

Supporting Quality Engagement with Children Information and consent form – Parents and guardians



We would like to get ideas on how to make things better for children and young people.

Supporting Quality Engagement with Children is a national consultation project run by the Australian Human Rights Commission. We are seeking the views and ideas of children and young people on how to make a range of government services and supports better for them. These consultations are a real way that young people can influence government policy and improve services for all children and young people, especially those most vulnerable.

What is the Australian Human Rights Commission?

The Australian Human Rights Commission is a national organisation that protects and promotes the human rights of everyone in Australia. We have a National Children's Commissioner, named Anne Hollonds. Their job is to protect and promote the rights of all children living in Australia. One way they do this is by asking children and young people about their thoughts and ideas. There is more information about the Commission at www.humanrights.gov.au.

Why are we doing this project?

We want to hear directly from children and young people. The Australian Government is working to support all children, young people and their families to reach their full potential and keep kids safe. For 2023, the Commission will be focusing on the [National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse 2021-2030](#). We will be talking to children and young people to find out whether the services and supports under this strategy are meeting their needs and how they can be improved.

How can children and young people participate and what can they expect?

We will be holding group discussions with children and young people across Australia. They will be about 2 hours long. We will be doing some activities and a survey to get participants' views on whether services and supports are meeting the needs of children and, if not, how they can be improved. We may take some photos of activities but will take these in such a way that the children and young people won't be identifiable. We will supply food and drinks.



Is there anything that might make children or young people upset?

We will be talking about services and supports that help young people, especially in tough times. This includes times when young people have been hurt and abused including physical, sexual and emotional harm. The focus of the consultations will be on services and supports, including how they are meeting young people's needs and how they could be improved. Children and young people will not be asked to share their personal experiences of tough times. They will be asked to tell us about what services and supports they think would be most useful to assist young people who are having tough times.

Clear guidelines will be given to young people reassuring them that they don't have to talk about anything they don't want to, but that it's possible that they may find the discussion uncomfortable or upsetting. If anything does make them feel upset, they can stop taking part **at any time**. We'll make that clear at the beginning of the discussions. If any child or young person needs assistance, someone from the partner organisation will be available to talk to. The Commission can also assist the child or young person to contact additional support people as required (e.g. a parent, or Kids Helpline). If you think additional support might be needed, please let the organisers know as soon as possible so that support can be arranged before the discussion begins.

The Australian Human Rights Commission has a Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy that talks about what we do to make sure these types of projects are safe for children and young people. This is available on our website at <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/commission-general/child-safety-and-wellbeing-policy-2020>.

What happens with the information from this project?

The aim of the project is to use information from consultations with children and young people to inform policy development. This will help improve services and supports for vulnerable children and young people.

We will take notes and record discussions so we are able to accurately represent children and young people's views and talk to the Government about their Strategy. All the information shared and collected will be kept safe, and only people who work on the project will have access to it. We will use the views of children and young people in a report to the Government and we might also use them in other reports or resources made by the National Children's Commissioner.

If we use something that has been said, written or created by a child or young person, we **will not identify them in any way**. We won't ask for names or contact details in the survey. The information collected will not be used for any other purpose than identified here and it will be stored confidentially in accordance with the Australian Human Rights Commission's Privacy Policy.



The only exception to this may be if something is said that makes us worried about the safety of a child. In that case, we might decide to make a report to the police or child protection authority to keep children and young people safe.

Does your child have to participate?

Participation is completely voluntary. Consent can be withdrawn at any time, including during the discussion.

Do children and young people get anything for participating?

Everyone participating in the discussions will get a voucher. All children and young people will get this voucher even if they decide to skip some activities or decide to withdraw after the discussion has begun.

If you want to ask us any questions, have concerns about the project, or want to make a complaint you can contact Sophie Charles, Children’s Rights Team, on phone number 1300 369 711 or by emailing kids@humanrights.gov.au



Support organisations and hotlines

Organisation	1800RESPECT: National sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service
Telephone	1800 737 732

Organisation	Beyond Blue: Anxiety, depression, and suicide prevention support service
Telephone	1300 224 636

Organisation	Lifeline: Crisis support and suicide prevention
Telephone	13 11 14

Organisation	Headspace: Supports young people aged between 12 and 25 years of age
Telephone	1800 650 890

Organisation	Kids Helpline: Counselling service for those aged between 5 and 25 years of age
Telephone	1800 55 1800



Consent Form

Everyone under the age of 16 years needs to have consent from their parent or guardian. In some cases, young people aged 16 and 17 years will also need consent from their parent or guardian.

I am the legal parent/guardian for the child/young person: _____.

1. I have read and I understand the information sheet and this consent form, and/or someone has communicated it to me in a way I understand.
2. I understand I am being asked to give consent for the child/young person to participate in a group discussion, survey and/or activities as part of the Supporting Quality Engagement Project.
3. I have had an opportunity to ask any questions and I understand the responses.
4. I have talked with the child/young person about them taking part in the project and they want to take part.
5. I have talked with the child/young person about what to do if they feel uncomfortable or upset during the group discussions and I have let the organisers know if the child/young person may need additional support.
6. I understand the Australian Human Rights Commission may record group discussions but only people employed by the Commission and working on the project will have access to this information.
7. I understand that what is written, said or created during the group discussion and/or survey may be referred to, quoted or used by the Australian Human Rights Commission in a report to the Australian Government. Materials created by the Commission may be made public, but will not contain identifiable information.
8. I understand that if there are concerns raised about the safety of a child, the Australian Human Rights Commission may decide to share this information (including revealing personal information) to police or child protection authorities. Otherwise, no identifiable information about participants will be released outside of the Commission.
9. I understand my consent is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time.

I have read the above points 1-9 and agree for the child/young person to participate in the Supporting Quality Engagement with Children project:

Yes No

I agree to the child/young person's photo being taken in such a way that the child/young person will not be identifiable. These photos may be used by the Australian Human Rights Commission in published materials. No other identifying information will be used:

Yes No

Parent/Guardian

Name:	
Signature:	
Date:	

