youth justice reforms and will be shared through a suite of publications in the following reporting period. For further information, see childcomm.tas.gov.au/everyone/major-programs/youth-justice/

In December 2022, children and young people from around the state, including young people from truwana / Cape Barren Island, participated in the CCYP Ambassador Program statewide event attended by the Minister for Education, Children and Youth and other members of the Tasmanian Parliament, education and community leaders, and senior state public servants. CCYP Ambassadors participated in a human rights workshop facilitated by Tasmania's Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, which included discussion of the rights of Tasmanian Aboriginal people. Jada, a young person from truwana / Cape Barren Island, spoke with local media about the importance of education about Aboriginal history and truth-telling. For more information, visit: childcomm.tas.gov.au/children-and-young-people-have-their-say/ and [CCYP Ambassadors](#)

In March 2023, members of my office came together with community leaders, policy-makers, funders, service providers and other collaborators for Change Fest, a national movement for place-based change. Hosted by the Kutalayna Collective and supported by the Kutalayna / Jordan River community, the gathering provided the opportunity to listen to and learn from Tasmanian Aboriginal people about their place-based ways of working and to deepen our connection to, and understanding of, Country.

In June 2023, I attended the annual National Reconciliation Week breakfast with members of the CCYP Ambassador Program and members of my team. During this event, we increased our knowledge and understanding of Tasmanian Aboriginal culture and heard contemporary Aboriginal voices speaking on the Voice referendum. The 2023 theme for [#NRW2023](#) is 'Be a Voice for Generations', encouraging everyone in Australia to be a voice for reconciliation in our everyday lives.

Promoting self-determination

The Australian Children's Commissioners and Guardians comprise part of the broader Australian and New Zealand Children's Commissioners and Guardians (ANZCCG) group of national, state and territory children and young people commissioners, guardians and advocates. All Australian Children's Commissioners and Guardians are committed to the self-determination and empowerment of Australia's First Nations people. As a group, we have adopted the advocacy priorities of our First Nations members for collective action and effort.

In April 2023, I joined with my counterparts to unequivocally support full implementation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. We noted that the premise behind the Uluru Statement has always been about creating structural and meaningful ongoing change that will secure enduring benefit for future generations of First Nations people and all people across Australia. Through our statement of support, the Australian Children's Commissioners and Guardians reaffirmed our enduring commitment to the promotion and protection of the rights of all children and young people in Australia. Policies and programs that benefit First Nations children will benefit all children. For further details see [2023-ACCG-Key-Priorities-Signed.pdf](#) and childcomm.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/ACCG-Statement-Uluru-statement-11.04.2023.pdf

In my December 2022 submission in response to the Tasmanian Government's Final Draft Youth Justice System Blueprint 2022, I highlighted that genuine partnerships with Tasmanian Aboriginal people must be developed to ensure that services to children and their families are culturally safe and enshrine self-determination. I advocated for a clear commitment and plan to involve Aboriginal children and young people in the co-design and implementation of the Blueprint. This will ensure their wellbeing and safety are front and centre of the reforms. I also noted that concrete commitments developed in partnership with Tasmanian Aboriginal communities will be critical to achieving the objectives sought through the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. For further details, see childcomm.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2022-12-23-FINAL-CCYP-response-to-Nov-22-YJ-Blueprint.pdf

Advocating for a Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People

Several other Australian jurisdictions have established independent statutory offices for promoting, monitoring and reviewing the rights and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. I have long advocated for the establishment of a Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People for Tasmania who is a Tasmanian Aboriginal person. A dedicated Aboriginal children's commissioner, with appropriate independence, functions, powers and resourcing, would be uniquely positioned to engage in a culturally safe and respectful manner with Tasmanian Aboriginal children and young people, and their families and communities, and to advocate for their rights and wellbeing. The establishment of such a role would honour the ongoing commitment of the Tasmanian Government to reset its relationship with Aboriginal communities and enable self-determination.

In my March 2023 submission to inform the design of the office of the Tasmanian National Preventive Mechanism (NPM), I highlighted the importance of ensuring that the NPM is culturally safe and inclusive. As described later in this report, the NPM is a body established for the purpose of preventing torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of people in places of detention. To ensure it is culturally safe and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal children and young people, their families and communities, I have advocated for the NPM to recruit Aboriginal staff and work in partnership with Aboriginal community-controlled organisations. For further details, see: childcomm.tas.gov.au/resource/tasmanian-national-preventive-mechanism-implementation-project-consultation-paper-1/.



Communication and engagement

To effectively perform the functions of the Commissioner, it is essential not only to actively seek the views of children and young people but also involve them in decisions that affect them. It is also crucial that I advocate for other organisations and authorities with decision-making responsibilities that affect children and young people to do the same, and work with them to create pathways for effective participation. It is a priority for me to engage with children and young people, stakeholders and the media to increase understanding of the role of the Commissioner and of children's rights generally.

Launching a new website

In March 2023, I launched a **contemporary and child-focused website** which is more accessible to a greater number of people in the community, including children and young people.

In developing the website, my team heard from children and young people, including those with disability, about how to improve user experience. As part of the website redesign, I launched the **Your Engagement Place (YEP!)** hub in May 2023. YEP! is an online one-stop shop that provides a curated list of child-safe, ethical engagement opportunities available to young Tasmanians aged less than 18. It includes a gallery area for promoting activities and initiatives in which YEP! members are involved.

For more details, see childcomm.tas.gov.au/launch-of-yep-program-for-young-tasmanians/ and [YEP! and YEP! Media Launch](#)

During May and June 2023, I ran a campaign to increase membership of the YEP! program across the community. The new YEP! hub had been live for only a few weeks at the close of the reporting period. As of end June 2023:

number of children and young people subscribers

77

number of adult subscribers

73

number of participation opportunities promoted

29



Increasing engagement opportunities for children

All children, even very young children, have the right to say freely what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions heard and taken seriously. Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, or the 'right to participate' as it is often referred to, is fundamental to the exercise and enjoyment by children of other rights. For example, the right to be safe, the right to education, and the right to the highest standard of health care.

Throughout the year, my team and I designed and delivered several initiatives to enable more children and young people around the state to be heard on matters that are important to them. In doing so, I have had regard for children and young people rarely heard through other avenues.

The **Voices of Young People in the Youth Justice System Project** has given young people with lived experience of the youth justice system an opportunity to share their views on the system and to have their views heard and taken seriously by the community and decision-makers.

As part of this project, the Advocate for Young People in Detention conducted semi-structured interviews with 12 young people, aged between 15 and 19, with current or previous contact with the youth justice system. The interviews were designed to foster mutual respect and trust. Through these interviews, we sought participants' views on the operation of the system from first contact, through to arrest, bail, the courts and youth detention. The young people were male and female, with 5 of the 12 interviewees identifying as Aboriginal. Due to the range and depth of topics covered in the interviews, I have decided to publish short, thematic reports and audiovisual outputs to communicate young people's views to a range of stakeholders. The first output, **'Listen: This is my voice'** was published in July 2023. More detail about this project will be included in the annual report for 2023-24.

Together with local musicians and producers, my office collaborated with arts and social change organisation Big hART to deliver the **'Diamonds' Hip-Hop**

Project at the Ashley Youth Detention Centre in the latter half of the year. This project has provided young people in detention with a safe and accessible way to express themselves and have their voices heard by writing, recording and producing an original hip-hop music track and accompanying film clip. I am grateful to the Department for Education, Children and Young People, staff at Ashley Youth Detention Centre, the project facilitators and Big hART for supporting the young people's participation in the project, and helping make 'Diamonds' a reality.

The track premiered on national radio in September 2023. More detail about this project will be included in the annual report for 2023-24.

In June 2023, I hosted a **Young Carers Roundtable** with young people who provide care for family members with chronic illness, disability and/or mental health issues. Young carers in Tasmania carry enormous responsibility and demonstrate incredible resilience. At the roundtable, organised in collaboration with Carers Tasmania, I heard about the challenges young carers face, including their experience of stigmatisation and the barriers to accessing services to help them manage their lives and support their families. Following the roundtable, I wrote to relevant ministers to draw to their attention the issues raised by the young carers during the roundtable discussion. I look forward to having further engagement with young carers this year.

As part of my monitoring of the out-of-home care system, and my own-motion investigation (discussed below), I met with children and young people with a current or recent care experience at events around the state. In May 2023, my team and I worked with children and young people to create art on the theme of **A Place at the Table**, with support from creative group 'All That We Are'. During these creative engagements, children and young people shared their thoughts about why it is important for adults to think about them when they make decisions that affect them. In sharing their views, children and young people drew on recycled crockery using food-safe pens and wrote messages on commercially baked biscuits shaped like speech bubbles. Images of the work they created will be incorporated into the report of my own-motion investigation due for release in the latter part of 2023.

Communicating the views of children in books, reports, submissions and other media

Consistent with our value of being child-centred, I seek to reflect the views of children and young people in my reports, submissions, media statements and other advocacy. During this reporting period, the views of children were communicated in a variety of ways and, where possible, I included the views of the children and young people in their own words.

In addition to the examples referred to elsewhere in this report, my June 2023 Memorandum of Advice to the Tasmanian Government on the Age of Criminal Responsibility in Tasmania includes the voices of young people with experience of the youth justice system. My submissions to inform the Food Relief to Food Resilience Action Plan and the Draft Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy also included the views of CCYP Ambassadors on relevant matters.

Following the launch of the book *Ok, so a nest is a home* in the previous reporting period, I hosted further promotional community events at Launceston Library on 15 August 2022, Huonville Library on 29 August and Queenstown Library on 20 September. The book features artwork by, and quotes from, the children and young people with care experiences who took part in consultations as part of my out-of-home monitoring program last year. It provides an easily accessible and honest insight into the lives of Tasmanian children and young people with a care experience including what is working well, and what is not working well for some children and young people in care. A copy of the book is available in all libraries around the state.

Following consultations with CCYP Ambassadors, I wrote to the Secretary of the Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) in March 2023 to outline their views on **vaping in schools**. I shared CCYP Ambassadors' experiences of how easy it is for young people to access vapes, misconceptions about the safety of e-cigarettes and vapes, and the influence of peer pressure and targeted advertising. In the letter, I emphasised the importance that CCYP Ambassadors placed on further consultations with young people to enrich policy development regarding vaping in Tasmanian schools. A copy of my letter to the Secretary is available at: [Letter on Vaping to DECYP Secretary](#)

The **social media presence** of my office continues to draw high levels of engagement, including with children and young people. This year our Instagram engagement rate with users aged less than 24 was over 20 per cent, which is attributable to our use of vibrant and accessible imagery, coupled with engaging and straightforward text and emojis. In addition to providing updates on my work, we promote opportunities for children and young people to influence decision-making processes and provide accessible information about children's rights through our social media channels.



- Posts: **173**
- Reach: **28,996**
- Visits: **2,151**



- Posts: **132**
- Reach: **14,376**
- Visits: **974**



- Number of newsletters: **3**
- Recipients: **894**
- Unique opens: **458 [total: 1,521]**



Creating opportunities for children to tell decision-makers what they think

The CCYP Ambassador Program involves young Tasmanians under the age of 18 speaking directly with me about what is important to them and other children and young people around the state. CCYP Ambassadors have regular opportunities to come together to discuss key issues and influence decision-makers.

Being a CCYP Ambassador involves:

- sharing opinions and ideas about what's important to young Tasmanians
- learning about and promoting the rights that children and young people have under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- participating in the development of, and running, special projects or events to help advocate for Tasmanian children and young people.

During the year, 83 CCYP Ambassadors participated in the program. This comprised 11 Ambassadors in the North West (13%), 16 in the North (19%), 9 on Cape Barren Island (11%) and 47 in the South (57%).

In 2022–23, CCYP Ambassadors participated in a total of 15 two-hour regional meetings, with one in Burnie, two in Devonport, three in Launceston, six in Hobart and three online.

Below are some of the outputs of the CCYP Ambassador Program in 2022–23.

- **Listen here! Haikus – August 2022:** CCYP Ambassadors enjoy having a range of different ways to express their views. This year, they used the traditional Japanese poem format, the haiku, to highlight Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives.
- **CCYP Ambassador t-shirt – September 2022:** This year, CCYP Ambassadors decided to design a CCYP Ambassador Program t-shirt. Based around the Ambassador megaphone logo, Ambassadors contributed drawings representing various rights of children. Consistent with the CCYP Ambassadors' strong preference, the t-shirt was made of ethically sourced, produced and compostable cotton.
- **2022 CCYP Ambassadors Statewide Event – 2 December 2022:** This event was co-designed by CCYP Ambassadors and brought together children and young people with adult decision-makers (including ministers, other members of parliament, representatives of local government and senior state public servants) and key service providers to discuss matters that affect the lives of Tasmanian children and young people. The event involved roundtable discussions, workshops and creative activities.
[2022 Ambassador Statewide Event](#)

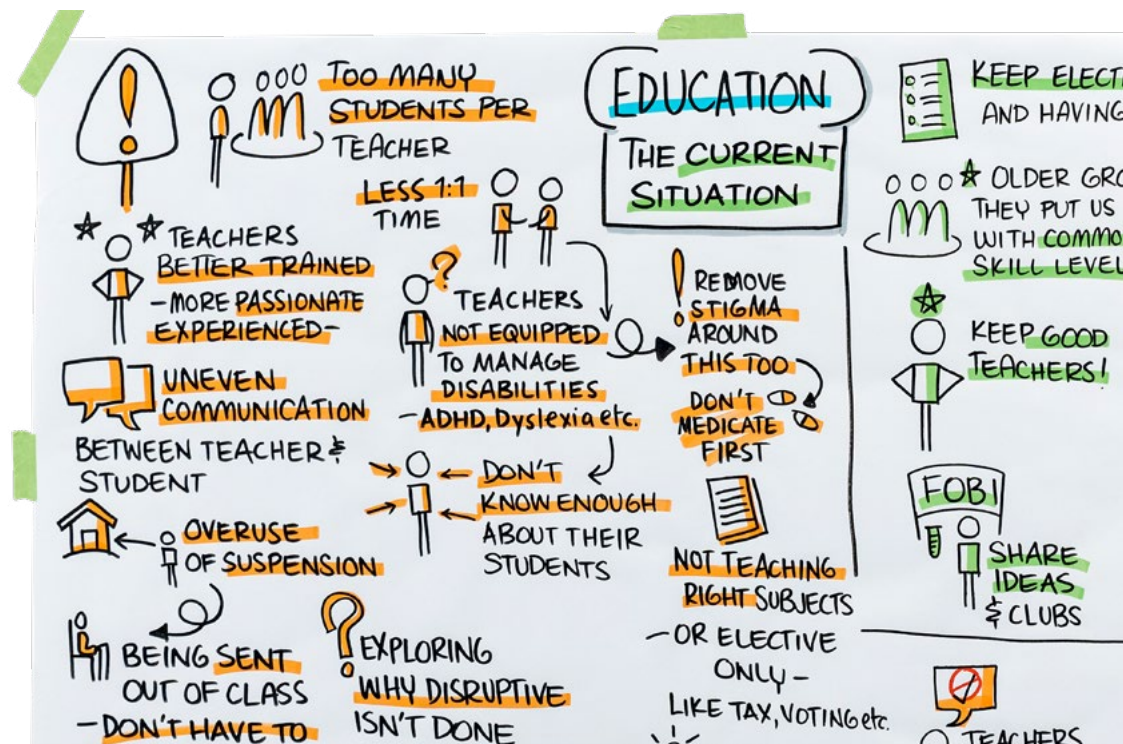


- **Look Down Listen Up – The right to be heard – 2 December 2022:** During the statewide event, CCYP Ambassadors co-designed and generated slogans on the theme of Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The slogans were painted onto sections of various political party election banners kindly donated by members of parliament.
[Ambassador Slogans](#)
- **Vaping letter to stakeholders – 3 March 2023:** As noted above, I wrote to the DECYP Secretary (as well as to the Executive Directors of Catholic Education Tasmania and Independent Schools Tasmania) regarding vaping in schools. This letter included a summary and quotes of what I had heard from CCYP Ambassadors.
- **Acceptance, Belonging and Feeling Safe: Hear My Story podcasts – 21 March to 4 April 2023:** Building on the discussions I had with CCYP Ambassadors about what acceptance, belonging and feeling safe means to them, Ambassadors shared their views through the medium of podcasts, releasing four during this year.
[Acceptance, Belonging and Feeling Safe](#)
- **Education animations and posters – 12 June 2023:** Ambassadors wanted the opportunity to influence the future of education and discuss their experiences of the Tasmanian education system. Their views and ideas were turned into a series of illustrated posters and animations.
[CCYP Ambassadors' thoughts on education](#)

CCYP Ambassadors also communicated their views on matters affecting children and young people in Tasmania during several consultations, events, committees and media opportunities during the year. Examples include:

- Consultation to inform the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan
- The Australian Government's Youth Steering Committee which provides advice on the establishment of a youth engagement model
- The Commonwealth Office for Youth's Youth Engagement Strategy Consultation and Youth Survey
- The Tasmanian Youth Forum 2023
- Consultation with the Minister for the Environment and Climate Change to inform Tasmania's next Climate Change Action Plan
- A workshop with Launceston City Council elected members
- ABC Hobart Radio Youth Panel.

Further information about the CCYP Ambassador Program is available at: childcomm.tas.gov.au/young-people/ccyp-ambassador/



Helping others to understand how to seek and act on children's views

As discussed above, all children, even very young children, have the right to say freely what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them and to have their opinions heard and taken seriously.

This year, I have continued to advocate strongly for commitment mechanisms requiring government and other decision-makers to uphold the right of children and young people to participate in and influence decisions that affect them. In August 2022, I welcomed the Government's commitment to amend the Climate Change (State Action) Amendment Bill 2021 to require **consultation with children and young people on the development of climate change action plans**. The changes also require that climate change action plans are published in formats that are accessible to children and young people. These amendments commenced in November 2022.

This significant shift in government policy was a direct result of advocacy by Tasmanian children and young people, including through the CCYP Ambassador Program, and they are to be congratulated for their efforts. Our state's response to climate change remains gravely important to the rights and wellbeing of all Tasmanian children and young people and future generations who are and will be disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change.

During the year, my staff and I provided advice to several government and non-government organisations on how to provide meaningful participation opportunities to children and young people to inform legislation, policy and service delivery. This included advice on a range of issues to the Department for Education, Children and Young People, the Department of Health, the Department of Premier and Cabinet, local councils, the Menzies Institute for Medical Research and non-government service providers.

We also continued work to develop resources and guides, both to raise awareness of how we go about listening to the views of children, and also to help other organisations and decision-makers understand how to seek and act on children's views. For example, we have planned a project to produce a practical **participation guide** for organisations and decision-makers on how to increase participation opportunities for all Tasmanian children and young people. The guide is being developed in consultation with Tasmanian children and young people from a range of backgrounds and from across the state.

I have also initiated a project to review and update all internal policies regarding ethical and safe engagement with children and young people. Many of these resources are shared with external organisations to assist them to build capacity in, and promote, child-centred decision-making.



Talking about children's rights and what we do

I take every opportunity to raise awareness of children's rights and about what we do in my speeches, presentations and when engaging with the media. A full list of my media releases and opinion pieces is at Appendix C and a list of my speeches and presentations is at Appendix D.

For example, I spoke at the **Songs for Freedom** concert in Hobart in February 2023 about youth detention, and the need to reform our youth justice system. The touring concert - featuring original songs created by Ngarluma and Yindjibarndi artists in the Pilbara town of Roebourne - runs alongside a campaign to highlight the high incarceration rates of Aboriginal people in Australian prisons. I spoke about the incarceration of children, noting that, to this day, Australian children as young as 10 - most of them Aboriginal - continue to be routinely arrested and detained. I am also a member of the Songs for Freedom Reference Group.

In December 2022, I spoke at the **5th National Child Protection Forum** in Perth, Western Australia. The focus of my talk was the importance of listening to children and young people. I highlighted the right of children (under Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) to have their opinions heard and taken seriously when adults are making decisions that affect them. I presented examples of how I and my staff had worked to achieve this in Tasmania.

In September 2022, I had the pleasure of presenting a keynote address at the **Family Day Care National Conference**. The focus of my address was the importance of positive early childhood experiences for children, the concept of children as rights holders from the earliest stage of their life, and the intrinsic link between having respect for the views of children and upholding their right to being protected from harm.



Monitoring

The CCYP Act requires that I promote, monitor and review the wellbeing of Tasmanian children and young people generally. The Tasmanian Government has broadly defined wellbeing for children and young people by reference to six key domains: Being loved, safe and valued; Having material basis; Being healthy; Learning; Participating; and Having a positive sense of culture and identity. Where a child's rights are respected, protected and fulfilled, their wellbeing should improve.



Collecting, analysing and sharing data and other information about the rights and wellbeing of children

Central to the effectiveness of my monitoring role is the ability to collect, analyse and share a range of data and other information about the rights and wellbeing of children.

Since 2018, the Office of the Commissioner has had a role in **monitoring Tasmania's out-of-home care system** with the aim of promoting and protecting the rights and wellbeing of Tasmanian children and young people in care. In this work, I seek to explore the experiences of Tasmania's children and young people in care and examine the processes and system features that affect their wellbeing. This monitoring focuses on systemic issues in institutional and administrative practices – it is distinct from complaint handling and individual advocacy for children in care, which are not part of my legislative remit.

My out-of-home care monitoring has four elements:

- regular data monitoring
- thematic monitoring
- responsive investigations
- monitoring of the Tasmanian Government's implementation of the Commissioner's recommendations to strengthen the out-of-home care system.

For more information, see: childcomm.tas.gov.au/everyone/major-programs/out-of-home-care-monitoring/

I chair an Out-of-Home Care Expert Panel which provides advice to inform the monitoring program. I acknowledge and thank the members of the Expert Panel for their generosity in sharing their insights and expertise:

- Professor Sharon Bessell, Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University
- Professor Daryl Higgins, Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University
- Dr Greet Peersman, the Australia and New Zealand School of Government
- Professor Kitty te Riele, Peter Underwood Centre, University of Tasmania.

Data monitoring includes the regular, routine flow of a set of government data to my office on specified matters relevant to Tasmania's out-of-home care system. Data gathered through this component of the monitoring program helps inform other elements of the program. For example, I receive quarterly data reports from the Department of Communities Tasmania and, more recently, the Department for Education, Children and Young People on numbers of children in out-of-home care (placed with government versus non-government providers), foster care households, and other indicators relevant to children's wellbeing in care. Publicly available data is also considered.

In my ***Out-of-Home Care Monitoring Report No. 2 (First ed.)***, which I released in March 2023, I called for greater transparency regarding the operation of the Tasmanian out-of-home care system. I emphasised the need for better quality data to provide a clear picture of how the out-of-home care system is functioning and how children and young people who come into care are faring.

I also highlighted the lengthy delays I experienced in receiving data, and in obtaining permission from the data custodian to publish previously unpublished data. The Monitoring Report No. 2 only provides data about the experiences of children and young people in care in 2020–21. The report is available at: [CCYP-Data-Monitoring-Report-2020-2021.pdf](#)

I acknowledge that improving data quality, especially in a demand-driven system like the out-of-home care system, is an enormous challenge. However, accurate and effective data reporting by government is essential to establish and maintain accountability to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of children in out-of-home care is, and remains, front and centre of everyone's minds.

An updated report on data for the period 2021–22 was released in July 2023. I look forward to learning more about how the Department will implement evidence-based solutions to improve accuracy in data entry, data revision and review, and data reporting.



Revising and establishing new processes to monitor the rights and wellbeing of children

In April 2018, former interim Commissioner for Children and Young People, David Clements, released [Laying the Foundations: A Conceptual Plan for Independent Monitoring of Out-of-Home Care in Tasmania](#). During this reporting period, significant work was done to evaluate my approach to monitoring of the out-of-home care system. Preliminary work commenced to update the Conceptual Plan for the program, including **a new rights-based approach to data monitoring**. This work is ongoing – with my own-motion investigation (see the next section) taking precedence. I also note that the findings and recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry will be instrumental in finalising this work.

During the year, I continued work to understand the effect on the wellbeing of Tasmania's children and young people arising from **COVID-19**, including through ongoing monitoring and analysis of administrative data received from Tasmanian Government agencies, as well as publicly available data. I shared the preliminary results of this analysis with relevant government agencies during interactive symposia on 13 December 2022 and 21 February 2023.

During the year, work commenced to audit all data received from government agencies by my office and to identify options for and establish a contemporary data-handling framework that is easy to use, automated, and capable of reporting on issues relevant to the breadth of my functions. This work is ongoing – with the own-motion investigation (see the next section) taking precedence.

Investigating a change to case management of children and young people in care

In December 2022, I launched an **own-motion investigation into a change to the case management of children and young people in care in Tasmania**. Under the change, some children and young people in care were no longer allocated to a dedicated Child Safety Officer. Instead, these children and young people were allocated to team-based case management within the Child Safety Service.

The purpose of the investigation is to develop a detailed understanding of the new model, examine any effects it has on the rights and wellbeing of children and young people in care, and make recommendations about its introduction. Between December 2022 and May 2023, I sought submissions from interested stakeholders. In response to demand, I also held several facilitated submission sessions with some stakeholder groups and individuals.

As part of the investigation, I invited children and young people in care to participate in an online questionnaire (called the *Commissioner's Big Questions*). Feedback on the scope and content of these questions was sought from a small group of young people with care experience and incorporated prior to broader distribution to children and young people via numerous channels.

In May 2023, I attended a statewide event organised by the Foster and Kinship Carers Association of Tasmania. Children and young people attending this event were invited to share their views about having a say in care, either by drawing and creating art pieces on table crockery or by drawing (both using food-safe markers) on commercially baked biscuits. Their ideas (and crockery) were then photographed and will be included in the report of the investigation.

To help inform the investigation, I also requested data from the Department for Education, Children and Young People. Qualitative and quantitative analysis of information and data received as part of the investigation was completed during the reporting period. The report of the investigation will be finalised in the next reporting period. More information about the investigation is available at: [CCYP investigation](#)

Influencing government's understanding of, and measurement and reporting on, the wellbeing of children

A key goal of mine has been to see the Tasmanian Government strengthen its ability to understand, and measure and report publicly and transparently on, the wellbeing of children.

A significant development in this regard was the launch in August 2021 of the Tasmanian Government's first Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy for 0-to-25 year-olds: 'It takes a Tasmanian village'. This responded directly to recommendations I made in 2020 for the development of a long-term whole-of-government strategy for improving the wellbeing of Tasmania's children and young people. I was delighted by the commitment that the strategy would be co-designed with children and was pleased to contribute to the design and implementation of consultations with children and young people.

I was greatly encouraged by the scope of the strategy, and its recognition of the importance of the first 1,000 days of a child's life to their development and future wellbeing. The strategy demonstrates that the Government has listened to feedback from children and young people, including in its acknowledgement of the environment as a crucial component of children's wellbeing.

The reporting processes outlined in the strategy will be important to achieving its goals. I am pleased that the Government released its first annual report on the strategy in November 2022. A data snapshot released alongside the report focused on the first 1,000 days of children's lives, with accessible datasets available through a data-sharing platform. The snapshot was developed in collaboration between the Tasmanian Government and the Technical Data and Measurement Working Group led by the **B4 Early Years Coalition**. During the reporting period, I was co-chair of the B4 Coalition together with respected educator Elizabeth Daly AC. While there is still much work to be done, the annual report for the strategy demonstrated the Government has come a long way in its ability to understand, and measure and report on, children's wellbeing. I look forward to the release in 2023 of the first Child and Youth Information Strategy which I understand will be informed by a wellbeing measurement, evaluation and learning framework. I also continue to support work to ensure every Tasmanian child has the best start in life.



Being consulted on reforms aimed at improving the rights and wellbeing of children

I am pleased that the position of Commissioner is a trusted and respected authority on matters relating to the wellbeing of children and young people in Tasmania. The Office of the Commissioner is respected for its capability to provide evidence-based, clear and accessible feedback and advice on the wide range of reforms and other issues affecting the rights and wellbeing of children in Tasmania. Examples of this work are included through this report. Appendix A lists the reports I have published during the year. Appendix B lists the submissions and expert advice I have provided to government consultations and parliamentary inquiries during this reporting period.

Among the most significant reforms on which I provided advice and written submissions during this reporting period are the development of the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Bill 2022, the development of the Youth Justice System Blueprint and associated reforms, and feedback on the Third Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy.

Topics covered in my submissions during 2022-23:

- Rights and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- Age of criminal responsibility in Tasmania
- Carer recognition
- Child and youth safe organisations
- Rights and wellbeing of children with disability
- Child sexual abuse in institutional settings
- Food security
- Literacy development
- Mental health
- Suicide prevention
- Rights and wellbeing of children in places of detention
- Youth justice system reforms
- Use of Nazi symbols
- Vaping in schools.



Advocacy, research and advice

As the advocate for all children and young people in Tasmania, I regularly engage in strategic advocacy and provide independent, apolitical and impartial advice and comment on the broad range of issues that affect the wellbeing of Tasmania's children and young people.

Specific elements of this work include:

- commenting on draft Bills
- contributing to other consultative processes
- providing advice to government on issues affecting the rights and wellbeing of children and young people
- participating in public forums, panels and conferences
- providing public commentary, including through media releases and opinion pieces
- engaging in systemic advocacy where a matter is raised with my office by a member of the community
- being a member of the Australian and New Zealand Children's Commissioners and Guardians (ANZCCG).

This section of the annual report outlines some of the major advocacy issues I engaged in during the reporting period.

My systemic advocacy work is, in part, informed by concerns conveyed to my office by members of the community. I do not have a complaint-handling role or an individual advocacy role, except in relation to young people detained under the *Youth Justice Act 1997*, and I cannot investigate specific circumstances or specific decisions made in respect of an individual case. However, my office is regularly contacted by members of the public who wish to raise concerns about the wellbeing of children and young people. During the reporting period, the office dealt with public enquiries from 135 individuals. In these circumstances, members of the public are given information about referral options and, in appropriate circumstances, their concerns may be shared with a relevant authority for action. Where a concern also raises issues of a systemic nature, I may seek further information from a relevant agency or organisation or engage in systemic advocacy.



Advocating for rights-compliant searches of children in custody

A priority for me in this reporting period has been to continue to advocate for rights-based approaches to personal searches of children in custody in custodial settings. In particular, I have continued to argue for changes to the practice of searches so that very, very few unclothed searches of children are undertaken.

In December 2022, amendments made to the *Youth Justice Act 1997* by the *Youth Justice Amendment (Searches in Custody) Act 2022* came into effect. The amendments establish **a new framework in respect to how youths in custody are searched in prisons, detention centres and police watch-houses**. These amendments prevent the routine practice of strip-searching of children and young people in custody and provide greater consolidated protections for their rights and wellbeing. These amendments are the direct consequence of a formal Memorandum of Advice I provided to the Tasmanian Government in May 2019.

Following the passage of the amendments, I provided:

- advice to the Department of Justice on the implementation of the *Youth Justice Amendment (Searches in Custody) Act 2022* and associated regulations
- advice to the Department for Education, Children and Young People to ensure its policy regarding personal searches of young people detained at the Ashley Youth Detention Centre aligns with the new legislation
- advice to the Department of Justice on a draft Director's Standing Order and Risk Assessment for searching young people in the custody of the Tasmania Prison Service
- information to staff of the Tasmania Prison Service about my role and the rights of children in custody.

Ongoing monitoring of the conduct of personal searches at Ashley Youth Detention Centre continues to be an important focus for my office to ensure that its practice is compliant with the new legislative and regulatory framework.



Providing comprehensive advice on Tasmania's age of criminal responsibility

In Tasmania, the age of criminal responsibility is 10. This means that children as young as 10 years old can be arrested, searched, questioned, detained in a police watch-house or reception prison, charged with a criminal offence, prosecuted in a court, remanded in custody, convicted, and sentenced to detention. I have for many years been a strong advocate for Tasmania to raise its age of criminal responsibility to at least 14, in line with the advice of First Nations representatives and medical, child development, legal and human rights bodies.

Accordingly, a priority for me this year was to provide a comprehensive **Memorandum of Advice to the Tasmanian Government on raising the age of criminal responsibility** to at least 14 years. I delivered the formal advice to the Tasmanian Government in June 2023. In this advice, I recommended the Tasmanian Government commits, without delay, to raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility to at least 14 years, with no exceptions. If implemented, Tasmania's law would align with the clearly stated position of the UN Committee that monitors the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Overwhelmingly, the evidence demonstrates that children come into conflict with the law because of factors including disadvantage, disability and trauma. In other words, children's contact with the law is often a direct result of not having what they need to grow and thrive. While the responsibility for this can never entirely be the responsibility of governments, it is the Tasmanian Government's responsibility to ensure that the laws which frame and guide the context within which children and young people exist, and the service systems that interact with them, do support them to grow and thrive. The current system fails to do this. Indeed, research has found overwhelmingly that the younger children are when they first encounter the system, the more likely they are to reoffend. In other words, the system perpetuates itself.

Through the work of my office, I have heard the views of children and young people with lived experience of the Tasmanian youth justice system, including their insights into the types of risk factors they experience, and how these risk factors can multiply. By listening to them, I have also heard about the factors

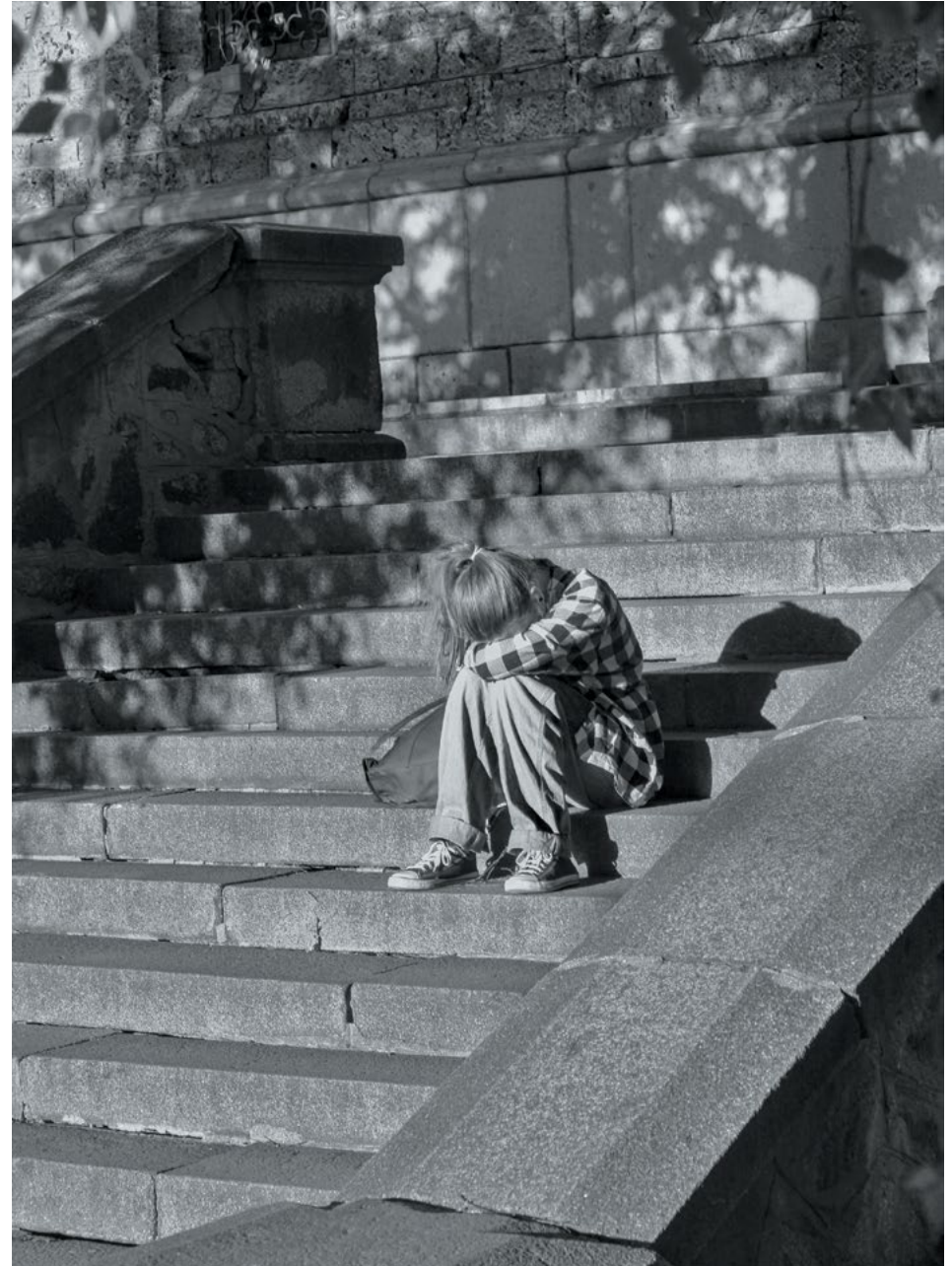


that make it less likely that a child will engage in harmful behaviour, including the importance of positive relationships within their family and community, housing, and therapeutic interventions (e.g. drug and alcohol treatment). The views of children and young people are reflected in their own words in the advice I provided.

Taking account of the research, and the voices of children and young people with lived experience of the current system, I have recommended that the Government immediately commit to raising the age of criminal responsibility to at least 14 within two years, and implement an alternative non-criminalising, needs-based response to children's harmful behaviour. Such a therapeutic approach would ensure that responses to children's harmful behaviour align with human rights standards and contemporary best practice without compromising, and in fact improving, community safety.

While the Government has acknowledged its existing criminalising approach to youth justice is not fit for purpose and has committed to implementing a new blueprint for a multi-systemic response along with a new model of therapeutic detention, I strongly believe that the Government's reform agenda does not yet provide a sufficient foundation to achieve a nation-leading best practice approach to youth justice that would uphold the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. I am convinced that there is a well-established case for change that requires an increase in the age of criminal responsibility with complementary legislative and policy reforms, as well as greater understanding of, and investment in, the service system.

My advice, which was publicly released during an event held in the following reporting period, is available at: [CCYP-Memorandum-of-Advice-re-Age-of-Criminal-Responsibility](#)



Advocating for child-centred reforms to promote and protect the rights and wellbeing of children

In this reporting period, I have continued to argue for policy reforms aimed at promoting and protecting the rights and wellbeing of children to be prioritised and that they progress in a child-centred manner.

Throughout the year, I continued to push for a change in mindset about child-centred approaches. For example, in my presentation at the **5th National Child Protection Forum** in December 2022, I emphasised that a child-centred approach is not just about listening to children on matters that affect them. Rather, it means we move from being a system or service that talks about and works for children to one that prioritises children's voices and works to meet or advocate for children's best interests.

In September 2022 – together with Victoria's Principal Commissioner for Children and Young People, Liana Buchanan – I provided an online briefing for community organisations hosted by TasCOSS on **Victoria's approach to promoting child safety in organisations**. The Victorian Commission for Children and Young People has dual responsibilities for overseeing and enforcing Victoria's Child Safe Standards, as well as administering and monitoring its reportable conduct scheme. The Principal Commissioner spoke about how the Victorian Commission's oversight operates in practice, and how a legislative child safe standards framework and a reportable conduct scheme could make a difference for children in Tasmania.

In October 2022, I provided comment on the **Child and Youth Safe Organisations Bill 2022**. Among other matters, I noted the lack of principles in the draft Bill and argued that the Bill should include fundamental principles, and that the purposes and objectives should reflect the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and relevant recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. I also encouraged further thorough consideration of the best and most effective model for independent child-centred oversight and regulation of, and education about, Tasmania's Child and Youth Safe Framework.

In December 2022, I wrote to the Premier and Attorney-General regarding **options for implementation, oversight and regulation of the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework** which would be established by the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Bill 2022. I expressed the view that it would be in the best interests of Tasmanian children that government establishes a new entity – a Commission for Children and Young People – to ensure an integrated, systematic and child-centred approach to keeping children safe from abuse in institutional settings. The Commission could absorb the functions of the Commissioner for Children and Young People, subject to some refinement of existing functions, and new functions could be designed and added to implement the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework. This would, in my view, be the most cogent and practical way forward to ensure a single, child-centred body is responsible for independent oversight and advocacy to promote and protect the best interests of children and young people in Tasmania.

In March 2023, I wrote to all Members of the Legislative Council to inform debate on the Bill. I noted that my support for the Bill had been based on the premise that it would be implemented through a child-centred independent oversight body. I also expressed concern that the decision of government to recruit to the position of Independent Regulator may increase the complexity and opacity of the systems to protect and promote the rights, wellbeing and safety of our children and young people, rather than help to provide a coordinated and integrated child-safe system. I also briefed the Legislative Council on the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Bill 2022 on 24 May 2023.

For further information, see: [2023-03-27-CCYP-Letter-to-Members-of-the-Tasmanian-Parliament-Child-and-Youth-Safe-Organisations-Bill-2022.pdf](#)

The passing of the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Bill 2022 in May 2023 constitutes a significant reform to strengthen the protection and promotion of the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in Tasmanian organisations. While welcoming the reform, I called on the Government to implement the reforms in a child-centred way and to take action to make the current complex patchwork of systems and organisations charged with keeping children safe simpler and easier to navigate.

It remains my view that Tasmania should have a single entity, a Commission for Children and Young People, that is responsible for the independent oversight of children and young people's safety and wellbeing – a one-stop shop that holds the best interests of children as paramount. I will monitor the implementation of the legislation and continue to advocate for what is in the best interests of Tasmanian children and young people. This is a once-in-a-lifetime chance to get it right. We owe it to our children and the many courageous victim-survivors who have shared their stories to influence child-centred change.

As at 30 June 2023, an Independent Regulator was yet to be appointed.

As part of Tasmania's implementation of obligations under the **Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment** (OPCAT), an implementation project is underway on the operation of the Tasmanian National Preventive Mechanism (NPM). The role of the NPM is to monitor Tasmanian custodial facilities and other places of detention.

I have provided advice to this process to reflect the rights and interests of Tasmania's children and young people. In March 2023, I provided a submission commenting on Consultation Paper 1 of the implementation project. Specifically, I recommended that:

- the NPM should implement an evidence-based, trauma-informed, and child-centred and child-safe approach to its visits to places where children and young people may be deprived of their liberty
- the NPM should have culturally sensitive supports in place for children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

A copy of my submission is available at: [CCYP-Comment-Tasmanian-NPM-Consultation-paper-1-FINAL-DRAFT.pdf](#)

In February 2023, my office participated in a **visioning design workshop** organised by DECYP's Youth Justice Reform Team. The workshop focused on reforming Tasmania's youth justice system with a central focus on the design and development of several new youth justice facilities. During the workshop, key stakeholders explored options and contributed ideas regarding the high-level function, services, amenities and design for each new facility. The aim of the workshop was to seek input from a range of stakeholders, set high-level goals and establish alignment across the sector.

During the year, members of my team provided advice to the Tasmania Law Reform Institute (TLRI) to inform its project **Sex offences committed by young people: evaluating the efficacy of responses by the Tasmanian Youth Justice System**. The project is reviewing the ability of the state's youth justice system to respond effectively to sex offences committed by young people. The TLRI expects a progress report to be available by mid-2024, with a final report to be delivered in 2025.

I was represented on a Tasmania Legal Aid Steering Committee and provided feedback on drafts to develop new **Separate Representative Practice Standards and Guidelines (PSGs) for lawyers in child protection proceedings**. The PSGs were launched in the next reporting period. I was pleased to see that the PSGs reflected our advice and recommendations, including by incorporating the Lundy Model of Child Participation.

I also provided advice on a range of other issues with a focus on ensuring that reforms consider the particular issues facing children and young people and reflect their best interests. For example, I made submissions on the Guardianship and Administration Amendment Bill 2022, the Third Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy (Compassion and Connection, 2023-2027), and the Food Relief to Food Resilience Action Plan. A full list of submissions I made during the reporting period is at Appendix B.

Contributing to the Commission of Inquiry

The Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings was established on 15 March 2021 with the aim of determining what needs to be done to better protect children against child sexual abuse in institutional contexts in Tasmania. The Commission's hearings have shone a light on the countless reports, allegations, incidents and risks of sexual abuse in institutional settings, and the too often inadequate responses of the Tasmanian Government to prevent child sexual abuse and respond appropriately when it does occur. It has also heard examples of poor systems, practices and culture.

The Commission of Inquiry has created an enormous opportunity for every Tasmanian to act on our shared responsibility to take all necessary steps to reduce the risk of child sexual abuse and to respond appropriately if it does occur. This will require wholesale changes to the way we empower children to have a voice, how our organisations work to protect children and demonstrate genuine respect for their rights, and how our community embraces and implements standards for child safety in organisational settings.

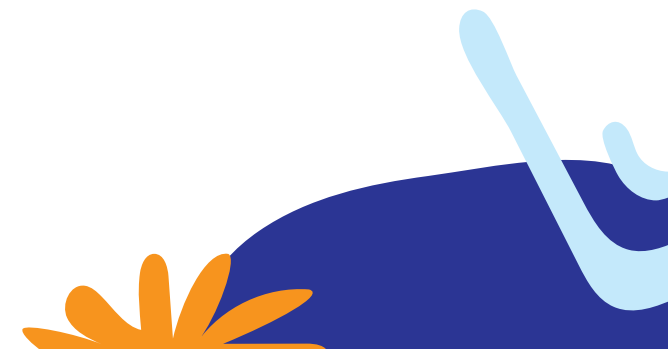
During this reporting period, the Commission of Inquiry has continued to be a significant priority for me and my team. I was pleased to receive an allocation of additional funding to my office for a fixed-term staff member to support my ongoing engagement with and contributions to the Commission of Inquiry.

I have provided influential input to the Inquiry on how we can strengthen our approach to keeping children safe in organisational settings, including by providing a formal written submission and witness statement, and giving oral evidence on three occasions. Links to my submission and statement, which include my evidence regarding the need for child-centred regulatory oversight of child safe standards and reportable conduct, are provided in my annual report for 2021-22.

During this reporting period, I gave oral evidence at a hearing on 24 August 2022 about the role of the Commissioner in providing oversight and advocacy for individual children and young people detained at the Ashley Youth Detention Centre. A transcript of my evidence is available at: www.commissionofinquiry.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/676121/Transcript-of-24-August,-2022.pdf

I would like to thank the many victim-survivors of child sexual abuse in Tasmania who came forward to courageously share their experiences with the Commission of Inquiry and the broader Tasmanian community. I would also like to express my deep gratitude to the children and young people who contributed their views to the Commission's work.

In February 2023, I welcomed the launch by the Commission of Inquiry of its report on children's views about safety in institutional settings. The report, **'Take notice, believe us and act!'**, presents the results of research involving almost 60 children and young people in government schools, hospitals, youth detention and out-of-home care. The findings reinforce that for children and young people to be safe and to feel safe in organisations, they need to feel respected, valued and empowered to have a say in decisions that affect them and to be able to raise concerns. Children's participation is the fundamental component of being a child-safe organisation. Many of the themes in the report have been noted before, including through my own work and that of previous Commissioners, and research of the national Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.



The report explores how children feel about the role of the Commissioner in advocating for them in the youth detention environment, and the role of the Child Advocate for children in care (who works within the Department for Education, Children and Young People). It is clear from the report that children greatly value having access to advocates who are in their corner, who listen to them, believe them and will act on what they say. Again, I express my thanks to the almost 60 children and young people who contributed their views to the **'Take notice, believe us and act!'** report.

It has long been my strong view that individual advocacy for children in out-of-home care and in youth justice detention must be independent of government, child-centred, and sustainably resourced to ensure children are given the space and time necessary to raise concerns with someone they trust.

The Commission of Inquiry's reporting period was extended until the end of August 2023. It is my great hope that the Government's response to the findings and recommendations of the Commission will represent a new beginning for the systems and services designed to care for our children, a new beginning for families in need of support, and a new beginning for the children and young people in organisational settings, including out-of-home care, youth detention, health and education. This will require the Government to act with bravery and determination.



Providing individual advocacy for children in youth justice detention

Under the CCYP Act, the Commissioner has a specific role to act as advocate for individual children and young people detained under the *Youth Justice Act 1997*. In practice, this means children and young people in youth justice detention may request the Commissioner's advocacy services on any matter affecting their rights and wellbeing. The CCYP Act (section 10) provides guidance about how the Commissioner may perform this advocacy role, including by:

- listening to and giving voice to the concerns and grievances of a young person and facilitating resolution of those concerns
- seeking information about, and facilitating access by a young person to, support services
- assessing whether a young person has been provided with adequate information about their rights
- assessing the physical and emotional wellbeing of a young person
- receiving regular reports to assist in monitoring youth justice detention, including about isolation, searches, incidents and the use of restrictive practices.

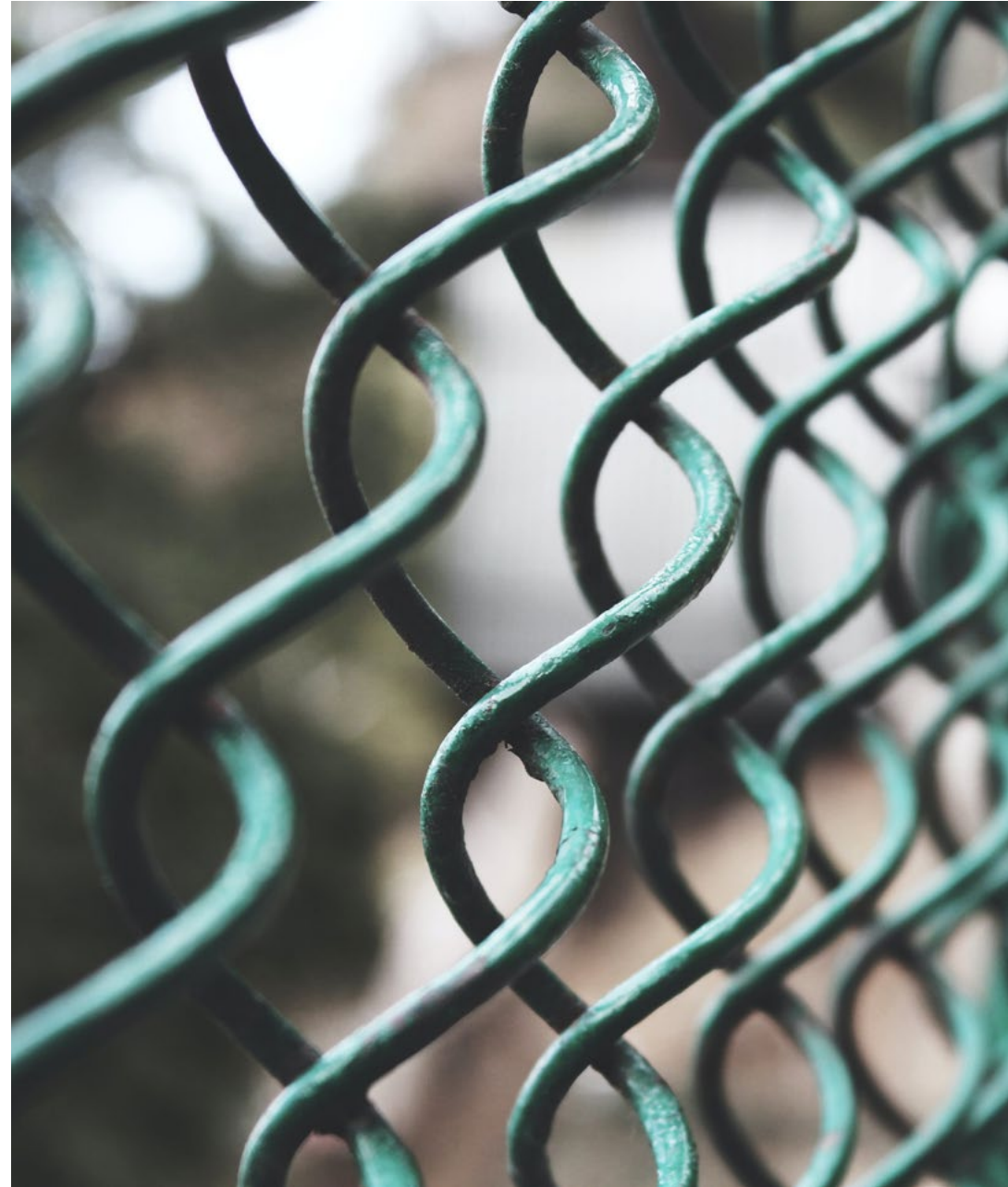
As a prescribed officer within the meaning of section 135A of the Youth Justice Act, I am entitled to access, at any reasonable time, any detention centre or any detainee at the centre for the purposes of performing my function as advocate. While children and young people are generally detained at Ashley Youth Detention Centre (Ashley), they may also be detained in Tasmania Prison Service facilities.

During the reporting period, I visited Ashley on 14 occasions to meet with the children and young people. They may also contact my office at any time to request my advocacy assistance.

Following the September 2021 announcement of the planned closure of Ashley, the Government agreed to provide fixed-term funding for an additional resource to support me to carry out my advocacy services for young people in youth justice detention. The Advocate for Young People in Detention commenced in my office in February 2022, significantly bolstering the advocacy services available to young people in detention and improving my systemic oversight of children's rights and the wellbeing of children and young people in custody.

Often my individual and systemic advocacy functions for young people in detention intersect. Systemic or centre-wide issues at Ashley are often identified through matters raised by individual young people. During the year, these issues included:

- Lockdowns, restrictive practices, unit-bound and isolation practices: I have repeatedly raised concerns regarding the use of restrictive practices at Ashley, including by highlighting that their use constitutes a breach of the rights of children and young people in detention under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. I have spoken publicly on these issues. See for example:
[ABC Radio - Lockdowns at AYDC for up to 23 hours a day...](#)
- The need for the establishment of a rapid response crisis team at Ashley: During the year, staffing shortages and rolling lockdowns had a detrimental effect on the wellbeing of children and young people at Ashley. In August 2022, I called for the urgent establishment of a rapid response crisis team, inclusive of specialist leadership skills and child safe practitioner expertise to support the safety and wellbeing of young people and staff at Ashley. I called for resourcing to be made available to ensure the rights of children and young people at Ashley are upheld. See for example:
[Ashley Youth Detention Centre](#)
- Access to legal representation, mental health support and other services: I have advocated for the rights of young people in detention to have private and prompt access to legal, medical and psychological services, notwithstanding the challenges associated with staffing at Ashley.
- Transfers to adult prisons: I have advocated for the urgent need to review a Memorandum of Understanding between the former Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice, which continues to enable the administrative transfer of children and young people between Ashley and adult prisons without regard for the best interests of the child and without independent oversight.



Spotlight on the role of the Advocate for Young People in Detention

The Advocate is generally onsite at Ashley three days per week, and is available by phone to listen to any concerns or issues that young people may be experiencing. During the reporting period, the Advocate made 117 visits to facilities where young people are detained, including to Ashley and Tasmania Prison Service facilities. I retained my schedule of visiting every three weeks.

When visiting Ashley, the Advocate is provided with keys and is able to move around the centre unaccompanied. This enables the Advocate to witness the young people's living environment, provide information about their rights, and interact with staff and program delivery.

Where requested, the Advocate advocates on behalf of individual young people including at care team, multi-disciplinary team, and exit-planning meetings. The Advocate assists young people to raise concerns and make complaints, and advocates for complaint outcomes to be communicated to young people in a timely and child-centred manner, including information about rights of review. Where appropriate, the Advocate attempts to resolve matters as they arise through discussions with Ashley management.

The Advocate liaises on behalf of young people with government and non-government services, legal practitioners and youth justice workers, and may support young people during court appearances. The Advocate monitors for emerging systemic issues and provides me with regular reports and advice.

By maintaining a regular, in-person presence at Ashley, the Advocate is able to establish effective rapport with each individual young person in detention. Young people have reported that having an Advocate onsite who they know and trust is important to them. This is particularly important where access to external service providers is impeded due to low staffing levels. Young people can access advocacy services regardless of staffing levels and restrictive practices. However, access to private spaces for confidential conversations with young people remains an ongoing challenge.

One young person identified positive changes to the detention environment due to increased advocacy:

'Well, you, you've changed a lot up there. Like they're a lot more aware and that up there now because they know that a lot of people are losing their jobs for what they did.' (Young person, Voices of Young People in the Youth Justice System project)

While another young person spoke of the importance of having someone there to listen to them:

'Now I'm thinking, there need to be more. There needs to be more people listening like [the Advocate] you're listening, they say something to other people, so they listen. Not a lot of people sit down and listen like you. They just sit there and oh yeah, right, this and that and this, you know? They don't listen.' (Young person, Voices of Young People in the Youth Justice System Project)

During the year, the Advocate assisted in the provision of advice on a range of operational and policy issues at Ashley including:

- the reinstatement of the **Ashley resident advisory group** – a forum allowing young people in detention to raise issues with centre management and provide advice on matters affecting them
- the **revised searches policy**
- implementation of an interim incentives program as part of the **behaviour management policy**
- changes to **complaints processes** to make them more child-centred and accessible to young people
- the planned **trial of body-worn cameras**.

*Jamie

Individual Advocacy Case Study

During a visit to Ashley, the Advocate meets with 16-year-old Jamie.

Jamie is an Aboriginal young person who is subject to a Care and Protection Order. Jamie has an intellectual disability and a history of trauma. Jamie has been effectively independent since the age of 13. Despite being subject to a Care and Protection Order, Jamie has frequently experienced periods of homelessness due to the complexity of their needs and lack of suitable accommodation providers in their area.

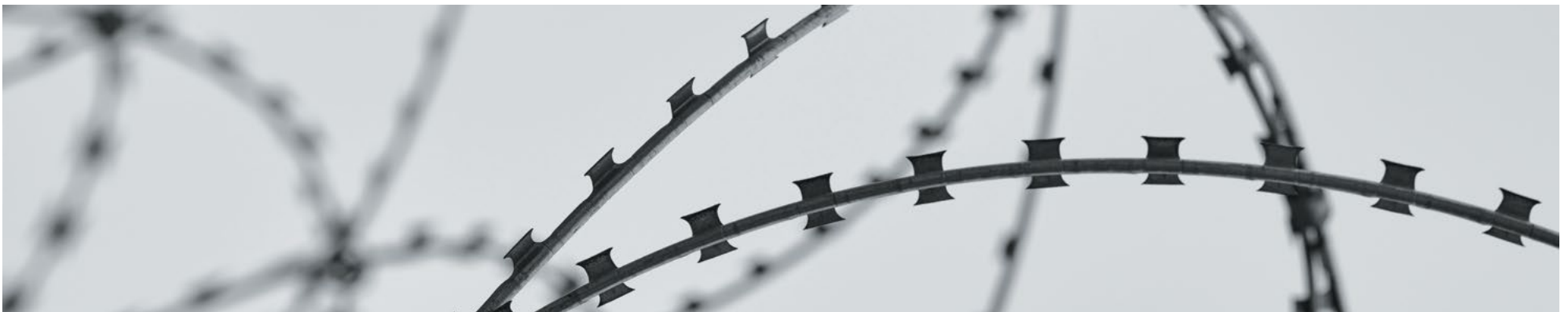
The Advocate sits down with Jamie and asks how they are doing. Jamie tells the Advocate about some issues they are having with some other young people in Ashley and describes experiencing threatening behaviour that makes Jamie feel unsafe. Jamie also reports having trouble contacting the Child Safety Service and their lawyer. Jamie would like to apply for bail, but does not have anywhere to live, and Jamie has been told that the Court will not grant bail without a stable address.

The Advocate asks Jamie if they would like some help with these problems and seeks Jamie's consent to speak with Ashley management and others who may be able to help.

To assist Jamie, the Advocate:

- reaches out to Jamie's care team, gathering relevant information about Jamie's history and current barriers to accessing safe housing
- speaks with the management team at Ashley to raise concerns regarding Jamie's experience of feeling unsafe at Ashley – this is later addressed by management moving Jamie to a different unit
- attends a meeting held by the Child Safety Service to advocate for Jamie and convey Jamie's wishes
- contacts Jamie's lawyer to advise that Jamie would like an appointment
- attends court with Jamie via video-link to provide support and advocacy
- after experiencing ongoing challenges in securing suitable accommodation, briefs and seeks assistance from the Commissioner to escalate Jamie's situation with relevant government agencies.

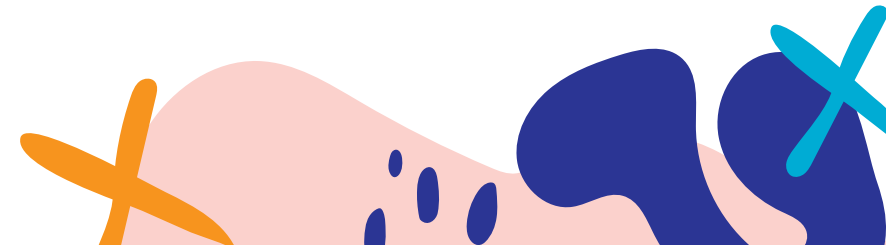
Once appropriate accommodation has been secured, and before Jamie's release, the Advocate provides a handover to the Child Advocate within the Department for Education, Children and Young People to ensure Jamie has continued access to advocacy following their release.



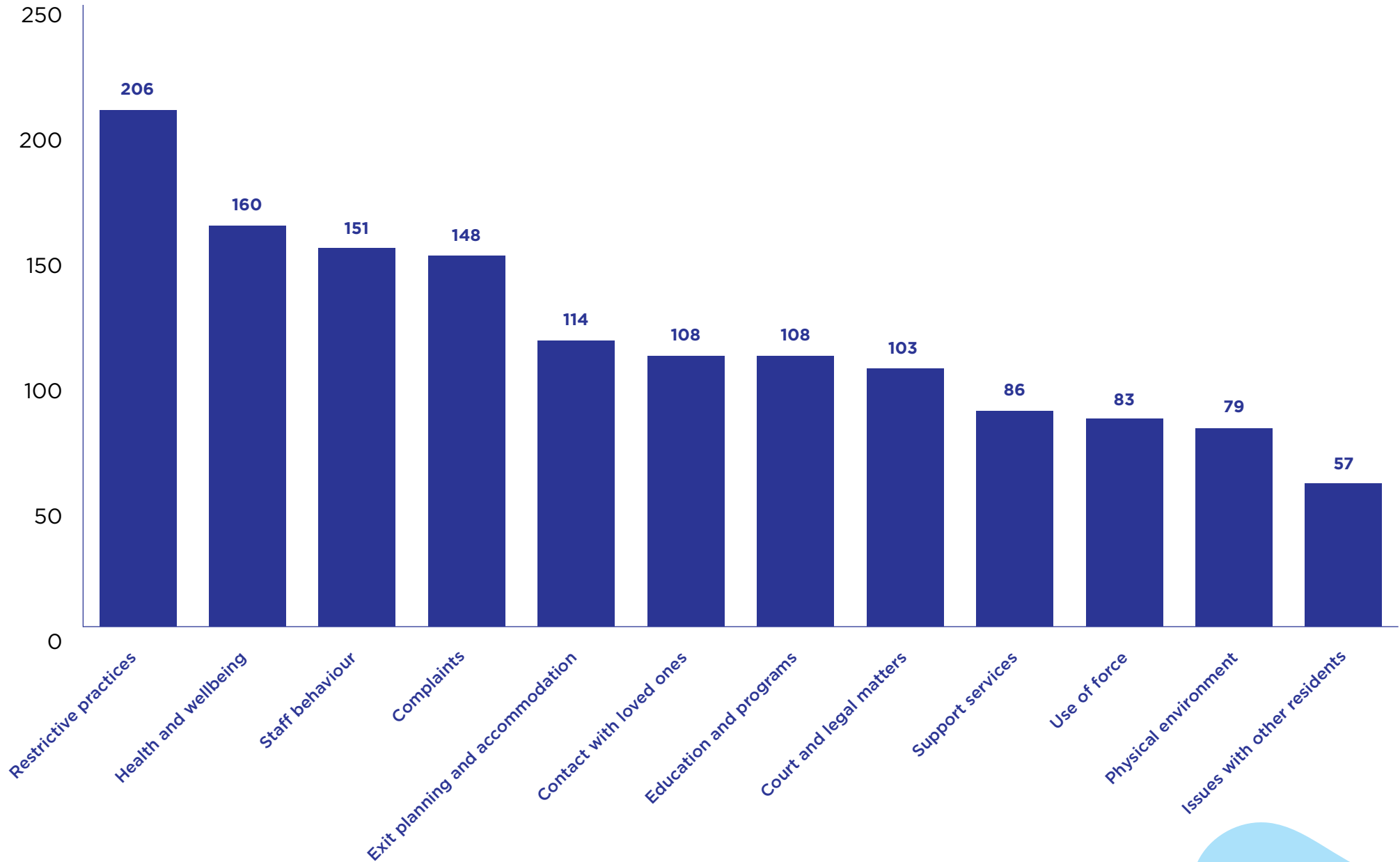
Individual advocacy themes during 2022–23

1. **Restrictive practices:** including concerns about lockdowns, unit-bound practices, isolation, and restricted movement around the centre **(206 requests)**
2. **Health and wellbeing:** including requests for mental health support, access to medical treatment, access to exercise/healthy food, and issues relating to physical health and medication **(160 requests)**
3. **Staff behaviour:** including alleged mistreatment, misapplication of rules, and inadequate responses to young people's needs **(151 requests)**
4. **Complaints:** including requests for assistance to make a formal complaint, follow up a complaint outcome, explain a complaint outcome, seek a review of a complaint outcome, or issues regarding complaints systems generally **(148 requests)**
5. **Exit planning and accommodation:** including exit-planning, access to safe and stable accommodation, referrals to support agencies, access to Centrelink, school enrolments **(114 requests)**
6. **Contact with loved ones:** including contact with family members, friends, and other support networks **(108 requests)**
7. **Education and programs:** including access to learning at the Ashley School, recreational activities, and programs **(108 requests)**
8. **Court and legal matters:** including access to legal practitioners, seeking legal advice, understanding court procedures, issues with bail, delays in court proceedings, pre-sentence reports **(103 requests)**
9. **Support services:** including contacting, accessing and receiving appropriate support from government and non-government service providers including the Child Safety Service, Community Youth Justice, and the National Disability Insurance Scheme **(86 requests)**
10. **Use of force:** including concerns about use of restraints and alleged assaults, including by other young people **(83 requests)**
11. **Physical environment:** including issues with units or rooms, maintenance issues, odours, furniture **(79 requests)**
12. **Issues with other residents:** including bullying, fighting, and disagreements/problems with other residents **(57 requests)**

Other themes included: issues related to privacy and confidentiality (33 requests), personal property (31 requests), harmful sexual behaviour and sexual assault (28 requests), issues regarding police and Tasmania Prison Service (TPS) staff (21 requests), boredom (21 requests), Ashley's behaviour development program (20 requests), food and canteen (13 requests), transfers to the TPS (12 requests), and matters related to Aboriginal cultural needs (4 requests).



Individual advocacy themes during 2022-23



*Daniel

*not their real name

Individual Advocacy Case Study

During a visit to Ashley, the Advocate introduces themselves to 14-year-old Daniel.

It is Daniel's first time in detention, and he appears visibly anxious and uncomfortable in his surroundings.

The Advocate asks Daniel how he is doing and whether he has access to everything he needs. Daniel says he would like to call his older sister, who is his legal guardian and cares for him in the community. Daniel reports that staff at the reception prison, where he was taken by police after his arrest, had refused to allow him to call his sister, saying he would need to wait until he got to Ashley.

The Advocate asks Daniel about his journey into Ashley via the adult reception prison. Daniel says that he was searched by prison staff and, during the search, had his clothing forcibly removed. Daniel also says that he was held in a cell next to adult prisoners who were calling out to him, making him feel uncomfortable.

The Advocate tells Daniel about his rights including that he has a right to complain about his treatment in the reception prison. The Advocate asks Daniel if he would like help to make a complaint. Daniel agrees, and elects to direct his complaint to the Ombudsman.

The Advocate also speaks to Ashley management to advocate for Daniel to have regular contact with his sister. Advocacy is also provided for additional supports for Daniel while in detention, noting his visible discomfort and anxiety.

After the Office of the Ombudsman has responded to Daniel's complaint in writing, the Advocate spends time with Daniel to explain the outcome, what it means, and answer any questions Daniel has. The Advocate advises Daniel of his options if he is unhappy with the outcome. The Advocate agrees to contact the Ombudsman to raise some concerns that Daniel has about the outcome.

Drawing on Daniel's individual experience of the reception prison, the Commissioner continues to engage in systemic advocacy on the use of adult reception prisons as the entry point to the youth justice system generally, calling for an end to this approach.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Reports and other publications

- Commissioner for Children and Young People Tasmania Annual Report, 2021–22 (17 November 2022)
[Annual Report 2021-2022](#)
- Vaping in Schools: What I have heard from CCYP Ambassadors, letter to the Secretary, Department for Education, Children and Young People (3 March 2023)
[2023-03-03-Vaping-Letter-to-DECYP-Secretary-FINAL.pdf](#)
- Monitoring Report No. 2: Key data on Tasmania's out-of-home care system, 2020–2021 (15 March 2023)
[CCYP-Data-Monitoring-Report-2020-2021.pdf](#)
- Briefing to Members of the Parliament of Tasmania – Child and Youth Safe Organisations Bill 2022 (27 March 2023)
[2023-03-27-CCYP-Letter-to-Members-of-the-Tasmanian-Parliament-Child-and-Youth-Safe-Organisations-Bill-2022.pdf](#)
- CCYP Ambassador Program – 'Hear My Story'– Acceptance, Belonging and Feeling Safe – four podcasts (April 2023)
[Acceptance, Belonging and Feeling Safe](#)
- CCYP Ambassador Program – Education Animations (15 June 2023)
[CCYP Ambassadors' thoughts on education](#)

APPENDIX B: Submissions

- Submission – Food Relief to Food Resilience Action Plan, 29 July 2022, [2022-07-29-Food-Relief-to-Food-Resilience-Action-Plan-Tas-Submission.pdf](#)
- Submission – Integrity Commission Discussion Paper, 12 September 2022, [2022-09-12-Letter-Consultation-Integrity-Commission-Act-2009-Discussion-Paper.pdf](#)
- Submission – Draft Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Strategy (2023–2027), 14 October 2022, [221014-CCYP-Comment-on-the-Draft-Tasmanian-Suicide-Prevention-Strategy.pdf](#)
- Submission – Carer Recognition Bill 2022, 17 October 2022, unpublished
- Submission – Draft Justice Miscellaneous (Royal Commission Amendments) Bill 2022, 21 October 2022, [Submission-Justice-Misc-RC-Amendments-Bill-2022.pdf](#)
- Submission – Draft Child and Youth Safe Organisations Bill 2022, 21 October 2022, [Child-and-Youth-Safe-Organisations-Bill-2022.pdf](#)
- Submission – Draft Mental Health Act Amendment Bill 2022, 31 October 2022, [Submission-Mental-Health-Act-Amendments-Bill-2022.pdf](#)
- Submission – Draft Guardianship and Administration Amendment Bill 2022, 18 November 2022, [2022-11-18-Submission-GAB-Amendment-Bill-2022.pdf](#)
- Submission – Tasmania’s Final Draft Youth Justice System Blueprint, 23 December 2022, [2022-12-23-FINAL-CCYP-response-to-Nov-22-YJ-Blueprint.pdf](#)
- Submission – Draft Police Offences Amendment (Nazi Symbol Prohibition) Bill 2023 – Community Consultation, 14 February 2023, [2023-02-14-Lt-Ginna-Webster-Nazi-Symbol-Prohibition-Bill.pdf](#)
- Submission – Tasmanian National Preventive Mechanism Implementation Project, Consultation Paper 1, 3 March 2023, [CCYP-Comment-Tasmanian-NPM-Consultation-paper-1-FINAL-DRAFT.pdf](#)
- Submission – Literacy Advisory Panel’s Final Consultation report for the Development of Tasmania’s Community-wide Framework, 22 March 2023, [2023-03-22-CCYP-Submission-Literacy-Advisory-Panel-Community-Consultation.pdf](#)
- Submission – Legislative Council, Government Administration Committee ‘B’, Inquiry into Tasmanian Adult Imprisonment and Youth Detention Matters, 31 March 2023, available on the Parliament of Tasmania website
- Submission – Australian Institute of Health and Welfare’s Consultation package for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children content, 2 June 2023, unpublished

APPENDIX C: Media releases and opinion pieces

- Tasmanian Out-of-Home Care Standards welcomed, 16 August 2022, childcomm.tas.gov.au/tasmanian-out-of-home-care-standards-welcomed/
- Climate Change Amendment Bill welcomed, 17 August 2022, childcomm.tas.gov.au/changes-to-climate-change-bill-welcomed/
- Rapid response crisis team at Ashley, 27 August 22, childcomm.tas.gov.au/ashley-youth-detention-centre/
- *OK, so a nest is a home* – Queenstown launch, 16 September 2022, childcomm.tas.gov.au/nest-book-queenstown-launch/
- Reforming youth justice in Tasmania, 5 October 2022, childcomm.tas.gov.au/reforming-youth-justice-in-tasmania/
- CCYP Ambassador Statewide Event 2022, 11 October 2022, childcomm.tas.gov.au/children-and-young-people-have-their-say/
- Anti-Poverty Week 2022, 18 October 2022, childcomm.tas.gov.au/anti-poverty-week/
- Tasmanian Parliament Apology, 8 November 2022, childcomm.tas.gov.au/tasmanian-parliament-apology/
- CCYP Annual Report 2021–2022 tabled, 22 November 2022, childcomm.tas.gov.au/ccyp-annual-report-2021-2022/
- Young, In Love and In Danger, 22 November 2022, childcomm.tas.gov.au/young-in-love-and-in-danger/
- CCYP Systemic Investigation into Out-of-Home Care, 19 December 2022, childcomm.tas.gov.au/ccyp-systemic-investigation-into-out-of-home-care/
- Out-of-Home Care submissions closing date extended, 23 February 2023, childcomm.tas.gov.au/submissions-closing-date-extended/
- Launch of ‘Take notice, believe us and act!’, 27 February 2023, childcomm.tas.gov.au/take-notice-believe-us-and-act-commission-of-inquiry-report-on-childrens-views-on-safety-in-organisational-settings/
- Better data needed for Tasmanian Out-of-Home Care System, 15 March 2023, childcomm.tas.gov.au/better-data-needed-for-tasmanian-out-of-home-care-system/
- Australian Child Maltreatment Study findings demand action, 3 April 2023, childcomm.tas.gov.au/australian-child-maltreatment-study-findings-demand-action/
- Launch of Your Engagement Place program for young Tasmanians, 9 May 2023, childcomm.tas.gov.au/launch-of-yep-program-for-young-tasmanians/
- ‘Tough on crime’ approach will not make communities safer, 22 May 2023, childcomm.tas.gov.au/opinion-piece-tough-on-crime-approach-will-not-make-communities-safer/
- Making organisations child safe still requires work, 25 May 2023, childcomm.tas.gov.au/making-organisations-child-safe-still-requires-work/
- B4 Early Years Coalition ‘Big Screen Little Screen’ Project Pilot welcomed, 6 June 2023, childcomm.tas.gov.au/big-screen-the-first-1000-days/
- Children and young people’s insights on education, 15 June 2023, childcomm.tas.gov.au/children-and-young-peoples-insights-on-education/

APPENDIX D: Speeches, presentations and events

- Panel member, National Family History Month, 16 August 2022
- Presenter, Young Archies Award Presentation, 27 August 2022
- Briefing with Victorian Principal Commissioner for Children and Young People, Victorian Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct model for TasCOSS members, 12 September 2022
- Panel Member, Department of Education and Communities Tasmania Combined Leaders Group meeting, 14 September 2022
- Presenter/ Public Discourse Award Recipient, Australian Council for Educational Leaders (Tasmanian Branch) Awards, 15 September 2022
- Keynote speaker, Family Day Care 2022 national conference, 16 September 2022
- Presenter/host, *Ok, so a nest is a home* book launches, Huonville 29 August 2022, Queenstown 20 September 2022
- Panel member, City of Hobart Children's Mayor event, 14 October 2022
- Presenter and Anti-Poverty Week Champion, Anti-Poverty Week launch, 18 October 2022
- Presenter, Northern Early Years Group, 22 October 2022
- Closing address, Child and Family Learning Centre statewide day, 17 November 2022
- Speaker, Anglicare's *Young, in love and in danger: Teen domestic violence and abuse in Tasmania* project launch, 22 November 2022
- Presenter, Education and Care Unit annual statewide meeting, 30 November 2022
- Presenter, *The power of young voices in influencing child-related policy and decision-making*, 5th National Child Protection Forum, 7 December 2022
- Presenter/ host, Impacts of COVID-19 on young Tasmanians (2020) symposia with government agencies, 13 December 2022 and 21 February 2023
- Speaker and guest of honour, Kids Care Clinic launch, 29 March 2023
- Presenter, St Mary's College Legal Studies class, 28 April 2023
- Panel member, Child wellbeing frameworks as mediators for the care and protection of children and young people in out-of-home-care, WACOSS Conference 2023, 2 May 2023
- Presenter, Child Health and Parenting Service operational meeting, 17 May 2023
- Panel member, Brighton Youth Action Group, Big Bangin' Youth Night, 19 May 2023
- Briefing, Joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People (WA), Inquiry into addressing food insecurity for children and young people affected by poverty, 23 February 2023
- Speaker, Songs for Freedom, MONA FOMA, 23 February 2023
- Briefing, Legislative Council on the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Bill 2022, 23 May 2023
- Reader, National Simultaneous Story Time, 24 May 2023
- Presenter, Launceston City Council elected members workshop, 8 June 2023
- Presenter, The Link Youth Health Service staff professional development day, 27 June 2023

APPENDIX E: Memberships

- Alliance for a Tasmanian Human Rights Act
- Australia and New Zealand Children's Commissioners and Guardians (ANZCCG)
- ANZCCG Policy Officers Network
- ANZCCG Data Community of Practice
- ANZCCG Youth Participation Community of Practice
- Australian National Child Health and Development Atlas Oversight Group
- Australian Research Council Linkage Project – Fostering school attendance for students in out-of-home care
- B4 Early Years Coalition
- Brand Tasmania Little Tasmanian Action Group
- Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act Review Advisory Group
- Community Consultative Group on the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy
- Council of Obstetric and Paediatric Mortality and Morbidity (COPMM)
- Department of Health Smoke Free Young People Working Group
- Department of Premier and Cabinet Child and Youth Wellbeing Website Working Group
- End Physical Punishment of Australian Children Network
- Family and Sexual Violence Community Consultative Group
- Fired Up: Responding to conflict and violence in teen relationships in Tasmania Reference Group, Anglicare Tasmania Inc.
- Magistrates Court Hobart Court Users Group
- Research Assessment and Approval Committee (RAAC), Education Performance and Review, Department of Education
- Songs for Freedom Reference Group
- Southern Regional Mental Health Group
- TasCOSS COVID Recovery Network
- Tasmania Legal Aid Separate Representative Project Steering Committee
- Tasmania Legal Aid Strategic Plan Partners group
- Tasmanian Collaboration for Health Improvement
- Tasmanian Youth Forum Steering Committee
- Thrive to 25
- University of Tasmania Research Advisory Panel, Regional Recovery after COVID-19
- Youth Action Priorities

Annual Report 2022-23

