

RIGHTS IN ACTION

A newsletter for ACT children and young people about their rights, safety, and wellbeing



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What's new?

- Starting on 10 December 2025, there will be new rules in Australia that mean people under 16 will no longer be able to have social media accounts. You can learn more about the reason for the change and ways to prepare at esafety.gov.au and on page 5.

Did you know...

- As a child under the age of 18, you have special human rights designed to keep you safe and develop well! Check them out [here](#).
- 196 countries have agreed to follow the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child.

Yuma! Welcome to November Rights in ACTION. This month we celebrate the 35th anniversary of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child. We had a party and a few schools and special guests came along to help us celebrate. Check out some photos from our celebrations on page 2-4.

Inside this issue you will also find some information about the upcoming social media account delay, our Child Friendly Annual report, and much more.

Jodie



Celebrating Children's Rights!

What is the Convention on the Rights of the Child?

On 20 November 2025, we celebrated 35 years since the Convention on the Rights of the Child started being used. The Convention is a promise made by almost every country in the world to protect children's rights.

Back in 1989, leaders from all over the world agreed that every child should have special rights to protect them. These include things like being safe, going to school, and being listened to by adults. In 1990, the Convention became the world's rule book for children's rights.

Today, almost every country in the world has agreed to follow these rules, making it the most widely supported human rights agreement in the world!

ACT Children and Young People Commissioner

2025 also marks 20 years of having a Children and Young People Commissioner in the ACT. Your Commissioner's job is to make sure that children and young people in the ACT feel safe, respected, and valued.

We know from talking to many of you that there are times you feel like adults do not listen. That is why it is important to have a Children and Young People Commissioner who does listen and who tells other adults about what she has heard from you. It is also part of her job to ask adults to listen, especially when they are making decisions that affect you.



Jodie Griffiths-Cook, Children and Young People Commissioner

Jodie Griffiths-Cook is your Commissioner

Jodie Griffiths-Cook has been doing this special job for almost 10 years! She has helped get the government to make many important changes, by listening to what you have to say and sharing this with people in power. Some of these important changes included raising the age of criminal responsibility and supporting the implementation of the Child Safe Standards.

Child Rights Big Birthday Bash

To celebrate all these wonderful milestones, Jodie organised a Children's Rights Big Birthday Bash on 20 November 2025. It was a wonderful day with performances, fun activities for children and young people, and special guests! Check out photos of the celebrations on the next two pages.



Jodie Griffiths-Cook, Children and Young People Commissioner

PARTY



Jodie Griffiths-Cook, Children and Young People Commissioner

Children's Rights Big Birthday Bash!





Jodie Griffiths-Cook, Children and Young People Commissioner with Kenny Koala (above) and Kirby (below)





Social Media delay



In Australia, from 10 December 2025, only people aged 16 or older will be able to have social media accounts. This may affect you, or someone you care about, like a sibling. Here is some information that might help you prepare.

How are children and young people feeling about this?

Some children and young people others feel sad, frustrated, or angry about losing ways to find information or to connect with friends. Others who have experienced harmful parts of social media might feel relieved. All of these responses are completely normal and okay. Be kind to yourselves and to others as you adjust to what the delay means for you.

Why is the government doing this?

The new rule is to help keep children and young people safe. Social media can sometimes expose you to pressure or harmful content. One way to keep you safer is to delay when you can have access to social media. The Government wants to give children and young people time to learn the skills that help you cope with the risks on social media.

Will I get in trouble if I have an account after 10 December 2025?

No, there will be no punishment for children, young people, or their parents if they access social media under the age of 16. But your account will likely be removed or deactivated. The rule is focused on making the companies who own the social media platforms keep children and young people under 16 years off their platform. If they do not, they face fines, but children and young people will not be punished.

Your rights

This change will help protect some of your rights - your right to be protected and your right to privacy for example. But it might make it harder to enjoy some of your other rights, like your right to information from the media, and to freedom of expression. The government decided that even though a social media delay does impact some of your rights, it is a necessary change to protect you and is reasonable and proportionate (which means it is fair when you consider the risks).

I have a social media account; how can I prepare?

It is likely your account will be deactivated or removed at some point on or after 10 December 2025. It is a good idea to back up any of your photos, memories, or content you want to keep by downloading it. If you have the choice, you may like to choose to deactivate your account, rather than remove it. This means you can keep your photos, handles, and memories and access them again when you are 16 years old.

Some online gaming and message platforms will not be affected (like iMessage) so you will still be able to use these to keep in touch with friends. There are also some great websites designed for children and young people to access information.

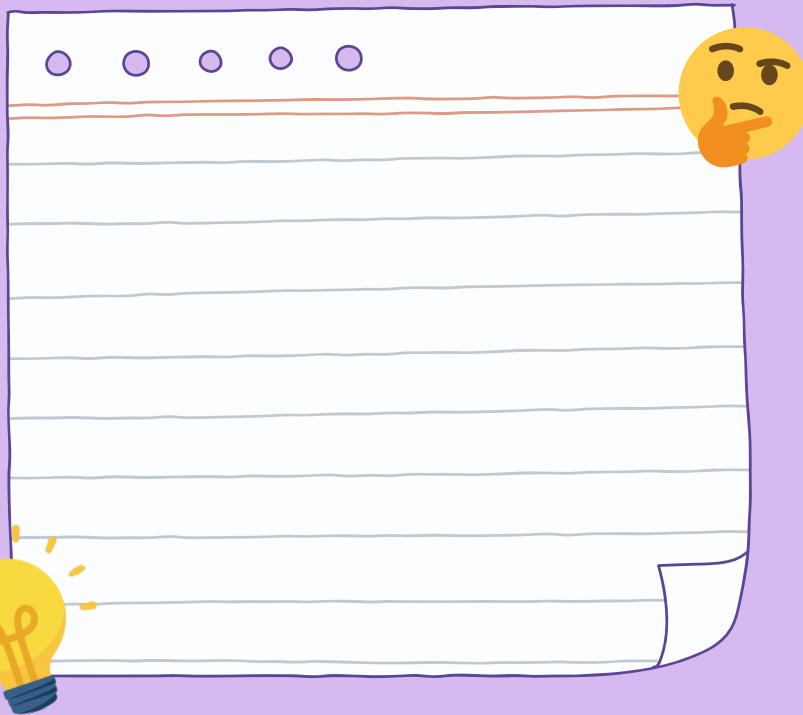
To hear the eSafety Commissioner talk about the changes, visit abc.net.au/btn/high/social-media-ban-q-a/105892142. You can also find more information, and ideas to prepare for the change at esafety.gov.au/young-people.

I kept an account, and then had a problem; what should I do?

Even if you manage to keep your accounts and you are under 16 years old, you can still get help if something bad happens to you on social media. You will not be punished. You can report harmful content, or behaviour at esafety.gov.au/report.

Finding new ways to access information

It is going to take everyone a while to adjust to the new social media delay, but you will find your way through to new ways of doing things. Use the note below to write down ideas for how you can stay connected with the things and people that are important to you.



How can I still get access to information about the world?

Try...

Behind the News abc.net.au/btn

KidsNews kidsnews.com.au/



Day for Daniel, 31 October

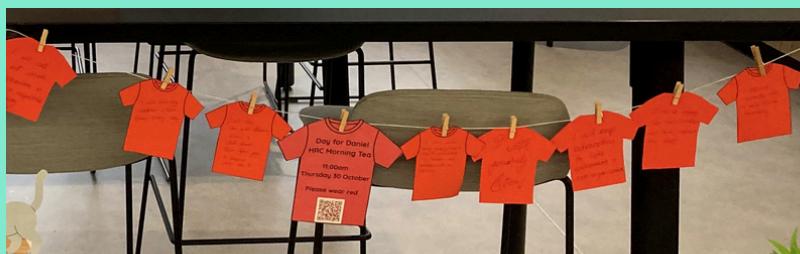
Last month we celebrated a special day called Day for Daniel. This is Australia's biggest day for awareness about child safety education. It is an important reminder that everyone plays a role in keeping children and young people safe.

The day promotes the importance of children and young people being able to recognise, react, and report when you do not feel safe. Adults should listen to you and take your concerns seriously.

Staff at the ACT Human Rights commission wore red and enjoyed a special morning tea to raise money for the foundation that started Day for Daniel. We set a challenge for everyone in our office - think of one thing you can do to help keep children and young people safe. We wrote our ideas on a red paper shirt as a promise to keep working on child safety.



(Left to right) Commissioners Karen Toohey, Dr Penelope Mathew, Jodie Griffiths-Cook and Margie Rowe.



Dates to look out for next month



International Day of People with Disability - 3 December

This special day encourages everyone to learn about and celebrate people with disability. Did you know 1 in 5 people in Australia has a disability?

International Day of People with Disability is a great chance to learn about people's experiences and think about how we can make Canberra a place where everyone feels like they belong.

You can watch or read stories people have shared about their experiences living with disability on idpwd.com.au/stories-2/.



International Volunteer Day - 5 December

The theme of International Volunteer Day this year is 'Every Contribution Matters'. Whether you volunteer once or all the time, the time volunteers give helps to make our world a better place.

Why not try volunteering? You can look for opportunities on govolunteer.com.au, just remember to choose 'suitable for Younger Volunteers, under 18', to find volunteering options that are for children and young people.



International Human Rights Day - 10 December

This year's International Human Rights Day theme is about how human rights are part of our everyday lives. They guide how we treat others and how we should be treated—fairly and equally.

Human rights protect. They help people everywhere find common ground. Every choice you make matters. When you treat others with respect and fairness, you help create a world where everyone enjoys their rights.

Why not use this day to think about how you can support other people's rights? You could take extra care to show respect, include everyone, or speak up if you see something unkind.