

THE THINGS THAT MATTER TO CHILDREN

What children in Eastern Adelaide say about their communities



The **Commissioner's Student Voice Postcards** initiative enables civic, political and community leaders across South Australia to hear directly from primary school students in Government, Catholic and Independent schools.



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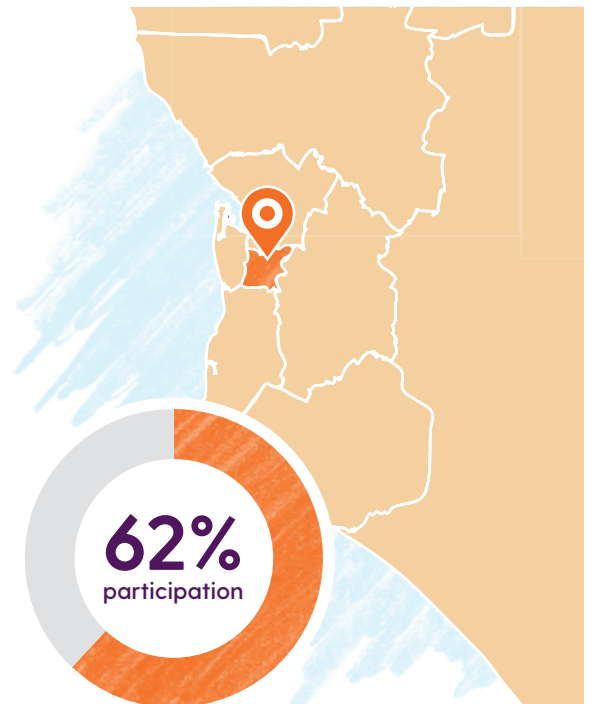
In 2022, 336 schools and 16,007 children participated, including **2,485** postcards received from children attending **38** schools across **Eastern Adelaide**.

The **38** participating schools in Eastern Adelaide included:

- **21** out of 31 Government schools
- **9** out of 16 Catholic schools
- **8** out of 14 Independent schools

Schools in Eastern Adelaide are in the following Local Government Areas:

- Campbelltown City Council
- City of Adelaide
- City of Burnside
- City of Unley
- City of Norwood, Payneham & St Peters
- City of Prospect
- Town of Walkerville





Views on their local community

Children in Eastern Adelaide wrote about what would make their local community more fun, safe, and connected. This included having ‘more Adventure Playgrounds and Zip lines in all schools’, more ‘green parks’, ‘more drinking fountains’, and ‘more sushi trains’.

“ [The world would be better if...] there was a train line to Burnside Village from Goodwood.” (11, boy)

They also want ‘more benches and quiet places with like nice posters to make people happy’ and ‘roller-coasters in SA, not just at the show’. Some children shared worries about ‘dodgy people in the city’ or ‘people driving unsafely’.

“ [I worry about...] how unsafe it is sometimes on the roads, with so many cars going fast, considering a lot of students walk home.” (12, girl)



Views on the environment

Children in schools across Eastern Adelaide want grownups to know that ‘climate change is a serious issue’. They worry about climate change ‘getting worse’, floods, and ‘what pollution and wars will do to this world by 2050’, including that ‘there will not be enough room for all the landfill’.

“ [I worry about...] what the world will be like for our children if we don’t do anything. about climate change.” (10, boy)

The world would be better if we ‘could uninvent fossil fuels’ and ‘help our planet’ by protecting animal habitats and reducing waste. Others wrote that ‘looking after the environment starts in better/cleaner transport’, and that ‘electric cars should be cheaper’ or there should be ‘teleportation devices’ to avoid pollution from cars.



Views on rights and ideas

Children in Eastern Adelaide describe themselves and other kids as more mature, reliable, and trustworthy ‘than adults think’. They want grownups to know that ‘we’re the next generation’ and ‘need to have a say about what is happening to the country’. They shared that kids should not be ‘underestimated’ or ‘treated like a baby’. Others shared that the world would be better if there was more respect for children’s voices and privacy, including if kids ‘were the leaders’ or able to vote.

“ [I want grownups to know...] kids ideas are just as valid as grown-ups and that’s why they shouldn’t ignore us but actively ask for our ideas.” (11, girl)



Views on money and fairness

Not having to ‘pay for everything’ was mentioned as one of the best things about being a kid by children in Eastern Adelaide. They shared that the world would be better if everyone ‘could afford food and bills’ and if ‘kids can go everywhere for free’, and ‘get free healthcare’. They wrote about it being unfair that people need to have money in order ‘to survive’. They want everything to be cheaper ‘because people are losing homes and have to live on the streets’.

“ [The world would be better if...] everyone could join the same activities no matter what. Trips and activities wouldnt be so expensive so everyone could participate and have fun in all sorts of things.” (11, girl)



Enjoyment and being me

Children going to school in the Eastern Adelaide region enjoy ‘having freedom and fun’ to play, without ‘caring what other people think’. They wrote about being able to ‘jump off jettys and climb rock walls’ and play a range of sports, including swimming and gymnastics. Other best things about being a kid included drawing, colouring, and ‘when my grandma taught me how to knit and crochet’.

They also wrote about learning new things and learning ‘about our greatest interests’. Others enjoy getting ‘toys on your birthday’ and going on holidays.

“ [The best thing about being a kid is...] getting to do the things you love, being with the people you love and seeing your school friends everyday.” (11, girl)

They want grownups to know more about what they are good at, including that ‘I’m super fast’, ‘I love to baby-sit’, and ‘I love my pets and my plants’. They want grownups ‘to encourage kids in what their passionet about’ and to know that ‘family time and outdoors is just as imporment as homework on school nights’. Others wrote about playing musical instruments or speaking multiple languages.



Views on school

Some children in Eastern Adelaide wrote about enjoying going to school to play and ‘learn important things in life’. Children also shared worries related to school, including ‘not doing well’, disappointing their parents, ‘embarrassing myself in class’, or ‘getting in trouble’. Others worry about balancing school with extracurricular commitments and moving schools, including ‘if we don’t get a high school for me’.

They want grownups to know that school can ‘get overwhelming’ and that they try their best. They wrote that ‘no teachers should have “favourites” or “bad students”’. Their suggestions to make schools better include ‘if school was cheaper’, there were ‘not as many assessments’, or shorter school days ‘so we can play or go on with other tasks’. They would also like more freedom rather than ‘be forced to study a certain subject’.

“ [The world would be better if...] future teachers were before starting as a teacher given time in a room with a kid to learn the perspective of the kid and how to empathise with one.” (9, boy)



Relationships, kindness, and equality

Having ‘a family to support you’ and friends ‘that are by your side’ are important to children across Eastern Adelaide. They also worry about being separated from friends or family or having ‘friendship problems’ or ‘disagreements’. They want grownups to create ‘a safe place were their children can tell them anything’.

They shared that the world would be better if ‘everyone had equal rights’ and there was less division between generations, no war, and no racism or discrimination based on religion, gender, age or ‘looks’. They would like to see everyone do ‘one little act of kindness every day’ and ‘put aside their differences and work as a community together’.

“ [The world would be better if...] nobody judged anybody and you could do whatever you want to do without being nervous what others will think of you.” (10, girl)

See the full report at <https://commissionerspostcards.com.au/reports/>

