



Commissioner for Children and Young People
Western Australia

*Ambassadors for
Children and
Young People*

25 October 2012

From the Commissioner



It is almost five years to the day that I was appointed the State's first Commissioner for Children and Young People.

My work as Commissioner over the previous five years would not have been possible without the assistance of the many individuals and organisations who are committed to strengthening the wellbeing of the more than 540,000 children and young people in this State.

The appointment of Ambassadors for Children and Young People recognises eminent Western Australians who are turning the spotlight on the needs of our youngest citizens.

The Ambassadors will work with me to encourage others in the community to consider what more they can do to support children and young people and their families. While this is something they all do now, the appointment of the Ambassadors formally recognises their leadership.

I would like to congratulate Phoenix O'Dea from Swan View Senior High School who created the lapel pin to be worn by the Ambassadors. I would also like to thank the other Year 11 and 12 students from Swan View who worked with my office and submitted a range of wonderful designs.

Thank you for joining me during Children's Week to acknowledge the significant role these distinguished Western Australians play and to celebrate their appointment as Ambassadors for Children and Young People.

Michelle Scott
Commissioner for Children and Young People WA

Professor Donna Cross



Professor Donna Cross is the foundation Professor of Child and Adolescent Health at the Edith Cowan University Child Health Promotion Research Centre (CHPRC). She is an internationally-renowned academic, having contributed to research in the USA, Canada, Finland, Denmark, Japan and Israel and she is passionate about enhancing the health and wellbeing of children and young people.

Professor Cross's early research included extensive school-based health promotion research. She has published on child health issues related to drug use, nutrition, road safety, smoking and

bullying prevention. Professor Cross has worked tirelessly to improve the health of our young people through research and community programs, with a focus on transferring knowledge from research evidence into policy and practice, and bridging the gap between university research and school and community programs.

A commitment to drawing the community's attention to the importance of investing in actions to strengthen the health and resilience of children is at the core of Professor Cross's work. She champions positive, whole-school approaches to children's wellbeing.

Professor Cross was a finalist in the 2011 WA Citizen of the Year Awards. In 2010 she received the Mental Health Good Outcomes Award from the Mental Health Commission of WA and in 2012 she received the Future Justice Prize for Australian leadership and initiative in the advancement of future justice. She is the Western Australian of the Year for 2012, in recognition of her work to improve the health and wellbeing of young people.

Mrs Annie Fogarty



For Mrs Annie Fogarty, the key to children's wellbeing lies in education. Her focus on the role of education in improving young people's lives has been a driving force in her establishment of the Fogarty Foundation.

The foundation was established in 2000 by Mrs Fogarty and her husband Brett Fogarty, with a vision "to deliver education opportunities that support people to achieve their potential and inspire community leadership". Mrs Fogarty has held the Executive Chairperson's role since the establishment of the foundation.

Through the foundation, Mrs Fogarty personally supports a number of projects designed to enhance educational opportunities for children and young people. The Fogarty EDvance program was developed to assist children in lower socio-economic areas overcome some of the challenges that hindered their success at school. Fogarty EDvance works on the principle that the quality of leadership in schools will help improve the effectiveness of that school. It works with schools in disadvantaged areas to build on existing strengths and helps the schools to engage with parents and the community, to develop better working relationships with government and community agencies, and to build a network with other schools to provide support for the school leadership team.

Mrs Fogarty has also been at the forefront of the foundation's relationship with Roseworth Primary School, and holds a position on the school board. The foundation's work has seen the development of Roseworth into one of the most effective independent public schools in WA. Through the Spark_Lab program with PICA, Mrs Fogarty and the foundation foster innovation and creativity in children and young people. Mrs Fogarty says that providing educational opportunities will help strengthen our whole society.

Professor Colleen Hayward AM

Mr Jonathan Holloway



Professor Colleen Hayward AM is a senior Noongar woman with extensive family links throughout the south-west of WA. She is currently the Head of Kurongkurl Katitjin, Edith Cowan University's Centre for Indigenous Education and Research, a position she concurrently holds with being Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Equity and Indigenous, across the University.

For more than 30 years, Professor Hayward has worked to influence policies and programs on a wide range of issues, reflecting the needs of minority groups at community, state and national levels.

With an extensive background in the areas of health, education, employment, training, housing, child protection and law and justice, Professor Hayward is highly regarded for her long-standing work for and on behalf of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia.

Among her many achievements, Professor Hayward has been awarded the 2008 National NAIDOC Aboriginal Person of the Year Award, the Premier of WA's prestigious Multicultural Ambassadors Award (2006) and she is an inductee into the WA Department of Education's Hall of Fame for Achievement in Aboriginal Education (2009).

In 2012, Professor Hayward was inducted into the Western Australian Women's Hall of Fame as well as being recognised as a Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia.



Mr Jonathan Holloway is Artistic Director of the Perth International Arts Festival.

Following five years as a theatre director, playwright and teacher, Mr Holloway was the founding artistic director of the Watch this Space program.

The Norfolk and Norwich Festival was his next major challenge. He spent six years developing that festival from attendances of 35,000 to 330,000 and increasing the turnover six-fold. His vision expanded the role of free and outdoor events in the festival, including introducing a children's program.

Importantly, he promoted the concept of creative learning, working intensively with more than 15,000 young people year round and delivering Creative Partnerships in that region in partnership with Paul Collard (the 2011 Thinker in Residence). Through these partnerships Mr Holloway worked with creative agents to promote creativity in schools, drawing on existing projects to link schools with creative practitioners in many fields. Mr Holloway sees the program as having a major role in increasing the scale, reach and reputation of the Norfolk and Norwich Festival.

Mr Holloway was appointed Artistic Director of the Perth International Arts Festival 2012-2015 season. In taking this position his vision is once again to increase the education, community and children's program, and to work with schools to tap into the expertise of creative professionals and help young people to discover their own creativity and apply it throughout their lives.

Mrs Tonya McCusker



Mrs Tonya McCusker is a Trustee and the Administrator of the McCusker Charitable Foundation.

Mrs McCusker studied ballet in Monte Carlo and in WA, and danced with the Australian Ballet Company before obtaining a Law Degree from the University of Western Australia. She worked in Hong Kong and China, then returned to WA as the Business Development Manager of the Leeuwin Youth Development Foundation, where she oversaw programs in leadership, team building and development of young people's self-esteem.

Her dedication to improving the lives of young Western Australians has seen her take up the role of Trustee and Administrator of the McCusker Charitable Foundation, which provides funding of up to \$5 million each year to organisations working to improve the lives of Western Australians. The Foundation focuses on medical research and education, and also supports the arts, environment, aged care, youth and 'excellence' programs.

Mrs McCusker's dedication to reducing alcohol-related harm for children and young people has led her to become an advisory board member and active advocate for the McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth. She is also the Patron or Co-Patron of many organisations, including Activ Foundation, Beehive Montessori School, Diabetes WA, Foster Care Association of WA, Friends of Ngala, Girls' Brigade WA, Girls Friendly Society, Leeuwin Ocean Adventure Foundation, Meerilinga Young Children's Foundation, Midnite Youth Theatre Company, Ngala, Perth International Arts Festival, Rocky Bay, Variety WA Toy Bank, WA Children's Week, WA Foundation for Deaf Children, WA Pregnancy Cohort (Raine) Study, Women and Infants Research Foundation WA, Youth Ballet WA Inc and Youth Focus.

Ms June Oscar



Ms June Oscar is a Bunuba woman, born in Fitzroy Crossing. Ms Oscar's tireless devotion to preserving culture and protecting children has given her a prominent place in the Aboriginal community in WA.

Ms Oscar is an advocate for the preservation of culture in the Kimberley and its value for young Aboriginal people. She chairs the Kimberley Language Resource Centre and is a member of the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre.

In 2007 Ms Oscar and other women of Fitzroy Crossing decided to take action against the "rivers of grog" that were seen

as the source of many social problems in the region. She lobbied government to impose a ban on full-strength takeaway alcohol in the region. This journey was documented in the film *Yajilarra*.

The rise in Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) was one of the catalysts for Ms Oscar's work. In 2009 Ms Oscar was involved in establishing the Lirilwan Prevalence Study into FASD with the George Institute in Sydney and is a chief investigator on that project.

Ms Oscar has also displayed her talents in the education arena, developing a curriculum for an Indigenous Knowledge Program for Wesley College in Victoria and as a member of a number of education-related committees. Since 2010 she has been a council member of the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS).

In 2009 and 2012 she was an Australian delegate to the UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues in New York. In 2010, Ms Oscar and her colleague Emily Carter were WA finalists in the Australian of the Year Local Hero award.

She is currently the CEO of Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre and a member of the Fitzroy Valley Futures Governing Committee.

Professor Trevor Parry AM



As a developmental paediatrician, Professor Trevor Parry AM has dedicated more than 30 years to improving the health and wellbeing of Western Australian children. During his career in public medicine, he has practised and promoted the benefits of prevention and early intervention in child health.

His establishment of the State Child Development Centre in the mid-1970s had an enormous influence on the approaches taken to diagnosing and treating developmental issues in children. He was director of the centre until 2004 and during this time a multi-disciplinary team model of

treatment was developed and persists today in all WA child development centres.

He is committed to educating community groups about the importance of early childhood development and enhancing the skills and confidence of families to give their children the best start in life. Professor Parry was founder of the WA branch of the National Investment for the Early Years (NIFTeY) and a member of the former national executive; an advisory board member of the Learning and Attention Disorders Society of WA Inc; a board member and Vice Chairman of the Autism Association of Western Australia and introduced Family Partnership Training to Western Australia and has chaired its management committee.

He continues to practise as a developmental paediatrician, as well as fulfilling the roles of Clinical Adjunct Associate Professor in the School of Paediatrics and Child Health at UWA and Emeritus Consultant to the Child and Adolescent Service WA. Professor Parry is also a member of the WA Child Health and Youth Health Network Executive Advisory Group.

In 2006 he was recognised for his outstanding service to paediatrics when he was awarded the John Sands Medal by the Royal Australasian College of Physicians. He was the inaugural recipient of the Children and Young People Lifetime Achievement Award at the WA Citizen of the Year Awards in 2010. In 2012 he was made a Member of the Order of Australia for his services to paediatric medicine and child health.

Judge Denis Reynolds



His Honour Judge Denis Reynolds is one of the longest serving judicial officers in Australia and the longest serving president of the Children's Court of Western Australia – a position he has held since 2004.

As Head of Jurisdiction, Judge Reynolds has provided strong support to the Drug Court in the Perth Children's Court, with the aim of rehabilitating children and young people from the effects of drug use and supporting them to develop stronger relationships with their families and the community. He sees the role of the family as critical in addressing justice outcomes for a child or young person.

Through his dedication to addressing the high rate of incarceration among Aboriginal young people, His Honour has garnered enormous respect among Aboriginal leaders who are preparing comprehensive plans to address dysfunction within sections of the Aboriginal community. Strengthening the capacity of communities and involving Aboriginal leaders and community members in developing local solutions for local issues has been a key theme in his advocacy on youth justice issues.

Recognising the role that prevention and diversion initiatives play in directing young people away from the formal criminal justice system, Judge Reynolds is a passionate advocate for expanding these initiatives. In particular, he has advocated support for programs designed around Aboriginal children and young people that respect their cultural needs and values. He has spoken out on numerous occasions about the need for Western Australia to invest some of its economic dividend into programs which prevent young people moving through the system into formal detention.

In 2012 Judge Reynolds was named the winner of the Community category of the Western Australian of the Year awards.

Hon Barbara Scott



The Honourable Barbara Scott was a member of WA's Legislative Council from 1993 until her retirement in 2009. She represented the South Metropolitan Region for the Liberal Party and was Shadow Minister for Education, Children, Culture and the Arts, and Censorship.

Ms Scott began her working life as a teacher in a small country community. After working in the UK, she returned to WA and engaged in community work. Her first role was President of the local kindergarten, which eventually saw her founding the Community Kindergartens Association of which she was President from 1978 to 1992.

Ms Scott went on to help form the Meerilinga Council that then became the Meerilinga Young Children's Foundation. The Meerilinga Council brought together 47 voluntary organisations to deal with young children and their families.

As a member of the Legislative Council, Ms Scott was appointed as Chair of the Select Committee to investigate the establishment of an independent Children's Commissioner in WA and was instrumental in shaping the legislation which governs that office, later chairing the joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People. She lists the establishment of the Commissioner's office as one of her parliamentary achievements, along with mandatory reporting of child abuse, the expansion of kindergarten and pre-primary education, and a 40 km/h speed limit around schools.

She is the President of the Friends of Ngala and Deputy Chair of the Ngala board. She is Patron of Kalparrin, Trustee of the May Gibbs Foundation, member of the Australian Family Association and Patron of Pineview Kindergarten in Coolbellup. Ms Scott has had a lifelong commitment to the value of early intervention and has influenced policy to that effect.

Professor Fiona Stanley AC



Professor Fiona Stanley AC is one of Australia's most prominent researchers on the health and wellbeing of young people and her passion and drive has seen the development of one of the most well respected research institutes on child and adolescent health.

Professor Stanley's interest in epidemiology and public health was sparked by her experience seeing young, sick children from remote communities brought in to the hospital, treated, and then sent back to the communities which had contributed to their health issues.

Professor Stanley was the founding Director of the Telethon Institute, established in Perth in 1990. Despite retiring in 2011, she remains closely connected with the Institute as Patron and Chief Investigator on a number of ongoing research projects. In 2002 she successfully lobbied for the establishment of the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth and was the first chairperson; she remains a board member.

Professor Stanley is strongly committed to the idea that improving health is a means to improving social justice. She is a passionate advocate for reconciliation and is dedicated to improving the life chances for Aboriginal people.

She was made a Companion of the Order of Australia in 1996 for her services to maternal and child health research, and her contributions to improving Aboriginal and community health. She was the 2003 Australian of the Year for her research on behalf of Australia's children. In 2004 she was honoured as a "National Living Treasure" by the National Trust and in 2006 made a UNICEF Australia Ambassador for Early Childhood Development.

She also holds positions as Distinguished Research Professor with the School of Paediatrics and Child Health at the University of Western Australia; Vice-Chancellor's Fellow, University of Melbourne; Director, 2013 Festival of Ideas; Member of the ABC Board; and Chair of the Alcohol Advertising Review Board.

Mr Sam Walsh AO



Mr Sam Walsh AO is the Chief Executive of Rio Tinto Iron Ore and Australia. Previously, he had been in the automotive industry, working for General Motors and Nissan Australia. Mr Walsh was appointed to the Rio Tinto plc and Rio Tinto Limited boards in 2009, is also a non-executive director of Seven West Media and is chair of the British Gas advisory committee.

In Mr Walsh's view, operating a profitable, ethical company is the best community investment that a business can make. This ideal is the impetus for the community investment programs and activities which are part of Rio Tinto's business. As the

Chair of the Rio Tinto's Community Investment Fund until the end of 2011, Mr Walsh helped guide the investment of more than \$35 million to build a stronger and more sustainable community. Investments by the Fund assist the Better Beginnings program and The Graham (Polly) Farmer Foundation.

Mr Walsh is engaged with a number of arts and cultural organisations. At present, he is the Chair of the Black Swan State Theatre Company, WA's flagship theatre company; Chair of the WA Chapter of the Australian Business Arts Foundation; Branch President of Scouts Australia (WA branch); Patron of the State Library of Western Australia Foundation; Chair of British Gas Advisory Committee, and founding chair of the Chamber of Arts and Culture WA.

In 2007 he was named WA Citizen of the Year – Industry and Commerce, and was appointed an Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia in 2010 for his contributions to business and the community. Mr Walsh was also awarded the Australian Business Arts Foundation's Richard Pratt Business Arts Leadership Award in 2011.

Associate Professor Ted Wilkes



Associate Professor Ted Wilkes is well known for his dedication to public health issues, particularly for Aboriginal people. Professor Wilkes is a Nyungar man, with connections to the metropolitan area and the south west of WA.

Professor Wilkes has worked in public health for much of his working life, having been the CEO of the Derbal Yerrigan Health Service in Perth and holding the position of Associate Professor at the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research (TICHR). While at TICHR he was Chair of the steering committee for the WA Aboriginal Child Health Survey. This

survey has shaped and guided the development of policy and practices around health, education and wellbeing for Aboriginal children and young people and their families.

Professor Wilkes is co-Program Leader of the Indigenous Australian Research Program at the National Drug Research Institute, based at Curtin University. His current research includes projects to develop culturally appropriate resources to assist health professionals working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to address issues of alcohol and pregnancy, and culturally relevant programs to support Aboriginal parents to promote their children's behavioural and social competence and readiness for school.

He is also the Chair of the National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee; a member of the Australian National Council on Drugs; President of the Derbal Yerrigan Health Service and was the former Chair of the Aboriginal Reference Group of the Department of Child Protection.

As an Aboriginal leader, Professor Wilkes endeavours to facilitate positive health and social outcomes for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Western Australians alike. He is particularly passionate about supporting young Aboriginal people through their education and in providing effective programs for young Aboriginal offenders to divert them from the criminal justice system.

Mr David Wirrpanda



David Wirrpanda's football career with the West Coast Eagles saw his name become a household word in WA. He played 227 matches, including the 2006 AFL premiership victory, from his debut in 1996 until his retirement in 2009. His success on the field has made him one of the most influential Aboriginal people in Australia and he has also received recognition as one of WA's most Inspirational People of the Year in 2008.

In his early life in Victoria, his mother's family established Worawa College for Aboriginal young people who had not engaged with mainstream education.

The value of education was constantly reinforced; a lesson which Mr Wirrpanda takes through life with him.

In 2005 he established the David Wirrpanda Foundation with a view to providing mentors and role models to Aboriginal children and young people and thus empower Aboriginal people and their communities. Mr Wirrpanda's work in promoting strong role models and healthy life choices is intended to increase school retention and connection with education, and to give Aboriginal young people a strong basis for further study or entry into the workforce. The foundation works with Aboriginal role models and mentors to provide a number of tailored programs for young people, including a program for high school girls, health programs and a work-readiness program. His aim through this is to make change slowly from the ground up – change that will be sustainable.

In 2012 Mr Wirrpanda was named National NAIDOC Person of the Year.

Mr Russell Woolf



Russell Woolf is the presenter of 720 ABC Perth's Drive program on local radio. He is eminently qualified to be an Ambassador for Children and Young People as he once was a child, then a young person and now, almost always, is an adult.

Russell was educated in Perth and spent more than 10 years involved in a youth group both as a member and a leader. In many ways he believes those experiences helped nurture and shape him into the person he is today.

Russell studied at UWA and Curtin University, went into his family business for a few years and then was accepted

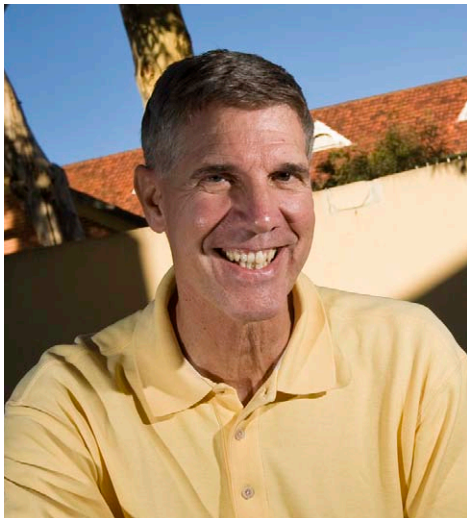
into the Broadcasting course at the WA Academy of Performing Arts. His radio work took him to Esperance, Kalgoorlie and Karratha before returning to Perth and the ABC.

In his position in the media, Russell works to ensure children and young people are given a voice and are heard in the community. He has been supportive of the Commissioner for Children and Young People's work and he interviews children and young people, and those that work to support and nurture their wellbeing, regularly on his 'Drive' program.

Another significant qualification is that Russell has a four and a half year old daughter. Obviously not a unique experience, but one that has nonetheless opened his eyes even further to the needs of young people in our community.

He believes there is much to celebrate in our children and young people and that as a society we must protect, support, listen and encourage them. Is there anything more heart breaking than learning that a young child has turned to an adult to share something of great personal significance, only to not be heard, or heard but not believed?

Winthrop Professor Stephen Lubrick



Winthrop Professor Stephen Lubrick's passion for helping children grow into healthy adults has seen him spend the past three decades working to find the best ways to do so.

Professor Lubrick is a Winthrop Professor of Child Health at the University of Western Australia and currently heads the Division of Population Science at the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research. He is best known nationally for leading groundbreaking studies of children's health, education and wellbeing including the WA Child Health Survey, the WA Aboriginal Child Health Survey and the Longitudinal

Study of Australian Children. These studies have, and continue to be, highly influential in shaping national policy and services for children and families.

Professor Lubrick is regarded as one of Australia's leading authorities in the epidemiology – the study of patterns of health events and their causes – of child and adolescent mental health.

Professor Lubrick is particularly recognised for the practical leadership and implementation of complex survey processes drawing on extensive state, national and international collaboration.

His ultimate goal is to see his psychological and social research findings translated into relevant, timely policies and actions on the part of governments and private agencies to positively influence the lives of children and young people in Australia and abroad.

Teaching the next generation of research leaders is, in Professor Lubrick's view, the key to continuing the great work already underway that will lead to significant changes in the lives of individuals and families.

In 2011 Professor Lubrick was awarded the Children and Young People Lifetime Achievement Award at the WA Citizen of the Year awards.

Alternative formats

On request, large print or alternative format copies of this publication can be obtained from:

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2012 Ambassadors