



Commissioner for Children and Young People
Western Australia



Multicultural Plan 2021–2026

Commissioner for Children and Young People

October 2021

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge and give our respect to all Traditional Owners and custodians across this vast state, their Elders past and present, and commit to supporting the wellbeing of the youth of today, who will be the Elders of tomorrow.

Alternative formats

On request, large print or alternative formats of the Commissioner for Children and Young People's Multicultural Plan can be obtained from:

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Introduction

Our values

We strive to be respectful, honest, inclusive, creative, positive, determined, independent and to act with integrity.

Commitment to the safety of children and young people

Children and young people are entitled to live in a caring and nurturing environment and to be protected from harm and exploitation. Children and young people should be safe, feel safe and be respected wherever they are. The Commissioner for Children and Young People prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in all work of the office and in our work with other organisations.

The Commissioner's role and functions

The Commissioner is the independent person who works closely with children and young people, their families, community and government to make WA a better place for 0 to 18 year-olds. The [Commissioner for Children and Young People Act \(2006\)](#) determines the functions and role of the Commissioner.

In particular, the Commissioner must —

- a) give priority to, and have special regard to, the interests and needs of —
 - (i) Aboriginal children and young people and Torres Strait Islander children and young people; and
 - (ii) children and young people who are vulnerable or disadvantaged for any reason; and
- b) have regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

It can be seen from the above that the Commissioner and staff have a legislative requirement to support vulnerable and disadvantaged West Australian citizens, in particular children and young people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds. The Commissioner and staff are very committed to support the above in all their work and across all civic, social and economic environments.

The Commissioner undertakes projects, commissions research, publishes reports, and hosts events to highlight specific aspects of children and young people's wellbeing. The promotion and valuing of the voice of all children and young people across all cultures and regions and the positive contributions they make to our society is paramount in our work. Additionally, using research and the other evidence available, the Commissioner seeks to positively influence legislation, policy, services and attitudes. All these aspects of the Commissioner's work assist the continuous improvement in the wellbeing of children and young people across all aspects of their lives. If the wellbeing of all children and young people is improved this will have a positive flow-on effect for WA citizens regardless of their ethnic or socio-economic backgrounds in the future.

As outlined in the Commissioner's Strategic Directions 2021–2026, the work of the office aligns with three key platforms:

- Promoting the rights, voices and contributions of children and young people.
- Monitoring and advocacy to strengthen the wellbeing of all WA children and young people.
- Prioritising the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people.

Again, these key platforms strongly support children and young people, our future leaders, especially those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and CaLD backgrounds.

The Western Australian Multicultural Policy Framework for the WA public sector dictates that agency Multicultural Plans should include strategies, actions and key performance indicators to measure progress. The following is the Multicultural Plan for the Commissioner for Children and Young People.

Commitment to the WA Multicultural Policy Framework three priority areas

The WA Multicultural Policy Framework has three policy priority areas:

- Harmonious and inclusive communities
- Culturally responsive policies, programs and services
- Economic, social, cultural, civic and political participation.

As can be seen by the Commissioner's role and functions as articulated above in the introduction, the work of the Commissioner is very much aligned with the three policy priority areas. This demonstrates the Commissioner and staff's commitment to multiculturalism and a multicultural policy position that embraces all citizens, in particular children and young people. All our work is governed by the importance of mutual respect, substantive equality and a commitment to shared values.

A number of the strategies listed are ongoing, other actions will occur from time to time as a result of projects. The Commissioner for Children and Young People's projects can be spontaneous as the work of the office is responsive to issues that arise in society, hence these are unable to be articulated in this plan at this point of time.

The Commissioner's office is a very small agency, approximately 17 FTE, however even with this small number of staff, the office has created the following plans that should be cross referenced with the Multicultural Plan:

- Equal Opportunity Plan
- Workforce Diversity Plan
- Reconciliation Action Plan (although there is no requirement for the Commissioner to produce one)
- Disability and Inclusion Access Plan (although there is no requirement for the Commissioner to produce one).

Note that due to the small size of the office, the person/s responsible for actions have not been shown in this plan, as all staff are expected to participate as part of their work. In addition, there is no additional funding shown for this multicultural plan. Due to the nature of our work the actions for this plan are funded within a project budget or through staff professional development. It is also not possible to address all strategies within an office of 17 FTE.

Policy priority 1: Harmonious and inclusive communities

Strategy: Promote the benefits of cultural and linguistic diversity and celebrate the achievements of people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds			
Action	Timeframe	Status (i.e. in development, behind schedule, completed or on track)	Outcomes achieved
<p>We have an ongoing commitment to ensuring we represent CaLD diversity in our image library, photos are used in publications, presentations and website, and in the videos we create during the year (e.g. Children’s Week, Living Environment, National Office of Child Safety).</p> <p>We have purchased pull-up banners for display around the office and for use when the Commissioner is presenting in the field. The banners include images of children and young people from CaLD backgrounds.</p> <p>The Commissioner for Children and Young People includes CaLD children and young people as a consideration in our Participation Guidelines (distributed in hard copy and available online).</p> <p>The Commissioner includes CaLD children and young people as a priority area in our Strategic Directions 2021–2026 (distributed in hard copy and available online).</p> <p>A video featuring WA Aboriginal children and young people</p>	Ongoing	Ongoing	The Commissioner for Children and Young People celebrates cultural diversity particularly in association with children and young people.

speaking about the importance of Country and culture, is played at all events hosted by the Commissioner and in all the Commissioner's presentations.			
Participated in a workshop with young people from CaLD backgrounds through the Edmund Rice Centre in October 2020. The Edmund Rice Centre WA exists to challenge popular beliefs and dominant cultural values, to ask the difficult questions, to look at life from the standpoint of the minority, the victim, the outcast and the stranger. In particular, the centre advocates for the needs of groups who are systematically excluded locally and globally.	October 2020	Completed	The voices of young people from CaLD backgrounds were heard.

Strategy: Address racism and discrimination at both an individual and institutional/systemic level, including implementing the Policy Framework for Substantive Equality

Action	Timeframe	Status	Outcomes achieved
<p>Increase cultural competency skills of staff members through delivery of relevant training programs/visits.</p> <p>All staff attended a visit to Yagan Square and talk by an Aboriginal Elder in May 2021.</p> <p>All staff completed the online PSC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness program in 2021.</p>	Ongoing	Ongoing re training/visits	Staff have broader awareness about issues impacting Aboriginal and CaLD communities.
<p>Regular celebrations of multicultural events such as Harmony Week, take place within the office.</p> <p>Staff are alerted by e-mail to events taking place (e.g. NAIDOC Week, National Reconciliation Week).</p>	Ongoing	Ongoing	<p>Harmony Day celebrated in 2021 with an international lunch and a quiz.</p> <p>Staff have broader awareness about issues impacting Aboriginal and CaLD communities.</p>

<p>All JDF's and job advertisements include a Substantive Equality statement, our values and an integrity statement. Job advertisements encourage applicants from a diverse range of backgrounds to apply, and all vacancies are always listed on the Aboriginal Services Jobs Board as well as the JobsWA website.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Prospective staff applying for a position are informed about the work culture at the Commissioner for Children and Young People.</p>
<p>The Commissioner has an Ambassador from CaLD background (Dr Casta Tungaraza).</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>As an Ambassador and as an agent of change, mentor, Intercultural Relations Consultant and an entrepreneur, Dr Tungaraza is a visible Ambassador for CaLD children and young people.</p>
<p>The Commissioner includes CaLD demographic details in the annual Profile of Children and Young People report (distributed in hard copy and available online) and the Indicators of Wellbeing online data resource.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>CaLD data is collected and utilised to contribute to the identification of client needs, the development of our (and other agencies) policies and programs and evaluation of outcomes</p>
<p>The Commissioner includes equity and diversity as a guiding principle in the Child Impact Assessment Guidelines (distributed in hard copy and available online).</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Children and young people are affected by a wide range of laws, policies, service provision, and other decisions. These guidelines are offered to other agencies and organisations as a mechanism to determine the direct or indirect impact that proposed policies, services and legislation will have on the rights, interests and wellbeing of children and young people. These will help to ensure that all children and young people should be involved in decision making, hence allowing for equity and diversity</p>

Strategy: Develop workplace cultures that are welcoming and inclusive of all Western Australians			
Action	Timeframe	Status	Outcomes achieved
Within the new office, imagery of culturally diverse children and young people are displayed in the entrance and around the office, conveying value placed on diversity.	December 2020 and ongoing	Ongoing	An inclusive and welcoming workplace established for all staff, stakeholders and clients
Collect cultural and linguistic data in the workplace to identify current number of employees from CaLD backgrounds at all levels.	Ongoing	Ongoing	All new staff are asked to complete their diversity details in the HRMIS payroll system, this then gets reported through HR MOIR data to PSC.

Policy priority 2: Culturally responsive policies, programs and services

Strategy: Provide language services to ensure language is not a barrier to equitable access to information and services, including complaints processes			
Action	Timeframe	Status	Outcomes achieved
Parent and carer information sheets for the Speaking Out Survey 21 were translated into the following languages: Mandarin, Arabic, Vietnamese, Filipino, Indonesian, Afrikaans, Dari (Fari), Thai, Hindi and Hazara to assist CaLD families.	Feb – June 21	Complete	Information about the survey was made accessible to CaLD parents.
The Commissioner’s internal complaints policy guides staff to offer children, young people and adults a range of supports to facilitate their safe and active engagement in complaints processes concerning the office, for example interpreters or a support person of a child or young person’s choosing. Information for children and young people about how to make complaints is available in multiple formats including video and	Ongoing	Ongoing	Information and complaints processes is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure better access for people with English language barriers.

written format on the Commissioner's website .			
When the Commissioner's staff undertake consultations with children and young people (e.g. SOS), information about how to raise concerns is provided verbally, as well as providing hard copy information (e.g. small red card with contact details of support services).	Ongoing	Ongoing	Information and complaints processes is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure better access for people with English language barriers.

Strategy: Collect and analyse cultural and linguistic data to contribute to the identification of client needs, the development of policies and programs, and evaluation of outcomes

Action	Timeframe	Status	Outcomes achieved
<p>Speaking Out Survey 21: CaLD participants</p> <p>18.1% or 2,463 children and young people (aged 8 to 18) who participated in the Speaking Out Survey 21 speak a language other than English at home and provided unique insights into their health and wellbeing through the survey.</p> <p>In addition, approximately 9% or 1,300 children and young people (aged 8 to 18) who participated in the Speaking Out Survey 21 were born outside of Australia in a non-English speaking country.</p>	Feb – June 21	Complete	<p>2,463 children and young people (aged 8 to 18) who speak a language other than English at home provided unique insights into their health and wellbeing through the survey.</p> <p>Approximately 1,300 children and young people (aged 8 to 18) who were born overseas in a non-English country provided unique insights into their health and wellbeing through the survey.</p>

Strategy: Enable culturally diverse communities to have meaningful input into policies, programs and systems through co-design and planning, co-delivery and implementation, and evaluation processes

Action	Timeframe	Status	Outcomes achieved
<p>Speaking Out Survey 21: CaLD participants</p> <p>18.1% or 2,463 children and young people (aged 8 to 18) who participated in the Speaking Out Survey 21 speak a language other than English at home and provided unique insights into their</p>	Feb – June 21	Completed	<p>2,463 children and young people (aged 8 to 18) who speak a language other than English at home provided unique insights into their health and wellbeing through the survey.</p>

<p>health and wellbeing through the survey.</p> <p>In addition, approximately 9% or 1,300 children and young people (aged 8 to 18) who participated in the Speaking Out Survey 21 were born outside of Australia in a non-English speaking country.</p>			<p>Approximately 1,300 children and young people (aged 8 to 18) who were born overseas in a non-English country provided unique insights into their health and wellbeing through the survey.</p>
<p>The Commissioner for Children and Young People worked collaboratively with the Wyndham Youth Aboriginal Corporation to develop and deliver a culturally inclusive training program focused on Aboriginal community research. See the Commissioner's website for details.</p>	2020	<p>Completed</p> <p>A similar program was conducted in 2021 with youth from Roebourne regarding their views on the new school to be built</p>	<p>The key purpose was to provide Aboriginal young people with the opportunity to develop skills that enable Aboriginal children and young people to be given a voice and be heard whilst creating opportunities for future employment.</p>

Strategy: Implement recruitment and selection processes that facilitate workforce diversity, and provide opportunities for the development of cultural competencies across the workforce

Action	Timeframe	Status	Outcomes achieved
<p>Wherever possible consider people from a CaLD background for vacant positions within the office.</p>			<p>A 2020 recruitment process for Level 4 SOS Officer positions resulted in the appointment of an officer with African-Arabic background - this enabled connection with students across the board but especially CaLD students during SOS fieldwork. It also afforded many opportunities for staff / everyone on the team for personal cultural learning and exchange.</p>
<p>Encouragement of the Commissioner's staff to undertake relevant professional developmental opportunities.</p>	Ongoing	Ongoing	<p>Two policy team members recently attended SNAICC webinar 'Working with Our Mob – putting Family Matters principles into practice'.</p>
<p>RAP working group/communications team sharing information about</p>	Ongoing	Ongoing	<p>Raised staff awareness of cultural differences.</p>

important days of celebration (e.g. National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week).			
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Policy priority 3: Economic, social, cultural, civic and political participation

Strategy: Implement recruitment and career development processes that support employment and progression of staff from CaLD backgrounds			
Action	Timeframe	Status	Outcomes achieved
With only 17 FTE and very little staff turnover there is limited scope to implement such a process.			
Strategy: Achieve equitable representation of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds at all levels and in decision making			
Action	Timeframe	Status	Outcomes achieved
Staff from CaLD backgrounds are able to have input into the Commissioner's decision making through group discussions and staff meetings.	Ongoing	Ongoing	CaLD backgrounds are able to have input into the Commissioner's decision making.
Strategy: Identify, develop and promote initiatives that support the development of businesses and the entrepreneurial potential of Western Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse community			
Action	Timeframe	Status	Outcomes achieved
Develop capacity and networks of CaLD businesses in WA to maximise their potential.	Ongoing	Ongoing	All stationary is ordered through an Aboriginal business. A recent morning tea was ordered from an Aboriginal caterer and included native Australian ingredients.
Strategy: Identify, develop and implement initiatives that encourage social, cultural, civic and political participation by members of Western Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse community			
Action	Timeframe	Status	Outcomes achieved
Children and young people with CaLD backgrounds form part of discussions when canvassing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Voices of CaLD children and young people are heard and

young people's thoughts on issues that affect them.			their views taken into account.
Strategy: Develop and strengthen global connections through partnerships with Western Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse communities and businesses			
Action	Timeframe	Status	Outcomes achieved
Unable to produce actions for this strategy.			
Strategy: Implement recruitment and career development processes that support employment and progression of staff from CaLD backgrounds			
Action	Timeframe	Status	Outcomes achieved
With only 17 FTE and very little staff turnover there is limited scope to implement such a process.			
Strategy: Achieve equitable representation of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds at all levels and in decision making			
Action	Timeframe	Status	Outcomes achieved
Staff from CaLD backgrounds are able to have input into the Commissioner for Children and Young People decision making through group discussions and staff meetings.	Ongoing	Ongoing	CaLD backgrounds are able to have input into the office's decision making.