

Youth Participation Policy

Topic area:	Business Operations	Version number:	8.0
Applies to:	All GCYP staff	OBJECTIVE Document ID:	A434533
Responsible Officer:	Senior Advocate		
Accountable Officer:	Guardian for Children and Young People		
Version details:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - January 2008 – date first issued. - March 2015 - New policy format applied. Reviewed at team meeting. - March 2015 – Version 7.0 endorsed by Accountable Officer. - February 2016 - Updated to reflect staff changes, no other review. - March 2016 – reviewed at team meeting and version 8.0 endorsed by Accountable Officer 		
Date of next review:	March 2017		

1. PURPOSE

- The purpose of this policy is to promote the participation of children and young people in care in the functions of the Office.

2. SCOPE

- This policy applies to all staff of the Office of the Guardian and children and young people in the custody or under the guardianship of the Minister who have contact with the Office.

3. DETAIL

- The Office is committed to the active participation of children and young people in care in the decisions that affect their lives.
- The coordination, monitoring and review of youth participation strategies is allocated to a staff member within the advocacy team.
- The youth participation strategy aims to gather the experiences and views of a diverse group of children and young people.
- Consultations with children and young people will be ethical, directed and open. This will ensure children and young people can raise their own issues, while directed discussion allows topics of interest to the Guardian's Office to be consulted on.
- Children and young people can participate through a variety of communication methods.
- The participation of children and young people is valued by the Office and their participation will be acknowledged.
- Feedback will be sought from young people regarding the appropriateness, benefit and value to them of participating. The Office will ensure feedback is provided to them about what has been heard and as a result, what will be acted on.

- The Office will ensure that children and young people’s involvement in youth participation activities is voluntary.
- The Office will honour the legislative requirements in the *Children’s Protection Act, South Australia (1993)*.
- The Office will annually review the youth participation strategy, with a view to making amendments to meet the needs of the Office and participants.
- The sensitive nature of participation is acknowledged by the Office and children and young people’s wellbeing will be paramount throughout.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- The youth participation strategy will be implemented by the Advocacy team and the Guardian.
- The support of youth participation is a shared responsibility across the Office.

5. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- Review of the Youth Participation Policy will be undertaken as prescribed in the GCYP Policy Document Protocol.

6. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term	Meaning
Guardian	The Guardian for Children and Young People
GCYP or the Office	The Office of the Guardian for Children and Young People
GCYP staff	Includes permanent, temporary, casual and contract staff, as well as volunteers and students on placement.

7. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Use the OBJECTIVE Document ID numbers to access the following documents relating to this policy:
 - GCYP Policy Documents Protocol A11407918
 - GCYP Strategic Plan 2011-2015 A4084451
 - GCYP Code of Conduct A5151910
 - GCYP Youth Participation Strategy A8141500

8. REFERENCES

- [Children's Protection Act \(1993\), South Australia](#)
- [Charter of Rights for Children and Young People in Care](#)
- [Child Safe Environments: Principles of Good Practice \(July 2012\)](#)
Issued by the Chief Executive, Department of Education and Child Development, (Section 8A, Children’s Protection Act 1993 [SA])

- [Department of Families and Communities Information Sharing and Client Privacy Statement \(2005\)](#)
- [National Framework: Creating safe environments for children: Organisations, employees and volunteers](#) (2005) – Issued by the Community and Disability Services' Conference