

Children's Plan 2024-2026



Our vision is all children are valued as competent citizens,
their rights are recognised and their wellbeing is supported

A safe, sustainable, vibrant Community





The Children's Plan is Campbelltown Council's commitment to working with children, their families, and organisations to bring all ideas and actions together that support Campbelltown to be a Child Friendly City. It builds on a strong foundation of past Child Friendly Campbelltown initiatives. Council has an opportunity to shape a community where children are valued, their wellbeing is supported, and organisations are working together to give children the best possible start in life.

The Children's Plan acknowledges family members have the primary responsibility for their children but there is an important role for the community, business and broader environment in which children live to create an environment for children to grow and develop well. The well-known phrase *'it takes a village to raise a child'* applies to the Campbelltown community.

Campbelltown is a great place to grow up and raise a family. Families value the abundance of open spaces with places for the whole family to explore, play, connect and learn. Campbelltown offers high quality public and private schooling and many recreational opportunities. These assets, coupled with a strong sense of community provide a backdrop to support all children's development and growth.

The plan addresses the needs of children aged between 0 and 11 years of age. Priority is given to children's early years, when their brains are rapidly developing, because research shows this brings lifelong benefits to them and to the whole community¹

The Children's Plan has been informed by evidence-based research, understanding of the policy environment and conversations, observations, workshops and surveys with children, families, and organisations. This information is contained in the Children's Plan Background Paper which can be viewed on Council's website, it provides the story of how the Children's Plan has been framed.

The Children's Plan has four themes with focus areas. An annual action plan provides the more detailed approach to implement and prioritise actions each year.

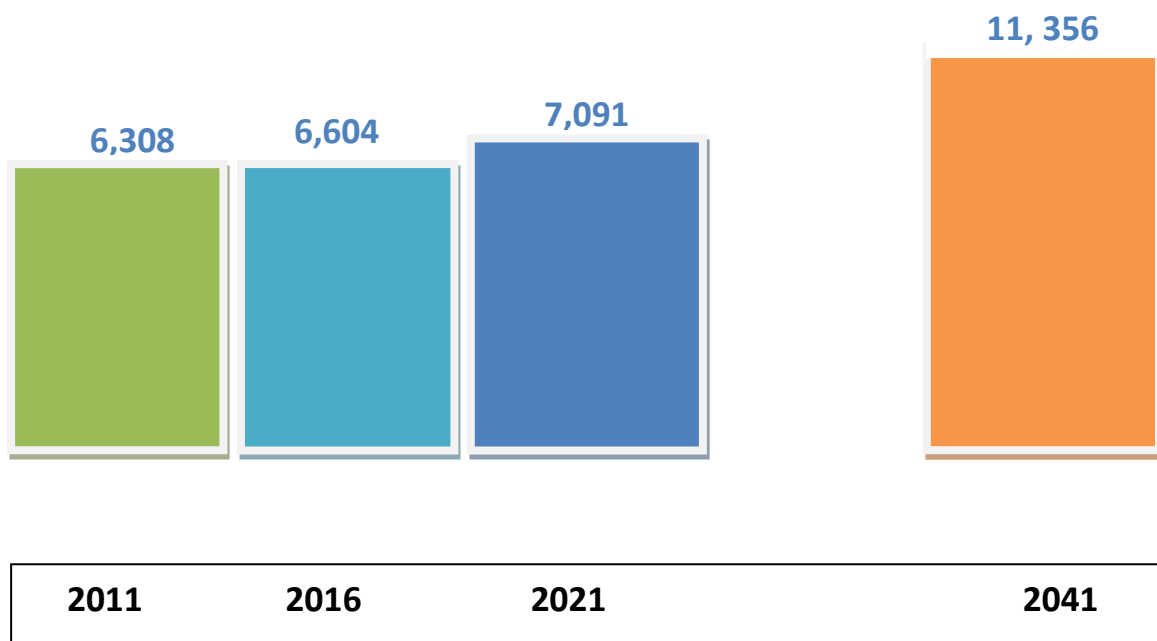
This Plan provides a direction of what we need to build that village.

¹ Winter, P. 2010.



Campbelltown's Children and Families Profile

In Campbelltown in 2021, there were 7,091 children aged 0-11 (13% of total population) living in Campbelltown compared to 6,604 in 2016. By 2041, this is projected to 11,356² (16% of the total population). This includes a projected increase of 901 children 0 – 4 years old, 760 5 – 9 years old, and 790 10 – 14 years old.



There are 21,834 households in the Campbelltown Council area.

- 31.6% are households living with children.
- 2,313 (10.6%) single parent households.
- 3,861 (18%) are low-income households (less than \$ 650pw).
- 907 are renting social housing (4.3%).
- 1,586 are households with no motor vehicle (7.4%).

Diverse Campbelltown

- Campbelltown is a multicultural community. 13.5% of children are born overseas and of those, 32% English is a second language. ABS (2016 v 2021) indicate large changes in birthplace countries in recent years, especially for those born in India (+1, 090) and China (+842).

² Source: Population and household forecasts, 2016 to 2041, prepared by .id (informed decisions), June 2021 and includes 12,13 and 14-year-old projections.



The AEDC (Australian Early Development Census)

The AEDC for Campbelltown is a reliable and valid indicator of Campbelltown children's development³. It is data collected every 3 years of 5-year-olds as they enter primary school.

Since 2009 most Campbelltown children are on track but there has been:

- A significant increase in the number of 5-year-old children vulnerable on two or more of five domains from 34 to 70 children or 7.5% to 11.5% from 2009 to 2021. 25 out of those 70 children reside in Magill.
- An increase in the number of children identified with additional needs from 65 to 86 or 12.3% to 14.3% (2015 v 2021).

³ Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) Community Profile (2021) Campbelltown SA.



Snapshot of how the Campbelltown community supports children and families

10 Childcare & Early Learning Centres	14 Playgroups	7 Public Preschools & Kindergartens
74 Parks, Ovals or Playgrounds	Campbelltown Library	13 Primary Schools
Paradise Recreation Plaza	The Aquatic & Recreation Centre (The ARC)	49 Sport & Recreation clubs

What children love about living in Campbelltown

	Spending time with family and friends <i>I play outside with my dog then annoy my brother (year 4)</i> <i>I went to Flynn's house (my cousin) then we went to the playground (4-year-old)</i>
	Play, sport & recreation activities <i>It's good to be a child because you can play. Adults don't play so much (4-year-old)</i> <i>I play footy (club) and basketball (at the ARC) and practice on my own (year 6)</i>
	The community they live in & want it to be safe & kind <i>If someone looks sad, ... ask if they are feeling okay (year 3&4)</i> <i>To be able to feel safe in Campbelltown. To be able to be happy in our local area. To be able to feel protected by other. (year 3)</i> <i>Inclusive, happy, kindness, saying hi to next door neighbours, full of laughter, and kids playing together (year 3/4)</i>
	Their freedom, choices and time to relax <i>Sometimes I feel I have all the time in the world to have fun (year 1&2)</i> <i>After school I also eat, rest, do homework, and play sports with my brother (year 4)</i>
	Having their ideas and opinions heard <i>It's not fair if adults get their say only. It's important for kids to join in because adults' decisions affect children (years 3-7)</i> <i>We are the next generation. If they don't let us have a say now, we might not know how to make decisions as adults (year 7)</i>

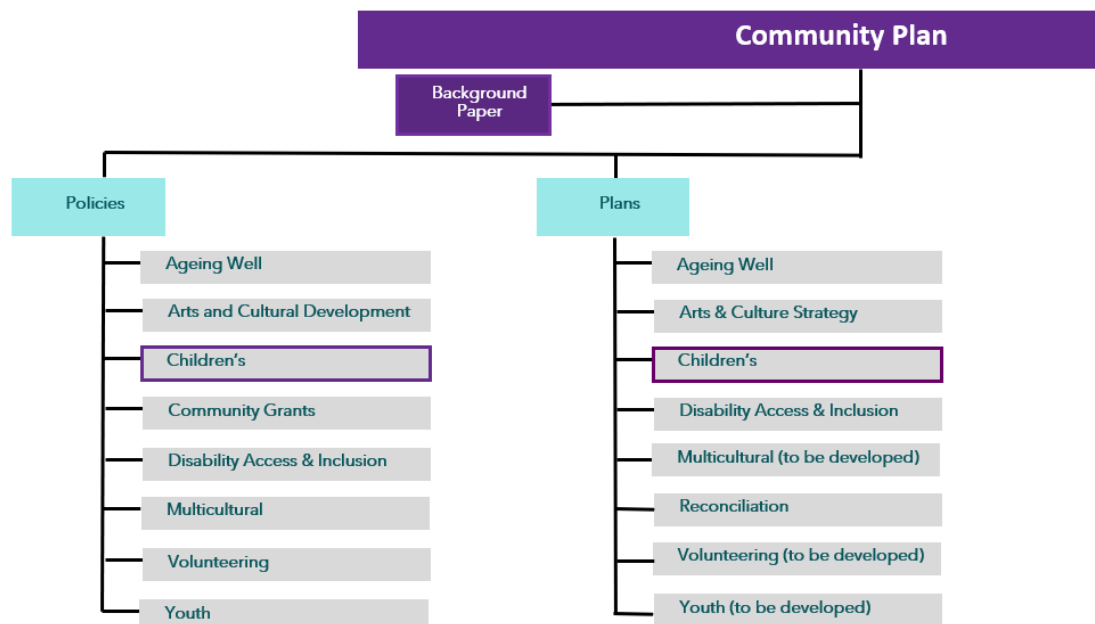


Children's Plan in a wider context

The Children's Plan will align to existing state and federal government agencies, policies and plans including:

- The Children Development Council.
- The Children and Young People Commissioner.
- The Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care.
- The Early Learning Strategy (2021-2031)
- Wellbeing SA Strategic Plan (2020-2025).
- Australian Government Early Years Strategy: vision for the future of Australia's children and their families (in development)

The Children's Plan also aligns to the City of Campbelltown's 2024 Strategic Plan and one of its management Plans, the Community Plan. Council's Community Plan 2024 is essentially a 'people plan' outlining the strengths, aspirations, gaps, and solutions as identified by the Community. The Community Plan overarches several Council's social policies and plans, of which the Children's Plan is one. Together they form the overall approach to how we work with the community.



Everyone is Welcome

Campbelltown Council and the broader Community welcomes everyone who lives, works, or plays in our area. We strive to build a community where everyone can participate in community life and feel a sense of connection and belonging. Council celebrates diversity, advocates for social justice and values people of all:

- Ages
- Genders
- Abilities
- Cultures
- Sexualities
- Political perspectives
- Faiths and beliefs
- Experiences
- Backgrounds

Council recognises that there are children and families who may have additional support needs for a variety of reasons and seeks to understand how to meet those needs.





Council's Role

The activities and projects within this plan are not always the sole responsibility of Council. Staff work in collaboration with community members, groups, organisations and governments to deliver the Children's Plan. Council will adopt one or more of the following roles at any time during implementation:

Service Provider

Council is a direct service provider and provides community services, activities and events in the community for example through the Campbelltown Library and The Campbelltown ARC.

Community Development

Council uses an ABCD (asset-based community development) approach where Council's role is to partner and work 'with' Community, not 'do to' or 'for' the Community. Communities can identify their own gaps and ideas and the solutions to address these by mobilising the assets (physical, financial, environmental, social and human) they have.

Partnership & Collaboration

The Campbelltown area is home to thriving clubs, groups and organisations. Council is committed to achieving the best social outcomes for the Community and knows this cannot be achieved alone. Council partners and collaborates to share knowledge, skills and resources.

Capacity Building

Our children and families are highly engaged, takes great pride in the area and actively support and participate in community life. Council will support individuals, groups, clubs and organisations to achieve social outcomes.

Advocacy

Council has a role to advocate with, and on behalf, of children and families to another tier of Government or organisation where there is an unmet need, a need for social justice or to improve access to facilities, services and programs.



Children's Plan at a Glance

The Children's Plan has been informed by community engagement (children, families, and organisations) and academic and government policy research. It has led to the development of a plan with four themes and focus areas within each theme.

Themes	Focus areas
My Connection	Child - parent Family - Family Family - service providers Service providers Books and reading
My Play	Playgroups Playgrounds Play beyond playgrounds
My Neighbourhood	Place to connect Freedom to move
My Ideas	Children as citizens Children's voice

An annual action plan will be developed and implemented, prioritising actions each year.

THEME 1 - MY CONNECTION



Children, families, and service providers need and want to be more connected in the Campbelltown community.

Making someone happy, make friends with them - Year 3/4 St Joseph's Tranmere

I'd love to be able to send a group text to local families and say we are going to the park Saturday at 3 - anyone who is free come along – Magill Parent.

I want to see more connection in the community, I mean that's very big sky. I want to see, you know, more community family connections. So, when they come into our community, they feel like they come into a community - Primary School Principal.



MY CONNECTION

A desire to be more connected was the strongest theme to emerge from conversations with children and families at community gatherings, an online survey of parents and 1:1 meetings and focus groups with organisations.

Most people need the company of others to socialise, share and for enjoyment. In recent years connection has been impacted by the pandemic where parent groups could not meet, gatherings reduced or stopped and reduced sport and recreation opportunities. Thinking back over time, children used to play more in their streets and meet other children that way which then introduced families however urban design and car dominance in streets has changed this natural gathering place.

The Children's Plan has 5 focus areas for this theme, acknowledging the importance of connection between a child and their primary carer (s), connections between families, connection through activities like reading and play as well as connections between organisations.

FOCUS AREAS

CHILD - PARENT CONNECTION

Parenting is the primary influence on children's development and the first 3 years of a child's life are the period of the most rapid growth and development. By the time a child is three years old, 90% of their brain has been developed, so attachment, the quality of relationships and learning environments for babies and toddlers is critically important⁴.

The Children's Plan will support child and parent connection, tailored to a family's needs at their child's stage of development.

FAMILY – FAMILY CONNECTION

In a Child Friendly Campbelltown survey of over 50 parents in 2022, 41% rated their feeling of connection to other families as very low, or 'not at all connected'. 75% of parents said they would like to be more connected. Many families said they would like to help build these connections. The Children's Plan will include initiatives that build connections between families.

⁴ Winter, 2010



FAMILY – SERVICE PROVIDERS

There has been an increase in the number of children whose development is vulnerable, and this is a statewide trend⁵. The Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care⁶ (The Commission) has recommended priorities for improved parenting supports to help reverse this trend. This includes expanding support for the Words Grow Minds Campaign⁷ which provides simple and consistent messaging to parents of young children about how to support their child's development. Also recommended is to promote the importance of pre-school, how to find a preschool and information on assessing preschool quality.

Council initiated five Magill Community Play Dates in 2023 and were an opportunity for informal conversations with families. Barriers to accessing programs and services were raised and included:

- Program times inconvenient due to work commitment or too far to travel.
- Unsure of what is available if new to the area.
- Language was a barrier for families from a non-English speaking background.
- Families with children with additional needs expressed difficulty in accessing support for their children. They reported travelling outside of the area and waiting lists to access early intervention services (speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy etc).

The Children's Plan will include initiatives that improve promotion of available services as well as advocating for services where gaps exist.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

A Child Friendly Campbelltown Working Group was established in 2022 and members participated in a focus group where they were asked what their hopes were for their community. The desire for better connections and improved communications between organisations was a strong theme.

There are significant benefits to create regular opportunities for connection between different service providers working with families. The Children's Plan will include initiatives where Council facilitates networking between services providers.

CONNECTION TO BOOKS AND READING

Children love to learn new things when they have developed an early interest in reading and counting and recognise numbers and shapes. Babies become confident learners through listening to stories, being sung to and hearing adults talk about what they see. Toddlers enjoy reading books with adults, listening to stories and playing learning games. Children become confident by reading books, writing stories, and being supported on research topics of interest.⁸

AEDC data indicates a significant increase in the percentage of children vulnerable in their language and cognitive skills development. In 2009, 27 children (2.6%) were vulnerable, and this

⁵ Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) Community Profile (2021) Campbelltown SA.

⁶ Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care in SA (2023).

⁷ Words Grow Minds Campaign (2023) <https://wordsgrowminds.org.au>

⁸ AEDC fact sheet



has increased to 36 children (5.9%) in 2021. The Words Grow Minds campaign has been recommended to address this issue.

Our community research indicates the Council Library is popular with children and families and schools are prioritising reading in curriculum. There are barriers for families where English is a second language or if there is stigma associated with parents with low literacy.

I want to get more library cards in kids' hands. That's my dream especially. I'm trying to reach those who fear libraries – Primary School Principal

There is stigma where parents have low literacy. We need to build trusting relationships through safe places. – Preschool Director

It would have been fun if there was a Storytime in the Park where the librarian does the regular Storytime session outdoors – Magill resident.

A community story of connection – Magill Kindy Play Street

I went along to the Community BBQ at Nightingale Reserve in the hopes of meeting some locals and build connections. I made friends with a lovely family who lived only 100m away. Our kids are the same age and became instant best buddies. They both started at Magill Kindergarten 6 months later and the fact that they knew each other made a huge impact on the transition. Now we walk home together every Kindy Day.

Holding the play street close after was a great idea to continue the momentum. Being tied with the Magill Kindergarten, it meant we were able to meet the teachers and some of the kids who would be attending. We made another great connection there and the two friends became three. The connection between us parents has also grown into a beautiful, supportive friendship with regular playdates between us.



Gipsy, Magill resident, attended a Council supported Park BBQ and a Magill Kindy Play Street.



WHAT COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE	WHAT COUNCIL WILL DO
Maintain Council's children and family's website.	Create a Children and Families Information Guide outlining local information and support for families.
Working with local children and families on their ideas	Develop communication methods for our multicultural children & families.
Continue a quarterly Child Friendly Campbelltown e-news for families.	Support initiatives to build local family connections.
Build and maintain relationships with relevant clubs, groups, and organisations.	Advocate for programs and services where gaps exist including Magill Community Playgroups.
Support intergenerational initiatives.	Support age-specific initiatives, prioritising early years.
Support initiatives for families with children with additional needs through Council's Disability Access & Inclusion Plan.	Advocate for local resource allocation as Royal Commission early child development system improvements are implemented.
Facilitate events for the Community to come together.	Establish an online forum for information sharing between organisations.
Provide programs and services for children and families through the Council Library.	Partner and collaborate with community groups, clubs, and organisations.
	Coordinate local rollout of statewide Words Grow Minds campaign.
	Review the Child Friendly Campbelltown Working Group.
	A child friendly review of the Multicultural Strategy which is in development

THEME 2 – MY PLAY



Child love freedom, choices, and time to relax through play.

A good thing about kids is that they get to play a lot and they get to go to parks. A bad thing about kids is that kids can't go places by themselves, and they have to go to school. 5-year-old, Charles Campbell College

Sometimes I feel I have all the time in the world to have fun. Year 3 East Marden Primary School

After school I also eat, rest, do homework, and play sports with my brother. Year 4 Paradise Primary School



MY PLAY

This theme emerges from decades of international evidence on the importance of enshrining play as an international right of children. Fulfilling this duty in our community is a part of the commitment Australia made more than 30 years ago in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) article 31 which states:

Every child has the right to relax, play and to join in a wide range of leisure activities.

The Children's Plan has 3 focus areas for this theme reflecting the value our community places on our playgrounds and research showing play beyond playgrounds is an important part of children's development.

Research on the importance of play for all children is conclusive. Benefits include cognitive development, social and emotional health, physical health, improvements to attention, coping, memory, solving problems, dealing with trauma, planning and decision-making skills, motivation to learn, building friendships and social skills just to name a few.⁹

Council has a strong history of supporting a range of play initiatives and Campbelltown has an abundance of dedicated community paid and volunteer leaders in childcare, education and playgroup settings who understand the value of play to support children's development. Campbelltown also has a range of quality parks, trails, natural spaces, and playgrounds that provide access to outdoor places for play.

Despite the research and the local assets available, community leaders report children's access to play is diminishing. For example, 2021 AEDC data indicates participation in Playgroups in SA has been low and is decreasing from 70.6% in 2015 to 58% in 2021.

The value of play is being lost in the context of many factors including busy working parent lives, the reduction in freedom to play independently outside without supervision, the impact of technology, curriculum not valuing the play in child development, urban development where size of backyards is diminishing and structured children's lives that reduce opportunity for free play.

⁹ Play Research, 2023



FOCUS AREAS

PLAYGROUPS

Children who do not attend playgroups are 1.7 times more likely to be developmentally vulnerable¹⁰ In the online survey, parents were asked about barriers to playgroup participation. Responses were mixed and included.

All seem to be church affiliated, and I'm worried it's just a way to get people to join the church/religion.

Time not suitable because working fulltime.

When asked 'would you like to be involved in a local playgroup?', 43% answered yes. The Children's Plan will include a commitment to promoting existing Playgroups and advocating for, and supporting, new playgroups to address gaps.

PLAYGROUNDS

Playgrounds are highly valued by the Campbelltown Community. When asked 'what do you love most about where you live?' the most popular response (20%) from parents was proximity to a park or playground.

Green trees, linear park trail, playgrounds, and libraries – Campbelltown mother of 3 children

Council's Playground and Exercise Equipment Development and Maintenance Policy (2021) guides the installation of new playgrounds as well as the maintenance of existing ones. This includes a commitment to authentic engagement with children to inform playground design and to providing a range of play choices including risky and nature play based play.

The Children's Plan includes a commitment to children's voice in Council's Playground planning.

PLAY BEYOND PLAYGROUNDS

Children are a kind of indicator species. If we can build a successful city of children, we will have a successful city for all people. – Enrique Penalosa, Mayor of Bogota.

This is a long-term strategic focus that aligns with an emerging field of child-friendly urban planning¹¹. It advocates for planning and design of neighbourhoods that create a safe and pleasant environment for children to play and socialise with a high level of freedom. The dominance of car in cities is considered one of the biggest barriers to child friendly neighborhoods. Therefore, a key strategy will be advocating for changes to relevant Council policy, plans and design to be more Child Friendly.

¹⁰ Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2014.

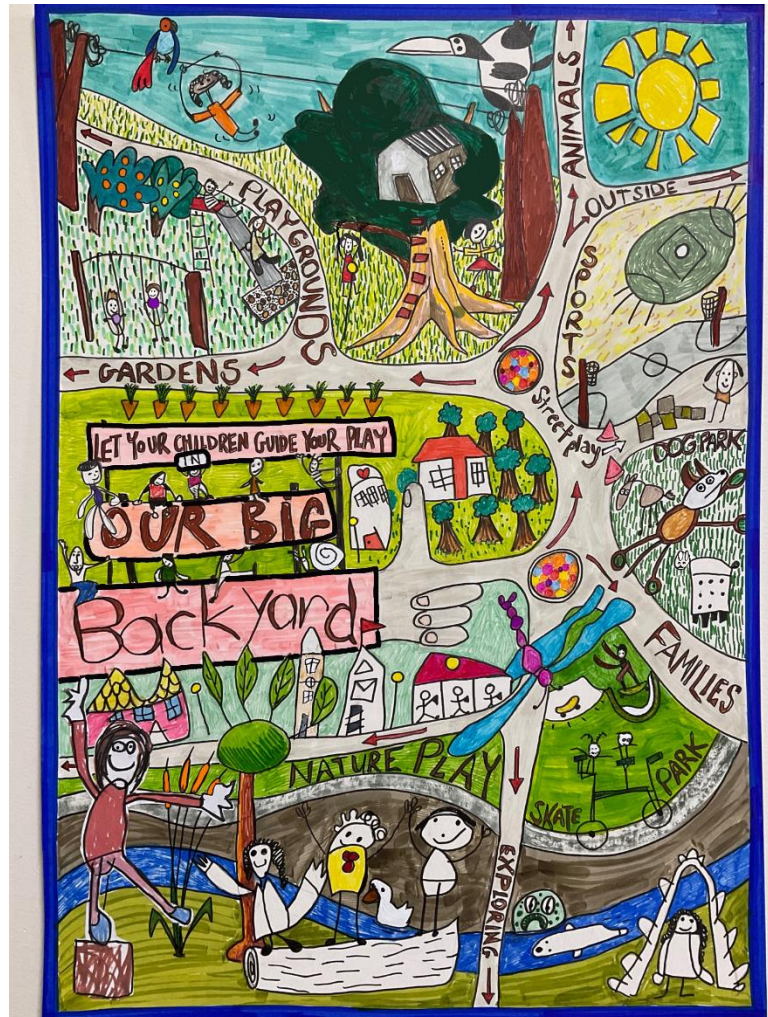
¹¹ Gill, 2021.

A community story of play– The big backyard

Children love the opportunity to explore Council's parks and public spaces.

Children from il nido Childrens Centre, Magill Kindergarten, Paradise Kindergarten, Paradise Primary School, and Stradbroke Primary School worked with local artist James Parker to draw their favourite places to play and explore.

James created a collage of their drawings which will be used to promote 'Campbelltown's Big Backyard'.





WHAT COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE	WHAT COUNCIL WILL DO
Promote and support playgroups.	Promote 'Our Big Backyard'.
Promote and support Play beyond playgrounds (Play Streets, Nature Play etc)	Advocate for, and support, new playgroups where gaps exist.
Support children to share their ideas and opinions on playgrounds and places and spaces.	Review Council's built and natural environment with a child friendly lens.
	Develop more age-appropriate engagement methods in consultations that affect children.
	Review Council's open and recreation spaces with a child friendly lens including children's reviews.
	Review existing children's resources including cycling maps

THEME 3 – MY NEIGHBOURHOOD



Children have a clear vision for their street and local area.

I loved riding my bike at the play street with my friends Everly, Ali & Charlie & meeting new friends – 4-year-old from Magill.

As it is our neighbourhood, and we may see things differently. It is important we enjoy our childhood as we only get it once.

Cars stop for children. No speeding - Student Representative Council - Athelstone Primary School.

It would feel safe and happy. It would probably have parks, streetlights, trees that make lots of shade, more public bathrooms and lots of plants and pretty flowers. With lots of nice houses and lots of people playing games.

Children walking to school and allowed to feel safe. Lots of safe areas kids can play in.



MY NEIGHBOURHOOD

The Children's Plan has interconnected themes as My Neighbourhood links to connection and play too. This theme focuses on the more immediate location of the child and family including their street or walkable area around their home and how their built and natural environment supports their development.

Research shows improvements to the quality of social interaction in public open space and the built environment can make a difference to communities, including those experiencing disadvantage¹². Internationally, child-friendly Urban Planners argue local roads are safer and more pleasant for connection, play, walking and cycling with fewer and slower cars.¹³

The Children's Plan has 2 focus areas under this theme. One focus is creating local opportunities for social connection. The other focus is creating a supportive physical environment for children's independent play and mobility.

FOCUS AREAS

PLACE TO CONNECT

Council is committed to neighbourhood development acknowledging that everyone feels safer and more connected when they know their neighbours and this includes children. As a child having other children to play with who live next door or in the street is a fun part of childhood and having safe, shady, well maintained streets and spaces for children to connect is important. Council has supported neighbour connection through Play Streets and the former Neighbourhood BBQ program and aims to build on these to see what more can be done.

Council has also undertaken social research in the suburb of Magill to further understand the strengths and gaps for children and family living here. This was driven by the AEDC data that there are more developmentally vulnerable children in Magill compared to other areas in Campbelltown and needing to understand why. This social research approach is invaluable to further understanding the uniqueness of each suburb in the Campbelltown area.

FREEDOM TO MOVE

Children's first experience of independence and freedom is through walking and cycling whether it be to school or out with siblings or friends it is something that children really value. However, the number of children who have the freedom to move has reduced over the generations for a number of reasons including fear of traffic and strangers and the increasingly structured lives of children with less free time to roam.

¹² Wallerich L. et al 2023

¹³ Gill, 2021



Researchers emphasise the importance of independent mobility for children, exploring public spaces unaccompanied. Benefits include providing children with greater opportunity to interact with other children which fosters independence and responsibility and contributes to creating a sense of belonging.¹⁴

Council invests in parks, trails, and walking/cycling plans and have examples of projects which prioritised people to interact in the space for example Fourth Creek/Morialta Parri chain of trails walk, Magill Village, Jan Street and Hamilton Terrace which all showcase child-friendly spaces with slower speed limits or traffic calming initiatives, wider footpaths, greenery, and safe crossings.

Despite these improvements, families remain car-dependent due to barriers including speed limits and car-centric planning, reducing independent walking and cycling to school. Parents desire safer streets (lower car speeds, bike lanes), more parks, green spaces, and tree canopies for their children. The conflict of this is that when community feedback is sought on slower speed limits the response is generally not supportive. However, the positive response to Play Streets does suggest potential for building community support for sustained child-friendly streets, including slower speed limits.

A community story of freedom – Council Bike Plan consultation

Council worked with East Torrens and East Marden Primary School Students to share what they loved most about riding their bikes and what stopped them.

It is so important to hear directly from children, not what adults think children would say.

The video is on Council's website



¹⁴ VicHealth 2011

WHAT COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE	WHAT COUNCIL WILL DO
Ensure children's needs are including in the implementation of Council's IAMP's (Infrastructure Asset Management Plans) including the Bike Plan and PAMP (Pedestrian and Mobility Plan)	Review Council family community connection initiatives (i.e. Magill Play Street, Park BBQ and Community Play Dates) to inform future places to connect initiatives.
Support schools' participation in way2go, state governments active travel to school initiative.	Review Council family community connection initiatives (i.e. Magill Play Street, Park BBQ and Community Play Dates) to inform future places to connect initiatives.
Support programs that build children's bike skills and confidence. (i.e. Learn to Ride).	Review recommendations of the Magill Deep Dive Research¹⁵.
	Implement Local Transport Plans with a child friendly lens including lower speed limits and traffic calming on local roads including reviewing the community feedback on slower speed limits at Morialta Mukanthi Conservation Park Playground with its relevance to children and families.
	Build community support for child friendly neighbourhoods including traffic policy and plans through Play Streets.
	Review design of local neighbourhoods to increase safety and amenity for children's freedom to move. (i.e., slower speed limits and car traffic calming infrastructure).

¹⁵ Millbanks, J. (2023b)

Theme 4 My ideas



Children want to have their say on issues and provide valuable insight when provided the opportunity.

We are the future, so we need to make sure the opinions are good.

To make the Community better is to listen to children and to take them seriously, not a joke.



MY IDEAS

This theme is core to the vision of the Children's Plan to value children as competent citizens and for their rights to be recognised.

Inspired by the Adelaide Thinker in Residence Carla Rinaldi, the concept of capable, competent citizens is important for Campbelltown. Children make up a large population group and they are living, growing, contributing and learning in the community as any other resident. It is important to shift thinking from seeing children just as 'cute' to acknowledging that children, from when they are born, can communicate their needs. It is up to adults to create ways for children to express themselves and then to authentically listen and understand what they are communicating.

The Children's Plan has 2 focus areas under this theme. The first focus is about promoting the rights of children as citizens under international, national, and state legislation. The second is about translating these rights into a commitment to ensuring children have a voice in decision making that impacts their lives.

FOCUS AREAS

CHILDREN AS CITIZENS

The international convention is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12, (UNCRC), 1989 states.

'Children have the right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them and to have their opinions taken into account.'

Consistent with the UNCRC, Council values children as local residents with an active interest in engaging and participating in their local community as capable and competent citizens.

CHILDREN'S VOICE

The Commissioner for Children and Young People, South Australia states;

'At the core of creating child friendly environments is the need for organisations to put policies and procedures in place that ensure children...feel they are being listened to and believed.'

'Committing to child friendly environments is not merely something that is nice to do. It is a requirement under international conventions that are embedded in State legislation.'

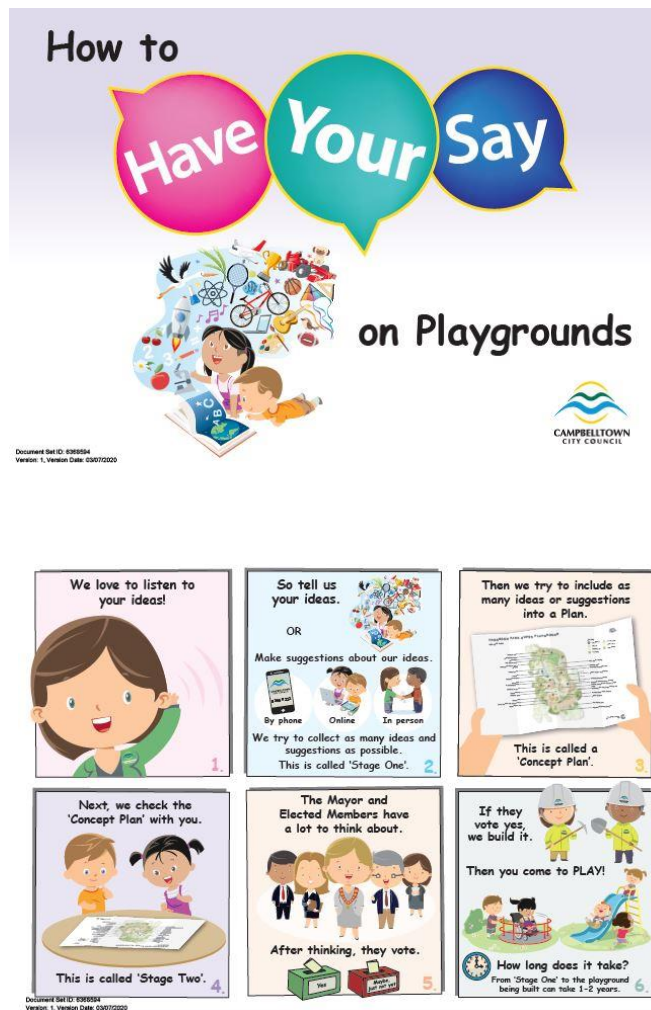
It is important to be clear on the purpose of children's voice, what level of influence they have on decisions, and ensure they are informed of decisions made from ideas they have raised. It is important not to have a consultation with children, that appears to be a 'tick the box' process, rather it is genuine. A local educator said

Children understand when an adult is being genuine (regardless of their age) and will respond appropriately.

As a key principle of Child Friendly Campbelltown, Council will continue to provide opportunities for listening to, and being informed by, children's voice. Council's focus will be on age appropriate, quality engagement.

A community story of closing the loop – Playground consultation

Children enjoy the opportunity to share their ideas about Council's open spaces including playgrounds. Staff were working with East Marden students on Botanic Grove open space and after a brainstorming session at the oval a staff member overheard the child tell their parent 'We're getting a new playground here!'. Staff knew that it was important to explain to children how consultation worked and how Council makes decisions. A child friendly 'close the loop' brochure was developed so that children could take it home after a consultation and talk about what they had been involved in.





WHAT COUNCIL WILL CONTINUE	WHAT COUNCIL WILL DO
Continue Child Friendly Campbelltown commitment to children's voice in Council consultations that impact them	Storytelling for social media and website on children as citizens of Campbelltown
Build relationships with local children's service providers	Develop tools and training for age-appropriate and authentic children's engagement.
	Ensure children's voice opportunities on council decisions are age-appropriate and authentic with school partnerships essential to this.

Conclusion

The Children's Plan further embeds Councils commitment to being a child friendly Campbelltown. The Plan focuses on supporting children, families and the groups and organisations who work with them to ensure that the village of Campbelltown continues to be a great place to raise a family and grow up in.