

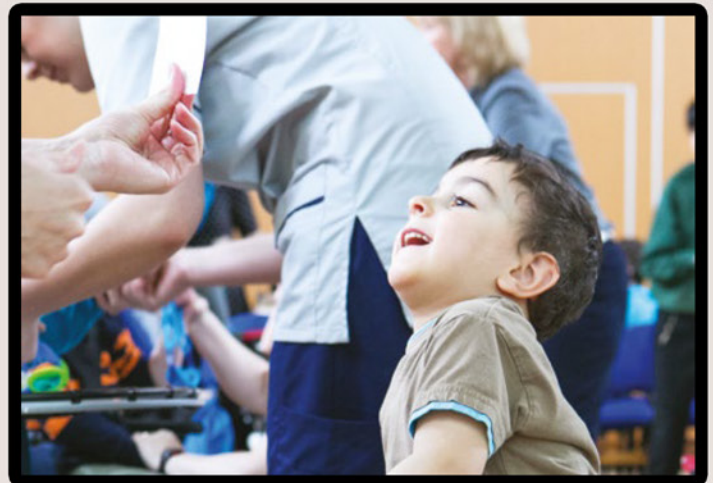


**CHILDREN &
YOUNG PEOPLE'S**
Commissioner
Scotland

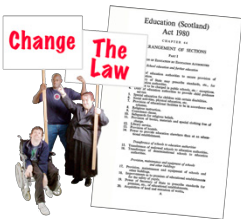
Annual Report 2015 - 16



**Easy
Read**



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The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland



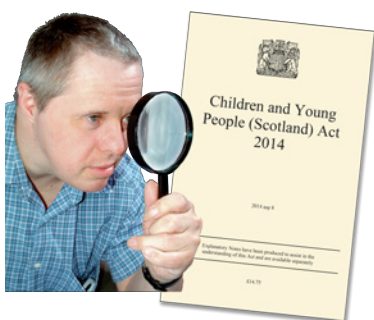
The **Commissioner for Children and Young People Scotland** is called Tam Baillie.

Tam works with a team of people.



He works with a team of people who:

- ▶ Help people to know about
 - children's rights
 - good ways to work with children
- ▶ Look at how the law and policies should change to improve children's rights
- ▶ Are responsible for children who are being looked after by their local council.



We will have a new commissioner in May 2017

Participation and Education



The **Participation** and Education Team works with children in schools and youth clubs on various projects:



Participation means being involved.



7 Golden Rules of Participation

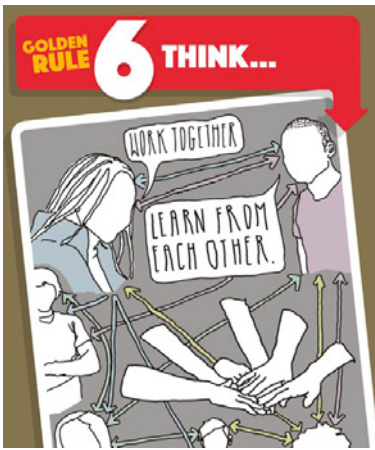
We created a training pack that helps:

- ▶ Adults involve young people in deciding things.
- ▶ Children and young people learn about their rights.

We have sent out 25,000 packs.

Some young people suggested ways to make the pack better, so we made some changes.





They chose an artist called Charlotte Duffy to design the pack.

We also made a version using symbols for children who don't read.

Flushed with success

This project was a campaign to improve the standard of school toilets.



We want school toilets to be kept as clean as toilets in adult work places.



This is better for the health of children and young people.



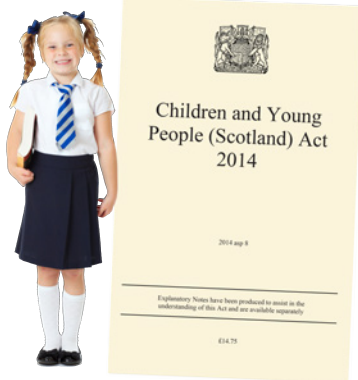
Next year we will put information and resources about the campaign online.

Some primary school children in Edinburgh are going to make a film about the campaign.



Children's Human Rights

We are working with different communities to look at how we can encourage better human rights for children.



Human rights are the rights that every body has to have a safe and happy life.

Your human rights include a right to:

- ▶ Be treated the same as everyone else
- ▶ Get to learn things, like in a school or college



Better Culture Action Group

We helped to run events in Perth and Kinross to help people in the community to promote human rights.

We hope that other areas in Scotland will start the same project in their area.



Baby blether

This year we held meetings with parents and carers of young babies.

This was so we can think about the rights of children under 3 years old and their carers.



The next stage is to have a meeting with professionals and organisations that work with babies and their families.

We will use this information to do a project for children under 3 and their parents and carers.

Minority ethnic communities



Minority ethnic communities are people from different countries or different cultures.

It includes people who say they are not white.



The story will be used to explain children's rights to children from minority ethnic groups and to get people talking about it.

Anti-bullying

Anti-bullying is a way of stopping bullying from happening.



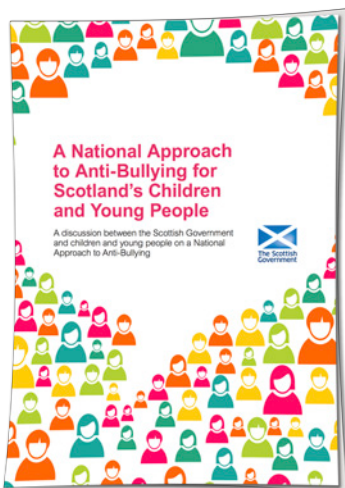
This year the Scottish Government has been looking at what they can do to stop bullying.

They plan to:

- ▶ Remind children about their rights
- ▶ Tell teachers they must do more to stop bullying



We worked with the Government on this.



We also worked with other organisations to help children and young people to tell the government what they thought.

Seven young people formed a group and created a questionnaire and Activity Book for children.

Laws and Policies



The policy team work to make sure the government think about children when they write new policies and laws.

There have been lots of changes to the law this year.

But we think there are still things that need to change.

Our report to the United Nations Committee on the rights of the child



This year the United Nations asked us to look at how the UK Government was putting the rights of children in to UK law.



We worked with the Children and Young People Commissioners from England, Wales and Northern Ireland to write a report.



● Children's rights becoming law

Scotland and Wales have started to make changes so that children's rights become part of the law. But there is a lot more to do.



We are worried about what could happen if the UK Government gets rid of the Human Rights Act.



● Child poverty

We are worried too many children are living in poverty.

This means they are poor and there isn't enough money for food, clothing or other important things.



● Keeping children safe

People should work together to make sure children are safe.

Any children who are abused or hurt should be able to get help quickly.

● Children with legal problems



Children and their families should get free help from lawyers if they need it.

We also want to make sure children don't get treated the same as adults if they go to court.

Sometimes children aren't kept in places that are suitable for them.

● Mental health services



The UK government doesn't do enough to help the mental health of children and young people.

This means those who need help can't always get it.

Children with mental health problems are sometimes told to stay in places meant for adults.



We looked at:

- ▶ Mental health
- ▶ The law
- ▶ Protecting children from harm
- ▶ Children with legal problems

The report said that:

- ▶ It is different for children living in the separate parts of the U.K.
- ▶ The U.K. Government should stop making cuts to benefits because it is affecting children



The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child held a conference in May 2016 to look at this.

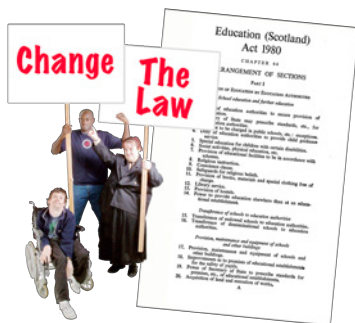
We supported young people to attend and speak. This helped the committee find out about what has been happening in Scotland.



The UN committee has now written a list of things that should happen.

We are using this list to show the Scottish Government how important children's rights should be.

Changes to the Law



Extra support at school

We worked with organisations to ask the Scottish Parliament to make a change to the Education (Scotland) Act.



We wanted to make it easier for children to ask for extra support at school.

Protecting children from violence

We worked with other organisations to show how **physical punishment** affects children.



Physical punishment means smacking, hitting or hurting a child when they have done something wrong.

We want to change the law to stop people using **physical punishment**.



Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse is where someone is controlled or hurt by a person that they live with.



We have been working with other organisations to look at how children visit a parent when they have been abusing the other parent.

We want to improve the support for these children.



Stop and search

The police can stop anyone and search them if they think they may be doing something wrong.

We don't think children should be searched in the same way as adults.

We are looking at how to change the law about this.



Age of criminal responsibility

This is the age that you start being responsible in law for any crime you commit.

In Scotland the age is 8. This is the lowest age in Europe.

We want it to be higher - and think it should be at least 12.



British Sign Language

We are helping young people to work with the Scottish Government around using British Sign Language with deaf children and young people.



Children and football

We have written a report to the Scottish Parliament about young footballers.

We want professional football clubs to take account of children's rights.

Communications Team

Our Communications Team make sure that people know about our work.



They have been working on:

- Making accessible versions of our reports
- Making information available through our website
- Creating a **Blog** about the problems of poverty for children in Scotland



A **Blog** is a where someone writes some short articles online.

Find out more

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