

A proposed Bill for Children and Young People – Wellbeing, Development and Early Intervention

The Strategy and the Council

The objects and principles that have been proposed for a Bill are intended to highlight the notion that strengthening families and communities for the wellbeing and development of children and young people in South Australia is a shared responsibility. It would be appropriate for a new Bill to reflect a whole-of-state approach to this.

We are interested in your views on these matters. Some guiding questions have been included at the end of this fact sheet, for your consideration.

A Whole of State Strategy for Children and Young People and their Families

It is proposed that a new Bill could include a requirement for the Minister to develop a **Whole of State Strategy for Children and Young People and Their Families**.

In broad terms, the Whole of State Strategy could provide for:

- Strategies and policies that affect children and young people and emphasise the need for children and young people to be able to participate in decisions affecting them;
- Government and non-government organisations to have a responsibility to contribute to and improve the wellbeing of children and young people;
- The role of communities to create and develop safe and supporting environments for children and young people;
- The need for appropriate services to be universally available to children and young people and their families;
- The need for early intervention where children and young people and their families require additional assistance or preventive interventions;
- The need for actions affecting children and young people to be informed by sound, evidence based research; and
- The priorities and strategies that the Minister will pursue and adopt to meet the objectives of a bill.

To prepare a Strategy such as this, it is proposed that the Minister consult with the Commissioner for Children and Young People and the Child Development Council (refer the next section).

It is proposed that the Minister would also undertake community consultation on the draft Strategy prior to adopting it and presenting it to both Houses of Parliament. Community members and children and young people should be part of this consultation process.



The Child Development Council

The Child Development Council is established under the *Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016* as an expert advisory body to the Minister for Education and Child Development. With the proposed scope of a bill to focus on the development and wellbeing of all children and young people, inclusive of prevention and early intervention, there is an opportunity to place the Child Development Council within this Bill.

It is envisaged that this inclusion would enhance a shared focus by government, non-government organisations and communities to improving the wellbeing and development of all children and young people in South Australia within the contexts of families and communities.

The proposed functions of the Child Development Council include:

- a) to advise the Minister in relation to the preparation and maintenance of the State Strategy
- b) to advise and report to the Government on the effectiveness of the State Strategy in furthering and achieving the purposes of this Act, and, in particular—
 - i. improving the physical and mental health, and the emotional wellbeing, of children and young people; and
 - ii. improving the participation of children and young people in educational and vocational training; and
 - iii. improving the participation of children and young people in sporting, creative, cultural and other recreational activities; and
 - iv. ensuring that children and young people are properly prepared for taking their position in society as responsible citizens; and
 - v. maintaining the cultural identity of children and young people;
- c) to promote the implementation of the State Strategy in respect of matters affecting children and young people under the laws of the State;
- d) such other functions as may be assigned to the Council under this or any other Act or by the Minister.

Consultation Questions

- Are there any additional matters that you feel should be included in the proposed Whole of State Strategy for Children, Young People and their Families?
- Mindful of the rationale for placing the Child Development Council in this new Bill, are the functions that have been proposed supportive of the intentions of such a Bill? If not, how might they be strengthened?

