

Australian Human Rights Commission


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## National priorities from the child's perspective: Lessons from the Big Banter

Equal life chances: How can early years services safeguard the health, development and wellbeing of all Australian children?  
Early years seminar series  
Royal Children's Hospital

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

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## Early childhood


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### Young children can communicate their feelings



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### Article 12 – the right to be heard



1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.


Photo of a child from the *Big Banter*

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## The Big Banter

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email: [kids@humanrights.gov.au](mailto:kids@humanrights.gov.au)



### What do children themselves say?



Speech bubbles contain the following text:

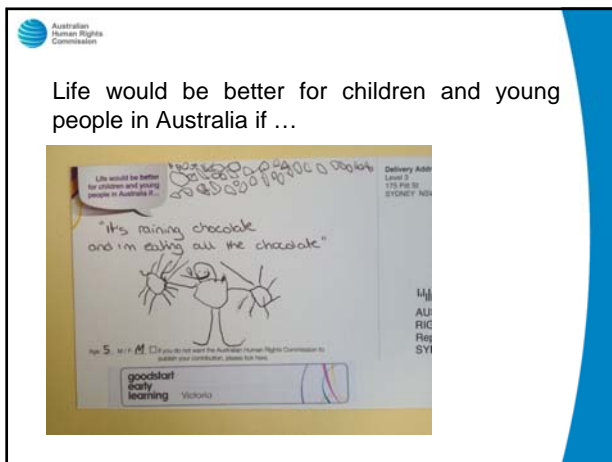
- I think that everyone should be safe
- All children should be cared for
- All kids should be treated fairly
- I'm happiest when I'm playing with my friends
- I am happiest when I am at preschool and have a nice teacher
- Every child should have healthy food
- Life would be better if we had peace
- There should be no bullies
- There should be housing for everyone
- Everyone should have a family
- There should be no violence
- I am happiest when my family is happy and healthy
- There should be no bullies
- There should be housing for everyone
- Everyone should have a family



**Life would be better for children and young people in Australia if ...**



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**Life would be better for children and young people in Australia if ...**



**Children's Rights Report 2013**

**Theme 1 - A right to be heard!**

Life would be better for children if we had a say in what changes  
*Child in primary school from Tasmania*

Letting Australian teenagers have a bigger say in how their schools are run would be a fantastic thing to do  
*14 year old from Victoria*

Life would be better for children if adults and older people were more open to our ideas and thinking  
*12 year old child from NSW*

**Theme 2 - Freedom from violence, abuse and neglect**

Life would be better if nobody got hurt and children felt safe all the time

Life would be better for children and young people in Australia if there was no drugs and violence. I've been beaten up and bullied. I complained about it but it didn't fix the problem.  
*13 year old child from the Northern Territory*

Life would be better for children and young people if there was no hitting  
*Child from Western Australia*

### Theme 3 - The opportunity to thrive

I have Asperger's Syndrome. Life in primary school was very difficult. Life would be better if people that were different, disabilities, races, religions and any other differences, all accepted each other. If there was no bullying. If schools were supportive of kids with disabilities, especially invisible disabilities like Asperger's Syndrome.

*14 year old child from Victoria*

Life would be better for children and young people in Australia if we were all treated with equality and we were all treated fairly. Life would be better if everyone learned the meaning of freedom.

*10 year old child from Victoria*

Life would be better for children if the government made sure every child had all the rights. I think every child should have food and water.

*An Australian child*

### Theme 4 - Engaged citizenship

I have a little sister who is 9 years old. We both know that kids and young people should be safe and be able to go to school and have food, but we'd never heard of the UN convention that puts all of this in writing. In fact, I don't think many young people know about the Convention. But we should know because it's important to see this in writing and for me, it was comforting to see that I and other young people are recognised this way.

*15 year old child from Victoria*

Children need better education on topics that matter. Education is knowledge and knowledge is power. And all children should have the chance to use their power to better our country.

*17 year old from Victoria*

### Theme 5 - Action and accountability

Sometimes my friends need help but don't know where to go or don't want to make a fuss.

*16 year old from the ACT*

Life would be better for children and young people in Australia if the government banned drugs and smoking, not just around children. This would make life better for not only young people but for people who have lost members of their family from drugs and smoking.

*11 year old child from Victoria*

I'm a young Indigenous person. I'm locked up in a Youth Detention Centre. I want more staff to prevent fights between other inmates. I also want more help on the outside instead of being locked up straight away.

*Child from Victoria*