

The Greens (WA) 2020 policy

Children

All children should be valued and supported to realise their full potential. Children should have equitable access and benefit from the best possible schooling, communities, and built, natural, and family environments. They should all be raised in safe, loving and nurturing environments, free of physical, emotional and sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination.

A loving home is the most important element in ensuring a child's well-being. Diverse family arrangements in which children can grow and thrive should be valued

State legislation and policies should adhere to the UN Conventions on the Rights of the Child, including that children should be given an opportunity to have a say in the decisions that affect their lives.

Aims

The Greens (WA) want:

- real and actionable collaboration between all government departments to ensure that child protection, health and education issues are identified and acted upon swiftly for the well-being of all children
- the prevention and elimination of physical, emotional and sexual abuse of children
- no child to live in poverty
- timely and appropriate support and interventions in which mentoring support is the first approach for all families who need it, before issues become a crisis
- affordable, quality, publicly funded child-care
- the developmental and learning needs of all children to be met quickly and appropriately with the option of additional support in the home, childcare centre or classroom, where needed
- early and accurate diagnosis of learning difficulties (see also The Greens (WA) [Education](#) policy)
- the establishment of an Office for Early Childhood

Measures

The Greens (WA) will encourage and support legislation and actions that:

- support children and individuals engaged in child-care, education, and protections, to provide safe and healthy environments for children
- adequately resource agencies to develop and implement programs which assist carers to develop positive and healthy child-rearing skills and which support the emotional, social and intellectual development of children, with particular emphasis placed on the early years to prevent outcomes requiring support and interventions later in life
- establish and maintain specialist trauma and attachment services to avoid the lifelong problems that can arise from trauma and grief experienced in childhood

- promote community-based delivery of services and resource distribution (see also The Greens (WA) [Public Participation](#) policy)
- prioritise and expedite programs and resources to communities experiencing, social exclusion, abuse and/or parental stress
- ensure that all social workers, teachers, child-care workers and other professionals responsible for the care, education, development and protection of children receive ongoing, professional support and training based on best practice and research (see also The Greens (WA) [Education](#) policy)
- guarantee the sufficient funding of childcare centres so that they are able to deliver high quality care, including rural and remote communities
- ensure enforceable standards of care and conduct, and frequently check accreditations of child-care centres to ensure the retention of quality staffing, adequate levels of trained staff and suitable facilities
- raise the age of criminal responsibility from ten years to at least fourteen and provide targeted intervention and support to prevent both the institutionalisation and criminalisation of young people (see also The Greens (WA) [Justice](#) policy)
- ensure community participation and leadership, particularly by and with First Nations communities, so that children can maximise their potential regardless of economic, ethnic or social background, level of ability, or where they live (see also The Greens (WA) [First Nations Peoples](#) policy)

Adopt a holistic approach to child health:

- ensure all schools have prompt access to school nurses, psychologists, counsellors, social workers and other specialist support staff
- ensure that all children in school are adequately fed and support school kitchen gardens and breakfast programs (see also The Greens (WA) [Food](#) policy)
- fund preventative programs to reduce childhood accidents
- support ongoing research into childhood health and development
- make urban environments inviting to promote more outdoor time and nature play, as safer, cleaner and free from harmful chemicals (see also The Greens (WA) [Planning](#) policy)

Prevention of child abuse:

- educate the broader community about the effects on children's lives and well-being of family and domestic violence, of physical, psychological, emotional and sexual abuse, of neglect and the impact of alcohol and other drugs (see also The Greens (WA) [Family & Domestic Violence](#) policy)
- increase investment in programs that focus on community awareness, prevention and reporting of abuse against children and young people
- fund high-quality services for child survivors of abuse and neglect
- in all decisions and interventions, ensure the safety and well-being of the child is paramount
- provide access to protective behaviour programs in schools
- develop and implement programs to reduce bullying
- provide school based parenting programs for teenagers, based on child development theory and research

(See also the Australian Greens [Children and Young People](#) policy)

Children policy ratified by The Greens (WA) in 2020

The Greens (WA) spokesperson for children's issues is [Alison Xamon MLC](#)