



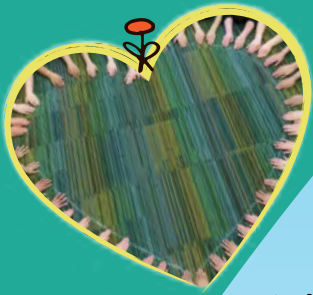
Australian  
Human Rights  
Commission

# What does the Children's Rights Report 2015 say?

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER



*Child-friendly version*



**Hi!**

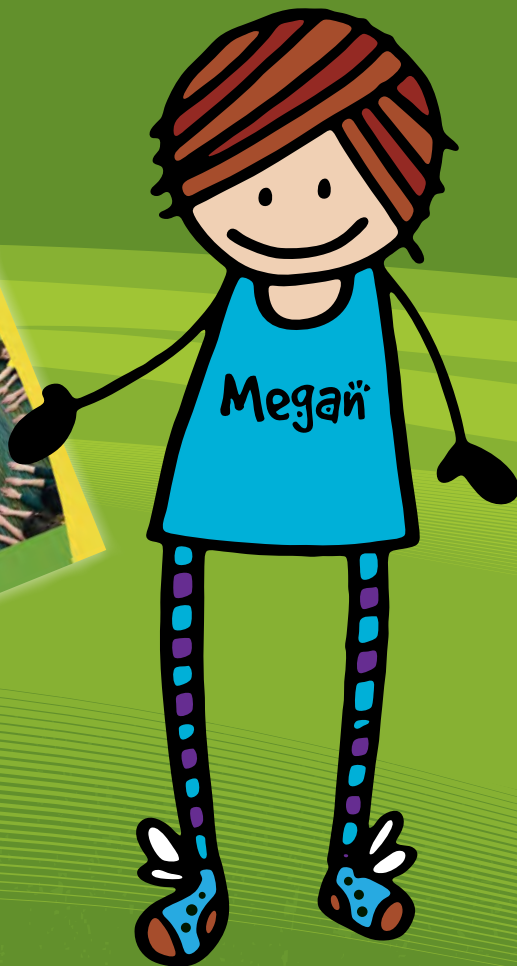
I'm Megan Mitchell, the National Children's Commissioner.

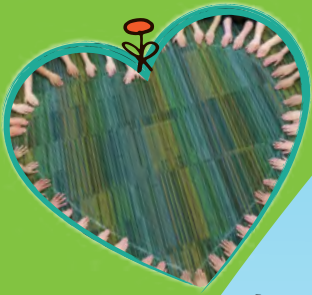
My job is to protect the rights of all children in Australia and make sure that adults are helping all of you grow up safe, protected and healthy.

Every year I write a Report to the Australian Government telling them how I think we can better look out for all children. This is my third report.

I am going to talk about the main things in my Report.







## Did you know that we all have human rights?

You have special rights that are written in an agreement called the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**.

You have the right to:

- ☆ be treated fairly no matter what
- ☆ have a say about decisions about you
- ☆ live and grow up healthy
- ☆ get information that is important to your well-being
- ☆ be safe no matter where you are
- ☆ be cared for and have a home
- ☆ know who you are and where you come from
- ☆ get an education
- ☆ privacy.

The Australian Government has promised to make sure all children get these things.



There is also a special group of people called the **United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child** who try to make things better for children all over the world.

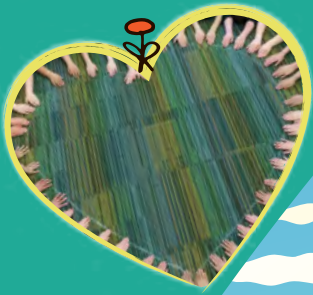
It looked at what life is like for children in Australia and told the Australian Government what it could do to make things better.

It said that Australia does a lot of good things for children BUT it also said that some children:

- ☆ are being treated unfairly
- ☆ are being bullied and hurt
- ☆ are not getting the education they need
- ☆ can't live with their parents
- ☆ are not as happy or as healthy as they could be
- ☆ do not have homes
- ☆ are in trouble with the law and need help
- ☆ are locked up.

**Australia needs to listen to children and work harder to help them.**





**In 2013, in my first year as the National Children's Commissioner, I went around Australia listening to children and young people.**

I met over 1,000 children and young people. About 1,400 children and young people also filled in surveys and sent me postcards.

I asked them what was important to them and what would make life better.

I heard stories from adults who work with children and young people too.

After I had listened to all the great things that children, young people and adults had to say, I came up with five main ideas.

These ideas are helping me do my work.



NEXT  
25 km



### 1. The right to be heard

We need to make sure that adults listen to children and young people and take their views seriously.

### 2. Freedom from violence, abuse and neglect

We need to make sure that all children and young people are safe.

### 3. The opportunity to thrive

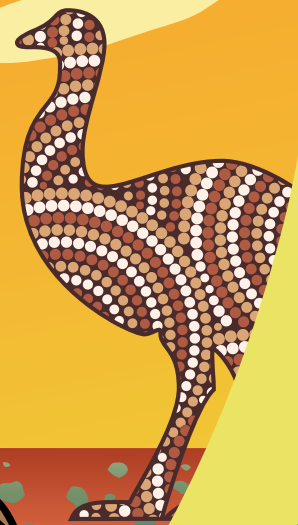
All children and young people need to grow up strong, healthy and happy. We need to help children and young people who are having a really hard time right from the start, instead of waiting until the problems get really bad.

### 4. Engaged citizenship

We should help children and young people get involved in their schools and communities – to be citizens! They need to know about their rights!

### 5. Action and accountability

We need to know all about how children and young people are doing in Australia. Then we need to make sure that the Australian Government makes laws and rules which help all children and young people.





## This year I paid special attention to the rights of children and young people when they buy things.

In our world today, buying stuff is a big part of our lives.

Every day we buy things like food, clothing and games (**products**). We also pay money for things like catching a bus or getting a haircut (**services**).

Anyone who buys a product or service is called a “**consumer**”.

Children and young people are consumers too!

Because we buy things all the time, the people who sell things to you (**businesses**) can have a big influence on the way we live.

Businesses can help make our lives easier by selling us things that we need and want, but sometimes they can also make our lives harder.

For example, you might be sold something that is not safe or not made to be used by children.

You might feel that sometimes you are tricked into buying things.

Something might go wrong with a thing you have paid for, and a business might not give you your money back.

They might also make it difficult for you to make a complaint.





**To find out more about the problems and issues children and young people face when they buy products or use services, I spoke with over 100 children and young people about their experiences.**

I learnt that:

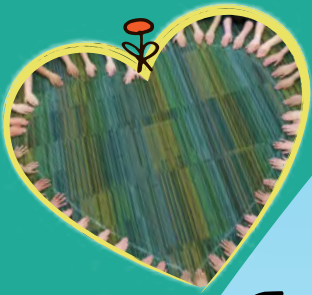
- ☆ Children and young people buy lots of different products and services. Many of them buy things from websites on the Internet.
- ☆ Sometimes children and young people are sold things that don't turn up or don't work properly.
- ☆ Many children and young people don't know about their rights so that when things go wrong, they don't know how to fix the problem.

The children and young people I spoke to told me that businesses should do more to help children and young people.

They said that businesses should let children and young people know about how products are made and what they can do if they have any problems with what they have bought.

In my Report to the Australian Government, I have suggested that more work needs to be done to protect the rights of children and young people when they buy products and services.





## This year I also looked at how children and young people are affected by family and domestic violence.

For most children and young people, home is a place where they feel safe, protected and loved.

**However, some children and young people don't feel safe in their own home.**

Disagreeing about things is a regular part of family life.

Sometimes your parents might have disagreements about money or who does chores around the house.

You might argue with your mum or dad, or brother or sister, about a lot of different things.

But sometimes arguments in families go too far and people can get hurt.



Sometimes children and young people see members of their family, like one of their parents, getting hurt.

Sometimes children and young people are the ones who are getting hurt.

Violence in families has a big effect on everyone, especially children and young people.

Children and young people who have to deal with violence at home can feel:

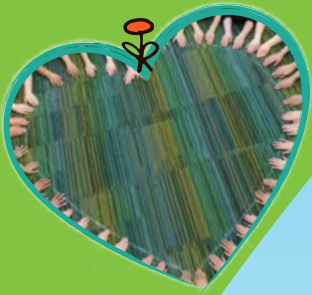
- ☆ afraid
- ☆ anxious or depressed
- ☆ lonely
- ☆ angry
- ☆ guilty
- ☆ confused.

There's no excuse for family and domestic violence. It is never OK.

All children and young people have the right to be safe.

I will be working with the Australian Government to help make sure that children and young people are safe and protected in their homes.





What if you are in danger of getting hurt or are worried about getting hurt?

Do you know where to go to get help?

If you think you are in immediate danger, get the police by dialling **000**.



If in  
danger  
dial  
000

How  
can I  
help?



If you don't feel safe at home or you are worried that other members of your family are not safe, there are lots of ways you can get help.

You can talk to someone you trust, like a friend or a teacher.

If you wanted to **talk to someone on the phone**, you can call Kids Helpline on **1800 55 1800**.

You can also talk to headspace:

- ☆ **face-to-face** at a headspace centre
- ☆ online at **[www.eheadspace.org.au](http://www.eheadspace.org.au)**
- ☆ on the phone by calling **1800 650 890**.



## What will I do now?

Every year I make a report like this telling the Australian Government what it can do to make life better for children and young people.

## What can you do now?

You can also have your say about your rights, anytime!

You can email me on [kids@humanrights.gov.au](mailto:kids@humanrights.gov.au).





## Know your rights!

All children in Australia and the world have human rights.

Some of the rights that you have are listed in the boxes below.  
Match the right to the picture it belongs to.

I have  
a right...

to be treated fairly  
no matter what

to have a say about  
decisions that affect me

to be cared for and  
have a home

to have a good education

to get helpful information

to live and grow up healthy

to have your own privacy





## Word scramble!

Look for some of the key words used in this report and unscramble the words below.

**PCRTSDOU**

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**Clue:** Food, clothes and games are all examples of ...

**IERESCSV**

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**Clue:** Catching a bus or getting a haircut are examples of ...

**NBISESSU**

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**Clue:** You buy things from a ...

**MUEOSRNCS**

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**Clue:** People who buy things are called ...





# Things Kids in Alice Springs



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