



Commissioner  
for **Children**

01

# Child Participation Models



ADVANCED HUMAN RIGHTS COURSE:  
CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN AFRICA

24 JUNE 2021

# Mandate sharing




## MANDATE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN

ACCORDING TO WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE CONSTITUTION AND ACT 2 OF 2019

The Western Cape Commissioner for Children must protect and promote the rights, needs and interests of children in the province by working with the departments of Education, Health, Social Development as well as Cultural Affairs and Sport.

The Commissioner for Children is an independent institution from government and reports to Provincial Parliament on activities, functions and progress on objectives.

- Monitor**  
The impact of government services, policies and laws on children and points out negative impacts.
- Investigate**  
Complaints about government services and make recommendations.
- Research**  
Policy or practice developments that affect child rights.
- Educate**  
Everyone on the laws, programmes and projects for children.
- Lobby**  
Key decision makers on laws, policies and practices affecting children.
- Advise**  
Government on improvements to realise child rights.
- Recommend**  
A clear course of action to change law, policy or practice that negatively affects children.
- Engage**  
All children to know about and be involved in the work of the Commissioner for Children and be able to inform the Commissioner of their perspectives of their rights, needs and interests.



Childrens.Commissioner@wcc.gov.za



Kukho umntu okhethiweyo kwiphondo lethu ekufuneka akhusele amalungelo abantwana. Igama lakhe nguMkhomishinari waabantwana.

UNIKWE INVUME YOKWENZA UMSEBENZI WAKHE YOKUKHUSELA ABANTWANA

Okokuqala unamandla okukhangela kwaye afumane iingxaki kuhlulumente ezimangalayo ekuphuculeni ubomi babantwana bonke. Okwesibini, unamandla okugokelela ubungqina bokuncedisana ekubazeni ngcono abantwana. Sifunde futhi sazi ukuba abantwana bahlathwezwazwa yintoni. Igunya lakhe lesithathu kukwazisa futhi afundise wonke umntu indlela abathandeka ngayo abantwana nendlela ekufuneka besatinywe ngayo. Ucela obantu abadala bazimamele izimvo neembono zabantwana.




UMkhomishinari waabantwana ukhohle ukumamela abantwana xa kungekho namnye umntu ofuna ukubamamela.

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There is a special person in our province that must protect children's rights. She is called the Children's Commissioner.

SHE HAS BEEN GIVEN SUPERPOWERS TO DO HER JOB TO PROTECT ALL CHILDREN

Her first superpowers are to look for anything in government that stops them from making children's lives better. For example, she wants to understand if schools and clinics are good places for children and how to make them feel safe.

Her second superpowers are to gather information that help us understand children better. She wants to know about children's dreams and worries.

Her third superpower is to tell everyone how wonderful children are and that they must be valued. She asks adults to listen to children's views and opinions.




The Children's Commissioner listens to children, especially when nobody else wants to, so that everyone can do what is needed to make children's lives better.

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Daar is 'n spesiale persoon in ons provinsie wat die regte van alle kinders beskerm. Sy word die Kinderkommissaris genoem.

SY HET 'SUPERPOWERS' GEKRY OM HAAR WERK TE DOEN

Haar eerste 'superpowers' is om te kyk na wat die regering doen om alle kinders se lewens te verbeter. Byvoorbeeld, sy wil verstaan of skole en klinieke goeie plekke is vir kinders. Sy wil ook verstaan wat kinders swaiger sal laat voel.

Haar tweede 'superpowers' is om informasie te kry wat om help om kinders beter te verstaan. Sy wil weet van kinders se bekommernisse en hulle drome.

Haar derde 'superpowers' is om almal te vertel hoe wonderlik kinders is en dat ons hulle moet waardeer. Sy via volwassenes om na kinders se gevoelens en opinies te luister.




Die Kinderkommissaris is daar om na kinders se advies te luister wanneer niemand anders na hulle wil luister nie.

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## Powers and duties:

- **Monitor:** The impact of government services, policies and laws on children
- **Investigate:** Complaints about services and make recommendations
- **Research:** Policy or practice developments that affect child rights
- **Educate:** Everyone on the laws, programmes and projects for children
- **Lobby:** Key decision makers on laws, policies and practices affecting children
- **Advise:** Government on improvements to realise child rights
- **Recommend:** A course of action to change law, policy, practice that negatively affects children
- **Child participation:** Children should be involved in the work of the CC and be able to inform the Commissioner of their rights, needs and interests.



# Child Participation Models



**Child  
Government  
Monitors**



**Community  
Child Rights  
Workshops**



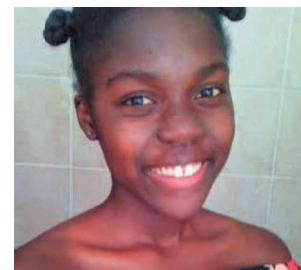
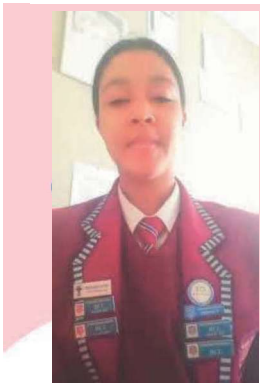
# Child Government Monitors

The aims of the model are to:

- ▶ Ensure children are **partners** in the development of the office
- ▶ Enable children to **guide the Commissioner** on the rights, needs, and interests of children
- ▶ Provide opportunities for children to render **input into** the Office.



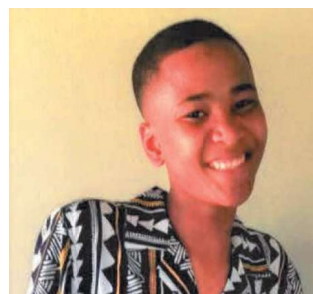




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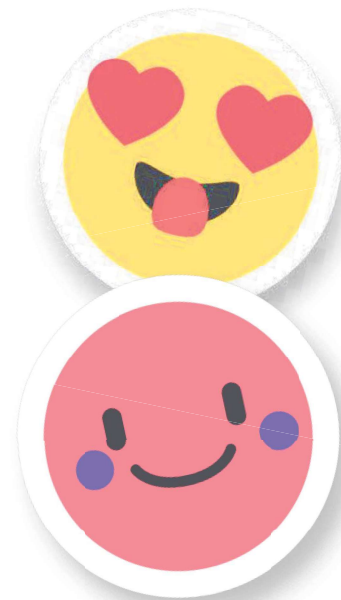
## Methods of recruitment

- Self-nominate
- Child rights organisations
- Organisations working with children
- Elected during a community child rights workshop
- Under 18 yrs
- Consent



## Advisory Council

1. **child rights advocate**
2. being **committed to the institution building**
3. apply their special **skills and talents** in the group
4. **representing the Child Government Monitors Group in other forums** e.g. webinars, conferences



# Approach to engagements

- ▶ WhatsApp group
  - ▶ Not included:
    - Monitors in State Care
    - Monitors sharing a phone
- ▶ Weekly 2 hr discussion sessions
- ▶ Child rights, governance, social justice issues, and self-care.
- ▶ Updates of the office and opportunities for participation







# For The Love of Children

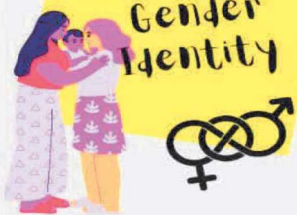
## Children Are Worthy

Of Growing Up in A Loving, Caring  
Environment With Good Parents Regardless  
Of Their Gender or Sexuality

All Children Are  
Worthy of  
Love From  
Their  
Caregivers



Good Parents  
Are Not  
Determined By  
Gender  
Identity



All Children  
Deserve Good  
Parents



Government  
Should  
Support  
Parents To  
Become Good  
Parents



#littlevoicesMUSTcount #kleinstemmetjiesMOETsaakmaak  
#amazwiamancinciMAKAVAKALE

## CGM submissions

- Art and poetry
- equal education
- mental health
- discrimination
- comprehensive sexuality education
- representative council of learners
- African Peer Review Mechanism
- UN
- SA Parliament



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 #amazwiamancinciMAKAVAKALE

[www.westerncape.gov.za/childrens-commissioner](http://www.westerncape.gov.za/childrens-commissioner)

#littlevoicesMUSTcount #kleinstemmetjiesMOETsaakmaak  
 #amazwiamancinciMAKAVAKALE

- CGMs involved in selecting the **logo**.
- CGMs developed the **hashtags** conveying our mission statement

#littlevoicesMUSTcount

- CGMs are the **brand ambassadors**
- CGMs are involved in **staff interviews**
- **First audience** of official reports



## CGM's top 3 achievements

- Presenting in the first ever closed oral hearings session for children and youth in **National Parliament** on 14 May 2021.
- Being involved as **monitors and advisors** in the first Western Cape Commissioner for Children's office.
- Exercising their **freedom of speech and expressing their views to society.**



## Lessons learnt from CGM



- Online platforms provide for broad communication
- Innovative activities
- Children preferred fun and easy
- Adults still require preparation for child participation.





# Meet the Child Government Monitors

Aimee



Alessio



Vimbai





## Community Child Rights Workshops

The aim of this model is to:

- Share the **mandate**
- **Advocate** with parents, primary caregivers and stakeholders
- **Monitor** services provided to children by government





# Approach to engagements



## Planning

- Work with local government officials within municipalities
- Contextual information
- Introductions to local stakeholders
- Assist with developing an itinerary for the visit
- Consent forms

## Workshops

## Produce a report



## Bergrivier & Matzikama

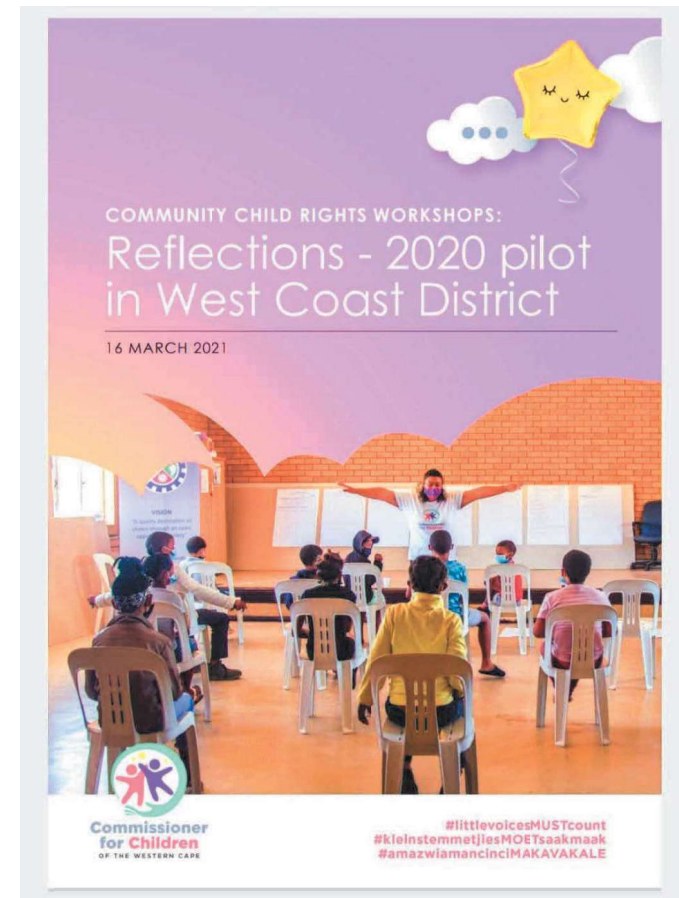
- ▶ Children, parents, and service providers
- ▶ Community safety mapping
- ▶ Recommendations for service improvements
- ▶ Child Government Monitors

## Hessequa

- ▶ Children and service providers
- ▶ Dreams and worries
- ▶ Recommendations for service improvements
- ▶ Child Government Monitors

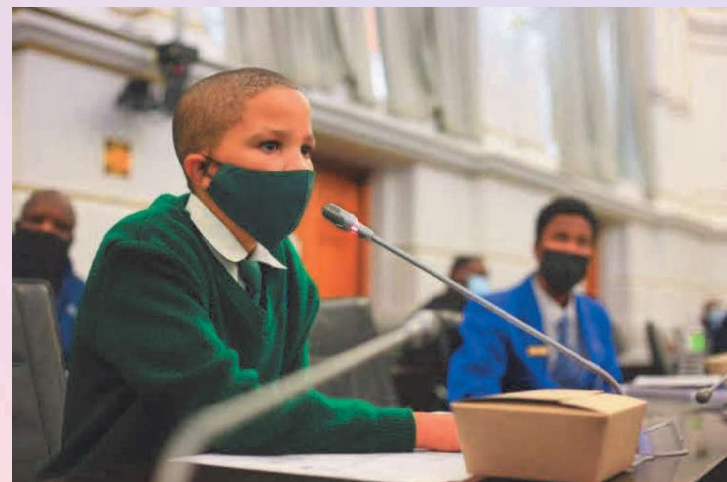


- ▶ Report of the findings
- ▶ Findings are shared with Heads of Departments in the Western Cape Province
- ▶ Each department addresses the concerns highlighted in the report





# A success story: Ruan's journey of activism





## Lessons Learnt

- Engaging directly with both adult community stakeholders and children models a child rights approach
- Providing children with an opportunity to feed into governance affirms them as active citizens.



## Contact details

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 @ChildCommWC

 Childrens Commissioner WC

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