

Policy Name:	Youth Policy
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Compliance Level:	Mandatory
Compliance Detail:	All staff
Category:	Governance, community liaison
Summary	This policy outlines our commitment to improve our services to children, young people and their advocates. It identifies key staff responsible for the youth action plan
Related Policies:	Youth action plan
Publication Date:	17 September 2012
Review Date:	17 September 2014
Policy Owner:	Director, Strategic Projects Division
Distribution Method:	Staff are to be advised of all policies by email when they are approved by the Ombudsman
Superseded Policy Reference:	Not applicable
Public availability:	Available
Feedback:	Youth Liaison Officer

YOUTH POLICY

PREFACE

We aim to be an effective organisation. Having an access and equity program to make sure that our services are accessible to all members of the public and to disadvantaged groups in particular is one way of achieving this. It is essential that our office is accessible to anyone who needs our services and any barriers are identified and where possible eliminated. Our Youth Policy is a key component of this program.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline our commitment to improve our services to children, young people and their advocates. We aim to ensure that we conduct our work in a way which facilitates access to the services provided by the Ombudsman for young people.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Director, Strategic Projects Division (SPD) has overall responsibility for the implementation of our youth action plan. The Director SPD has the authority to amend strategies and timeframes contained in the plan following consultation with the youth issues group. The Director SPD may, if appropriate, refer issues to the Senior Officers Group. The Youth Liaison Officer (YLO) will report to the Director SPD on the progress of each strategy contained in the youth action plan at least quarterly.

The YLO is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the youth action plan with support and assistance being provided by the youth issues group. The youth issues group has responsibility for ensuring that Ombudsman staff from their respective divisions is provided with information, support and guidance in relation to issues affecting young people.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Not applicable.

DEFINITIONS

Young person - Generally, a young person is aged between 12 and 24 years. Based on vulnerability and the types of issues affecting people, we categorise young people into two separate age brackets: 12-17 years and 18-24 years.

Youth Action Plan - The youth action plan outlines the strategies, actions and planned activities undertaken by the YLO, YIG and the office in relation to our work with youth.

Youth Issues Group – an internal working group consisting of members from across the office which provides an ongoing forum to identify, monitor and review youth related issues, inquiries and complaints.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Ombudsman is committed to ensuring access for young people and their advocates to services provided by our office. We aim to maintain our awareness of issues affecting young people and appropriate services to them, by regularly engaging with peak bodies and youth services, and young people directly through our participation in community events, inspections of residential and custodial facilities, and school visits.

It is our goal to:

- ensure the delivery of a high quality service to young people and their advocates
- increase general awareness in the community of the services provided by our office
- assist the youth services sector to improve their management of complaints from young people
- contribute to addressing systemic issues affecting young people, and
- achieve better outcomes for young people.

The youth action plan outlines the strategies and activities we will use to implement our commitment to remaining responsive to the changing nature of issues facing young people.

OMBUDSMAN APPROVAL

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Barbour', written in a cursive style.

Bruce Barbour

OMBUDSMAN