

The clear statement of the national commitment to giving kids the best start in life is something which Good Beginnings applauds as it is our core business. Good Beginnings agrees with the government that children and young people are Australia's future and that the country's future depends on them reaching their full potential. The role of the National Children's Commissioner (NCC) needs to be a role that ensures this goal is not only an aspiration but a reality.

With Wellbeing being the fundamental priority for the Commonwealth I would like to capture the way it is considered in the Bill in a slightly different way. The key purpose for doing so is that the overarching role of the NCC should be to promote a national overarching outcomes framework for all children and young people (0-24 OECD age range). There would be a role for the NCC to enable Australia to co-ordinate such a framework as there has been much development to date but it is yet to be consolidated.

Some examples of the existing national frameworks, plans, strategies and Acts that would contribute to a Children and Young Peoples' national overarching outcomes framework are as follows:

- National Standards for Out of Home Care
- National Plan to reduce violence against women
- Family Law Act
- National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children

The key reason for the NCC to have a responsibility to ensure that there is a national overarching outcomes framework is not only to meet the OECD requirement but for it to be a point of reporting on changes in outcomes and the approaches that achieve these. The basic principle and the focus around outcomes for children and young people being a valued member of society are naturally aligned. This would enable the NCC to play a positive and proactive role in developing wellbeing for children and young people.

Having ensured the outcomes are clear it is then possible for the NCC to advocate for children and young people at the national level. Although a national focus it must be integral in the role to refer and consult with the State/Territory Children and Young People Commissioners where they exist. Having promoted the national overarching outcomes framework the role of examining existing and proposed Commonwealth legislation becomes much more purposeful. The proposed annual report process can include the high level summary of the national overarching outcomes framework and the NCC role would be best positioned within Prime Minister Cabinet - to enable linkages across all departments. In understanding some of the challenges implementation of children and young people data is currently being coordinated by AIHW through a commitment from COAG and support from FaHCSIA. These sorts of arrangements will need to be considered as to how the NCC will have access to information that they require.

There is much to be worked through in the application of the NCC role but Good Beginnings is in absolute support of its existence.