54 reasons

WHAT YOU TOLD US ADULTS NEED TO KNOW TO ACT IN YOUR BEST INTERESTS

ABOUT THIS REPORT BACK TO YOUNG PEOPLE

54 reasons is a child rights organisation. Because of this, it's especially important that we learn from you about how you experience your rights and what we can do to help make rights real for you.

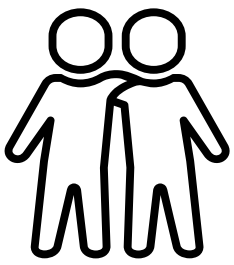
This year, we invited children and young people connected with our services to tell us about what's important when it comes to their care and safety - two really important parts of your right to have adults act in your best interests.

We heard from 356 children and young people from our services across Australia.
This report is about what you told us.

Article 3 of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child** says that **adults should always prioritise the best interests of children (anyone under 18 years)** when they make a decision, or act in a way, that affects you.

1

Relationships matter



You need to be able to trust adults who make decisions that impact you. You want adults to check-in on you, care about what matters to you and stand up for you.

> "EVEN WHEN WE ARE YOUNG, WE STILL KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE WHEN WE FEEL UNCARED FOR AND UNSAFE AND FEELING AS THOUGH WE ARE NOT BEING TAKEN SERIOUSLY MAKES THE SITUATION WORSE. IT LEADS TO YOUNG PEOPLE NOT REACHING OUT IF THEY DO NEED HELP."

> "LISTEN TO US. NOT ONLY TO OUR WORDS, BUT OUR BODY LANGUAGE."

2

More than talk



You want adults to be there for you physically, but also to respect your boundaries. You want them to try to understand what you don't have words for, and know when you need them near.

3 Making space

When adults prioritise meaningful time with you, where you can relax together and share what matters to you, you feel safe and cared for.

> "ADULTS HELP MAKE ME FEEL SAFE WHEN THEY TRY TO UNDERSTAND WHEN I TRY TO EXPLAIN MY PROBLEMS OR CONCERNS EVEN IF I AM BAD AT EXPLAINING STUFF."



4 Doing 'for' vs doing 'with'

You appreciate it when adults step up for you - especially when you feel unsafe - but actioning your care and safety with adults empowers you and strengthens your relationship with them.

5 Stronger together

You want adults to step up for your best interests, but need them to involve you in decisions so they get the full picture. Adults taking you seriously makes you want to share.

> "ALL [ADULTS] CAN DO THINGS THAT MAKE ME FEEL SEEN. THESE THINGS CAN INCLUDE TALKING TO ME AND CHECKING UP ON ME REGULARLY OR TRYING TO NOTICE IF SOMETHING MAKES ME FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE, LIKE IF I FEEL UNSAFE."

WHAT WE ARE DOING WITH WHAT YOU TOLD US

1 We're sharing your views with adults who make decisions that impact you.

2 We're helping adults to understand what acting in your best interests means and to make decisions *alongside* you.

3 We're assessing how we act in your best interests to make sure we're doing everything we can to keep you safe and properly cared for.

4 We're continuing to stand up for what matters to you, and make sure your views are taken seriously.

Everything we shared here comes from the consultation report *'In Our Best Interests': Children's views on what matters most*, Nov 2025.
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