



Ms Lizzie Blandthorn MP  
Chair  
Public Accounts and Estimates Committee  
Parliament of Victoria  
Spring Street  
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

via: online submission

Dear Ms Blandthorn

### **Inquiry into the Victorian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic**

The Commission for Children and Young People's submission is focused on sharing with the Committee what children, young people and services who work with them told us about the impact of Victoria's response to COVID-19.

The Commission is an independent statutory body established to promote improvement in policies and practices affecting the safety and wellbeing of Victorian children and young people, and bring their views and experiences to the attention of government and the community.

During the pandemic, we have been heavily engaged with relevant departments to understand and provide advice in relation to delivery of services in the education, child protection, out-of-home care and youth justice systems.

Between April and July this year, the Commission undertook consultations with children and young people across Victoria as well as organisations providing services and supports to children and young people. The purpose of these consultations was to understand how children and young people were experiencing the impacts of COVID-19, and to use their experiences to inform our advice to government.

During this project, the Commission heard from 644 children and young people through individual and group consultations, as well as an online survey. We also spoke with over 170 people from 70 organisations who provide a range of services to children and young people.

The Commission has published three themed summaries or 'snapshots' covering the topics most raised in our consultations, namely safety, mental health and education. We have attached the snapshots with this letter for the Committee's consideration. The snapshots are also available on the Commission's website at [www.cryp.vic.gov.au/upholding-childrens-rights/covid-engagement/](http://www.cryp.vic.gov.au/upholding-childrens-rights/covid-engagement/).

The lives of children and young people have been, and will continue to be, seriously affected by the pandemic. In light of this, it will be important for Victorian Government and community agencies to continue to explore and understand children and young people's experiences and perspectives.

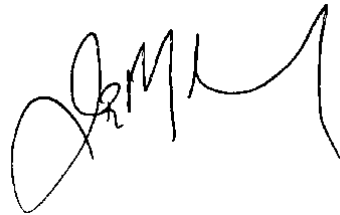
We trust the attached snapshots provide useful insights and perspectives for the Committee as, collectively, we work to respond to the virus and its significant economic, social and health impacts.

Yours sincerely



Liana Buchanan  
**Principal Commissioner**

25 September 2020



Justin Mohamed  
**Commissioner for Aboriginal Children  
and Young People**

30 September 2020

**Enclosed: Safety snapshot, Mental health snapshot, Education snapshot**