

Dear Colleague

Since commencing in the role of Commissioner for Children and Young People I have had the opportunity to speak with thousands of children and young people seeking their views and opinions on a variety of issues and topics. Each person and group generates unique perspectives but what is common is the desire to continue to be engaged and included in contributing to the decisions that impact on their lives.

As an organisation working with children and young people I am sure that this is not news to you, and I am equally sure that you have a range of ways of connecting the young people you work with to the systems and structures that impact on them.

As I have the privilege of working across the state and across jurisdictions and systems, I have decided to document my approach to this work so everyone can see how I am working.

In relation to my engagement with youth organisations my approach is to:

- build the capacity of young people to lead
- strengthen structures already established by young people
- develop new representative models in partnership with young people
- respect, acknowledge and amplify the advocacy agendas established by young people

Our approach is practical, feasible and creative and we are genuinely interested in connecting to youth groups, agencies and organisations in addition to young people.

The attached document reflects this commitment.

I would also like to let you know about some work that we are currently working on The Poverty Project.

One of the issues children and young people have asked me to prioritise is to 'help poor kids'. We know that poverty is a serious problem facing South Australian families. However, the majority of poverty research focusses on the impact on children in the context of their parent/s or family living in poverty.

The Poverty Project, aims to learn more about what children and young people in South Australia consider are the contributing factors and what more should be done, and by whom, to create a South Australia where no child lives in poverty.

I would love your help to complete our survey if you could post this message on your social media and in your groups, pass it along to young people you know. It would help ensure we get a comprehensive response. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ccypsa-poverty-project>

In addition to the survey we are holding focus groups and a day forum for young people in May to create the solutions.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Helen Connolly

Commissioner for Children and Young People