



PLS GIVE ME A NAME

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



What's in it for me?



Hi everyone, I'm Jodie and I'm **your** Children and Young People Commissioner (or CYPC) here in the ACT.

Last year my team and I started a newsletter written especially for children and young people in the ACT, to help you get information about Covid-19 and the lockdown. It can be hard to find easy-to-understand information when you're not an adult so we decided to keep the newsletter going and to make it about more things than just Covid.

Because my job is all about your human rights, the topics we cover in this newsletter will also be about your rights and your wellbeing. We will also include information about things that are happening in the ACT that you might want to know about.

My team and I do what we can to make the ACT better for children and young people so we want this newsletter to be something you can contribute to. Let us know what you think we should be doing and we will use this newsletter to make sure you know what we get up to. We'll make sure there are lots of opportunities to ask questions, share your thoughts or make suggestions.

The first opportunity is to give this newsletter a new name! Tell us what you think it should be called by getting in touch at:



[ACTKids_CYPC](https://www.instagram.com/ACTKids_CYPC)



ACTKidseact.gov.au

In this issue...

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

WHAT DOES CYPC DO FOR
CHILDREN AND YOUNG
PEOPLE IN THE ACT?

HOW TO HANDLE BACK TO
SCHOOL NERVES

SHOULD I BE WORRIED
ABOUT OMICRON?

What does the CYPC do?

Did you know there is a person in Canberra whose job it is to listen to children and young people so that she can work to make things better for you? The job is called the Children and Young People Commissioner (or CYPC).

Jodie Griffiths-Cook has been the CYPC for 5 years and last year was asked to stay in the job for another 5 years. Jodie loves being the CYPC so she said yes!

Here's some information about her job, why it is important and what she loves about it.



JODIE GRIFFITHS-COOK
ACT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMISSIONER

What does the CYPC do?

The CYPC is part of the ACT Human Rights Commission. The law (which means the rules about what we can and can't do) says the CYPC must be independent from the government. This means that the CYPC can do things without having to first ask the government if it is okay. The CYPC's job is to make the ACT a better place for children and young people to live.

There's lots of different ways that Jodie does this. Importantly, the law says she has to:

- Talk and listen to children and young people themselves;
- Make sure others know about the rights of children and young people;
- Encourage other organisations to listen to children and young people, and to take their views seriously when making decisions;
- Give advice to government about how to improve things for children and young people.

What the best thing about being the CYPC?

For Jodie, the best thing is talking, listening and hearing from children and young people. Making sure children and young people can share their knowledge and experience helps us make sure that children and young people in Canberra feel safe and know they will be taken seriously about things that matter to them.

What if I have something to tell Jodie?

There's lots of ways you can let Jodie know about things you think are important for you or for other children and young people in Canberra. You can tell her in anyway you want -- draw a picture, make a video, record yourself saying what you think, sing a song, or write her a letter. Whatever works for you. Get in touch:



02 6205 2222



[ACTKids_CYPC](https://www.instagram.com/ACTKids_CYPC)



ACTKidseact.gov.au



Upload your thoughts through our Young Thinker Forum
actkids.act.gov.au

HEALTHY LCM BAR

Need something fun, and not too sugary, for your lunchbox? Try this fun recipe for healthier LCM bars.

Ingredients

- 4 cups puffed rice (like rice bubbles)
- 2 cups desiccated coconut
- 1/4 cup chia seeds
- 1/2 cup coconut oil
- 1 cup malt syrup or golden syrup
- 1/4 cocoa powder

Method

- Combine all dry ingredients
- Melt coconut oil and syrup in a pot over low heat
- Add to dry ingredients and mix well
- Press into a lined lamington tin
- Sprinkle with 100's & 1000's or chocolate chips if you want to
- Refrigerate until set, then cut into rectangles



6 tips to beat back to school nerves

I remember hating the back to school ads for school shoes and stationary that came on in the middle of the summer holidays. It shouted that the holidays were almost over and made me mad. For those of you who love school, these ads might make you excited, but for others they might give you nervous butterflies in your stomach!



This year there's the added stress of Omicron and rumours of school being delayed. So, now that we know school is starting next week, some of you might need some tips on how to calm your nerves. Whether it's friendship worries, workload, Covid or new teachers we have a few tips to get you ready for your first day.

Remember you're not the only one

Everyone else might look like they're coping just fine, but lots of people feel worried starting a new year of school. Having nerves on your first day is totally normal!

Name your fears

Unlike Voldemort, naming fears can take away some of their power. Write down or draw them because knowing exactly what makes you nervous gives you some control, can help you think of ways to address your worries, and helps you see if some are so silly you can let them go!

Give yourself a good talking to!

Usually we're harder on ourselves than anyone else is. It's time to pay yourself some compliments because self talk can impact our confidence. Listen to what you are saying to yourself and stop if it's negative. Make a list of things you think you are good at and replace negative thoughts with those positive ones.

Get everything ready

Over the next couple of days make sure you have everything ready so you can start school as calmly as possible. Try on your uniform and shoes, get your school bag packed and make your lunch the night before. That way you will feel in control and calmer too.

Build your support network

If you find school hard for any reason, make sure you have a group of trusted people who know this and can be on hand to help throughout the year. Knowing these people have your back will help when you face challenges.

Plan some time to rest

After the holidays, being back at school can be exhausting -- learning the routine, being around so many people and concentrating hard can make you more tired than usual so make sure you spend some time resting after school and in the weekends so you can recover!



NIGHT WALK

Warm summer evenings are a great time to spot some animals at night. Take a strong torch, point it into trees and see what you can find. Possums and bats are out and about and if you're lucky, you might even see a Tawny Frog Mouth or Morepork. Did you know that Tawny Frog Mouths are not actually owls? Unlike owls they don't have curved talons (or claws) on their feet and their feet are small.

Their species name is *strigoides*, which means owl-like.





Should I be worried about Omicron?



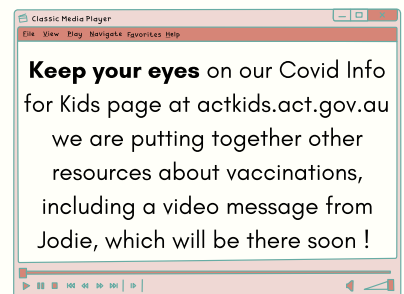
Over the past 2 years of the pandemic, children have been less likely to become sick from Covid-19. Experts are saying this has not changed with Omicron. But knowing that while seeing masks everywhere and hearing about all the things schools are doing to stay safe, it can feel pretty scary. Here are some of the things we know about Omicron:

- Children are less likely to get Covid (including Omicron) than older people
- Omicron is really easy to catch though so more people are getting it, including more children than with other types of Covid.
- When children do get it, they are usually less sick than older people... some don't even have any symptoms and others just have mild symptoms like a cold.
- Some children who get it will have worse symptoms but this is a very small percentage and children are still less like to be very sick, or get long Covid, than adults.

Although the risk of getting Covid is low for children, there is still a chance you might get it. That means vaccinations and other safety steps, like washing your hands and social distancing, are still important. Vaccinations help keep symptoms mild if you do get Covid and also help to stop you passing it on to other people, like grandparents or siblings under 5 who can't get vaccinated.

So, while you don't need to be too worried about Omicron, you should still make sure you are being Covid-safe. You probably already know this means:

- wash your hands
- wear a mask
- keep your distance
- stay home if sick,
- get vaccinated, and
- sneeze/cough into your elbow!



JOKE TIME

Here are a few medical jokes if you're still worried...all of them are terrible, but hopefully they will make you smile!

Why was the aeroplane ill?
It had the flew!

When does a doctor get mad?
When he runs out of patients!

Did you hear the one about the germ?
Never mind, I don't want to spread it around

Why did the cookie go to the hospital?
He was feeling really crummie!

Why did the doctor take a red pen to work?
In case she wanted to draw blood!