

*Joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People —
First Report — Annual report 2020–2021 — Motion*

Resumed from 6 April on the following motion moved by Hon Kyle McGinn —

That the report be noted.

Hon KYLE McGINN: In talking to this report I have focused on the United Kingdom's model of implementing an easier way for children and young people to understand Parliament before they give evidence or participate in very high level, complex hearings. I acknowledge that the model that was put together and put on the table were facts, books and directions. When children and young people get to the Parliament, there are proper directions for where to go. As I have said before, if before even getting to Parliament, children can get a vision of what the room is going to look like, just breaking the ice like that, it is a really good way to ensure that when they get into the room, they are not overwhelmed. I am sure any young person walking into this chamber for the first time, for example, would be slightly overwhelmed.

I know I was when I came in in 2017. I was all right up until I had to sign my name somewhere over there. That is when it started to get a little bit scary. I do think in the context of this report that the UK model is something we should be looking at here and taking on board. I think that our education department does a fabulous job with all of that.

When I was on my feet last time, I was talking about an intern of mine, Amy Astill, who went on to do youth Parliament. She went into youth Parliament and performed very well. She then did it again and became youth Premier. She is now a coordinator of that program and she is an advocate and role model supporting new young people going into that system. Anything we can do to support young people taking part in this process is a strong way for us to ensure that in the future we see more engagement with the democratic process, and more engagement and understanding of the seriousness of what our committees do.

Hand on heart, I was not aware that the majority of the hard work in this place is done across the road, funnily enough, in the committee rooms, and boy is it hard work. I think the first big report I got my teeth into was the inquiry into WorkSafe here in WA. That ended up being a massive, massive report, which I am very proud of by the way. Getting an understanding at an early age will allow people to put their hand up more in politics and allow them to take part in hearings and give evidence. It will only better the knowledge and the experience that young people will have to engage with our democratic process, which in turn should see the community get a little bit more accepting of politics and politicians. I know that it seems to become a harder conversation in public. If our young people engage more with our clerks, for example, and get some of that knowledge and experience, I have no doubt they will be more excited to get involved and potentially become a Clerk or an Usher in the future.

Consideration of report postponed, pursuant to standing orders.