

Thursday, 1 November 2018

yourtown contributes to report expected to set national agenda for children

yourtown's expertise in providing support for young people in Australia has proved vital to the culmination of the The Children's Report, delivered to the United Nations once every five to six years by The Australian Child Rights Taskforce and to be presented Thursday, 1 November.

Head of Strategy and Research John Dalglish said **yourtown** welcomes the report and its recommendations for creating a national agenda to support and protect young people in Australia.

"As a member of The Australian Child Rights Taskforce, **yourtown** can speak to the Taskforce's dedication to creating a report that requires action to be taken on a policy level to stop our children falling through the gaps," Mr Dalglish said.

"**yourtown** believes this report is an accurate reflection of the challenges that affect far too many vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people in Australia today.

"The report highlights the necessity for government intervention and a national plan to tackle a range of critical community issues.

"**yourtown** particularly welcomes the report's recommendations for setting targets to reduce child poverty, address the needs of Indigenous young people, raise the age of criminal responsibility, extend the age of leaving care until 21, and the commission of new research into this sector," he said.

The mental health of children and young people is also a major focus of the report.

"We've been working hard to raise the profile of mental health concerns and welcome the report's focus on the need for increased and improved mental health services and suicide prevention responses tailored to the needs of individuals and communities," he said.

"Mental health is the number one reason children and young people contacted Kids Helpline in 2017, with one in four (17,115) counselling contacts to Kids Helpline relating to this issue. These were highest in the 10-14 age group, increasing by 123 percent (1,250 contacts) from 2011-17 - twice that of the 19-25 age group."

The Children's Report is an exposition of complex issues and challenges facing children and young people in Australia, particularly the more vulnerable among them. This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, refugees, asylum seekers, young people who live with a disability and those who identify as LGBTIQ+.

The Australian Child Rights Taskforce is co-convened by UNICEF Australia and The National Children's and Youth Law Centre and represents a number of Australian organisations advocating for the promotion and fulfilment of the rights of Australian children.

Laura Clarke, **yourtown** Advocacy and Policy Lead is attending the launch of the report at the National Press Club tomorrow.

Further information and research regarding the critical issues facing Australian young people can be found in the **2017 KHL Insights Reports**, go to www.yourtown.com.au/insights/annual-overviews

Kids Helpline is Australia's only free, private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling service specifically for children and young people aged 5 to 25 years. **FREE call 1800 55 1800** or www.kidshelpline.com.au

Kids Helpline would like to remind media to include [Kids Helpline](#) contact details during or at the end of broadcast coverage and articles to direct children and young people who may need support.

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INTERVIEW/PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES

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