



Activity Report September—November, 2017

Two major bills affecting young offenders

Our Office has responded to two significant bills introduced to the South Australian Parliament by the Attorney General. These bills adversely affect children and young people, especially those who come into contact with the youth justice system. Both bills were inconsistent with national and international standards that protect the rights and interests of children and young people, and particularly Article 3 of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

We produced a submission, '*Looking for Balance: a response to the Statutes Amendment (Youth Sentenced as Adults) Bill 2017*', to the first of these - the *Statutes Amendment (Youths Sentenced as Adults) Bill 2017*. This bill is yet to be considered by the Upper House and this Office has been encouraging Legislative Councillors to oppose it. The second was the hastily introduced *Statutes Amendment (Recidivist and Repeat Offenders) Bill 2017*. The Guardian wrote to the Attorney General and other MPs to express serious concerns. We provided a document detailing the essential principles for secure therapeutic care, which we will release more widely in the future. This latter Bill was defeated in the Upper House.

Community Visitors Scheme

The Office welcomed Jordan Bell as the Principal Community Advocate for the trial of a Community Visitors Scheme for young people in care, a recommendation coming out of the Nyland Royal Commission.



Training Centre Visitor Scheme

In mid-November we will also be welcoming back Belinda Lorek as the Principal Training Centre Advocate, a role she will share with Alan Fairley. They will work together to establish the Training Centre Visitor Scheme, a program of advocacy, visits and inspections of the Adelaide Youth Training Centre. Belinda previously worked with the office as an Advocate and Acting Senior Advocate.



People's Policy for Children's Wellbeing Forum

Along with the Commissioner for Children and Young People, the Guardian participated in the People's Policy for Children's Wellbeing Forum which was run by Democracy Co. Other members of the Guardian's Office team have attended consultations on the draft Early Intervention Bill, the Child Protection Reform Implementation Key Partners Forum regarding Prevention and Early Intervention and the launch of Uniting Communities' Jo's Therapeutic Youth Residential Care.

Monitoring

The Office's Advocates have conducted thirteen monitoring visits to six Department for Child Protection residential care sites and other sites managed by HYP A, Uniting Care Wesley SA, Baptist Community Services, Cara and the Adelaide Youth Training Centre. In addition, Conrad Morris, our Advocate – Aboriginal Children, has focussed on visiting Aboriginal Family Support Services houses and making contact with Aboriginal young people seeking advocacy, those who are residents in the Adelaide Youth Training Centre and those in residential care.

Comment and submissions

The Office has provided feedback on a review of *Operational Orders relating to the use of Isolation, Restricted Routine and Structured Routine* by the Adelaide Youth Training Centre, *Draft Regulations under the Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016*, and a submission to the Law Council of Australia Justice Project: Children and Young People.

Child protection expenditure report

The Office also released its yearly report on *South Australian child protection expenditure from the Report on Government Services 2017* and the report on *Audits of Annual Reviews 20017-2017 – children, systems and practice*.