

# ACYA's financial report to JR McKenzie

10am – 2pm, Friday 1 December 2017

St Andrew's Conference Centre, 30 The Terrace

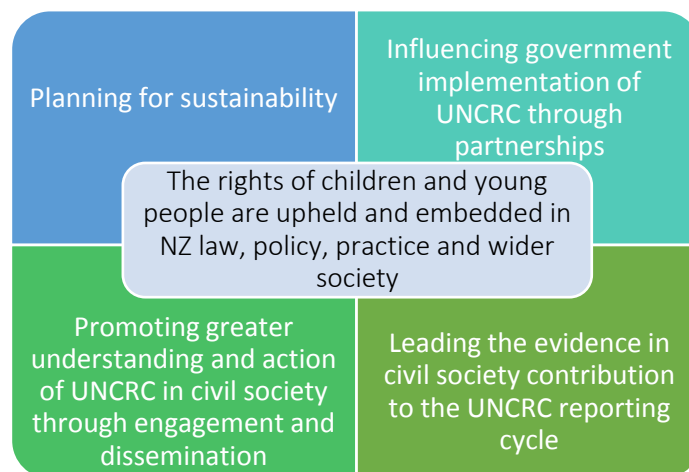


## Introduction

Action for Children and Youth Aotearoa (ACYA) seeks to promote respect for all children and youth and their rights. In order to do this, we

- a) Promote understanding and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC)
- b) Promote action on the recommendations of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child for Aotearoa New Zealand
- c) Provide reports from non-governmental organisations in Aotearoa New Zealand to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child
- d) Promote opportunities for the voice and participation of children and youth to be heard.
- e) Do anything else that will further these aims

The vision/kaupapa of ACYA is for tamariki (up to 18 years) in Aotearoa New Zealand to experience the full realisation of their rights under the UNCROC.



## Work funded within this Agreement

The purpose of our work and key differences we want to make are:

1. Strengthened UNCROC architecture through:
  - greater awareness about children's rights, particularly within government
  - an effective UNCROC Monitoring Group
  - promotion of UNCROC (particularly the UN's recommendations) in government work programmes.
2. The development, publication and presentation of the sixth non-government civil society report(s) to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (due at this stage in 2020).

## Achievements and unexpected successes in the last year/few months

- We have contributed to the effectiveness of the UMG by contributing to the development of terms of reference; we are looked to as experts on the UNCROC and the reporting process. We have also directly influenced the focus of the UMG towards implementing the UNCROC.
- Building relationships and strengthening our position in the sector

- Connecting with others, e.g. CPAG, Save the Children
- Children's sector meeting – co-hosting with CWN
- On organising committee for childhood studies colloquium
- Hosted successful AGM
- Invested in planning – strategic and coms and engagement; This has brought benefits because we are clear about what we want to say and do. For example, we have an increased media presence with the last two media statements resulting in radio interviews.
- Organisational structures – sub-committee structure, work on developing Māori caucus; We are setting up policies so we can become an employer organisation.
- Coordinator appointed on a contract basis
- Increased awareness of our role in the sector reified through other organisations making contact with us and wanting to be involved. In the last week we have been approached by the CTU and World Vision.

### Challenges and responses

- Employment related, policies, processes and protocols have needed to be developed. Our response to that has been to work with one of our members, YouthLaw, who have provided administrative support
- We still have a challenge around our communications and online presence. Our response has been to re-structure the governance committee and also to follow our strategic direction. Next year, the focus will be on communication and engagement and on the 25<sup>th</sup> year anniversary event.
- Sustainability beyond the next 5 years is still a challenge. Our response has been to establish a Finances/Sustainability Committee to address ongoing sustainability issues.

### What we have learnt that may lead to changes in the way we do things

- Look for practical supports, e.g. hot-desking at another member's workspace. We have had one offer but need to continue to be proactive in seeking practical support.
- We need to consider how to effectively disseminate the Concluding Observations as the basis for a common agenda to progress UNCROC. We are looking beyond Aotearoa New Zealand for ways to do this.
- We have learnt that we need to be responsive in how we use the Concluding Observations. We need to interpret and apply these depending on the context. For example, the joint statement calling for an accord on child poverty and the accompanying media statements.
- We also need to be flexible and responsive to changing government structures including the Office of the Children's Commissioner. For example, getting through to new ministers will be a challenge and as well as being flexible and responsive, we will need to be persistent.
- We are actively working with the OCC to embed UNCROC and structures within government to implement UNCROC.
- Our Strategic Planning process emphasised the need for balance so we are not just reactive.
- The current political landscape has changed since the election with longstanding issues facing children now firmly on the Coalition Government's agenda. This has changed the opportunities and ways we engage with government. For example, around the UMG table, government officials are now open to our advice about implementing UNCROC.
- While we support the focus on child centred practices and including children's voices, there is a risk that other principles underpinning UNCROC are overlooked. That means we need to lead a different type of awareness-raising that focuses on implementation using the architecture of the UNCROC. We believe the time is right to introduce a more sophisticated discourse about UNCROC.

Dr Sarah Te One, ACYA Coordinator.