

Telephone: 07 3900 6000
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9 February 2022

Queensland
Family & Child
Commission

Ms Rebekah Kilpatrick
Head
National Office for Child Safety
By email: NationalOfficeForChildSafety@pmc.gov.au

Dear Ms Kilpatrick

Thank you for providing the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) with an opportunity to make a submission following the release of the *National Strategy Advisory Group Model Public Consultation Paper*.

Under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the Australian government has responsibility to make sure the needs of children are appropriately responded to, including, under article 12, the right to participate in decisions made about them.

The QFCC advocates for children to have opportunities to express their views freely and have those views respected and considered in a meaningful way in the development of public policy.

To give effect to this right, the QFCC recommends the National Office for Child Safety consider adopting a broad practice of youth participation including, but not limited to, engaging children as members of the National Strategy Advisory Group.

In December 2021, the QFCC released the *Model of child and youth participation* (attached), which comprises a combination of two approaches:

- engagement with young people, which involves proactively seeking out opportunities to connect with them and providing appropriate support to help them express their views in meaningful ways
- advocacy for the views of young people, which involves taking steps to amplify what they say and ensuring their views influence decision making.

Youth participation can be put into practice in a number of different ways, such as:

- membership on advisory councils
- contributing to an agency's work, including the development of youth-led projects
- using the views of children and young people to inform policy and practice outcomes
- conducting surveys of children and young people on issues that matter to them
- bringing children and young people together with decision-makers for influence.

The QFCC uses all these methods to give effect to child and youth participation. Our Youth Advisory Council was established in 2018, and today has 25 Youth Advocates from across Queensland who provide direct input into the QFCC's policy, advocacy and oversight functions.

Level 8, 63 George Street,
Brisbane Qld 4000
PO Box 15217,
Brisbane City East Qld 4002
Telephone 07 3900 6000
Facsimile 07 3900 6050
Website www.qfcc.qld.gov.au
www.talkingfamilies.qld.gov.au
www.oneplace.org.au

During the past 12 months, we have also included children and young people as paid youth researchers to identify the agency's oversight and evaluation priorities, and facilitated private hearings to allow young people to have direct input into government inquiries.

The QFCC would be happy to speak to you further about our model of child and youth participation, to establish child and youth participation across the work of the National Office for Child Safety.

If you or your officers have any queries in relation to this matter they may contact [REDACTED] Senior Executive Director, Office of the Commissioners, on [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely



Luke Twyford
Principal Commissioner
Queensland Family and Child Commission



Natalie Lewis
Commissioner
Queensland Family and Child Commission

Enclosed:

1. QFCC Model of Participation
2. QFCC Youth Participation: A Quick Start Guide