

2022

**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**2021 ACT YOUTH ASSEMBLY 'OUR VOICE, OUR IMPACT' REPORT
GOVERNMENT RESPONSE**

Presented by

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ACT Government response to the 2021 Youth Assembly ‘Our Voice, Our Impact’ Report

The ACT Government has a long-standing commitment to supporting youth engagement and participation.

On 25 June 2021, the ACT Government partnered with the ACT Youth Advisory Council to deliver the 2021 ACT Youth Assembly (the Assembly).

The Assembly is a deliberative democracy process to draw out key ideas, policy recommendations, and encourage direct participation of young Canberrans aged 12 to 25 years to have their voices heard in a full-day forum on the four contemporary issues that are important to them:

- **Inclusive Society**: this forum aimed to explore safety, discrimination, culture, and identity for young Canberrans. The forum facilitators collaborated with young people about factors that impact social interactions, their experiences, and their understanding of what makes an inclusive community.
- **Resilience, Rights, and Respectful Relationships**: this forum aimed to explore ideas around resilience, rights, and respectful relationships for all young Canberrans and the issues surrounding these concepts. The forum also aimed to explore what effective respectful relationship programs look like for young people.
- **Youth Employment**: this forum aimed to improve, promote, and advocate for fair and respectful employment opportunities and conditions for young workers in the ACT. This forum aimed to identify key issues that affect young people when looking for, or during employment, and establish effective strategies and avenues young people can utilise when facing any of these issues.
- **Environment and Sustainability**: this forum aimed to address the question of how young people can be active citizens in schools and in their community, to contribute to a safer, cleaner environment. The Council worked with young people to provide recommendations on better management of food waste, recycling, innovative transport options, and sustainable schools.

One hundred and nine young people from diverse ages and experiences attended the Assembly. The Assembly provided young Canberrans a platform to speak on issues that are important to them and have their views and opinions heard.

The Council compiled the ‘2021 ACT Youth Assembly; Our Voice, Our Impact’ Report (the Report) which includes information and recommendations gathered from the forum discussion groups.

The Report includes 18 recommendations across the four forums to address the issues and concerns raised by young people who attended the Assembly, which are included in the Report:

- five recommendations in the Inclusive Society Forum;

- four recommendations in the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Forum;
- five recommendations in the Youth Employment Forum; and
- four recommendations in the Environment and Sustainability Forum.

The ACT Government has:

- a. Inclusive Society Forum: agreed to three recommendations; agreed in principle to one recommendation and noted one recommendation.
- b. Rights and Respectful Relationships Forum: agreed in principle to all four recommendations.
- c. Youth Employment Forum: agreed in principle to three recommendations and noted two recommendations.
- d. Environment and Sustainability Forum: noted four recommendations.

The below table includes the ACT Government response to the recommendations in the Report.

INCLUSIVE SOCIETY FORUM

The Inclusive Society Forum aimed to explore safety, discrimination, culture, and identity for young Canberrans. The forum facilitators collaborated with young people about factors that impact social interactions, their experiences, and their understanding of what makes an inclusive community.

Five recommendations were identified in the Inclusive Society Forum. All recommendations are to be co-designed with young people to ensure their effectiveness.

The ACT Government has agreed to three recommendations, agreed in principle to one recommendation and noted one recommendation.

NO	RECOMMENDATION	ACT GOVERNMENT RESPONSE
1	The ACT Government to develop, fund, and implement an awareness campaign that calls out discrimination and provides young people with information on how and where to access support.	<p>NOTED</p> <p>Discrimination can affect young people in their day-to-day lives, at school, accessing services or programs, participating in sport, joining a club, or practicing a religion.</p> <p>The ACT Government is committed to working with young people to ensure that young Canberrans enjoy the equal protection of the law and full respect for their human rights.</p> <p>The ACT Human Rights Commission undertakes a range of targeted community education activities providing information about the <i>Discrimination Act 1991</i>.</p> <p>The Justice and Community Safety Directorate (JACs) will consider opportunities for further awareness raising activities focusing on young people.</p> <p>The Education Directorate (EDU) provides support to schools to prevent, identify and respond to racism and discrimination in ACT public schools and is reflected in the <i>Future of Education Strategy</i>.</p> <p>EDU is contributing to the ACT whole of government commitment to eliminating racism, via the development of a whole of Directorate Eliminating Racism Strategy.</p> <p>ACT schools play a critical role in developing and shaping student understanding, attitudes and actions to value inclusion and diversity by creating safe, positive</p>

		<p>environments, where pro-social attitudes and behaviours are both modelled and taught.</p> <p>ACT public schools, Kindergarten to Year 10, implement the Australian Curriculum to deliver equitable, quality education for all students. Schools explicitly teach core content including the General Capabilities and Cross-Curriculum Perspectives to build student awareness and empower student action in relation to discrimination, racism, diversity, and inclusion.</p> <p>The Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) will liaise with EDU and JACs on any policies or programs that have relevance to the CIT environment.</p>
2	<p>Young people are aware of school policies that aim to make their schools inclusive, however, they often felt the policies were ineffective and at times tokenistic, as bullying and harassment of young people continues in many school environments.</p> <p>The ACT Government to review their current policies, programs, and spaces in school settings to ensure that school environments are inclusive to the diverse needs of all young people (young disabled people; young people who identify as part of the LGBTIQ+ community; young people from different cultural and religious backgrounds and young people from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background) in our community to ensure that they can actively participate in the school community.</p>	<p>AGREED</p> <p>The ACT Government is committed to ensuring ACT public schools are safe and inclusive places where students, families and staff feel accepted, valued, and connected.</p> <p>This commitment is outlined in the Future of Education Strategy (the Strategy). A key foundation of the Strategy is Inclusion (one the four key principles in Students at the Centre). Foundations and principles provide the framework for driving the actions under the Strategy.</p> <p>The Safe and Supportive Schools Policy (SSSP) provides guidance to ACT public schools on promoting a safe, respectful, and supportive school community. The SSSP articulates a range of prevention, identification, and early intervention strategies to address bullying and harassment.</p> <p>EDU will commence a review of the Safe and Supportive Schools Policy in 2022 and will seek input from students as key stakeholders in the consultation process.</p> <p>EDU's Infrastructure Specification Policy (EDIS Policy) guides the development of all school infrastructure and includes a functional design brief that mandates the school interiors be open and 'visible to all' environments. The use of flexible learning environments with glass panels and sliding glass doors significantly increases the visibility throughout the school which provides a raised level of accountability and more importantly responsibility for all students and staff. It has</p>

		been shown in schools that this has significantly aided in the reduction of bullying behaviours.
3	<p>The ACT Government to design, develop and implement a consistent and age-appropriate school-based diversity program that addresses, raises awareness, and explores:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discrimination in all its forms; • the difference between racism and discrimination; • concepts of bias and unconscious bias; • the impacts of discrimination and racism for individuals, groups and the ACT community more broadly; and • understanding and accepting the different forms of diversity. 	<p>AGREED IN PRINCIPLE</p> <p>EDU provides support to schools to prevent, identify and respond to racism and discrimination in ACT public schools and is reflected in the Future of Education Strategy.</p> <p>EDU is contributing to the ACT whole of government commitment to eliminating racism, via the development of the Eliminating Racism Strategy.</p> <p>ACT schools play a critical role in developing and shaping student understanding, attitudes and actions to value inclusion and diversity by creating safe, positive environments, where pro-social attitudes and behaviours are both modelled and taught.</p> <p>ACT public schools, Kindergarten to Year 10, implement the Australian Curriculum to deliver equitable, quality education for all students. Schools explicitly teach core content including the General Capabilities and Cross-Curriculum Perspectives to build student awareness and empower student action in relation to discrimination, racism, diversity, and inclusion.</p> <p>CIT will liaise with the EDU and JACs on any policies or programs that have relevance to the Canberra Institute of Technology environment.</p>
4	<p>Young people expressed creating safe, welcoming, and accessible spaces in a range of settings in the ACT that must meet the diverse needs of young people (young disabled people; young people who identify as part of the LGBTIQ+ community; young people from different cultural and religious background and young people from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background) in our community.</p> <p>The ACT Government should actively seek input from young people when designing public spaces, to ensure they are welcoming, safe, secure, and connected to</p>	<p>AGREED</p> <p>The ACT Government is committed to promoting the health and wellbeing of all staff and students, ensuring that schools are safe, supportive, and meet the diverse needs of children and young people.</p> <p>EDU acknowledges that this means it is not a <i>'one size fits all'</i> when creating safe spaces and that the importance of working with young people and their families about what is appropriate and supportive for them.</p> <p>EDU's infrastructure projects undertake cultural site walks with traditional land custodians to understand the cultural history of the sites, and how that history can be integrated into building fabric through the design phase.</p>

	<p>the surrounding community and infrastructure including public transport.</p>	<p>EDU continues to support schools to create culturally appropriate and safe spaces in school settings. This is undertaken with a co-design approach with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations with connections to the local community, this includes increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artifacts and artworks in learning settings as well as creating architectural connections to the surrounding landscapes.</p> <p>EDU also actively engages with school communities and students in the development of school infrastructure projects. The EDIS Policy seeks to broaden community use spaces and provide flexible areas to create strong connections between the school and local community. Students and young people’s input are collected through project engagement sessions and interactive community drop-in sessions.</p> <p>CIT will continue to work with Major Projects Canberra (MPC) in the design of the new CIT, Woden Campus in respect to this recommendation.</p> <p>Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) is leading a project develop and implement gender sensitive designed with principles to assist with design of public urban spaces and infrastructure, including wayfinding.</p> <p>An Inter-Directorate Committee of representatives from Environment, Planning Sustainable Development Directorate, MPC, Suburban Land Agency, and the City Renewal Authority has been established to develop the principles.</p> <p>The Infrastructure and Planning team within TCCS continue to review and implement improvements that can be made to lighting and footpath with the aim of making safer connection. When determining locations for new bus stops considerations are made to avoid secluded areas where possible with recommendations from the Women’s Centre for Health Matters Report considered in planning stages.</p> <p>TCCS has also commenced Mitchell solar light trials in the concrete shelters to better improve safety and security.</p>
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		<p>TCCS periodically meets with advocates and other interested parties on matters involving children and young people travel, particularly involving schools via the School Transport Committee.</p> <p>The Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) is committed to ensuring stakeholders and members of our community have a genuine opportunity to engage in and have a say on the policies, programs and services that are important to them. EPSSDD know that our policies and projects are enriched by community and stakeholder input.</p> <p>Consultations, campaigns, and other engagements follow the whole-of-government guidelines. Engagements and campaigns are individually designed to reach target audiences in the most effective manner for those audiences using a range of engagement tools. For example, campaigns may be run through social media channels, with larger campaigns having a wider advertising budget and reach, such as the annual Heritage Festival.</p> <p>For community engagement, EPSDD utilises methods and channels including the ACT Government's YourSay website, face-to-face workshops, targeted surveys, whole-of-government social media and newsletters, the Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate's websites, social media, media, and letterbox drops.</p>
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<p>5</p>	<p>The ACT Government to further strengthen school settings so they are welcoming, inclusive, safe, and culturally appropriate by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building cultural competency in our schools; • identify an appropriately trained teacher and/or co-ordinator to support the full inclusion of all students and provide ongoing professional development for teachers and school staff; • create a whole-school approach to inclusion through establishing a school culture that celebrates diversity in all aspects of school life; • facilitate positive peer relationships and actively teach staff and students how to be more inclusive; and • school facilities to also provide unisex change rooms and toilets; safe and welcoming spaces; and pray rooms. 	<p>AGREED</p> <p>The ACT Government is committed to ensuring that schools are inclusive, culturally integral, and safe for all young people in our community.</p> <p>EDU values diversity and building an inclusive culture. This is reflected in community and stakeholder engagement, policies, procedures, guidance and supports for schools, and the work of dedicated teams within schools and the Education Support Office.</p> <p>ACT public schools have policies, procedures, practices, and resources in place to support inclusion of all students by all staff. Schools have access to a range of specialist staff including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Psychologists; • School Youth Health Nurses; • Indigenous Education Officers; • Youth Workers; • Social Workers; • Allied Health professionals; • English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) teachers, Disability Education Coordination Officer (DECO); • Cultural Integrity Coordinators; and • Safe and Supportive School Contact Officers (SASSCOs). <p>EDU is guided by a Cultural Integrity Framework to inform cultural integrity in all ACT public schools and the Education Support Office.</p> <p>Cultural Integrity in ACT public schools means that schools are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • culturally safe places for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and staff; • accountable for meeting the aspirations, learning and wellbeing needs of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; • developing all staff and students' understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, languages and knowledge systems through professional learning and curriculum delivery;
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• developing and maintaining genuine, collaborative and respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents, families, local community members, service providers and agencies;• actively representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions to contemporary society in their physical infrastructure and online presence;• supporting and providing opportunities for all staff to build their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, languages, and knowledge systems; and• regularly evaluating and refining their practices to ensure that Cultural Integrity is achieved and retained. <p>The Safe and Supportive Schools Policy requires all ACT public schools to identify at least two Safe and Supportive School Contact Officers.</p> <p>SASSCOs play an important role in building positive, engaging cultures using strategies for prevention and early intervention/response</p>
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RESILIENCE, RIGHTS, AND RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS FORUM

The Resilience, Rights, and Respectful Relationships forum aimed to explore ideas around resilience, rights, and respectful relationships for all young Canberrans and the issues surrounding these concepts. The forum also aimed to explore what effective respectful relationship programs look like for young people.

Four recommendations were identified in the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Forum. All recommendations co-designed alongside young people to ensure that these are positive and interactive.

The ACT Government has agreed in principle to all four recommendations.

NO	RECOMMENDATION	ACT GOVERNMENT RESPONSE
1	Ensure that every school year starting from early childhood includes mandatory units of works about inclusive and diverse respectful relationship, consent, and sexual education. This ensures that students are empowered by their increased education on these concepts.	<p>AGREED IN PRINCIPLE</p> <p>The ACT Government has committed \$2.1m over four years to provide a considered, evidenced-based approach to preventing gender-based violence through embedding gender equality in ACT public schools. An important component of this work will focus on strengthening respectful relationships and sexuality education, including consent.</p> <p>EDU is enhancing the supports schools to provide students through access to timely, relevant, and inclusive respectful relationships and sexuality education, including consent.</p> <p>All ACT schools teach Respectful Relationships and Sexuality Education through the Australian Curriculum in years P-10, supported by social and emotional approaches. Early Childhood settings are guided by Belonging, Being and Becoming the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.</p> <p>The Australian Curriculum learning area of Health and Physical Education supports students to develop knowledge, understanding and skills that will help them to establish and manage respectful relationships through the 'Relationships and Sexuality' focus area.</p> <p>At the College level, this education is primarily delivered through Pastoral Care programs.</p>

CIT has a dedicated Student Support team that provides a range of support and counselling to students. MATE Bystander training is delivered to some CIT staff and is delivered to our year 12 student cohort.

CIT's ability to deliver training packages is limited by national vocational and education and training (VET) regulation and curriculum.

The ACT Health Directorate (ACTHD) supports any initiatives which seek to increase young people's knowledge around consent, healthy relationships, and sexual health.

Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT

ACTHD funds Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT (SHFPACT) to provide sexual and reproductive health services for people in the ACT, with a particular focus on eliminating barriers to safe and appropriate sexual health care and information for vulnerable and marginalised population groups.

In 2021, the ACTHD committed an additional \$913,000 for SHFPACT to provide sexual health education and support specifically for students with disability (a service which is not covered under most NDIS agreements). This funding will enable the delivery of a package of interventions including programs specifically for people living with a disability, workforce development initiatives and the provision of health information, resources and referral support for people who work with and care for people with a disability.

The Junction Youth Health Service (The Junction)

The Junction is funded by ACTHD to provide primary health care and support services for young people aged 12-25 years. In addition to clinical primary health services, The Junction youth workers facilitate outreach programs for schools and local community groups addressing healthy and respectful relationships, sexual health, sexually transmissible infections, and contraception.

A Gender Agenda

ACTHD funds A Gender Agenda (AGA) to provide support and advocacy services for people who identify as trans, gender diverse and intersex. AGA provide this support for children and young people either through onsite programs facilitated at AGA House or in an outreach capacity in local schools and community hubs.

		<p>ACTHD will actively seek to include services aimed at promoting inclusive and diverse respectful relationship, consent, and sexual education as part of the ACTHD's Approach to Commissioning, where the ACTHD will work with community partners to strengthen investment flows to ensure that service provided best meet the needs of the Canberra community.</p> <p>This recommendation aligns with the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program's Report (the Report), with particular reference to Recommendation 19 and Recommendation 20. The Report can be found on CSD's website at: www.communityservices.act.gov.au/sexual-assault-prevention-and-response.</p>
2	<p>All teachers from all sectors are to be given mandatory professional training in delivering inclusive and comprehensive sex and relationship education.</p>	<p>AGREED IN PRINCIPLE</p> <p>As part of the ACT Government's commitment to embed gender equality in ACT Government schools, a team of gender equality coaches will provide professional learning, coaching and support to school-based staff to uplift teaching capability and confidence in the delivery of respectful relationships and sexuality education, including consent.</p> <p>EDU will build upon the insights gained from the 2021 Respectful Relationships, Sexuality and Consent roundtable to identify opportunities to strengthen respectful relationships and sexuality education in ACT schools in collaboration with the Independent and Catholic Education sectors.</p> <p>As part of this work, the Education Directorate will improve the support available for teachers and school staff to deliver inclusive and comprehensive respectful relationships and sexuality education to their students.</p> <p>CIT has a dedicated Student Support team that provides a range of support and counselling to students. MATE Bystander training is delivered to some Canberra Institute of Technology staff and is delivered to our year 12 student cohort.</p> <p>CIT ability to deliver training packages is limited by national vocational and education and training (VET) regulation and curriculum</p> <p>ACTHD supports the upskilling and professional development of teachers and educators so that they can better support children and young people around sex and relationships.</p>

Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT

SHFPACT provides evidence-based supports to schools and educators so that they can best support and deliver sexual health education to students with disability. Funding from ACT health Directorate will enable SHFPACT to deliver the Schools Disability Program, facilitate SoSAFE! Framework training and provide curriculum assistance and support.

The Schools Disability Program supports the growth and learning of students with disability in Canberra, about their social safety and sexual reproductive health needs. The service is available for all students with disability in ACT schools. The Program includes curriculum support, teacher/educator professional development and co-facilitation group education for school staff.

The SoSAFE! Framework is a set of visual and conceptual tools to promote social skills, social safety and sexuality and relationships education. It was designed for the communication and cognitive needs of people with moderate-severe intellectual disability. SoSAFE! is used in group work programs, individual counselling, school education, and community education activities of the organisation.

A Gender Agenda

AGA provide in-service professional development workshops for schools and community groups to better equip and support school staff and educators to support trans, gender diverse and intersex children and young people. AGA has close relationships with many ACT schools and enjoys opportunities to explore teaching and curriculum development and co-design and facilitation of school-based awareness events and health promotion activities.

This recommendation aligns with the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program's Report, with particular reference to Recommendation 20. The Report can be found on Community Services Directorate's website at:

www.communityservices.act.gov.au/sexual-assault-prevention-and-response.

EDU staff have access to, and are expected to complete, Domestic and Family Violence training, to better equip teachers and broader ACT Public Service (ACTPS) staff to recognise, respond and refer to domestic and family violence. The specific

		training required is dependent on the role of the staff member. All staff are expected to complete Foundation e-learn modules.
3	Create an interactive and accessible virtual hub that provides reliable and consistent information for parents, students, teachers, and the wider community. It is created and maintained with input from all stakeholders.	<p>AGREED IN PRINCIPLE</p> <p>The ACT Government notes the importance of ensuring that teachers, students, and parents have access to evidence-based information and resources related to respectful relationships and sexuality education, including consent.</p> <p>In 2021, EDU published content on its internal intranet to provide staff with information, research and curriculum resources related to Gender Equality and Respectful Relationships education.</p> <p>As part of the Gender Equality in Schools initiative, further curriculum development materials and learning resources will be developed to support teachers and school-based staff in ACT public schools to deliver evidence-based, inclusive, and relevant teaching and learning programs for their students.</p> <p>EDU is drawing on consultation with parents and carers, experts, students, teachers, educational institutions, and community partners in the development of this work. Consultation will inform future mechanisms for sharing information with stakeholder, including families.</p> <p>ACTHD values the access young people have easy-to-understand, age-appropriate and evidence-based education and information related to respectful relationships, consent, sexuality, and sexual health.</p> <p><u>ACT Health Directorate website</u></p> <p>ACTHD has recently redesigned the Sexual Health landing page on their website at: <u>https://www.health.act.gov.au/services/sexual-health</u></p> <p>The Sexual Health page provides a comprehensive overview of sexual health information in plain language for widespread understanding. Key topics include information specific to sexually transmissible infections, unplanned pregnancy, and sexual violence. The landing page also includes links to key external resources.</p>
4	Develop a community awareness campaign under the banner of the Consent Capital to promote sexual and respectful relationship education that	AGREED IN PRINCIPLE Promoting and modeling respectful, positive attitudes, and behaviours teaches our young people how to build healthy, resilient, and confident relationships.

	<p>involves active participation from community groups.</p>	<p>The ACT Government is committed to promoting healthy sexual and respectful relationships for young people in our community which includes taking action to prevent and respond to sexual violence in the ACT, working in partnership with our stakeholders and our community.</p> <p>In March 2021, Minister Berry in her capacity as the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence announced that the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program would be established to bring together government and non-government experts to make recommendations to government about sexual assault reforms in the ACT. The ACT Government received the <i>Listen. Take Action to Prevent, Believe and Heal</i> Report (the Report) from the Steering Committee on 13 December 2021. The Report made 24 recommendations to address sexual violence in Canberra. The Report can be found on CSD’s website at: www.communityservices.act.gov.au/sexual-assault-prevention-and-response.</p> <p>On 5 May 2022, the Legislative Assembly passed reforms amending the definition of consent to an affirmative communicative model and bringing ACT legislation in line with contemporary understandings of consensual sexual activity, implementing recommendation 22 of the Report. The changes to the law will be supported by a community education campaign as part of an overall strategy.</p> <p>The ACT Youth Advisory has a key, unique role in the ACT community to ensure that all young people feel represented, heard, and safe.</p> <p>Council identified a fundamental issue regarding the safety of young people in our community and developed a consent brochure aimed to raise awareness and correct information about giving consent. The brochure was developed by young people for young people to help young people have the confidence to make the most suitable, well-informed decisions possible when consent is required. The brochure also includes information and contact details to access services and support available in the ACT.</p>
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YOUTH EMPLOYMENT FORUM

The Youth Employment Forum aimed to improve, promote, and advocate for fair and respectful employment opportunities and conditions for young workers in the ACT. This forum aimed to identify key issues that affect young people when looking for, or during employment, and establish effective strategies and avenues young people can utilise when facing any of these issues.

Five recommendations were identified in the Youth Employment Forum. All recommendations are to be co-designed with young people to ensure their effectiveness. This includes planning for, and providing, sufficient time and resourcing to effectively and meaningfully engage with a diversity of young disabled people and non-disabled people throughout design processes.

The ACT Government has agreed in principle to three recommendations and noted two recommendations.

NO	RECOMMENDATION	ACT GOVERNMENT RESPONSE
1	The ACT Government should criminalise wage theft, imposing individual liability on employers that choose to partake in wage theft and imposing the appropriate fines. Such that they would deter from future defaulting. In the current situation the fines are not large enough and create repeat offenders. Hence criminalising is key.	<p>AGREED IN PRINCIPLE</p> <p>The Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) (Fair Work Act) is the primary source of employment rights, conditions, and entitlements for workers in the Territory.</p> <p>The Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) is responsible for promoting compliance with Australian workplace laws and educating about rights and responsibilities at work. The FWO also assists in resolving issues, and if there is a breach of the Fair Work Act, options include workplace investigations and litigation.</p> <p>Contraventions of the <i>Fair Work Act</i> are dealt with under a civil penalty regime and some civil remedy contraventions (small civil claims jurisdiction) may be heard by eligible state and territory courts.</p> <p>In 2019, the ACT enacted the <i>Courts (Fair Work and Work Safety Legislation Amendment) Act 2019</i> (ACT) <i>Magistrates Court Act 1930</i> (ACT) to give the Industrial Court of the ACT Magistrates Court the <i>Fair Work Act</i> civil claims jurisdiction. Since October 2020, the ACT Magistrates Court has been able to hear certain matters within the Fair Work Act small claims jurisdiction, which may include matters relating to the underpayment of wages.</p>

The ACT Government supports measures that improve wage entitlement compliance and has, within its legislative powers, introduced several measures designed to support compliance with all workplace laws and standards in the ACT. Specifically, these measures include:

- in 2020, the *Labour Hire Licensing Act 2020* was introduced to encourage responsible practices in the ACT labour hire sector by establishing a licensing scheme. This scheme fully commenced on 27 November 2021 and all labour hire providers must now hold a licence to operate in the ACT. To obtain a licence, labour hire providers must be able to demonstrate they are a suitable person, including a history of compliance with workplace laws and standards (for example, the *Fair Work Act*); and
- in 2019, the ACT Government introduced the secure local jobs code reforms which provide a suite of requirements in the procurement setting for entities that contract with the ACT Government for territory-funded work. The secure local jobs code requirements allow the Government to audit the compliance history of entities with workplace laws and standards to ensure contracts are provided to entities that meet the highest ethical and labour standards.

An applicant for a labour hire license within the ACT must prove that they are a suitable person under section 28 of the *Labour Hire Licensing Act 2020*. A suitable person will include consideration of the applicant's character, honesty, integrity, and professionalism; whether the applicant has a history of compliance with workplace laws or standards and is able to demonstrate an ability to comply with workplace laws and standards amongst other criteria. Licensees must also declare any convictions of serious criminal offences which may be considered as part of the ACT's test of suitability for holding a license.

The activities of the Labour Hire Licensing Commissioner in administering the *Labour Hire Licensing Act 2020* are carried out by the WHS Commissioner. In the event that the ACT, through its regulator activities, becomes aware of breaches of workplace laws and/or standards by a labour hire provider, specifically those relating to worker entitlements and wages, enforcement and compliance action will be considered against the business under the legislative framework.

1. The objects of the Act are to:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Protect workers from exploitation by providers of labour hire services; and b. Ensure labour hire service providers meet their workplace obligations and responsibilities to the workers they supply; and c. Promote the integrity of the labour hire service industry; and d. Promote responsible practices in the labour hire services industry.
2	<p>The ACT Government should provide additional funding to the Young Workers Centre to deliver their Rights at Work Schools Program in each ACT High School at least every two years to ensure young people are equally and adequately educated on their employment rights. This includes specific education on the employment of young disabled people.</p>	<p>AGREED IN PRINCIPLE</p> <p>The ACT Government is committed to supporting young people understand their rights in the workplace.</p> <p>As part of the 2018-19 ACT Budget funding over four years was provided to establish a Young Worker Industrial Advice Service for the Canberra community, with a particular focus on assisting young and vulnerable workers to understand their workplace rights.</p> <p>The ACT Government funded Young Worker Advice Service (YWAS) was awarded in 2019 as part of a public tender process, to UnionsACT.</p> <p>YWAS provides the Territory’s young people with cost-free access to confidential advice about their workplace rights. The service was established by the ACT Government in recognition of the vulnerability of young workers in the workforce.</p> <p>A key element of the service is the provision of outreach programs targeting ACT schools in addition to a reliable, contemporary social media platform (website) through which young workers are able to receive trusted assistance.</p>

3	<p>The ACT Government should provide monetary discounts or other incentives for businesses that employ more young people and young disabled people into part and full-time positions. The incentives for employing young disabled people should also include requirements relating to compulsory disability awareness training, and the inclusion of disability rights, obligations, reasonable adjustments and accessibility in orientation or induction. The ACT Human Rights Commission should be empowered to monitor and investigate claims for incentives.</p>	<p>NOTED</p> <p>The ACT Government is committed to creating an inclusive Canberra so that people with disability can fully participate and enjoy the benefits in our community, including access to employment opportunities.</p> <p>The ACT Government supports the provision of disability awareness training, and the inclusion of disability rights, obligations, reasonable adjustments and accessibility in orientation or induction.</p> <p>The ACT Government notes the Australian Government funds several programs which assist employers with any financial cost associated with employing people with disability, such as the Employment Assistance Fund and the Disabled Australian Apprentice Wage Support.</p>
4	<p>Disability education and awareness training be compulsory for all employers and staff and be included in the staff handbook training. This training should be done by disabled people and cover rights of employees with disability, requesting reasonable adjustments, obligations and disclosing disability. This training should also cover disability issues, awareness, accessibility, and the diversity of the disabled experience</p>	<p>AGREED IN PRINCIPLE</p> <p>In November 2021, in recognition of the unique needs and support required by young workers, WorkSafe ACT launched its inaugural Young Workers Strategy 2021-2023 (the Strategy). The Strategy captures WorkSafe ACT’s approach for ensuring compliance with the management of work-related health and safety issues affecting young workers in the Territory, which includes a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increasing young worker awareness of work health and safety issues and workers’ compensation obligations; • support duty holder awareness and compliance with work health and safety and workers’ compensation legislation; • enforce compliance with work health and safety and associated worker’s compensation duties; and • continue to build internal WorkSafe ACT capability and capacity as a responsive regulator on young workers’ health and safety. • The Strategy identifies young workers and apprentices with a disability as a priority area of focus. <p>WorkSafe ACT has also released a range of resources and information for young workers and their employers; this includes information about:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring that induction training is provided to and completed by young workers, as is required by the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (WHS Regulation); and • duty holders obligations to make reasonable adjustments for people with a disability to provide them with equity of opportunities, including information about the Employment Assistance Fund which is available through the Australian Government to cover the costs of making workplace changes to support young workers with disabilities. <p>The SBS Core Inclusion eLearning Program is available to all ACTPS employees. The program provides information on core inclusion principles such as unconscious bias and intersectionality for all diversity groups, including People with Disability.</p> <p>ACT Directorates also often have individual targeted disability training appropriate to their employee groups.</p> <p>The ACT Government supports the provision of disability education and awareness training for employers and staff.</p>
5	<p>The <i>Discrimination Act</i> be amended to include a positive duty to eliminate discrimination. This significant reform would take the onus off young disabled people, and instead places the responsibility on workplaces to take proactive action to improve accessibility and inclusion for workers with disability. This change encourages systemic and preventative change. The ACT Human Rights Commission should be empowered with a range of regulatory tools to monitor, investigate, and enforce the positive duty. The positive duty should apply to public authorities immediately and should apply to private bodies and community organisations after a period of three years.</p>	<p>NOTED</p> <p>The ACT Government is currently reviewing the <i>Discrimination Act</i> as part of the implementation of the Capital of Equality Strategy and the commitment in the Parliamentary and Governing Agreement for the 10th Legislative Assembly.</p> <p>The introduction of a positive duty to the <i>Discrimination Act</i> is being considered as part of this process to modernise discrimination law to support best practice in promoting equal opportunity, respect for diversity and social inclusion.</p> <p>The possibility of including a positive obligation on organisations to eliminate discrimination in the <i>Discrimination Act</i> has been subject to public consultation in 2021-22.</p> <p>The recommendation of the 2021 ACT Youth Assembly will be considered as part of this review.</p> <p>The ACT Government will invite public comment on a draft Bill later this year.</p>

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY FORUM

Environment and Sustainability: this forum aimed to address the question of how young people can be active citizens in schools and in their community, to contribute to a safer, cleaner environment. The Council worked with young people to provide recommendations on better management of food waste, recycling, innovative transport options, and sustainable schools.

Four recommendations were identified in the Environment and Sustainability Forum.

The ACT Government has noted four recommendations.

NO	RECOMMENDATION	ACT GOVERNMENT RESPONSE
1	<p>The ACT Government to reform school bus routes, timetables, and services to encourage and facilitate sustainable transport by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● reinstating a dedicated school buses in the ACT, servicing all ACT primary schools, high-schools, and colleges; ● revise and implement the ACT School Student Transport Scheme; ● review and update the Transport Canberra website to be more accessible and included information to find 	<p>NOTED</p> <p>The ACT Government is committed supporting environmentally and sustainable transport solutions. Future transport in Canberra will feature more attractive, flexible travel options that increase choice, reduce carbon emissions, and facilitate a compact, vibrant urban form.</p> <p>Public transport, cycling and walking are low emission forms of transport that make highly efficient use of space and support the activation of streets and places. Canberra’s future transport network will support a shift towards these modes. Not all trips can be made in this way, and Canberrans will continue to enjoy reliable, safe roads and freight networks when needed.</p> <p>Canberra’s future transport network will support a shift towards these modes. Not all trips can be made in this way, and Canberrans will continue to enjoy reliable, safe roads and freight networks when needed</p> <p>Future-focused investment: A future-focused investment framework supports long-term sustainable benefits. TCCS will consider the sustainability of a solution and look to its impact not just for the immediate transport solution, but its broader contribution to the liveability of the city. Practically this will involve the continued rebalancing of investment towards public transport, cycling and walking while we will continue to invest in the safety and maintenance of our road network to ensure safe and accessible choice which will support the future growth of Canberra.</p> <p>Further information is available in the ACT Transport Strategy 2020 at: https://www.transport.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0016/1613302/200601-ACT-Transport-Strategy_web.pdf.</p>

<p>sustainable transport options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● implement systems to train bus drivers to have awareness of the vulnerability of their passengers and how they can support best them. 	<p>The ACT Government provides school students with cheaper travel options for travelling to or from school with their MyWay card on school days. For students and their families who are unable to afford the cost of regular travel on the Public Transport Network, a means tested Student Transport Program is available (based on concession criteria) that provides eligible students with free travel on school days only.</p> <p>The Provision of Dedicated School Bus Services Policy is available at: https://www.transport.act.gov.au/about-us/service-policies</p> <p>TCCS' website provides a range of information for transport for Canberrans including how to access shared bikes and e-scooters.</p> <p>Canberra has shared paths, nature trails, easy terrain and a climate that makes it comfortable for walking and /or cycling around the city. Information on walking and cycling paths can be found on the Transport Canberra and City Services website at: https://www.transport.act.gov.au/travel-options/walking-and-cycling/walking/cycling-and-walking-maps</p> <p>TCCS is committed to approaching diversity and inclusion with a whole of Directorate commitment. TCCS' focus is to continue to provide spaces and environments where we value different perspectives and the richness that diversity brings regardless of people's age, gender, race, sexual orientation, nationality, or ability. Further information is available on their website at: https://www.cityservices.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1660419/People-Strategy-2019-2023.pdf.</p>
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<p>2</p>	<p>The ACT Government to require each registered food business in the ACT to enter a Food Waste Minimisation Plan. This should be a three-way agreement between the ACT Government, the business or organisation, and a nominated food charity, detailing how the business or organisation will manage and minimise their food waste.</p>	<p>NOTED</p> <p>The ACT Government is committed to creating a community that supports environmentally and sustainable practices.</p> <p>The ACTsmart Business Recycling program assists businesses with setting up efficient recycling and waste management practices. A requirement of the program is that all participating businesses have an arrangement to process their organic waste and divert it away from landfill.</p> <p>As part of the Parliamentary and Governing Agreement ACT NoWaste, TCCS are managing the following commitment: <i>Create circular economy legislation to, amongst other things, phase out single use plastics and require businesses to have a separate collection for co-mingled recycling and organic waste collection and a food waste reduction plan from 2023.</i></p> <p>On 1 July 2021, the ACT Government took action to ban single-use plastics through the <i>Plastic Reduction Act 2021</i> and the first set of items banned for sale, supply, and distribution in the ACT from 1 July 2021, included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-use plastic cutlery (including bioplastic cutlery) • Single-use plastic stirrers (including bioplastic stirrers) • Expanded polystyrene takeaway food and beverage containers. <p>The ban has been supported by ACT businesses and community organisations and has helped reduce our reliance on plastic.</p> <p>From 1 July 2022, the next stage the ACT Government is proposing an additional ban on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • single-use plastic straws (with exemptions for those who need them) • single-use plastic fruit and vegetable “barrier bags” • cotton buds with plastic sticks • all oxo-degradable plastic products such as degradable plastic bags and degradable dog waste bags. These have additives that enable the plastic to break down into tiny fragments (microplastics) which do not completely decompose and are harmful to the environment. <p>Businesses, community organisations and individuals were invited to provide feedback on these proposed changes items between 14 October 2021 and 12 January 2022.</p>
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3	<p>The ACT Government to create a set of guidelines outlining food that is or cannot be donated to charity. This should recommend, based on the condition of the produce, if it can be donated to a charity, and help reduce the amount of produce needed to be rejected by charities.</p>	<p>NOTED</p> <p>The ACT Government is committed to supporting environmentally and sustainable practices that are compliant and are safe and suitable for Canberrans to eat. Keeping food safe and free from contamination is critical to public health.</p> <p>The <i>Food Act 2006</i> (the Act) does not stop food businesses or individuals from donating food.</p> <p>The rules and regulations in Australia that govern making sure local and imported food is safe to eat is managed under the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Food Standards Code)</p>

		<p>Food can be donated provided it is safe and suitable for people to consume and complies with the requirements of the Food Standards Code, which includes relevant labelling and compositional requirements.</p> <p>The Food Safety Standards place obligations on Australian food businesses and charities to produce food that is safe and suitable to eat. The standards also contain health and hygiene obligations for food handlers, aim to lower the incidence of food-borne illness.</p> <p>The guidelines outlining food that cannot be donated to charity is contained within the Food Safety Standards.</p> <p>Further information about the Food Safety standards can be found at: https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/industry/safetystandards/Pages/default.aspx</p>
4	<p>The ACT Government implement composting facilities available for food businesses who wish to manage spoiled food that cannot be donated.</p>	<p>NOTED</p> <p>The ACT Government is committed to committed to creating a community that supports environmentally and sustainable practices including implementing initiatives to manage spoiled food that cannot be donated.</p> <p><u>Transport Canberra and City Service’s 2020-21 Annual Report</u></p> <p>ACT NoWaste is planning for future waste management and resource recovery requirements, including the introduction of FOGO processing facility, a site feasibility study for a North Canberra Resource Management Centre and Material Recycling Facility expansion.</p> <p><u>Transport Canberra and City Services Website</u></p> <p>The ACT Government is working to reduce waste to landfill and increase resource recovery. In 2018, the Waste Feasibility Study examined options to drive better resource recovery in the Territory. A key recommendation was the implementation of a kerbside food organics and garden organics (FOGO) collection.</p> <p>The ACT Government is looking to roll out FOGO collection service in the Territory. It is a key Government election commitment and is outlined in the Parliamentary and Governing Agreement of the 10th ACT Legislative Assembly.</p> <p>Additionally, under the National Waste Policy Action Plan all states and territories including the ACT have agreed to deliver FOGO collections as a key mechanism to reduce organic waste. Further information is available on Transport</p>

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