



NICCY
PROMOTING THE RIGHTS OF
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

**HAVE YOUR
SAY!**

**SHARE
YOUR
THOUGHTS**

**NI Commissioner For Children &
Young People**

MAKING RIGHTS REAL

**Corporate Plan
2023-2027**

**YOUR
VOICE
MATTERS!**

**EASY READ
VERSION**

**LISTENING
TO YOU**

www.niccy.org

info@niccy.org

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Hello from Chris



Hi I'm Chris and I started as Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People in September 2023. I've been working with young people for over 20 years and I'm really motivated to make sure children and young people's rights are made real in Northern Ireland.

To do the best in my job I want to ensure that children and young people's voices are at the heart of what we do. That's why I would like your help to plan the work of my office for the next 4 years.

Right now our country is not doing the best to make sure children grow up healthy, happy and that they can reach their full potential. That needs to change and I am optimistic that we can make that change happen.

This plan sets out how we will work with children and young people, parents and carers, government and public services and all those who work with and for children and young people to create lasting change.

We want to make sure that all children have the best start in life and can also grow up in an environment where they can live their best lives!

Together we can achieve so much!

Chris Quinn – Commissioner



WHAT IS A CORPORATE PLAN ?

This document shows how NICCY plans to make children's rights a reality over the next 4 years and how we will work to achieve our goals.

Our Mission

(WHAT WE WORK FOR)



'To safeguard and promote the rights and best interests of children and young people'

Our Vision

(HOW WE SEE THE FUTURE IN NI)

'A society where the rights of all children and young people are respected and realised.'



All of our work is grounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

You can read more about it [here](#)

The main principles of the UNCRC are **NON-DISCRIMINATION**, **BEST INTERESTS**, **SURVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT**, AND **PARTICIPATION**

OUR VALUES

This is how all our staff will behave as we work with,
and on behalf of children and young people in NI.

01

**Children and Young People's Rights
are at the centre of all we do**

02

**We value and protect
our independence**

03

**We respect and value people, promote
inclusion and diversity, and challenge
discrimination and inequality**

04

**We are open and honest
and act with integrity**

05

**We are optimistic, striving to effect
positive and lasting change.**



NICCY'S TOOLBOX

NICCY was set up under a law that say what we need to do to make children's rights real. Some of these are what we have to do - or **DUTIES**, others are special **POWERS** NICCY has to do our job properly.

DUTIES



PROMOTE

Make sure everyone understands children and young people's rights

Make sure people understand what the Commissioner does and how to get in touch with us



CHECK HOW THINGS ARE GOING

Make sure laws are working well and that children and young people are treated fairly

Make sure the services that children and young people use are effective



ADVISE & COMMUNICATE

Advise Government and Agencies like schools, doctors and others who work with children

Communicate effectively with Children and Young People and their Parents

Ask opinions of Children & Young People

POWERS



RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

Carry out research or run training on any issue that affects children and young people

Investigate when children's rights aren't being met

Share information in reports or online about issues affecting children and young people



GIVE ADVICE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Issue guidance about anything to do with the rights and best interests of children and young people

Make recommendations to anybody or any agency relating to the rights and best interests of children and young people



HELP WITH COMPLAINTS WHEN CHILDREN DON'T GET THEIR RIGHTS

Assist with Complaints to / or against Public services like schools or healthcare

Helps with legal cases affecting children's rights

Hello from Mairéad - NICCY's Chief Executive



Hi I'm NICCY's Chief Executive and its my job to make sure we work in the best way we can to achieve our mission and vision.

We are working in challenging times but this is no reason for there to be any impact on the realisation of children's rights. As an organisation we will make the best of our resources and use all of the tools in our toolkit to work in partnership with those who seek to improve the lives of children and young people.

NICCY will keep our independence so we can challenge Government and Public Services to deliver the best services for all children and young people in Northern Ireland.

NICCY is having its 21st anniversary as Northern Ireland's independent children's rights institution in 2024 and we look forward to celebrating this with you. I hope you will use this opportunity to tell us how we can work best for you.

Mairéad McCafferty – Chief Executive



**NICCY is working in difficult times but we are
confident we can rise to the challenge**

OUR GOALS

Objective 1 – Incorporation

To bring the UNCRC ‘home’ to better protect children.

We want to make sure Children’s Rights are embedded in all services for children and young people by making sure Government respects children’s rights and trying to get them in to law in NI

Objective 2 – Rights

Challenge Government where children’s rights are not met.

We will work on the most urgent children’s rights issues including the cost of living, education, health and well-being, youth justice, the legacy of conflict, covid recovery, environmental justice, homelessness, child safety, refugees and asylum seekers and challenging discrimination

Objective 3 – Advocate

Use our ‘tools’ and powers to challenge child rights violations.

We will support individuals or groups of children whose right have not been met by Government or services they should have such as education, healthcare, play and leisure or any other rights issues.

Objective 4 – Knowledge

Make sure everyone understands what we do!

Raise awareness of Children’s & Young People’s Rights, the UNCRC and what NICCY does. We want to make sure we communicate in the right way with you so please let us know where you want to get information from us.

Objective 5 – Participation

Promote CYP’s Voice so services can better meet their needs!

It is really important to listen to children and young people’s opinions about things that affect them - not only because their views can make things better but also because it is their right! We want to make sure government listens to you and also that the voting age is lowered so your views can have a strong impact.

Objective 6 – Effectiveness

Delivery as the Independent Children’s Rights Institution in NI.

We know that resources are limited at the moment so we will make sure that NICCY makes the most of our money and staff time. We also want to make sure we are sustainable and work in a way that protects or environment.

OUR WORK

The Commissioner wants to make sure Children and Young People's voices are at the heart of what we do . While all our objectives are vital to make children's rights real, Objective 4 – Knowledge, and Objective 5 – Participation, are worth a bit more explanation.

Knowledge:

Ensuring Children, Young People, their parents, carers and those who work with them know about their rights, about NICCY and our work is an important part of our job. It is essential that we are visible and accessible – particularly to those most in need.

The Commissioner will engage directly with a range of people, in a meaningful way. This will include direct engagement with:

- Children and Young People, meeting and speaking directly with them, to understand, and act upon their lived experiences; raising their awareness of their rights and of NICCY.
- Parents, Guardians and Carers, meeting directly with them to hear about the issues affecting them and their children; and to raise their awareness of children's rights and NICCY.
- Professionals, Practitioners and 'trusted adults' to raising awareness of children's rights issues and providing training where possible.

OUR WORK

Participation:

The voices of Children and Young People will continue to be an essential part of the work of the Commissioner. We will embed young people's voices in the culture of NICCY and we will be proactive in seeking out and supporting the voices of those most vulnerable. Over the next three years we will strengthen young people's participation within NICCY and promote a culture of meaningful participation within and across public bodies.

The best interests of children and young people should be considered when designing new laws and policies, as well as when decisions are taken about them.

The UN have reinforced the fact that children and young people should be able to express their views and to have their views taken into account in all decisions affecting them. NICCY will support this through advising the NI Assembly, NI Executive, Departments and their agencies in the development of meaningful participation with children and young people specifically but not limited to the development of:

- A regional Participation Policy which will consider the roles and responsibilities on departments and other children's authorities to ensure participation is meaningful and not tokenistic.
- Participation mechanisms that provide opportunities for Children and Young People to engage, participate and contribute to the development and implementation of policies, programmes and services that impact them.
- We will prioritise progress in respect of lowering the voting age to 16, aligning with political education programmes.

Tell Chris what he needs to work on to improve things for children and young people in Northern Ireland

Use the QR code



or [link to take this short survey](#) to tell Chris what's important to you, what you think needs to change to make children and young peoples' lives better.

You can also draw your own picture of what's important to you and send it to the NI Commissioner for Children and Young People using the DearCommish@niccy.org email address.

You can get in contact with us through the DearCommish email or **02890 311 616**.

We will then use all the information sent to us to plan our work, to make sure that children's rights are protected in Northern Ireland.

NI Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY)

Equality House

7-9 Shaftesbury Square

Belfast

BT2 7DP

CONTACT



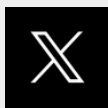
028 9031 1616



dearCommish@niccy.org



www.niccy.org



@nichildcom



niccy_yp

If you'd like to discuss this or if you
need help to complete your response
contact us at participation@niccy.org
or on 02890311616