



Who are we?

The Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People works to improve the safety, welfare and wellbeing of all children and young people in NSW aged 0-24 years.

The Office is also responsible for promoting children and young people's participation in decision-making about issues that affect their lives and speaking up for children and young people to get their points of view heard by decision makers.

On 9 January this year, Andrew Johnson was appointed the first Advocate for Children and Young People in NSW.

What is this consultation about?

The Advocate is responsible, under legislation, for developing a three-year whole-of-government strategic plan for children and young people aged 0-24 years in NSW.

Andrew is inviting children and young people all over NSW to participate in consultations to inform the development of this plan.

Children and young people will be asked for their views on:

- What is working and what is not working well for children and young people in NSW;
- What the NSW Government needs to focus on to improve the lives of children and young people; and
- What are the qualities of a good society for children and young people?

After speaking with children and young people, we will also consult with government and non-government agencies whose work impacts on young people. The Office of the Advocate will develop a draft plan based on the views of children, young people and adults. We will seek feedback from children and young people on the draft plan before it is finalised.

What is involved?

As a facilitator, your job is to run a classroom consultation with your students.

This involves facilitating a class discussion based on materials we provide to you. After the discussion, you will then assist students to develop their own class plan for children and young people in NSW by answering four questions.

Students also have the option to provide individual and confidential feedback via an online survey.

Resources

- PowerPoint and/or Handout 1: “Have your say” – this introduces the Office of the Advocate and explains what the consultation is about.
- Handout 2: “What is and is not working well for children and young people in NSW”.

Running the consultation

STEP 1:

PLAY THE POWERPOINT AND/OR GIVE OUT HANDOUT 1

(about 10 mins)

- Read through the slideshow and/or the handout with students.
- Stop at Slide 11 – “Our plan for children and young people in NSW”.
- Give children and young people the opportunity to ask any questions.
- Let students know their participation is voluntary, they can choose not to take part and that is okay.
- Tell your group that by participating in this consultation they have the opportunity to have a say about what the plan for children and young people should focus on to improve the lives of all children and young people in NSW.

STEP 2:

DISTRIBUTE HANDOUT 2 - “What is and isn’t working well for children and young people in NSW”

(about 15 mins)

- Divide into groups of 3-4 children and young people per group.
- The handout lists the different areas that the NSW government is responsible for. Students should discuss and write down the things in each area that they think are working well for children and young people and also those things that they think the government could do better for children and young people.
- Remind them to think about all children and young people between the ages of 0 and 24 years, not just children and young people their age.
- Prompts for students if needed (try to have children and young people come up with their own ideas first):
 - Health care: think about what health services are available to young people including mental health and the ability to access these services
 - Family and community services: think about children and young people in out of home care, and with disabilities
 - Transport: think about the cost, accessibility, safety of transport services.
 - Education: think about schools, preschools, TAFE and university

STEP 3:

Developing the plan for children and young people in NSW

(about 20-25 mins)

- Open the PowerPoint (or Handout 1) to Slide 11 - “Our plan for children and young people in NSW”. (NOTE: If you are not using PowerPoint you will need to record students’ answers on paper and send this back to us)
- Tell students they are now going to develop their own plan for children and young people as if they were in charge of NSW – remember the goal of the plan is to make NSW the best it can possibly be for children and young people.

Answering Statements A and B on the plan

- Read out Statements A and B on the plan – “We think the following things are working well for children and young people” and “We think the following things are NOT

working well for children and young people”.

- Students should discuss as a group what they wrote in their small groups and together prioritise three things that are working well for children and young people in NSW (A) and three things that are not working well (B).
- DISCUSSION PROMPT: In prioritising their three things, you may wish to ask children and young people to consider the following:
 - *Do you think other children and young people in NSW would agree that these things are or are not working well for them?*
- Once agreement is reached, write their responses on the PowerPoint (or record on paper if you are not using the PowerPoint).

Answering Statement C on the plan

- Read out Statement C on the plan – “The top three things we would like the NSW Government to focus on to improve the lives of children and young people are.”
- Students should discuss as a group, and then prioritise the top three things for writing on the plan.
- DISCUSSION PROMPTS: In prioritising their three things, you may wish to ask children and young people to consider the following:
 - *If you were the leaders of NSW, what do you think are the most important things to fix **first**?*
 - *What would be different if you did this well?*
 - *If you were the leaders of NSW, what would you change for children and young people?*
 - *What would these changes look like? For example: more buses available from X to X between the hours of X and X.*
 -
- Once agreement is reached, write their responses on the

PowerPoint (or record on paper if you are not using the PowerPoint).

Answering Statement D on the plan

- Read out Statement D on the plan – “The qualities of a good society for children and young people are.”
- Students should discuss as a group, and then prioritise the top three things for writing on the plan.
- DISCUSSION PROMPT: In prioritising their three things, you may wish to ask children and young people to consider the following:
 - *How do you like adults to **BEHAVE** towards you?*
 - *How do you like adults to **TREAT** you?*
- Once agreement is reached, write their responses on the PowerPoint (or record on paper if you are not using the PowerPoint).

STEP 4:

Optional online feedback (about 10 mins)

- Explain to students that they now have the opportunity to give their own individual feedback to the Advocate.
- This involves answering the same four questions via an online survey PLUS one additional question asking if there is anything else they would like to tell the Advocate about how to make NSW a better place for children and young people?
- This is entirely optional.
- Students may want to do this if they feel they did not get to express their views sufficiently in the group situation, or if they felt something was important to them that did not get written up in the group responses.
- Responses are anonymous – they do not write their names on the survey.

How to participate

- Students need to log on to their computers and be given the

survey link to click on. The link is

<http://www.acyp.nsw.gov.au/young-person-survey>

- Please note that once they start writing, they will need to complete it. It cannot be saved and opened again at a later time.

STEP 5: Where to from here and thank you!

- Thank students for their participation and open the PowerPoint/Handout 1 to slide 13.
- Explain that they can send us an email at countmein@acyp.nsw.gov.au if they would like to be kept up to date on what is happening with the plan for children and young people.

STEP 6: Returning the responses

Please record the number of students (males and females separately) who took part in this consultation and their Year group.

Please return these numbers and the PowerPoint with responses to:

melissa.goldman@acyp.nsw.gov.au

OR post answer sheets to:

Melissa Goldman

Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People

Level 2, 407 Elizabeth St SURRY HILLS NSW 2010

Thank you for running this consultation on behalf of the Advocate for Children and Young People!

STEP 6:

Returning the responses

Please return the PowerPoint with responses and/or question response sheets to:

melissa.goldman@kids.nsw.gov.au

OR post to:

Melissa Goldman

Office of the Advocate for Children
and Young People

Level 2, 407 Elizabeth St SURRY
HILLS NSW 2010

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