



Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People

Annual Report

2018/2019



acyp.

The Hon John Ajaka MLC
President
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

The Hon Jonathan O'Dea MP
Speaker
Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

In accordance with section 32 of the *Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014* (the Act) I am pleased to present the Advocate for Children and Young People's Annual Report for 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019.

The report includes: a description of the Advocate's activities during the year in relation to each of the Advocate's functions; an evaluation of the response of relevant authorities to the recommendations of the Advocate; and any recommendations for changes in the laws of the State, or for administrative action, that the Advocate considers should be made as a result of the exercise of the Advocate's functions.

As provided by section 32 of the Act, I ask that you now make this report publicly available at the determined time.

Yours sincerely



Andrew Johnson
Advocate for Children and Young People
1 October 2019

Received by me and authorised
to be made public forthwith on

Tuesday 1 October 2019
at 4:15pm


Speaker

The Hon John Ajaka MLC
President
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

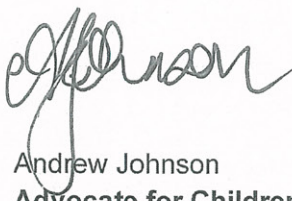
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For
President

a cyp

Office Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People

Report Annual Report

Year 2019

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We wish to pay our respects to Aboriginal elders – past, present and emerging – and acknowledge the important role of Aboriginal people and culture within the NSW community. ACYP advises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers this report may contain images of people who may have passed away.

Cover design

Entries from Youth Week 2019 Design Competition (left to right) - Brodie Fleming, Eshita Singh, Hansi Appuhami, Zardid Syed, Derek Nguyen, Josh Whitehead, Savera Shabih, Ana Maksimovic, Mia Heredia, Celena MacDonald, Mikayla Daniel, Ankith Naikaraparambil, Emma Vazquez, Hayley Johns, Mikayla Daniel

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Advocate's foreword

Andrew Johnson

Advocate for Children and Young People

I am pleased to present the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People's (ACYP) Annual Report for the reporting period of 1 July 2018 – 30 June 2019. This report outlines the work that the office has been involved in under the functions of the Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014.

Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the thousands of children and young people in NSW who generously gave their time to provide feedback in the reporting period. During this reporting period ACYP reached a milestone of having heard back from 10,000 children and young people in face-to-face consultations out of a combined total of 28,000 children and young people over the last four years.

An important part of our mandate is to give priority to the interests and needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people and so many of our consultations have involved those who are doing it tough.

During the reporting period, I was fortunate to hear directly from children and young people from diverse backgrounds and life experiences on a broad range of topic areas. Specific consultations were undertaken with children and young people who are refugee and asylum seekers, Aboriginal children and young people, those living in regional NSW and those in Juvenile Justice centres. In addition to the Juvenile Justice consultations, our office commenced a trial of Exit Interviews.



We also conducted targeted consultations with children and young people on child safe organisations and the future of education. We continued with our ongoing work of hearing from children and young people on areas including education, mental health, wellbeing, homelessness, employment, rights, safety, violence, diversity, discrimination, life skills, digital usage and general attitudes.

Some of the major issues and recommendations we heard from children and young people during the many consultations included: the need to systematise children and young people's voices into decision-making processes; an increase in life skills programs; better transitions out-of-care; access to Aboriginal owned and controlled organisations; government services to be more accessible; needing places to go when suspended; assistance in navigating the service system; the importance of voice in schools; and training and knowledge in human and children's rights.

I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the 2018 and 2019 NSW Youth Advisory Councils. Their advice to me and the Government of NSW has been invaluable.

I would like to thank the many government and non-government organisations, schools and youth groups who worked with us during the reporting period. We have enjoyed engaging with you all through many of our projects and events and hearing about your work and recommendations.

I extend my gratitude to our related Ministers, the Hon. Bronnie Taylor MLC, NSW Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women; the Hon. Gareth Ward MP, Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services and the former Minister responsible for Youth, the Hon. Ray Williams, MP.

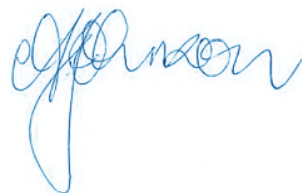
The feedback from our consultations led to the development of a number of significant pieces of work during the reporting period. This includes the reports 'Consultations with Socially Excluded Children and Young People', 'Engaging with Children and Young People in your Organisation' and 'The Economic Cost of Violence Against Children and Young People'.

We also celebrated the launch Our Local which is an online platform that was called for and co-designed by children and young people to provide information on opportunities, activities, services and events around NSW.

Children and young people from all over NSW came together to participate in a number of initiatives to have their voices heard. Together with our partners in government and the non-government sectors, we held many events during the period including: the NSW Children's Week Parliament; the NSW Children's Week celebration event; the meaningful participation with children and young people conferences; Children's Laureate event and NSW Youth Week Forum.

Throughout the reporting year ACYP continued to provide training to organisations on child rights, child rights programming and participation with children and young people. Our course on child rights now contributes to five hours of free NESA Registered Professional Development for NSW teachers.

I would like to finally thank and acknowledge the staff of ACYP who are always committed to ensuring that as many children and young people across NSW are given the opportunity to engage with us and have their voices heard.



Andrew Johnson

Advocate for Children and Young People

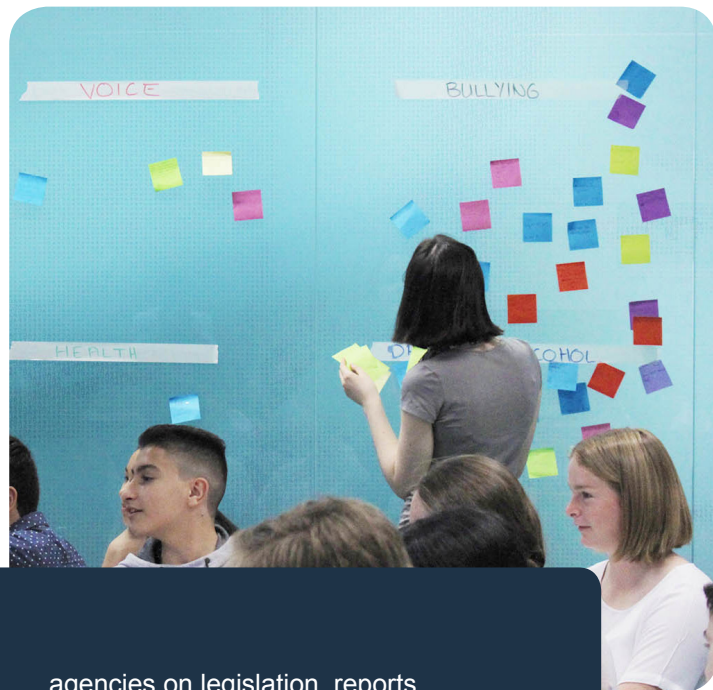
About the office

Governance and functions

The Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People is established under the Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014 (the Act). The Advocate is an independent statutory appointment overseight by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Children and Young People.



The functions of the Advocate as set out in the Act are:



a. to advocate for and promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people aged 0-24 years

b. to promote the participation of children and young people in the making of decisions that affect their lives and to encourage government and non-government agencies to seek the participation of children and young people appropriate to their age and maturity,

c. to conduct special inquiries into issues affecting children and young people

d. to make recommendations to government and non-government

agencies on legislation, reports, policies, practices, procedures and services affecting children and young people

e. to conduct, promote and monitor research into issues affecting children and young people

f. to promote the provision of information and advice to assist children and young people,

g. to prepare, in consultation with the Minister, a three year Strategic Plan for Children and Young People in the State.

The Act also establishes the NSW Youth Advisory Council (YAC) of which the Advocate is an ex officio member. The Advocate is also responsible for providing secretariat support to the YAC.

In undertaking these functions the Advocate is to focus on systemic issues affecting children and young people and to give priority to the interests of vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people. The Act requires the Advocate to prepare an annual report to Parliament on the Advocate's activities during that year in relation to each of the Advocate's functions.

Year in review

1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019

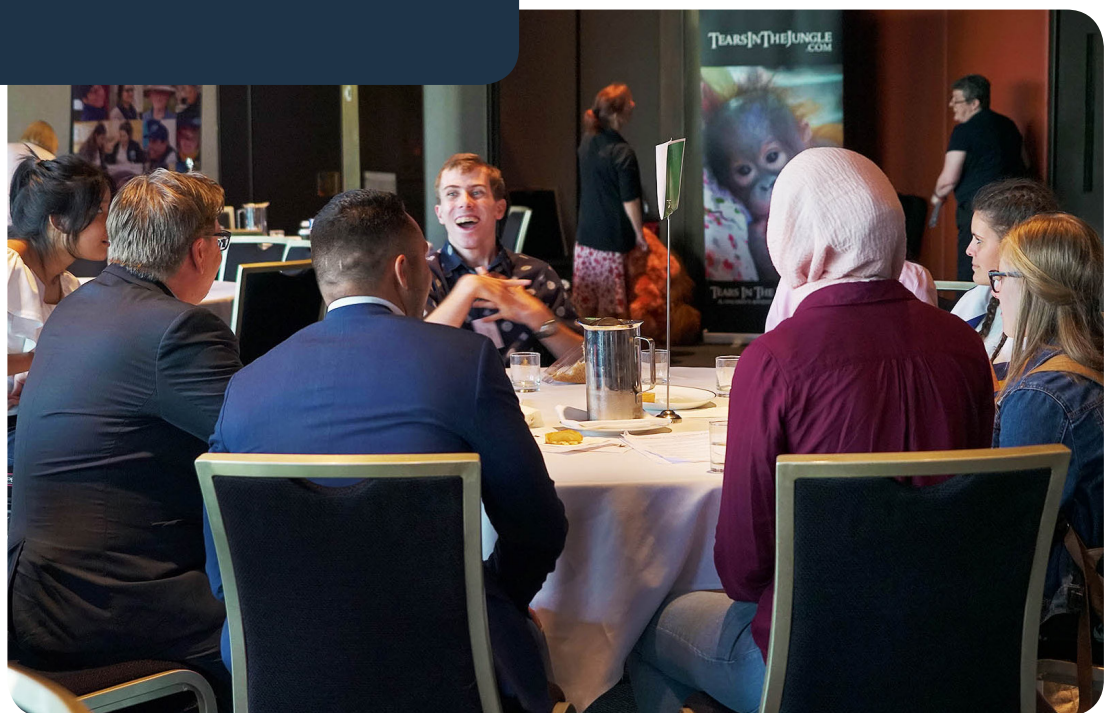




Promoting the participation of children and young people in the decisions that affect their lives

One of the functions of the Advocate under the Act is to promote the participation of children and young people in the making of decisions that affect their lives.

ACYP undertakes this function through a range of activities with children and young people including face-to-face consultations, programs, initiatives, polling and events. ACYP listens to children and young people so that their voices are heard and that they can have a say on the matters important to them.



Consulting with children and young people

In this reporting period, ACYP reached a milestone of having heard back from 10,000 children and young people in face-to-face consultations out of a combined total of 28,000 children and young people. Consultations with children and young people are held across metropolitan and regional NSW to ensure a wide reach of voices are heard.

Through face-to-face consultations, ACYP asks questions designed specifically to allow children and young people to feel as though they can freely and openly provide responses.

ACYP has heard feedback from children and young people on a wide range of topic areas including:



education,



rights,



life skills,



mental health,



safety,



digital usage



wellbeing,



violence,



and general attitudes



homelessness,



diversity,



employment,



discrimination,

ACYP also consults with children and young people through initiatives, training, programs, competitions and events.

Attitudinal polling with children and young people is also conducted each year and this involves questions on specific subject areas. The results inform ACYP's reports and publications.



Consultations

Throughout the reporting year, ACYP worked with government and non-government stakeholders to undertake targeted consultations with children and young people across NSW. These include:

Regional consultations

In late July and early August 2018, ACYP worked with the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) to conduct 26 workshops across regional NSW. The purpose of these workshops was to engage young people in the early preparation stages of a Regional Youth Strategy for NSW.

640 students were consulted across eight DPC regions in regional NSW: Central West and Orana (62), Far West (36), Hunter (181), Illawarra-Shoalhaven (87), New England and North West (26), North Coast (132); Riverina Murray (60), and South East Tablelands (56). Consultations predominantly took place in high schools so young people were mostly aged between 12 – 18yrs, however some groups of older young people also participated in the consultations.

Young people gave feedback about what they feel is working well for young people in their communities, what is not working so well, and

what improvements they would like to see made for young people in their community.

Refugee consultations

Between November 2018 and January 2019, ACYP in partnership with the Coordinator-General for Refugee Resettlement in NSW, the Joint Party Working Group Refugee Youth Sub Group and Multicultural NSW conducted a series of focus group style consultations with young refugees and asylum seekers.

The purpose of the consultations was to hear from young people what supports and services are working well for young people arriving in NSW and what they think would better help them during the settlement process. These insights would then be used to inform the NSW Government's Refugee Youth Policy Initiative.

In total, 176 young people aged between 12 and 24 years took part in 36 focus group style consultations. They were residing in Sydney, South West Sydney, North West Sydney, Newcastle, Coffs Harbour and Wollongong.

Young people had come to Australia from a wide range of countries including Iraq, Syria, Iran, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Uganda, Myanmar,



Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cambodia, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Lebanon. Just under one-third of these young people had been in Australia for less than 12 months.

Young people were recruited through NSW secondary schools as well as from services that provide supports to refugee and asylum seeker young people (NAVITAS; SCARF; Asylum Seeker Centre).

Young people responded to questions about what had helped them when they first arrived in Australia.

Child Safe consultations

ACYP conducted 96 focus group style consultations with 608 children and young people to gather their views on creating child safe organisations. Children and young people were aged between 10 and 24 years of age. 45.6% identified as male, 52.8% as female and 1.6% as a gender other than male or female. Of the 608 children and young people, 7.7% were Aboriginal and 17.8% were from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. 45.2% of the children and young people consulted with resided in Sydney and 54.8% in rural and regional NSW.

Focus group consultations were conducted in three settings. One hundred and fifty children and young people took part in the consultation as part of the ACYP Youth Week Forum at NSW Parliament House in April 2019. A further 448 children and young people participated in the consultations in their schools. ACYP staff visited 12 schools; 5 were located in Sydney and 7 in regional areas. Six of the 12 schools were Government, 4 Catholic and 2 were Independent. A focus group consultation was also conducted



with 10 of the 12, 2019 NSW Youth Advisory Council (YAC) members.

Participants answered questions about creating safe environments for all children and young people, feeling unsafe in an organisation, making a report or recommendations and how to provide feedback when issues and recommendations are raised.

ACYP also conducted a poll of approximately 1,000 children and young people aged 12-24 years across NSW. The questionnaire included the same four questions as asked in the face to face consultations and some additional questions related to creating child safe organisations.

Juvenile Justice consultations

During the course of the last reporting period, the Advocate conducted consultations in Acmena, Riverina, Cobham, and Orana Juvenile Justice Centres. We listened to a total of 86 young people aged between 11-21yrs.

These form part of a wider series of consultations undertaken in Juvenile Justice Centres prior to and following the recent reporting period which has seen the Advocate visit all NSW Centres twice between July 2017 – July 2019 listening to over 242 young people.

Consultations were conducted in small focus group formats at each Centre. Young people

responded to questions about what services, programs, and supports they think are helpful to young people prior to coming into custody, whilst they are in custody, and when they return to the community.

Exit Interview Trial

In addition to the Juvenile Justice Centre consultations, ACYP commenced a trial of Exit Interviews with young people at Baxter Juvenile Justice Centre. This trial consisted of two rounds of targeted in-depth, individual interviews with 15 young men, within one month of their release date.



The young men gave detailed responses to a range of questions exploring how they think young people could be better supported in communities to stay out of trouble; what programs, supports and services are helpful for young people in custody; and what do young people leaving custody need to assist them to reintegrate into the community.

Future of education consultations

In October 2018 working with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESAs), ACYP conducted consultations with school students to seek their views on what education in the 21st Century should look like. Participants were asked about what should be the purpose of schooling in the

future, what knowledge, skills and attributes should be developed, how student learning can be better supported and changes for the future. In total, 1,848 children and young people took part in the consultations, online survey and youth poll.

These consultations were held at two ACYP events: Children's Week Parliament (October 2018) and the recruitment day for the 2019 NSW Youth Advisory Council (November 2018). At these events there were twenty focus group style consultations and 230 young people participated with ages ranging between 12 and 24 years. Young people came from across NSW representing diverse backgrounds and life experiences including disability; out of home care; culturally and linguistically diverse; Aboriginal young people and young refugees. Participants were recruited from Government, Independent and Catholic schools; local youth councils and community groups and organisations.

Main themes that emerged from these consultations were then used to create an online survey that was completed by children and young people that attended the School Spectacular event organised by the NSW Department of Education (November 2018), where 611 children and young people, aged 18 years and below, completed the survey. In addition, similar questions were also asked in a youth poll commissioned by ACYP in December 2018 and



1,007 children and young people aged 12-24 years took part in the online poll.

Aboriginal children and young people – Nations of Origin

ACYP again attended the PCYC Nations of Origin event held in Raymond Terrace on 16-18 July 2018. Nations of Origin is a multifaceted sport, cultural, education and leadership program which is held annually in close proximity to NAIDOC week. Cultural identity is a focal point of the project with all teams consisting of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal young people and the teams representing their community under their traditional local Aboriginal nation name from their area. ACYP undertook consultations with young people at netball, football and rugby league tournaments. In total, 354 young people from regional and urban areas across NSW took part in small group discussions about community and culture over the three days.

Attitudinal surveys

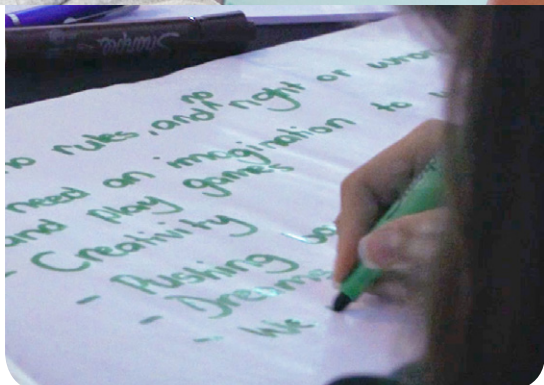
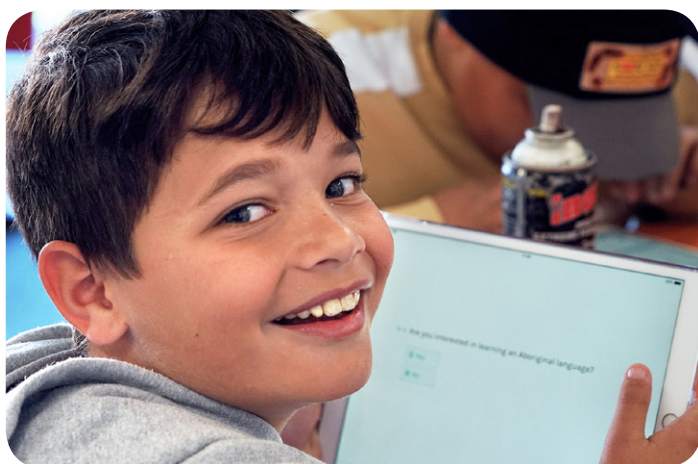
ACYP commissions YouGov Galaxy to conduct quantitative polling to compliment the qualitative research collected by ACYP directly from children and young people across the state.

ACYP undertook four surveys in the reporting period which involved children and young people between the ages of 12 and 24 who live in NSW.

Children and young people were asked questions on topics including but not limited to: rights, safety, smart phone usage, domestic violence, environmental concerns, education, health, mental health and general attitudinal questions. ACYP have worked with the following departments to assist them in their work to better target their programs: NSW Education Standards Authority, NSW Department of Education, Office of Women, Department of Health and Department of Premier and Cabinet.

The results from polling are often shared with a range of government departments as a way of informing them about children and young people as beneficiaries and users of their services. By sharing this information with key decision makers, information from children and young people helps to inform the development of new policies and practices.

Polling topics and questions often result from face-to-face consultations directly with children and young people. Polling allows ACYP to gain an understanding of certain issues raised by children and young people from a quantitative perspective, to compliment qualitative methodologies. At various times ACYP consults with other NSW government departments to collaborate on polling questions.



Report launches

ACYP has released a number of reports which have been informed by consultations with children and young people. Each report outlines ACYP's methodology, how many children and young people were consulted, the questions asked, the detailed findings and the recommendations made by children and young people.

The feedback and solutions provided by children and young people is reported directly into parliament and provided to decision makers. Many of ACYP's reports are publicly released to raise even more awareness about the issues that children and young people are experiencing and what changes they would like to see made.

ACYP is also requested by various organisations and government departments to undertake targeted consultations with children and young people on specific topic areas. These results and findings are then produced into reports which can assist with the creation, development and implementation of their projects, keeping in mind the best interests of the child throughout the process.



Report on Consultations with Socially Excluded Children and Young People

On Thursday 18 October 2018, ACYP released a report 'Consultations with Socially Excluded Children and Young People'. The report outlines 70 recommendations which were raised in face-to-face consultations with almost 3,000 socially excluded children and young people, living in low socio-economic status areas, in out of home care, experiencing homelessness, in the juvenile justice system and Aboriginal children and young people.

The recommendations suggested by children and young people are organised across 12 topics in the report, these include: voice; education; Aboriginal children and young people and culture; employment; housing and homelessness; violence against children and young people; transport; mental health and substance abuse; supportive workers and services; accessible programs and activities; justice; and the built environment.

The report found that children and young people doing it tough face extraordinary challenges drawn out by their multiple disadvantages. Issues identified by children and young people themselves included having a safe home to live in, needing access to accommodation support and food in times of crisis, the need for better education in schools and for transitions out-of-care or detention.

Other areas identified included life skills, needing somewhere to go when suspended and government services to be more accessible. For Aboriginal children and young people there was also a very strong preference for Aboriginal owned and controlled organisations.

The key and overarching recommendation was the need to systematise children and young



people's voices into decision-making processes at all levels on matters affecting their lives. Whether that be at the highest level of government policy making to the day to day decisions made by the service they connect with.

Socially excluded children and young people were more likely than other children and young people to talk about the need for more respectful and supportive community service workers and disengagement from school. Racism, discrimination and youth stereotypes were raised as big issues amongst Aboriginal children and young people causing them to feel unwelcome and excluded in their communities.

The release of the report received wide coverage across ABC media outlets. The coverage provided a platform for the voices of socially excluded children and young people and drew attention to the issues they face in their daily lives.

ABC investigative reporter and NSW State Coverage Producer Greg Miskelly published an in-depth story on the abc.net.au website. The Advocate was interviewed by Wendy Harmer and Robbie Buck on ABC 702 as well as ABC regional radio stations where he provided insight into the consultations undertaken and the major issues raised. The Advocate also appeared on ABC's The Drum and the findings of the report were covered on ABC's 7pm News. The editorial potential reach across online was 7.23m, radio was 578.63k and TV was 106.18k.

Engaging with Children and Young People in Your Organisation

Building upon the work of the former Commission for Children and Young People and ACYP, ACYP released the resource 'Engaging children and young people in your organisation' on Tuesday 5 February 2019. The resource includes information on how to run events, top ten tips for participation, checklists for CEOs, boards, NGO front line workers and contract managers.

The resource has been developed to help government and non-government organisations meaningfully and effectively involve children and young people in their decision making. It highlights the importance of seeing children and young people as partners with adults in the decision making process.

As many organisations have already found, initiatives designed for children and young people are more likely to be effective if children and young people themselves participate in their development and implementation.

In the resource, the term 'participation' refers to children and young people's involvement in collective decision making, that is, children and young people having a say in the decisions that government and organisations make that affect them. It does not refer to children and young people's participation in personal and family decision making.

The resource outlines the ways in which children and young people can participate in organisational decisions including one-off consultations, sitting on boards, and committees, recruiting staff, youth councils, and advisory groups and participating in and undertaking research.

This guide has been prepared for a wide audience—from people with no prior practice of involving children and young people in organisational decision making to those with extensive experience. It has been written for members of all levels of government, policy makers, non-government and community organisations, youth workers, teachers, school executives, and private organisations.

Since the guide was published, ACYP has since released a video booklet of the guide which allows readers to interact and watch video examples of meaningful engagement and participation with children and young people. The guide is available on the ACYP website.



The Economic Cost of Violence Against Children and Young People

The International Perspectives conference held at the MCA in 2017 brought together more than 120 leaders and experts and more than 100 children and young people from across NSW, all of which shared a collective goal – to end violence against children and young people.

The 'Now and Forever' campaign was launched at the 2017 conference. Children and young people called for a campaign that asks adults to stand up and say out loud that violence against children and young people is wrong. Children and young people asked adults to sign a pledge to help end violence against children and young people.

Since the launch of the 'Now and Forever' campaign, many people are continuing to take part by signing the pledge. ACYP has continued with its ongoing work and commitment towards helping ending violence against children and young people. On Thursday 20 June 2019, ACYP released a report that estimates violence against children and young people costs NSW \$11.2 billion annually.

According to the report, 'The Economic Cost of Violence Against Children and Young People', which ACYP commissioned Deloitte Access Economics to undertake, there were 154,302 estimated cases of violence against children and young people in NSW.



The report, which focuses solely on violence against children and young people aged 0-24, using the figures from 2016-2017, reveals that violence against children not only impacts on their lives but also has a tremendous economic impact on New South Wales:

- Violence against children and young people costs NSW \$11.2 billion annually
- \$2.3 billion of this is borne by NSW health, education child protection, housing and justice systems directly
- \$8.2 billion is borne by individuals and the broader community and \$600 million by the Federal Government.

The report seeks to understand the long-lasting impact violence has on children and young people who experience it and includes the costs to individuals, to health, education, family and community services and housing budgets as well as productivity.

By investigating the economic costs for the government, people and the community, it serves as a reminder that efforts need to be redoubled to ensure that children are free from violence; failure to act will result in significant costs to individuals as well as to the community.

When the report officially launched, a variety of media outlets shared the findings. An in-depth story was published by National Social Affairs reporter Norman Hermant and coverage was widely shared across ABC TV networks including ABC News mornings, ABC NEWS 24, ABC Evening News, and ABC Brisbane, Hobart, Adelaide and Canberra. The story was also broadcast nationally across ABC radio networks.

The Advocate shared the major findings of the report and asked that people take the pledge to end violence against children and young people. This message was covered across NSW and national radio networks including 2GB, MIX 104.9, and Triple J. Articles were published online across outlets including News.com.au, the Daily Telegraph, Daily Mail, 9 News, 7 News, the Herald Sun, The Australian, and the Courier Mail. Overall, the potential reach for the report release for online was 64.60m, radio 5.54m and TV 902.41k.



NSW Children's Week



Children's Week is an annual event that raises community awareness of the needs, rights and achievements of children and young people. To celebrate Children's Week, many events, programs and activities are available for children and young people across the state.



In 2018, Children's Week was held from 19-28 October. The theme was Article 12 of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: 'Children's views and opinions are respected. They have the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child and the right to be heard'.

To celebrate Children's Week, ACYP engages with children, young people and adults through events and initiatives including Children's Week Parliament, Children's Week Awards, a celebration event and the Biggest Recess. ACYP also works with the NSW Children's Week Committee and the NSW Youth Advisory Council who assist with the concepts, ideas and planning for NSW Children's Week.



NSW Children's Week Parliament

ACYP continued their valued partnership with YMCA to deliver the NSW Children's Week Parliament program following on from its success in 2017. On Monday 22 October 2018, children and young people took over Parliament House.

The one-day program was offered to 93 children and young people in years 7-10 free of charge to ensure that cost was not a barrier for participation. The children and young people came together from areas across NSW including Sydney, the Illawarra, Hunter, South East, Riverina Murray, New England, North Coast, West and Far West.

About the day

The Advocate together with YMCA CEO Susannah Le Bron and Chair of the Children's Week Committee Julie Hourigan Ruse, gave the young people helpful advice and Members of Parliament were invited to speak with children and young people as part of an interview panel on the day. Members of Parliament Taylor Martin MLC, Paul Green MLC, Courtney Houssos MLC, Alex Greenwich MP and Andrew Fraser MP gave advice and spoke about their time as an elected representative and what they are passionate

about. The Legislative Assembly Chamber was presided over by MPs Greg Warren MP and Chris Gulaptis MP.

The children and young people received training in speech writing and advocacy and were asked to prepare a one-minute speech on matters important to them under the themes of the NSW Strategic Plan for Children and Young People: Safe, Connect, Respect, Opportunity, Wellbeing and Voice. They rehearsed their speeches with YMCA and ACYP staff before making their way to present their speeches in the Legislative Assembly Chamber.

The children and young people participated in a consultation which involved questions about the future of education. They provided their views on what education in the 21st Century looks like. Questions included: What knowledge, skills and attributes should every student develop at school? How could the curriculum better support every student's learning? This feedback along with the detailed findings was produced in the form of a report.

The Children's Week Youth Parliament Program was a reflection of the Children's Week 2018 theme: Article 12 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child – the right of children and young people to participate in decision making and for their views to be heard and respected.





NSW Children's Week Awards

For Children's Week 2018, nine award categories were designed to recognise the achievements and contributions of children and young people as well as the adults who made positive impacts on the lives of children and young people.

Both the 2017 NSW Youth Advisory Council (YAC) and the 2018 YAC put forward the categories for the awards. There were seven awards for children and young people and two awards for adults.

Children, young people and adults could nominate an individual, group, service or project that fell within the nine categories. The winners received their awards at a special Children's Week celebration event.



Award winners

Children and young people awards

(Nominees were children and young people under the age of 18)



Community Art Award

For those who inspire through art including painting, drawing, digital art, photography, performance, dance and music. Eli Rickard, 14.



Environmental Award

For those who help support the environment through a range of acts, decisions and initiatives. Jade Mudge, 16.



Bravery Award

For those who demonstrate a single act or ongoing acts of courage, strength or determination. Max Colgin, 7.



Newly Arrived Migrant or Refugee Award

For those who have made a positive contribution to their local community, region or state. Gabriel Smano, Sarkees Babaziyan, Haitham Abdulrazzaq, ages 13-18.



Act of Kindness Award

For those who have or continue to offer acts of kindness by helping and supporting those around them. Astrid Graham, 13.



Voice Award

For those who use their voice to bring change, inform others, and raise awareness. Hamani Tanginoa, 16 and Bassam Maaliki, 15.



Giving Back to the Community Award

For those who give up their time for their community through volunteering, programs and every day behaviours. Newcastle Graffiti Art Program.

Adult Awards

(Nominees were adults over the age of 18)



Inspiring Mentor Award

A person or group who supports, encourages and guides children and young people. Sandy Al-Aweik



Foster Parent/Guardian Award

A person who is committed to helping the lives of children and young people in out of home care. Rhonda Ashby.

NSW Children's Week Event

On Wednesday 24 October 2018, ACYP together with the NSW Children's Week Committee and 90 attendees celebrated Children's Week at the ACYP Office.

Audience members were treated to performances by young people themselves including the Redfern Dance Company, Senior Aboriginal Performance Group and Alex Nicolson from Newtown High school of the Performing Arts. Attendees heard from the Advocate and Children's Week Committee Chair, Julie Hourigan Ruse. At the event, the winners of the NSW Children's Week Awards received their prize.

Promotion for NSW Children's Week

ACYP promoted NSW Children's Week through:

- the management and ongoing updates of the NSW Children's Week and Biggest Recess websites
- Direct emails to stakeholders and children and young people
- social media posts
- the creation of videos
- the Children's Week Sydney Morning Herald lift out feature 'Giving children a Voice' - published on 25 October 2018.





Light projection show

After the awards ceremony, attendees were invited to gather outside the ACYP office at sunset to see a light projection display on the front facing glass of the building.

The voices of children and young people were gathered from ACYP's face-to-face consultations across the state and an overview of these voices were presented through a ten-minute visual representation.

The voices were grouped across themes including education, unity through diversity, respect, voice and the final section concluded with the voices of children and young people in detention.

The light display also highlighted a series of pictures, drawings, artwork and photographs received from ACYP's previous competitions for children and young people.



Biggest Recess



The first Biggest Recess was held on 28 October 2016 across NSW as part of NSW Children's Week. The aim of the Biggest Recess is to encourage adults to play a positive role in improving childhood health by thinking about their behaviour around exercise and healthy eating and how this influences the children and young people in their lives. The Biggest Recess was part of the Premier's Priority of Tackling Childhood Obesity.



Biggest Recess took place on Friday 26 October 2018. ACYP asked organisations to take just 20 minutes out of their working day to have fun with activities and enjoy healthy snacks. The initiative is a great opportunity to focus attention on childhood health through awareness and education in a positive and fun environment.

In 2018, ACYP engaged with government and non-government stakeholders by suggesting activities they could get involved on the day of the Biggest Recess.

Organisations were encouraged to register their participation through the Biggest Recess website to let ACYP know what activities they were planning.

The Ambassador for the 2018 Biggest Recess was media personality Rachael Finch. On Thursday 18 October 2018, Rachael met with the ACYP team as part of an 'Activation Day' where she demonstrated how easy it is to take 20 minutes out of the working day to do some exercise. Rachael ran through a series of movements that are best suited for those working

in an office environment. She also showed the team how to make a simple smoothie which can be created using basic and healthy ingredients.

The day before the Biggest Recess, Rachael appeared on the Morning Show on Thursday 25 October 2018 to speak about the initiative and how people can get involved by visiting the Biggest Recess website: www.biggestrecess.nsw.gov.au

The initiative in 2018 received an estimated traditional media reach of 764,000 across TV, radio and print. The estimated social media and online reach was 1,749,000.



The NSW Youth Advisory Council (YAC) plays an important role in advising the NSW Government on issues that are relevant to young people across the state. Membership of the YAC is open to all children and young people between 12 and 24 years of age residing in NSW. Applications are sought from diverse locations, backgrounds and life experiences.

The 12 member YAC provides a direct avenue of communication between young people and the NSW Government. The YAC meets regularly throughout the year to provide advice to the Minister responsible for Youth, the Advocate on issues, policies and laws that affect children and young people in NSW.

Recruitment for the 2019 NSW YAC

For the recruitment of the 2019 NSW YAC, more than 1,000 applications were received from passionate children and young people from all over NSW. 150 applicants were shortlisted and invited to attend the YAC Recruitment Day on Thursday 8 November 2018 at NSW Parliament House.

The task of shortlisting 150 young people to attend the 2019 YAC Recruitment Day was incredibly difficult given the quality of applications. Following the YAC Recruitment Day, the Advocate presented recommendations to the Minister for review and concurrence. Recommended Council members were then presented to Cabinet who gave approval. Twelve members were selected to form the 2019 NSW YAC.

The functions of the YAC under the Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014 are:

- to advise the Minister and the Advocate on the planning, development, integration and implementation of government policies and programs concerning young persons
- to consult with young persons, community groups and government agencies on issues and policies concerning young persons
- to monitor and evaluate legislation and government policies and programs concerning young persons and to recommend changes if required
- to conduct forums, approved by the Minister, on issues of interest to young persons
- to collect, analyse and provide the Minister and the Advocate with information on issues and policies concerning young persons.



2019 NSW YAC Recruitment Day

At the YAC Recruitment Day, young MCs welcomed the candidates to the event. The Advocate provided advocacy training for the candidates which covered areas including: how to understand policy processes, how to develop messages, how to prepare for interviews and how to put forward recommendations and communication strategies.



The young people were encouraged to participate and share their thoughts throughout the training. The former Minister responsible for Youth, the Hon. Ray Williams spoke to the children and young people about his role and provided advice.

The young people worked in groups as part of a consultation. They gave feedback to questions, some of these included: 'What is the purpose of schooling in the twenty first century? What knowledge, skills and attributes should every student learn at school?' This feedback was developed into a report that included detailed information and findings.

On the day, the candidates also provided feedback for ideas on NSW Youth Week 2019. In the afternoon, each group came together to present their recommendations to the Advocate.



Promotion for the 2019 NSW YAC

ACYP reached out to stakeholders about sharing the information about the recruitment of the 2019 NSW YAC with their networks. The Department of Education and the NSW Education Standards Authority both included information in their newsletters to encourage young people to apply.

The Advocate participated in radio interviews to encourage young people all across the state to put forward an application. Interviews took place across radio networks including ABC State Wide and ABC regional stations. ACYP also promoted the recruitment of the 2019 NSW YAC through newspapers including regional and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) publications.



NSW Youth Week



Youth Week is a time for young people aged between 12-24 years to celebrate and participate in a variety of activities, opportunities and events across the state. The theme for NSW Youth Week 2019, 'Coming together to Connect, Share, Speak Out and Celebrate' which was decided on by the 2018 NSW Youth Advisory Council.



In order to encourage as many young people to participate in NSW Youth Week as possible, ACYP is involved in:

- the Youth Week website which was developed and continues to be maintained and updated by ACYP
- branding and digital assets which are provided to NSW councils
- the design and distribution of merchandise to NSW councils for their Youth Week activities
- online digital campaigns
- the co-design of activities with the NSW Youth Advisory Council.



NSW Youth Week Forum

To celebrate the start of Youth Week, ACYP held the Youth Week Forum with 135 young people on Monday 8 April 2019 at NSW Parliament House. The theme for NSW Youth Week 2019, 'Coming together to Connect, Share, Speak Out and Celebrate' was decided by the 2018 NSW Youth Advisory Council. There were many activities and events available for young people during Youth Week (10-18 April 2019) including art and drama workshops, sport programs, festivals, markets, competitions, expos and much more.

Young people travelled from all across the state to attend the Forum, including from Ballina, Cobar, Albury, Cooma and Tweed Heads. On the day, the Advocate provided advocacy training and facilitated discussions with the young people.

ACYP contacted government departments and invited them to provide questions for the young people. The young people worked in groups



and responded to questions on a range of areas including education, child safe organisations, online usage, careers and services for children and young people. Government departments included the NSW Department of Education, NSW Department of Justice, Department of Premier and Cabinet, NSW Health, Women NSW, NSW Public Service Commission, Department of Family and Community Services, and Department of Finance, Services and Innovation. This valuable feedback was developed into reports.

The new Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women, the Honourable Bronnie Taylor MLC attended the Forum. The Minister met with the young people and took the time to hear their opinions on the topics discussed.

The winners of the NSW Youth Week 2019 Design Competition were announced and congratulated on the day; Ana Maksimovic, Brodie Fleming and Mikayla Daniel. Penrith Selective High School submitted the most entries and won a prize for art supplies. Hundreds of inspirational entries were received revealing the creative abilities of young people in NSW.



Participation Conference

In a post Royal Commission world, ACYP held a conference on Thursday 28 February 2019 at NSW Parliament House that focused on the importance of listening to the voices of children and young people. The event looked at meaningful engagement with children and young people as well as examples of practice when NGOs, government and other bodies involve children and young people in their organisations.

Children and young people told ACYP they would like safe spaces where they feel comfortable to come together and collectively share their ideas and thoughts on topics important to them and so, this feedback informed the planning of the conference. On the day, a children and young

people's conference took place 'Count Me In to Have my Voice Heard' and involved 96 children and young people who came together from seven schools in NSW. At the same location, a second conference, 'Count on Us to Have your Voice Heard' brought together Commissioners from around the country, academics, NGOs and government representatives.



count me in
to have my
voice heard.

Count Me In to Have my Voice Heard

The young people's conference began with a Welcome to Country, an introduction by members of the NSW Youth Advisory Council and the Advocate. The children and young people were then presented with Advocacy training which outlined helpful information for preparing for interviews, applications, meetings and presentations.

The day then moved into consultation sessions where the young people were given questions and worked together to respond. Questions included: What is meaningful participation? How does your school facilitate participation? What training and supports do you need to help you participate? How do you want to be shown that your participation has value? The children and young people collectively worked together to discuss their own experiences as they decided on answers.

The responses were collated and representatives presented this feedback to the attendees at the 'Count On Us to Have Your Voice Heard' conference in the Theatre at the end of the day. Representatives included one young person from each of the schools that attended as well as two members from the Youth Advisory Council.

Some of the key feedback included wanting to be actively involved, the need for respect and the importance of inclusion.

count on me
to have your
voice heard.

Count On Us to Have Your Voice Heard

The 'Count on Us to Have Your Voice Heard' conference commenced with introductions and welcomes from young people. The Advocate welcomed guests and discussed the history and importance of child rights, examples of meaningful participation with children and young people and ACYP's detailed findings from consultations with children and young people. More than 140 attendees from across government Departments and the NGO Sector came together to hear more about meaningful participation with children and young people through the panels, streams and children and young people themselves.



Children and Young People Panel

The first panel of the day involved children and young people who discussed their experiences of when they felt they were listened to or had a good participation experience. They also shared examples of when participation did not work well. The panel suggested their top tips for adults and engaged in questions from the audience. Panel members were: Francis Elliot-Rudder, Brenella Abdel-Rehim, Melik Ibrahim, Emily Blackhouse, and Simon Byrnes.

Commissioners Panel

The second panel involved Commissioners from around the country: Colleen Gwynne, Children's Commissioner Northern Territory; Colin Pettit, Commissioner for Children and Young People Western Australia; and Helen Connolly, Commissioner for Children and Young People South Australia. The Commissioners shared

information on what is happening in their state around children and young people's participation, the essential elements to meaningful participation and how their office involves children and young people.

Academic Experts Panel

The third panel involved academic experts who presented their key research and findings into children and young people's participation as well as where their research is currently heading. Panel members included: Professor Anne Graham AO, Director, Centre for Children and Young People, Southern Cross University; A/Professor Philippa Collin, Western Sydney University and Stream Leader, Wellbeing, Health & Youth Centre of Research Excellence; and A/Professor Tim Moore, Deputy Director (Practice Solutions), Australian Centre for Child Protection, Australian Centre for Child Protection, University of South Australia.





Our Local launch

Attendees were then invited to attend the launch of a new website portal Our Local. Our Local was called for and co-designed by children and young people to provide information on opportunities, activities, services and events around NSW. Our Local was officially launched by Glenn King, the current Secretary of the Department of Customer Service.

Streams

The afternoon involved three streams where panel members addressed their experiences, work and key projects.

Stream 1 was held in the Theatrette and a panel discussion took place around involving children and young people in the design, implementation and monitoring of programs. The Panel Chair was Julie Hourigan Ruse, CEO FAMS. Panel members included: Susannah Le Bron, CEO, YMCA NSW; Helen Lunn, National Child Safe Lead, Mission Australia; Justine Perkins, Founder, Touched by Olivia; and Fraser Corfield, Artistic Director, Australian Theatre for Young People.

Stream 2 in the Strangers' Function Room involved a panel discussion on involving children and young people in policy-making processes.

The Panel Chair was Zoe Robinson, CEO, Yfoundations and panel members included: the Advocate; Katie Acheson, CEO, Youth Action; and Judith Murray, Engagement Manager, AbSec.

Stream 3 in the Jubilee room brought together panel members who spoke about involving children and young people in all aspects of schools and the education system. The Panel Chair was Joanna Quilty, CEO, NCOSS. Panel members included: Paul Owens, Principal, Kirawee High School; Margaret Mulcahy, Principal, Eagle Vale High School; Darcy Moore, Deputy Principal, Dapto High School; and Robyn Bale, Director Student Engagement and Interagency Partnerships, Department of Education.

A highlights video from the day can be viewed on the ACYP website.





On Thursday 28 February 2019 as part of the 2019 Participation Conference at NSW Parliament House, Glenn King, the current Secretary of the Department of Customer Service, together with the Advocate, launched Our Local. Using the directory website, children and young people across NSW can find things to do and support when they need it.

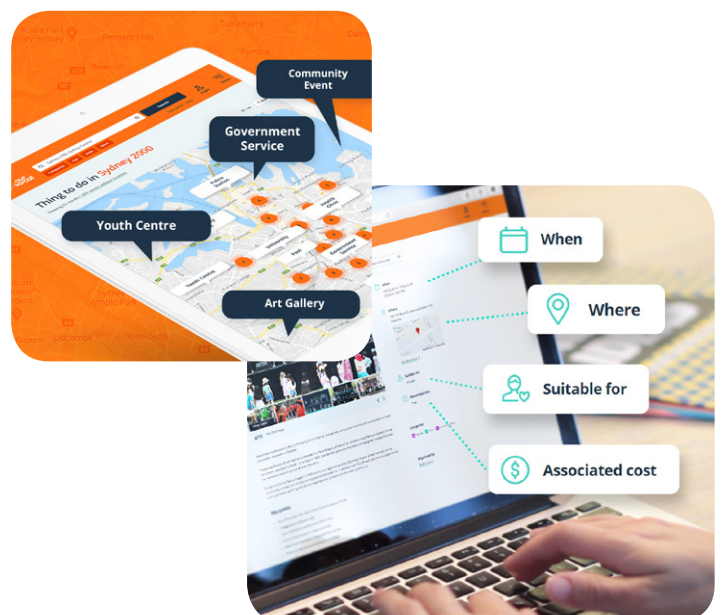
Our Local was developed in response to direct feedback from thousands of children and young people across NSW. They expressed the need for a single place online to find local and state-wide opportunities, activities, services and events.

Children and young people can search their suburb or council on www.ourlocal.nsw.gov.au to access more than 16,000 listings. There are over 80 categories to choose from, including services, creative arts, sports & recreation, work & volunteer, events and education. Sixty percent of the listings are in regional areas.

NSW Government and organisations and that receive government funding or grants to provide opportunities, activities, services and events for children and young people in NSW are able to be listed on Our Local. There are over 900 NSW Government and non-government organisations who work with, by and on behalf of children and young people included on the platform.

Representatives from NSW Government departments provided advice on the project through the Our Local inter-departmental steering committee. Children and young people co-designed and directed the website.

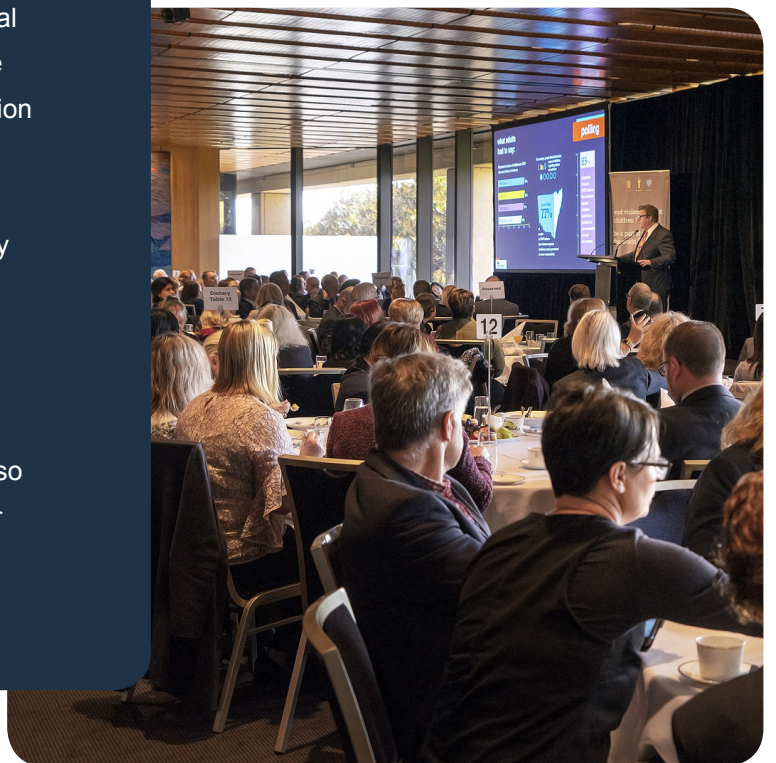
The launch promotional video was seen 5.5 million times on social media by children and young people in NSW, establishing an audience for the new website.



National Child Protection Week Breakfast

The National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) together with ACYP invited guests to a breakfast event to mark National Child Protection Week 2018. The event took place at NSW Parliament House in the Strangers' Function Room on Tuesday 4 September 2018.

National Child Protection Week is marked annually across Australia. During National Child Protection Week the wider community is encouraged to remember that everyone has a part to play in protecting all children and that even small actions can help to improve a child's future. People are also encouraged to remember that by building stronger communities, safer environments are created for children.



Guests heard from government and non-government leaders who work towards improving the lives of children and young people in NSW. Speakers included: Minister for Family and Community Services, the Hon. Pru Goward, MP; Glenn King, the current Secretary of the Department of Customer Service; Richard Cooke, CEO of NAPCAN; and Janet Schorer, NSW Children's Guardian.

During the event, the Advocate presented an update on the progress of the 'Now and Forever' campaign. At the event, the winners of the annual NAPCAN 'Play Your Part Awards' were announced. The awards recognise people who are doing inspiring work to build stronger communities, and support children and families.

Engaging with children and young people at events with organisations

NAIDOC Week 2018 celebrated the invaluable contributions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have made – and continue to make - to our communities, our families, our rich history and to our nation.

On Thursday 12 July, 2018 TACAMS (Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation Aboriginal Medical Service) organised a community Family Fun Day to celebrate NAIDOC. Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation is located in the suburb of Airs in the Macarthur region of South Western Sydney.

The event aimed at engaging families, particularly children and young people. Multiple organisations both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal were involved in the day. The day included cultural awareness sessions, a football competition, food, rides and attractions, performances, activities and competitions.

ACYP hosted a stall at the events and were able to survey 65 Aboriginal children and young people using iPads. In the survey participants were asked about culture, connection and the NAIDOC theme - 'Because of her, we can!'



Nations of Origin

ACYP attended PCYC's Nations of Origin from 16-18 July 2018. Nations of Origin engages with Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people from across NSW where they participate in the sport, cultural, education and leadership program.

ACYP undertook consultations with young people at the netball, football, and rugby league tournaments at Raymond Terrace. In total, 354 young people, from regional and urban areas across NSW, took part in small group discussions with ACYP over the three days to have their say.

Some of the questions asked during consultations included: What is working well for you and other young people in your communities? What is not working well for you and other young people in your communities? What are your priorities for government within your communities? The findings from the consultations have been collated in the form of a report and continue to inform ACYP's feedback and recommendations.



ACWA Young People's Conference

On Tuesday 21 August 2018 as part of the Association of Children's Welfare Conference 2018, The Advocate for Children and Young People held a one day conference for young people with experiences of living in out of home care (OOHC).

Forty young people came together from across NSW to share their experiences of being in care, how the service system has both met and not met their needs, and where they would like to see improvements in the system.

The young people ranged in age from 14 years – 25 years, with 20 young people under 18 years and 20 young people 18 years and over. There were 25 young women and 15 young men. The group was evenly split between young people living in the metropolitan area and those living in regional areas.

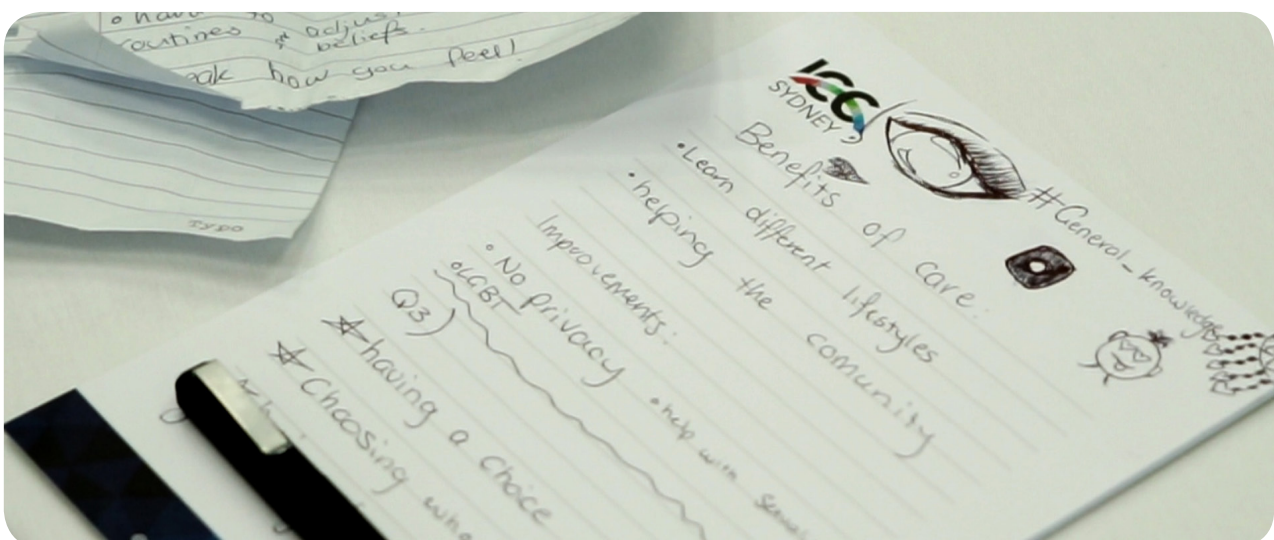
Young people were divided into five tables based on their age. These became their working groups. Four consultation sessions were run throughout the day. Young people worked on the open-ended

questions. Each table was given time to discuss and answer the question and then feedback to the larger group. Some questions included:

- What's working well for young people in OOHC?
- What's not working well for young people in OOHC?
- What do you think should be the priorities for young people in OOHC?

Young people then presented back to the adult participants at the conference about what they had talked about during the day.

The Advocate presented a keynote at the main conference, 'What are over 2,000 children and young people doing it tough telling us to do?' The presentation covered ACYP's detailed findings from consultations with children and young people doing it tough as well as their key recommendations for areas including education, employment, housing and homelessness, violence, mental health and substance abuse and transport. At the Conference, ACYP also attended a booth and met with attendees to discuss ACYP's role, function and work.



World's Largest Mental Health Awareness Lesson

On Friday 9 November 2018, ACYP attended the World's Largest Mental Health Awareness Lesson. The event involved 1,500 Year 9 and 10 public school students who participated in a 40 minute interactive mental health lesson as part of the new K-10 PDHPE syllabus. The event introduced students to the concept of building mental fitness and help-seeking behaviours while also raising state-wide and national awareness of mental health.

ACYP set up a stall on the day and students met the Advocate and learned about ACYP's work and initiatives. They were also provided with materials that showed them how they can engage with ACYP.



Schools Spectacular

On 23 and 24 November 2018, ACYP attended SpecFest as part of Schools Spectacular. SpecFest involved an area located outside Qudos Bank Arena that included pre-show entertainment and activities for students and parents. The theme for Schools Spectacular 2018 was 'The Greatest'. ACYP set up a wellbeing area for Schools Spectacular performers so that they could relax in between shows and engage in activities. ACYP conducted surveys and video interviews for the young people to engage in.

Children and young people participated in more than 600 ACYP surveys over the two days. The survey included questions such as: What are the most important aspects, skills and qualities that children and young people should learn at school?

In keeping with the theme, ACYP asked children and young people in video interviews: "What is the greatest thing in your life?" An overwhelming response to this question was "friends and family". The performers reflected on how much they enjoy participating in Schools Spectacular, their performances and how they got involved in the event. The highlights video is available on the ACYP website.



Children's Laureate

The Australian Children's Laureate and ACYP came together to host an event on Friday 1 March 2019 at the Sydney Opera House. The consultations with 92 children from primary schools around the state discussed the imagination and how they would like to see books and reading supported more strongly throughout the community. Questions included: "When you hear the word imagination, what does it mean to you? Can you think of ways that we can encourage more children to read?"

The event brought together all five of Australia's Children's Laureates: Boori Monty Pryor, Alison Lester, Jackie French, Leigh Hobbs and Morris Gleitzman. On the day, the young people also participated in workshops with the Laureates. A video which outlines the day can be seen on the ACYP website.



Enhance government and non-government training when dealing with children and young people

ACYP regularly conducts training for government and non-government organisations to better assist them with engaging with children and young people. ACYP's training is designed to show organisations how to respectfully engage with children and young people and involve them in decision making processes.

The Advocate delivers face-to-face training on a range of areas including child rights, meaningful participation and engagement with children and young people, advocacy and media. During the reporting period, The Advocate delivered child rights training to organisations including the NSW Education Standards Authority, TFM and Inspector of Custodial Services.

ACYP has developed modules and tools to assist organisations with engaging with children and young people. During the reporting period, ACYP launched the guide 'Engaging with Children and Young People in your Organisation' which covered a large scope of areas including top ten tips for participation, checklists for CEO's, boards, NGO front line workers and contract managers.

In addition to structured training programs conducted by ACYP, in the reporting period the Advocate spoke at over 35 events which included elements of child rights and participation training with stakeholders and children and young people. This included information on how to involve children and young people in decisions that affect them, child rights perspectives and considerations as well as information on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Over the reporting period ACYP ran training sessions and made keynote addresses about these issues to over 4,000 people. Some of the Advocate's keynotes included the ACWA Conference, NSW Department of Education Conference 'The Way We Work', NSW Office of Preventative Health Adolescence Forum, Y Foundations Conference, AIFS 2018 Conference, YMCA Youth Parliament and Catholic Education Conference.



Child Rights Training for NSW Teachers

On Thursday 13 December 2018, ACYP became an endorsed provider of NSW Education Standards Authority Registered Professional Development (PD). ACYP's free Child Rights Training course contributes five hours of NESA Registered PD for NSW Teachers maintaining at Proficient Teacher. ACYP held a registered training course on Thursday 6 June 2019 for nearly 40 participants. The training took place at the ACYP office in Sydney and was delivered by the Advocate.

Through ACYP's training session, teachers gain an understanding of the history of the child rights movement, the major rights embedded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the ways in which these rights have been incorporated into policy and law, including the NSW Education Act and other pieces of legislation.

The training was designed to provide attendees with an understanding of how these rights translate into every day practices and how to see situations with a child rights lens and approach which can improve student engagement, participation and wellbeing, as well as promote a safe and respectful learning environment. ACYP are continuing to offer this training to NSW teachers.



Child Rights Educational Resource

On Tuesday November 20, 2018 ACYP launched an educational video resource that covers the meaning, history and significance of child rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The video release coincided with United Nations World Children's Day (November 20).

Depicted through animation and co-designed with children and young people, the educational resource outlines a comprehensive overview of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child, its history and background and the four overarching Articles that apply across all other rights in the Convention: Article 2 non-discrimination, Article 3 best interests, Article 6 survival and development and Article 12 participation.

An example of some of the areas highlighted in the resource:

- in numbers alone, children are central to the world we live in, as they make up a large and important part of society
- investing in children is both an opportunity and a duty. It is an opportunity because the gains achieved – through better nutrition, health care, education and protection – are likely to be far greater and longer lasting than those in almost any other area
- it is our duty because children everywhere have human rights, from the very beginning of their lives
- these rights include the right to survive and develop, to be protected from violence, abuse and exploitation, to have their views respected and to have actions concerning them be taken in their best interests
- these rights are found in a number of treaties and international standards, most importantly in the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).



Research projects

Material Deprivation and Social Exclusion Among Young Australians: A child-focused approach

On Monday 26 November 2018, the report, 'Material Deprivation and Social Exclusion Among Young Australians: A child-focused approach' was released. The report was produced in collaboration with the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) at UNSW, ACYP, the Smith Family and the NSW Department of Education.

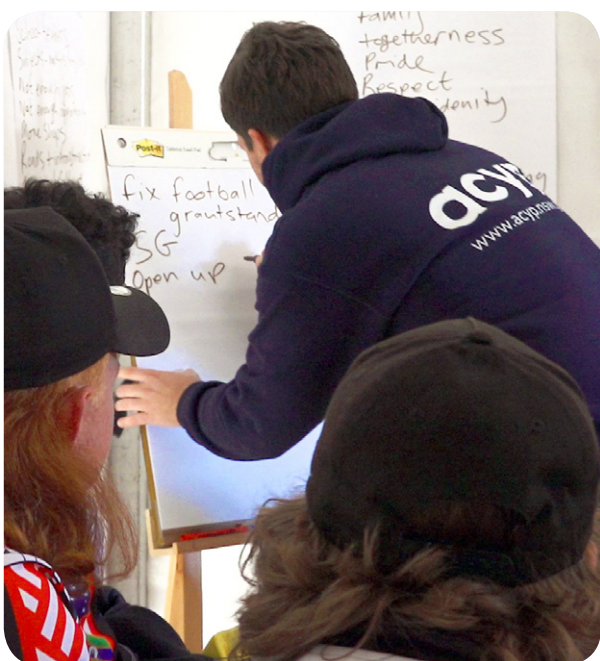
The study explores and examines deprivation among young Australians and provides insight on young people and their experiences of poverty. A number of findings were identified showing that young Australians are deprived of many of life's essentials. A key aim of the project was to identify

a list of items that a majority of young people believe are essential for all young Australians.

The study included 18 items that young Australians listed as essential for all young people. These were grouped into two categories: Material Deprivation: the lack of things that young people see as essential and Social Exclusion: a lack of activities that young people see as essential.

Some key findings include:

- Essential items include having three meals a day, having fruit or vegetables at least once per day, clothes needed for school and access to public transportation
- Both groups, Material Deprivation and Social Exclusion experience severe deprivation meaning they are deprived of at least three essential items
- Those experiencing higher levels of deprivation are shown to have lower levels of wellbeing across many aspects including overall life satisfaction, positive outcomes of the future, connectedness to family, friends and community.



Committees and advisory groups

Parliamentary Joint Committee on Children and Young People

Under the Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014, one of the core functions of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Children and Young People is to monitor and review the exercise by the Advocate of the Advocate's functions.

Following a resolution by both Houses on 18 and 19 June, 2019, the members of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Children and Young People are:

- Chair: The Hon. Matthew Mason-Cox (LIB, LC Member)
- Deputy Chair: Ms Felicity Wilson (LIB, LA Member)
- Ms Abigail Boyd (GRNS, LC Member)
- The Hon. Greg Donnelly (ALP, LC Member)
- Ms Jodie Harrison (ALP, LA Member)
- Ms Robyn Preston (LIB, LA Member)
- Mr. Dugald Saunders (NAT, LA Member)

The Advocate or an ACYP delegate holds membership or provides council to a number of government and non-government entities, some of which are listed below:

- Active Kids Cross Agency Steering Group
- ACWA 2018 Conference Organising Committee
- Australian Children's Commissioners & Guardians (ACCG)
- Care and Crime Working Group
- Child Death Review Team (CDRT)

- Children and Young Person Injury Prevention Working Group (CYPIP)
- Cyberbullying Governance Group
- FACS Domestic and Family Violence Strategy Working Group
- Healthy Eating Active Living and Childhood Obesity Premier's Priority Senior Officers Group
- Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee
- Law Society of NSW – Children's Legal Issues Committee
- Local Government Youth Development Network
- Mental Health Commission - Community Advisory Council Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) on Vulnerable Children, Young People and Families
- NSW Children's Week Committee
- NSW Family Matters Collective
- Our Local Steering Committee
- Parliamentary Joint Committee on Children and Young People
- Regional Youth Interagency Steering Committee
- Social Innovation Council
- Steering Committee for the Joint Protocol to reduce the contact of young people in residential out-of-home care with the criminal justice system
- Violence against Children Advisory Committee
- Youth Justice Coalition
- Youth Week Reference Group

Making recommendations on legislation, reports, policies, practices, procedures and services affecting children and young people

ACYP prepares reports, papers and submissions relating to children and young people in NSW, including through the E-Cabinet process.

ACYP made one submission to Government Inquiries in the reporting period:

- Review of Consent in Relation to Sexual Assault Offences. Submitted 3 July 2018.

Conduct, promote and monitor research into issues affecting children and young people

ACYP is involved in a number of research initiatives and projects which include focus groups that are aimed at understanding the attitudes, thoughts and experiences of children and young people in NSW. ACYP conducts research projects and develops info graphics which demonstrates comprehensive statistical data in a clear and informative way.

Engaging with stakeholders

The Advocate regularly holds and attends meetings to establish and deepen working relationships with the many government, non-government and civil society organisations who help protect and promote the rights and interests of children and young people.

The Advocate also works closely with organisations and collaborates on projects, events and initiatives.

During the reporting year, the Advocate attended or held 393 meetings, forums, seminars and related events.





Responses of authorities to recommendations made by the Advocate

None other than the tabling of the annual report.

Advocate's recommendations for changes in the laws of the State, or for administrative action

No independent recommendations were made in the reporting period outside of ACYP's usual government consultation processes.

Internships and work experience programs

Now in its fourth year, the ACYP Work Experience Program offers Year 10 students a five day placement in which they receive advocacy training and mentoring directly from the Advocate. They are also involved in developing their own advocacy project. During the program, the students get to experience time working the different units in the office, including the Participation, Policy and Research, Media and Communications units.



In the reporting year, five children and young people participated in the ACYP Work Experience Program which involved students from Matraville Sports High School, Randwick Girls High School, and Plumpton High School.

This program is open to all Year 10 students from across NSW.



Promote the provision of information and advice to assist children and young people

The ACYP website is regularly updated to inform children, young people and adults of ACYP's projects. During the reporting year a number of enhancements were made to the website to improve access to ACYP's resources, reports, guides and information.

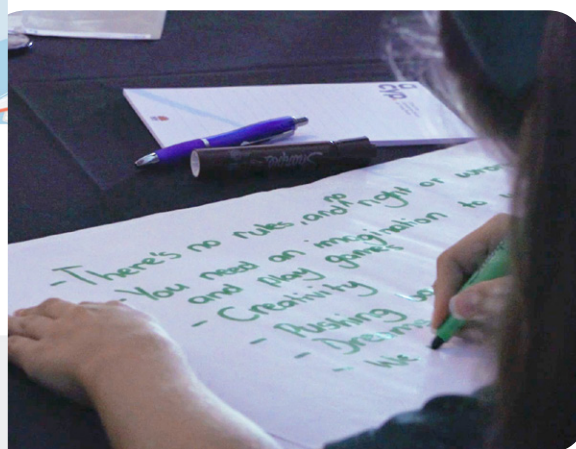
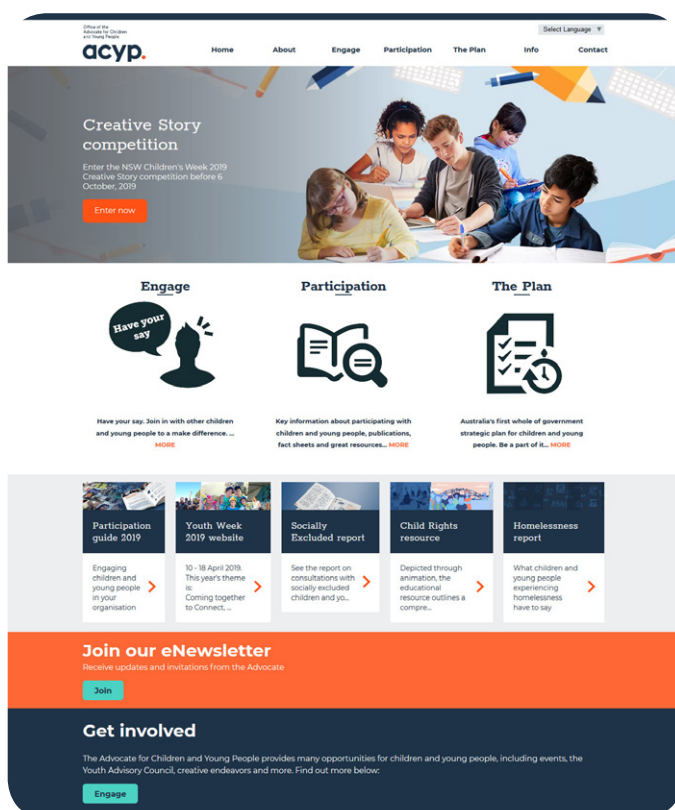
A significant update involved a new 'participation' section which focuses on meaningful participation with children and young people. ACYP's resources, events, and initiatives have been collated to appear in this section under the specific areas 'cultural change, take action and inspiration'.

The new guide, 'Engaging Children and Young People in your Organisation' can be downloaded from the website and a new flip book feature has been added which includes video examples.



New modules have also been added to the website including ACYP's child rights training resource which is presented as a video. More information on the projects mentioned in this annual report can be found on the ACYP website.

During the reporting period, ACYP consulted with children and young people on the design of the new ACYP website. Members of the Youth Advisory Council provided feedback for the new design which is currently under development.



Office structure and administration

Staffing

The Advocate is an independent statutory officer supported by a small team of staff.

The Advocate's budget is part of the FACS operating budget and is reported as part of that department's Annual Report.

As at 30 June 2019, there were a maximum of 12 full time staff and 4 part time staff, employed against a staff establishment of 20 positions.

Principal officers

As at 30 June 2019, our senior management team was:

- Mr Andrew Johnson, BA LLB MSW, Advocate for Children and Young People
- Mr Michael Shaw, B. Comms, PGCertSS, PGCertPP, Director

Publications

Publications by the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People released throughout the reporting year:

- Report on Consultations with Socially Excluded Children and Young People
- Engaging with Children and Young People in your Organisation
- The Economic Cost of Violence Against Children and Young People





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Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People

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