



CCYP

Commissioner for Children
and Young People Tasmania



November 2019

Role of the CCYP

- Independent statutory office established under the ***Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2016***.
- A primary focus is to **promote the rights and wellbeing** of all children and young people in Tasmania.
- Role is guided by and informed by the principles of the United Nations' ***Convention on the Rights of the Child*** (CRC).



General Principles of the CRC

- The child's **right to non-discrimination** (Art. 2)
- The child's **right to have their best interests taken into account** as a primary consideration in all actions and decisions that affect them (Art.3)
- The child's **right to life, survival and development** (Art. 6)
- The child's **right to have a say** in all matters affecting them and for their views to be taken into account (Art.12)



Who are Tasmania's children and young people?

- Tasmania is home to around **112,000** children and young people aged 0 to 17 years.
- 22 per cent live in the south-east, 29 per cent in the south-west, 22 per cent in the north-west and 27 per cent in the north.
- 10.1 per cent of children and young people aged 0 to 19 in Tasmania identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- 50 per cent live in local government areas with an Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage score below 950.



What is mental health for children and young people?

- “A state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community” - World Health Organisation
- Mental health is the way children think or feel about themselves and the world around them. It’s related to how children cope with life’s challenges and stresses.
- However, mental disorders affect around 1 in 7 children (aged 4-17) in Australia.¹

¹ Lawrence D, Johnson S, Hafekost J, Boterhoven De Haan K, Sawyer M, Ainley J, Zubrick SR (2015) The Mental Health of Children and Adolescents. Report on the second Australian Child and Adolescent Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing. Department of Health, Canberra.



Prevalence of Mental Disorders among Children and Adolescents in Australia

Table 2-1: 12-month prevalence of mental disorders among 4-17 year-olds by sex

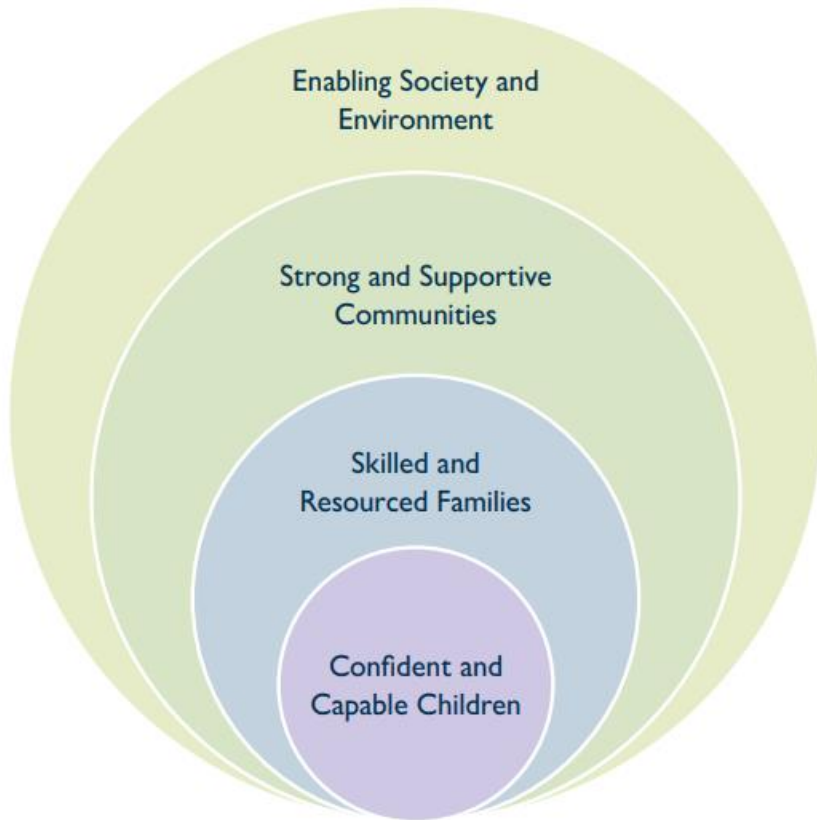
Disorder	Males population estimate	Males prevalence (%)	Females population estimate	Females prevalence (%)	Persons population estimate	Persons prevalence (%)
Anxiety disorders	145,000	7.0	133,000	6.8	278,000	6.9
Major depressive disorder	50,900	2.5	61,300	3.1	112,000	2.8
ADHD	215,000	10.4	83,200	4.3	298,000	7.4
Conduct disorder	52,400	2.5	31,200	1.6	83,600	2.1
Any mental disorder (a)	335,000	16.3	225,000	11.5	560,000	13.9

(a) Totals are lower than the sum of disorders as children and adolescents may have had more than one class of mental disorder in the previous 12 months.

Lawrence D, Johnson S, Hafekost J, Boterhoven De Haan K, Sawyer M, Ainley J, Zubrick SR (2015) The Mental Health of Children and Adolescents. Report on the second Australian Child and Adolescent Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing. Department of Health, Canberra.



The Ecological Model and the Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework

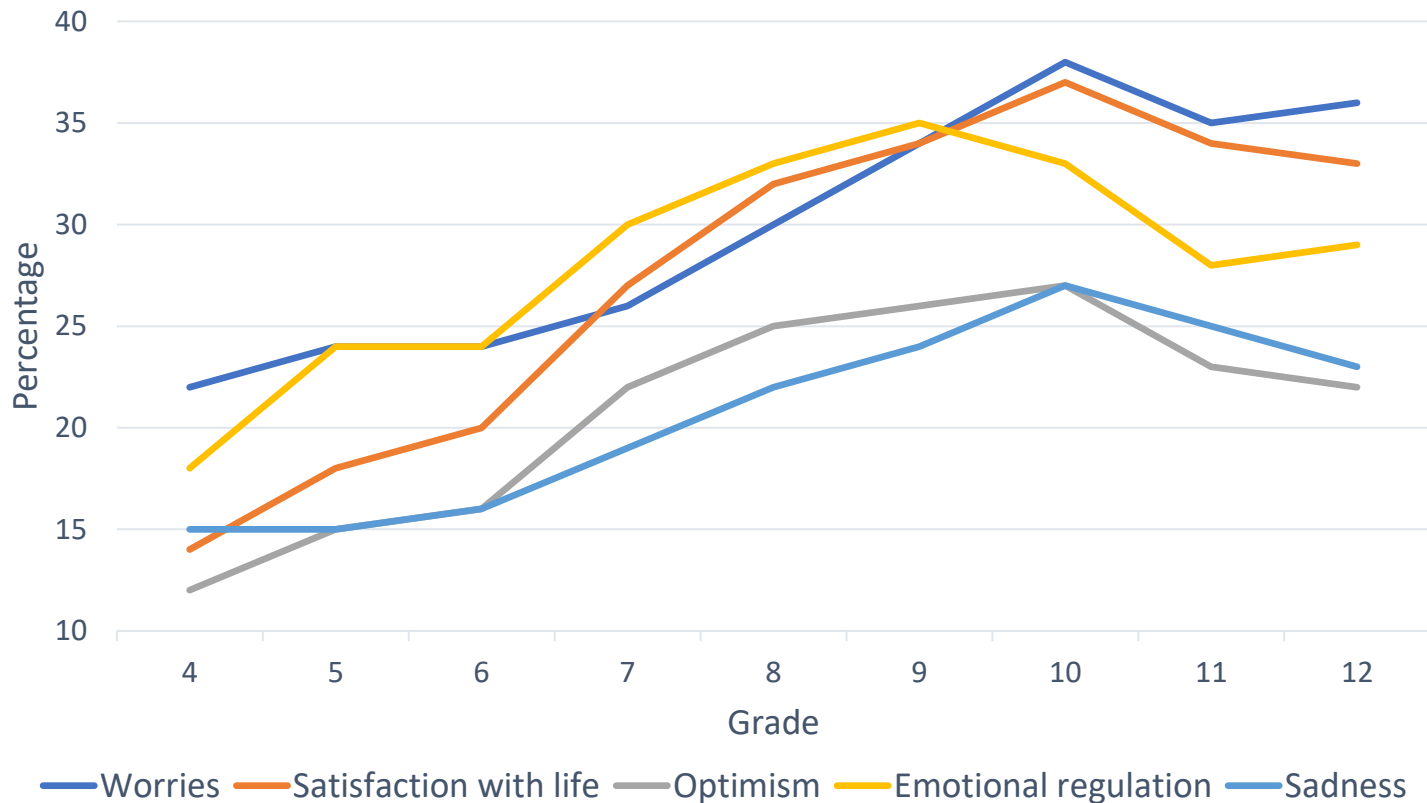


The Six Domains of Child and Youth Wellbeing



Department of Education Student Wellbeing Survey 2019

Percentage of students with low wellbeing



Listening to and promoting the voices of children and young people

- Statutory function to establish a Children and Young People Consultative Council and to promote and empower the participation of children and young people generally.
- CCYP Ambassador Program
- Out of Home Care Monitoring Program
- Listening Tour – children and young people, families and organisations who provide services.



CCYP Ambassador Program

In 2019, opportunities for children and young people to have a voice in matters that affect them has been expanded through the establishment of a **CCYP Ambassador Program**.

CCYP Ambassadors:

- share their views about what is important to them
- learn about and promote child rights
- complete special projects



CCYP Ambassador Program

Key themes in 2019:

- Education and opportunities
- Climate changes and the environment
- Equity and diversity
- Safety
- Access to material basics, services and supports
- Mental health and bullying
- Participation and recognition of children and young people



CCYP Ambassador Project



How's life?

- “Good...but busy!”
- So much on!”
- “...it’s a bit stressful. There are high expectations.”
- “More people than not will say they are feeling anxious and depressed.”
- “We need help to get the balance right.”
- “My mum works at the uni – lots of her students have had mental health issues – they are probably stressed with all the stress...people may not be able to ‘find the line’ ...”



Mental Health

I think that people that have a mental health issue should not be afraid to speak up.

I am extremely passionate about mental health for young people.

Stigma around mental health – too many people aren't ready to talk about the issues.

Parents getting more help because parent's mental health affects their child's mental health.

I think that more emotional help is really important. Some kids have things in their lives that are really sad and I think we need to get more people knowing about it and then more people can help.

I feel that social media can be a problem for children in my generation with bullying and safety issues. Social media can also lead to mental health issues and people feeling a certain way based on what they have experienced online.

When adults get involved they say "just ignore it", but some adults don't understand when something does happen adults don't do enough to make us safe. Safety affects our focus and our mental health and that can lead to self hurt and others.

Be able to talk to anyone, anytime about mental health without being judged.



Bullying

If a child is getting bullied, sometimes they don't tell an adult. When they do tell an adult, sometimes the adults don't care.

I'm someone that has been bullied a lot and I feel that there is too much of it happening and it is starting to become normal to be bullied, and it is not ok for people to be bullied. I would like to help get the message out that bullying is not ok in a work environment or an education or learning environment

I am passionate about seeing bullying and violence against children stamped out of schools and the wider community...I myself have been subjected to bullying verbally at school. I have also witnessed not only verbal bullying but also physical bullying and bullying on social media. Bullying has made me feel down and sad at times and no child should feel this way. I would like a safer environment for all.

I really want everyone to feel safe and happy so that they can focus on developing themselves. A big way that we can do this is to raise awareness about bullying, the long term impact that this has on people, and how to stop it.



Climate Change

There are lots of things I worry about but the one thing I worry about the most is kids' futures and our planet. I think it's important that kids grow up in a waste free planet and have a nice future to look forward to.

There are always these underlying issues that will worry us – the reality is that in 20 years I don't know if I will be able to have children because I don't know whether bringing a child into this world will be nice.

There are many worrying issues going on at the moment. I know that in just a few, short years, this world will be in our hands. It is very important that the Government takes into account what we would like done with our world. One major issue is climate change, this, if not acted on immediately, could potentially be the end of our future. The Tasmanian Government needs to educate people about this issue. They need to make their decisions with climate change in the backs of their minds. They need to lead people in the right direction because, together, we can make a huge difference. This all needs to happen before it is too late. I, personally, do not want to be handed such a big problem. It should not fall upon the people of the future's shoulders, it should fall on those of the present. If that means we need to finish what they started, that's okay, but this should not be all up to the next generation.



What do young people want?

If people were acceptive of mental health issues as they are with other illnesses, and we had more services especially for youth, Tasmania would be a better place for young people and children.

Having a safe/chill space where if you're stressed/worried, you can go and calm down.

Put lists of numbers to call for support and places you can go to up on school noticeboards.

Kids knowing that there is a school psychologist that they can talk to.

Making sure that every school has a counsellor that students can talk to.

Make mental health services cheaper and more accessible.

Having check-ups and asking the question "are you okay" and "how are you".

I believe that we need to find better systems for supporting young people and their families to feel connected to each other and to their communities.

Lower prices of psychology sessions.



Out-of-Home Care Monitoring Program

- Thematic monitoring for 2018-19 – “being healthy”
- Cross-cutting theme of “children and young people’s participation”
- Call for submissions – September 2018
- CREATE Round Table – April 2019
- Informal meetings with young people in OOHC



Findings from the Out-of-Home Care Monitoring Program

- Concerns about social relationships, including issues with bullying and social media.
- Mental health symptoms and conditions including self-harm, depression and anxiety, trauma and behavioural problems.
- Barriers to access for mental health services and trauma care exist across the continuum.
- A shortage of inpatient child and adolescent mental health care in Tasmania, at present.



Findings from the Out-of-Home Care Monitoring Program

“Australia-wide, children in care experience significantly poorer mental health outcomes than children who have never been in care, in many instances stemming from an underlying, and sometimes hidden, history of trauma in the form of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect”.

Submission on “being healthy”, 2019



Findings from the Out-of-Home Care Monitoring Program: Social health and connectedness

“Having someone to
talk to”

“Being with
people who
care about me”

“Being with people you
trust”

“Being healthy
is not just
physical, it’s
mental”

“Making sure your friends are okay”



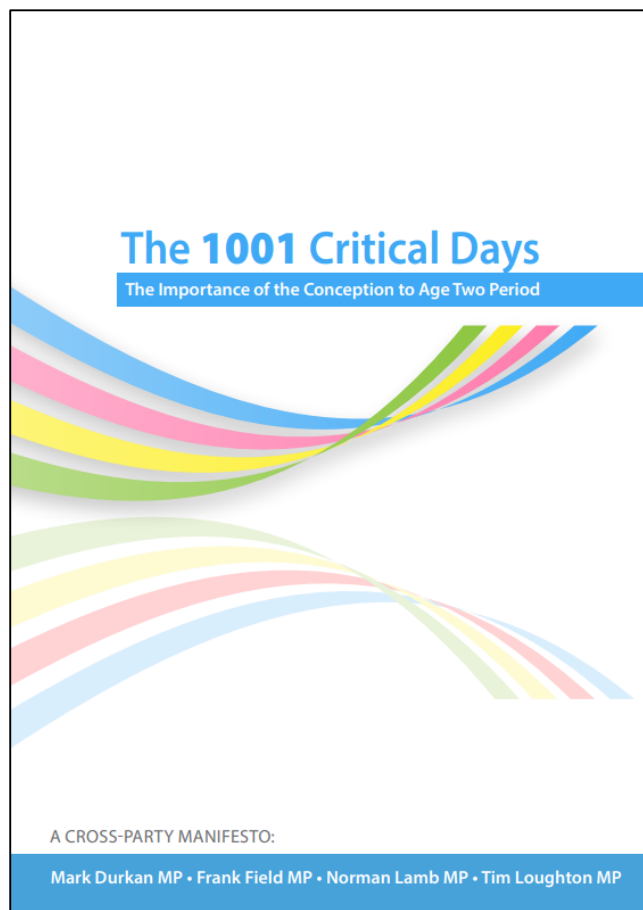
Listening Tour

Access to mental health services was consistently raised by children and young people, their families, and service providers. Their main concerns were:

- Long waitlists.
- Little or no outreach.
- Few or limited staff capacity.
- Limited office space for services.



The First 1,000 days



- Conception to the end of the second year of life.
- Period with the greatest potential to affect health and wellbeing over the life course.
- UK – Cross Party Manifesto
The 1001 Critical Days





WE CAN

<https://www.childcomm.tas.gov.au/we-can-short-film/>

Questions?



www.childcomm.tas.gov.au

