



OUR COLLECTIVE IMPACT 2025

The work of the National Youth Collective



***PROJECT
ROCKIT***



PROJECT ROCKIT is located on the lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation.
We pay our deep respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge
the continuing connection to land, water and community.

Always was, always will be, Aboriginal land.

YOUTH COLLECTIVE MANIFESTO

In 2024, the National Youth Collective came together for a series of Blue Sky Thinking Sessions, where young people shared their ideas and perspectives, inspired by PROJECT ROCKIT's vision of a world where kindness and respect thrive, and bullying, hate, and prejudice are left behind.

During these sessions, the Collective explored what a more just, more peaceful, more inclusive, more generous world looks like? This conversation led to the creation of a manifesto, which now guides our youth-driven movement.

And so, here it is - the manifesto.



WHO ARE WE

PROJECT ROCKIT's National Youth Collective
is a group of 50 diverse young people.



ABOUT PROJECT ROCKIT

PROJECT ROCKIT ignites bravery in youth voice. Established in 2006, PROJECT ROCKIT's flagship school programs have positively impacted over 800,000 young people and elevated 90+ young people into career-starting employment in the social impact sector. By harnessing youth-driven co-design and participation practices to address emerging social challenges, PROJECT ROCKIT is a vehicle for amplifying young people's voices into leading decision-making.



ABOUT THE YOUTH COLLECTIVE

PROJECT ROCKIT's YOUTH COLLECTIVE is represented by 50 diverse young people from across Australia. Aged 12 to 21 years, they act as advocates, creators, advisors and collaborators on work and projects with PROJECT ROCKIT and our partners to help build a world where kindness and respect thrive. The COLLECTIVE holds PROJECT ROCKIT accountable to remaining youth-driven and ensures that we understand the complex and nuanced experiences of young people today. Their lived experiences help us to better influence and shape the systems that govern their lives.

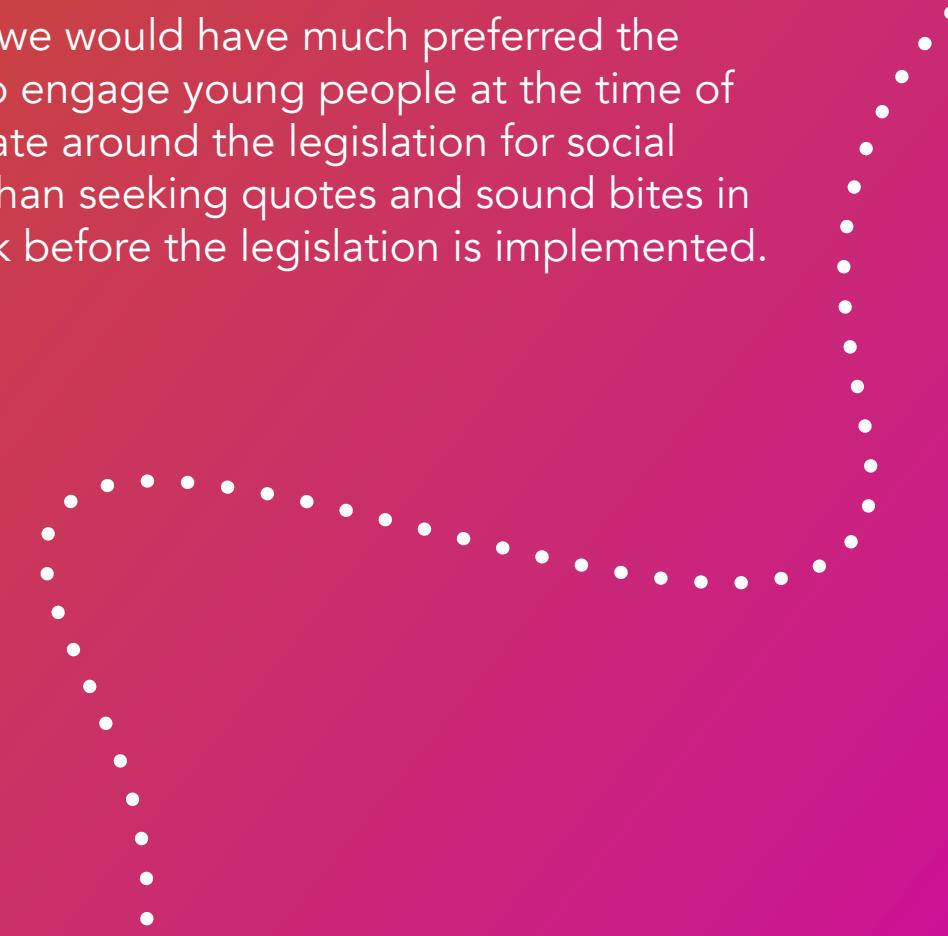
INTRODUCTION

As we pull this Impact Report together, PROJECT ROCKIT and the Youth Collective are receiving multiple media requests daily for young people to speak about the upcoming changes to social media for those under 16 years. And, it highlights some significant aspects about the impact that we as a collaboration of people - young and old - want to have and how we go about trying to achieve that impact.

Firstly, the debates around digital technology and young people have brought the work of the Youth Collective into focus and there are moments where members have engaged with technology companies, government consultation and processes and in our own external advocacy. However, when we do this, we know that authentic and meaningful participation from young people requires time, it requires support and education, it requires a willingness from adults to offer young people some power and agency in the process.

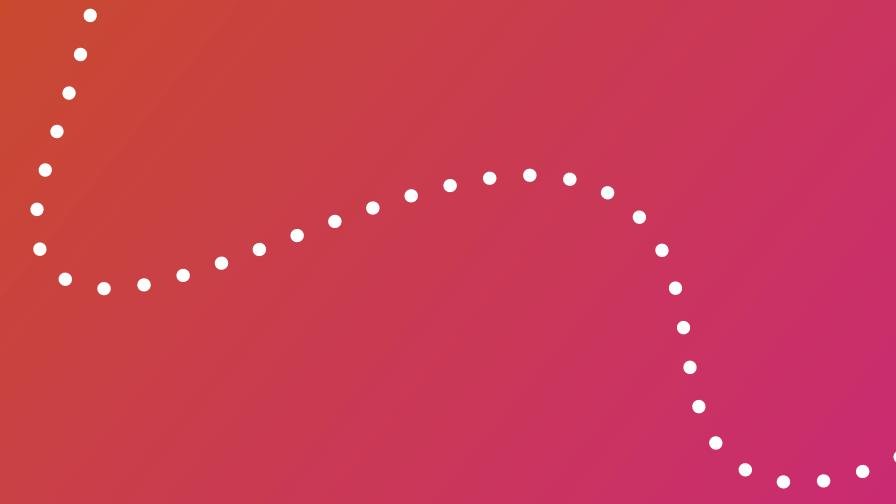
Our impact relies on a genuine respect and commitment to young people, often this comes through individuals within systems - rather than the systems themselves. It is those individuals, in partnership with young people that will help to change those systems.

And so, we would have much preferred the media to engage young people at the time of the debate around the legislation for social media, than seeking quotes and sound bites in the week before the legislation is implemented.

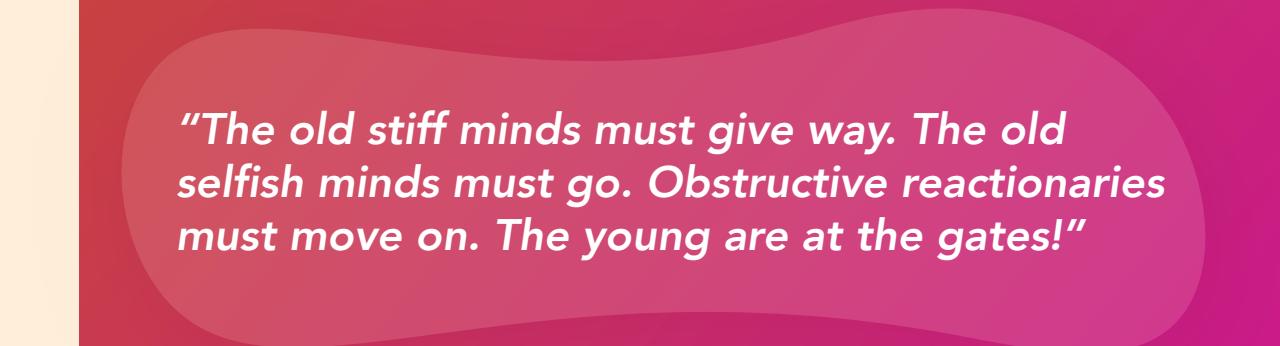


We prefer working with journalists writing long form pieces that offer the breadth and nuance of young people's differing opinions and ideas because young people are not a homogeneous hive mind, but like all generations bring their intersectionality and variety of lived experience to the table. Young people will disagree with each other. And, so they should.

PROJECT ROCKIT's mission is evolving. This year we have begun focussing on IGNITING BRAVERY IN YOUTH VOICE. Our organisation is a conduit, we connect young people into the systems that govern their lives and they deserve and should be impacting. Our organisation is a collaboration, we are youth-driven and adults and young people work alongside together bringing their different skills and experiences to achieve shared goals. Our organisation is a change platform, our purpose is to help and support others to see that we must change the ways in which we view, engage and support young people in this modern world.



That is the impact we seek. We do it as a Collective. We do it with what suffragette Lavinia Dock referred to over 100 years ago as "*the potent spirit of youth*".

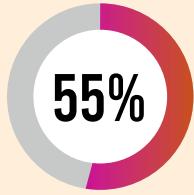


"The old stiff minds must give way. The old selfish minds must go. Obstructive reactionaries must move on. The young are at the gates!"

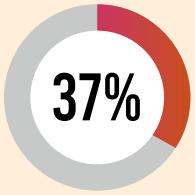
Lavinia Dock, "The Young Are At The Gates," The Suffragist, June 30, 1917.



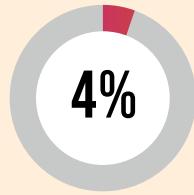
Total Members



Female



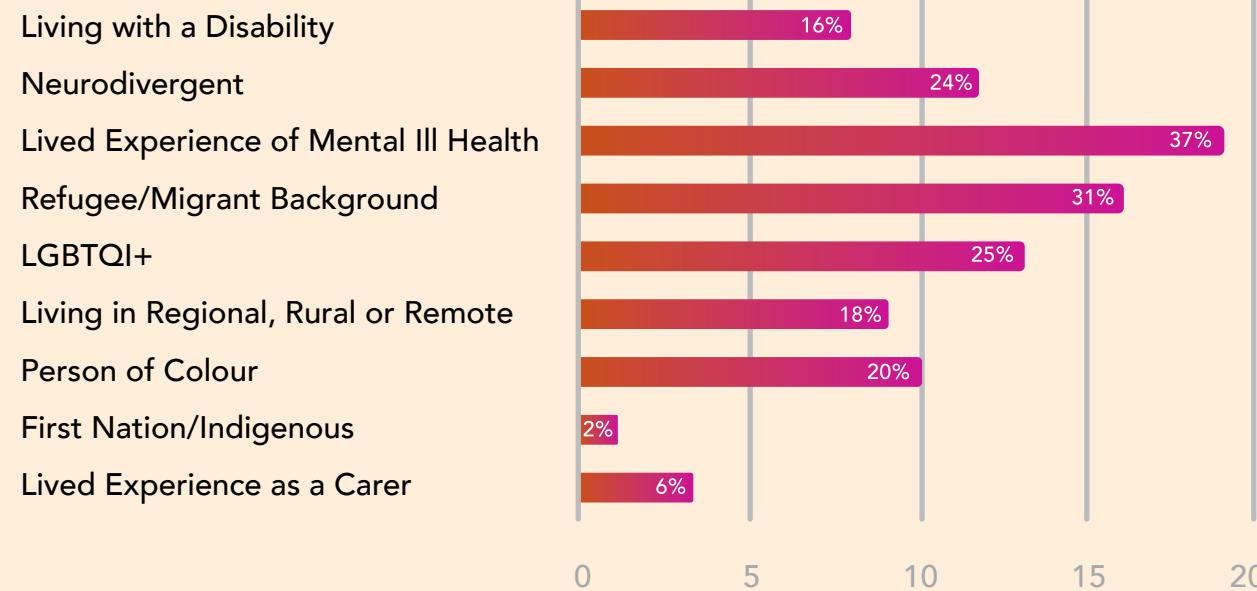
Male



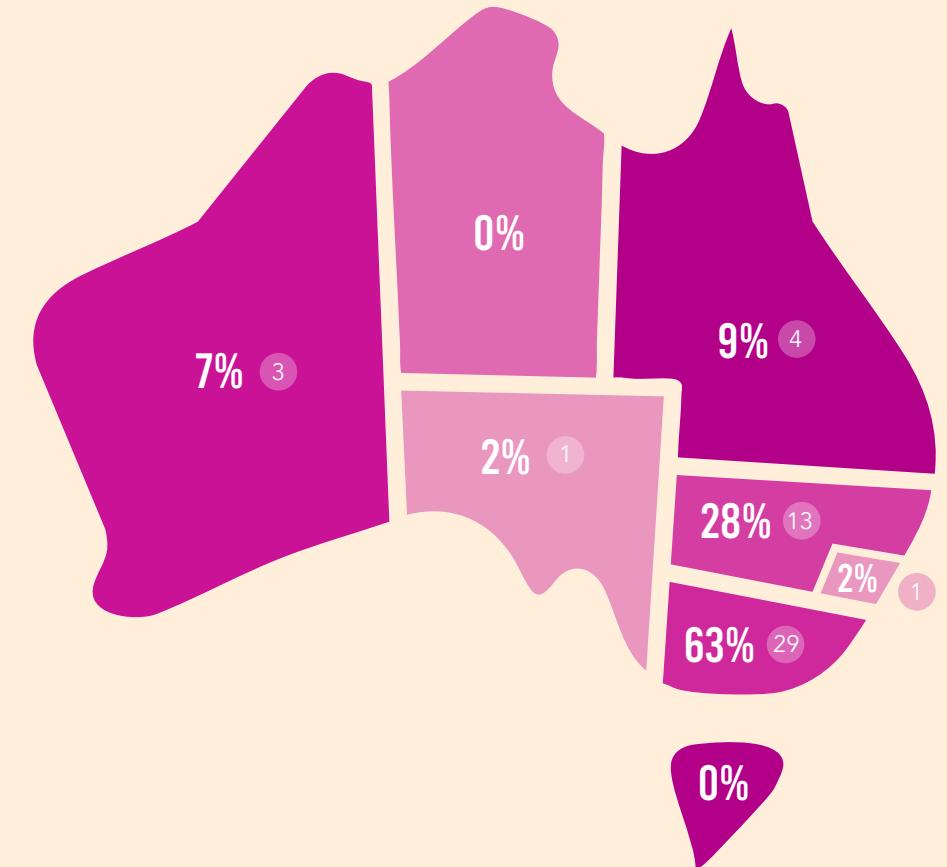
Non Binary



Average Age



REPRESENTATION



OUR PROJECTS



OVERVIEW

Our participation model focuses on action and doing work, rather than just advising adults on the work they are doing. This means that rather than having set meetings across the year, the Collective work in agile project teams coming together to work on projects of interest and impact. Some of these are initiated by the young people in the Collective themselves, others through PROJECT ROCKIT's work in school identifying key issues and needs and others through partners who have approached PROJECT ROCKIT and the Collective and whom align strongly with the vision and mission of our organisation and are approved by the Collective.

These were our projects in 2025.



CAMPAIGNS & CONTENT

- SHAPING OUR FEED (Nov 2024 - Feb 2025)
- KINDNESS IS CONTAGIOUS Campaign (April-May 2025)
- DIGITAL CHILDHOODS SUMMIT - Video Content (June 2025)
- HIGH SCHOOL HACKS (August-November 2025)
- WE ARE ONLINE (Meta) for Senior Students
(August - December 2025) - Launching Feb 2025
- DEAR DIGITAL FUTURE - Summer Story Series (December 2025 - February 2026)

DESIGN & ADVICE

- CO-DESIGNING, Melbourne Design Week event (May 2025)
- FUTURE GENERATION FUNDING ADVISORY PROJECT (Feb - June 2025)
- PLAY TO CONNECT: Roblox x PROJECT ROCKIT (May 2025)
- SUBMISSION: COLLABORATED ON SUBMISSION TO FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ANTI-BULLYING RAPID REVIEW (July 2025)
- OAIC's Children's Online Privacy Code Advisory (Aug -Dec 2025)
- THE CROSSROADS PROJECT with WSMRC (All year)

CONSULTATIONS & RESEARCH

- CONSULTATION with Australian Privacy Commissioner (Mar 2025)
- OUR ONLINE EXPERIENCE RESEARCH REPORT (Apr 2025)
- FOCUS GROUP with ACU/NAPCAN - Safety of Young People in Australian Youth Councils (May 2025)

PROJECT IN FOCUS

WHAT IS ANGER?

Anger is what we call a 'secondary emotion' - usually there is another emotion or range of feelings that sit 'under' the angry feeling. Think of an iceberg - anger can be the tip of the iceberg and what we see, but beneath that anger might be a combination of feelings (hurt, frustrated, ignored, confused etc) that have not been resolved and anger is the feeling that shows up.

Anger can feel like a lack of control, being misunderstood, feeling annoyed by people who don't share a view you hold, a sense of injustice or being unfairly treated. Anger is a normal response to a situation but being aggressive or lashing out is not a useful way to manage this feeling. Doing something physical can help, if it's safe. But this might not remove the feeling altogether. Being able to unpack the hidden parts of the iceberg is often how we can resolve anger more effectively and adaptively (usefully).

Ways I can manage anger when it arises:

- I hit my teddy bear.
- I practice box breathing.
- I remove myself from the situation.
- I hug my teddy bear, quite aggressively.
- I ask a friend to listen to me rant.
- I listen to heavy/upbeat music while angrily going on a walk/run as a way to express and release the emotion.

JOCELYN SAYS:

Remember anger is a secondary emotion, like the tip of an iceberg. Try and take a breath and ask yourself - what is under my anger? How can I address that feeling?

WHAT IS SHAME?

Shame is sometimes a very snake feeling. Shame is an array of connected emotions like: a sense of judgment, unlovable, of not being good enough. Many people get stuck on this.

The antidote to shame is empathy, not sympathy which is feeling for someone) - connecting with the person that needs grace and compassion not criticism or correction.

Shame thrives on isolation and being disconnected from others. Shame wants you to be alone. By connecting with your trusted crew of both peers and adults and showing grace to yourself as you learn to walk through the world you can counteract shame.

Ways I can manage shame when it arises:

- I share what happened with someone I trust so that it becomes smaller and manageable and maybe even laugh about it with them.
- I make artwork or write about how I feel to express my emotion. It helps release it.
- I find it helps to reflect by myself upon what has occurred and why I feel this way.
- Sometimes, I remind myself that if they're a stranger, they may not remember it after 5 minutes. And, if they're not, I know my opinion matters.
- I talk to a sibling/friend/family member who can comfort me.
- I address why I feel shame and think about what I could/would do if it occurred again.

PROJECT ROCKIT

KINDNESS IS CONTAGIOUS Campaign

(April-May 2025)

Kindness Is Contagious Campaign (April-May 2025)

Born This Way Foundation, Cotton On Foundation and the PROJECT ROCKIT National Youth Collective partnered to use our youth participation and co-creation approach to create a series of educational resources and videos.

We spearheaded the development and delivery of leading kindness and wellbeing resources by centering and elevating young people themselves as the creators. Our aim was to harness the power of digital media to engage and educate young people on matters of mental well-being, inclusion, and peer support.

Outputs

20 videos that were used as a social campaign and subsequently part of an educational resource on PR PLUS

A series of printable resources for schools including: an A2 sized “30 Days of Kindness” Poster, an emotional management booklet, and resources to support random acts of kindness and mental wellbeing.

Reach of over 600,000 views across Instagram and TikTok

PROJECT IN FOCUS



FUTURE GENERATION FUNDING ADVISORY PROJECT

Future Generation Funding Advisory Project

The Collective were engaged by social impact investment company, Future Generation, to advise them as part of their selection of organisations to invest in as part of their Future Generation Australia stream. Members of the Collective developed their own criteria, conducted interviews with the 29 organisations on the shortlist, in small groups assessed each organisations application and provided their panel with a written report that advised on young people's thoughts on the suitability and impact of those organisations - from our perspective. This information supported Future generation to make a final recommendation to their Board on who to fund for the coming years. Overall, 28 members were involved in the process.

The significance of this project is that young people were involved in making decisions that impacted financial investment. This was not just co-designing a logo, but playing a key role in decision making that would have significant impact on those organisations who were invested in.

Outcome

Young people advised and influenced the distribution of millions of dollars in the coming years to child and youth organisations they recommended to the Future Generation Board.

PROJECT IN FOCUS



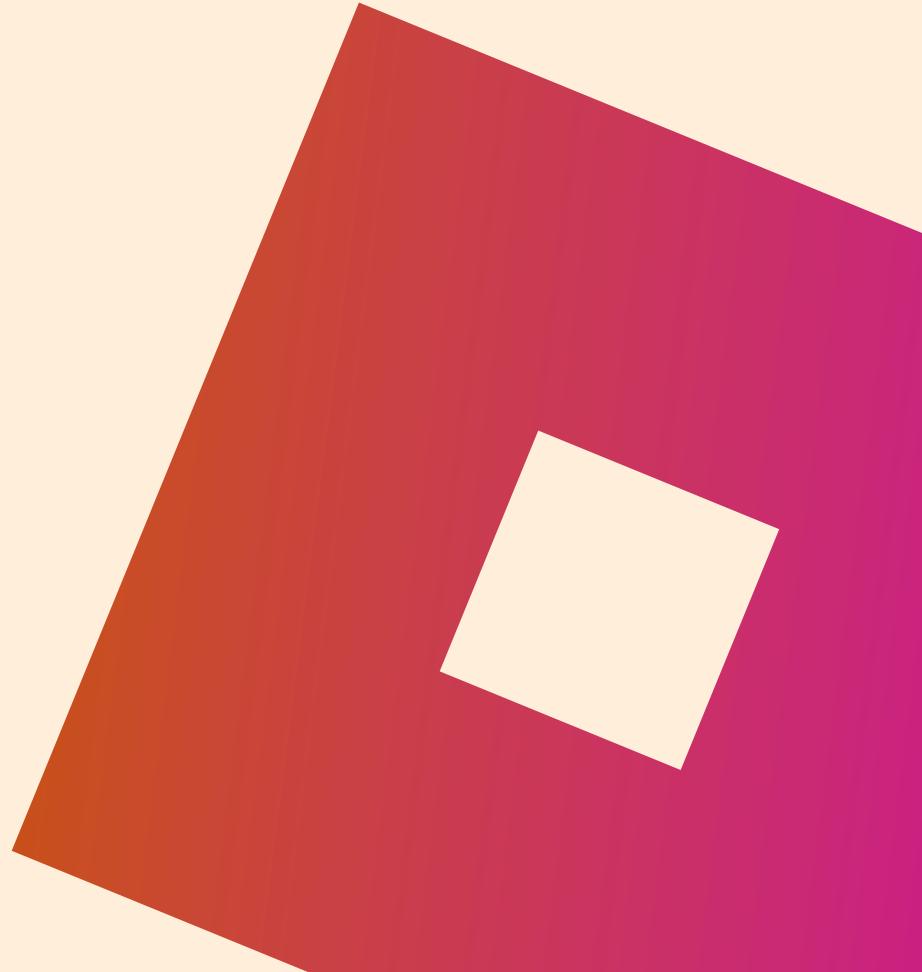
PLAY TO CONNECT: Roblox x PROJECT ROCKIT

Play To Connect: Roblox X Project Rockit

On Saturday 17 May, at the PROJECT ROCKIT offices in Melbourne over 40 young people aged 10 - 14 years gathered to participate in a creative consultation that saw them share their insights, experiences and perspectives on civility and safety on the Roblox platform.

We had 8 members of the National Youth Collective attend as peer facilitators and worked alongside PROJECT ROCKIT facilitators to oversee the work. We also had two younger members of the Collective participate in the event.

While the event had creative design elements, and allowed young people to rapid prototype games for civility and safety, this was a consultation that supported the generation of ideas through play and creativity - rather than a "co-design" event. The intention was to allow young gamers to express their opinions and ideas, their expectations and their needs based on their lived experience of playing Roblox. The Collective played a key role in ensuring authentic and representative perspectives.



PROJECT IN FOCUS



HIGH SCHOOL HACKS

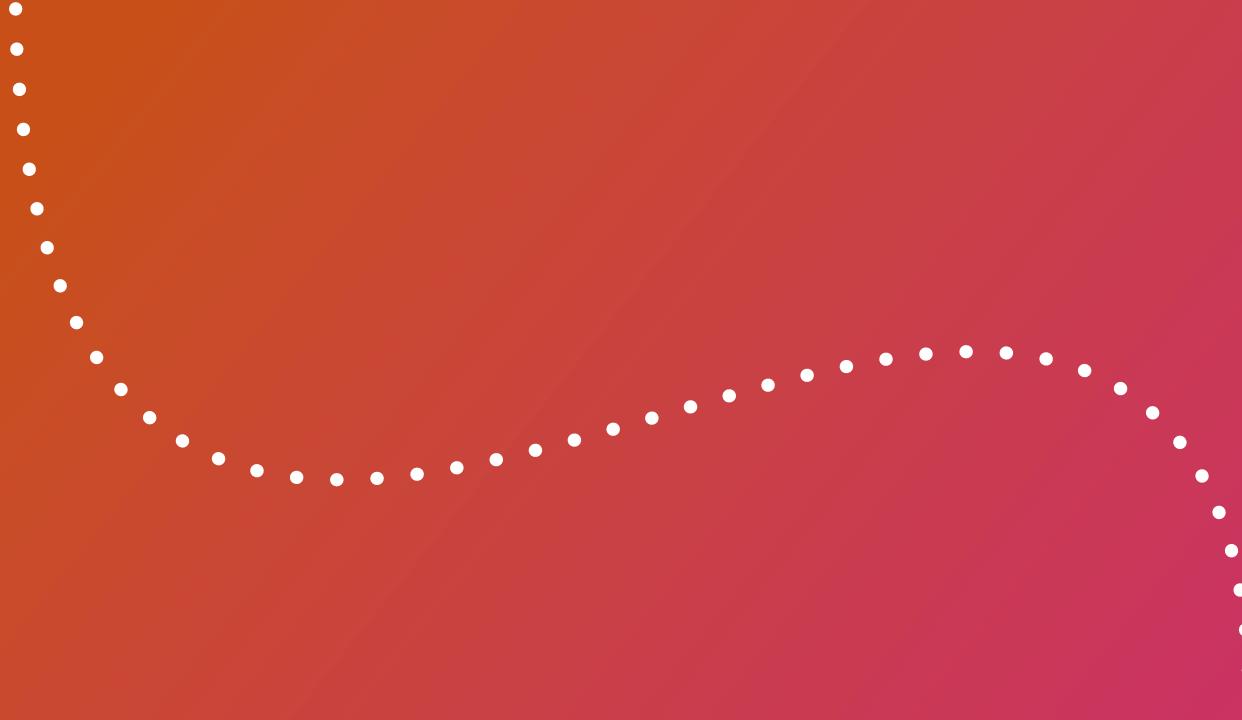
High School Hacks

In response to feedback from primary educators asking for PR-plus content suited for their students, the Collective created x10 videos for PR-plus discussing topics related to the transition from primary school to High School. The project was created in deep collaboration with external educators, students, and was driven by the National Youth Collective members through months of discussion and filming.

NYC members with recent experience of the high school transition filmed themselves openly with their advice about the following topics: AI, homework, first day of high school, making new friends, seeking help, dealing with bullying, digital lives, independence, making high school fun. Discussions were guided by questions from multiple primary cohorts. Year 6 students from Southmoor Primary School hosted a visit from our team to provide feedback on first edits, create voiceovers, and to draw icons for inclusion in the final videos.

On the first week of launch, one educator shared that "...every time I watch one of these videos, I am just so blown away by the amazing young people in them! The way they speak and share their advice is amazing. This is a resource that I look at and wish I had when I was in school."





OUR ADVOCACY

OVERVIEW



Many of our members grow over time and build their skills as youth advocates, many taking on various roles within different sectors and different points of contact from within and external to different levels of government.

We have had members talk at Senate hearings alongside our CEO, appear in national and international media speaking to issues that impact them and undertaking their own research and campaigns to promote and highlight issues that matter to them.

Members of the Collective bring our vision and mission into different spaces and are also represented across many spaces including:

- Global TikTok Advisory Council
- Australian Government OFY Advisory Groups
- Office for eSafety Youth Advisory Council
- NAPCAN Youth Speak Out
- VicSRC
- Many local government Youth Advisory Groups

ADVOCACY IN ACTION

Advocating Through Our Ceo: Sextortion (February 2025)

Regularly, Lucy Thomas, PROJECT ROCKIT, CEO has opportunities to advocate and speak to key issues impacting young people. In mid-February Lucy attended one of these events with leading academics and advocates around Sextortion. Members, Victoria, Abbey, Mehela and Rispah all provide Lucy with insights and opinions that they used to present and bring young people's voices into that space around this issue.

Victoria's key point:

"The power dynamic relies not on spoken ultimatums but on the victim's own fear of what could happen if they resist."

ADVOCACY IN ACTION

Submission: Collaborated On Submission To Federal Government Anti-Bullying Rapid Review (July 2025)

This submission, titled “This is what it’s like: Youth-driven perspectives on bullying today – and what schools can do to change it,” is packed with insights drawn from across our work, especially the voices of the National Youth Collective. The Collective participated in a session with Lucy discussing the issues and their experiences, these were included in our submission to Government where we invited them to further collaborate with us and their work towards developing a National Standard as to how schools respond to bullying.

You can read the submission [here](#)

Outcome: PROJECT ROCKIT’s submission was referenced in the final review.

Quoting: Bullying is now embedded in the interplay between physical and digital spaces. Social exclusion, image-based abuse, targeted group chats, and viral humiliation can begin in person and ripple across digital spaces (and vice versa). Failing to treat bullying as a seamless experience across these realms limits the effectiveness of any response – Project Rockit Submission



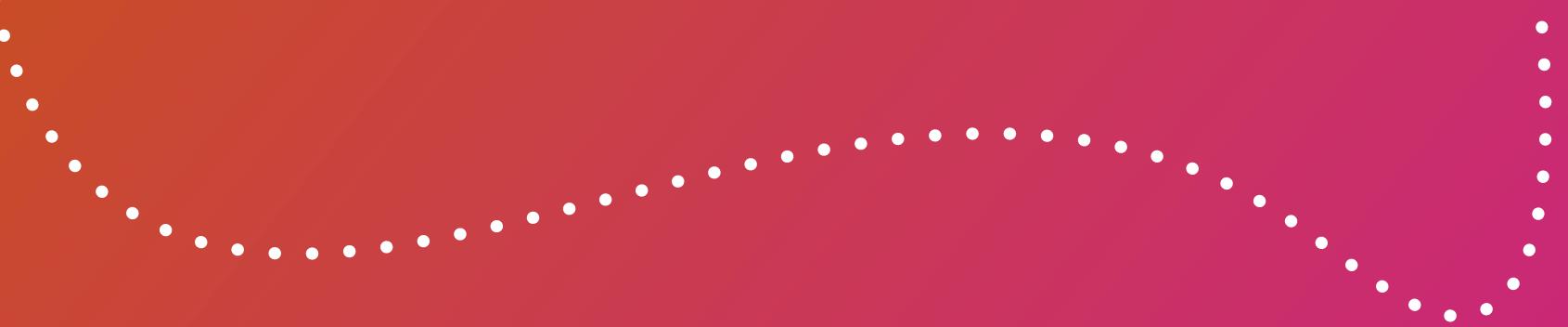
ADVOCACY IN ACTION

Evidence At Senate Hearing (October, 2025)

Member, Caitlin Blanch and CEO Lucy Thomas presented evidence to the Senate Environment and Communications Committee and their inquiry into the new under-16 social media ban and age verification for search engines.

OUR EVENTS & MEDIA





OVERVIEW

PROJECT ROCKT supports members of the Collective to engage in events where they present their perspectives and lived experience, meet with partners and advocate through the media. It is essential that these are undertaken in close collaboration as when engaging with adult systems that are not designed with young people in mind, the experiences can be negative and tokenistic. Together, we work to prepare and support any members of the Collective who are engaging in events or media opportunities with PROJECT ROCKIT.

EVENTS

Attend Meta Online Safety Event (Sept 2025)

In September META held their annual Online Safety event and alongside our CEO Lucy Thomas two NYC members - Anju and Lamisa - attended as representatives. The meeting launched new research with Prof. Amanda Third and Jocelyn Brewer and was attended by key staff on META's Global Safety Team, such as Antigone.

Project Rockit SXSW Panel (October 2025)

Members Lamisa, Anju and Konan

The future of the internet is being decided without the people who will inherit it. For years, adults have debated how to regulate young people's digital lives, but too often, young people are left out of the conversation. It's time to change that. PROJECT ROCKIT has spent nearly 20 years mobilising young people to thrive, online and offline. In this panel, its National Youth Collective – a cohort of 40+ lived experience experts aged 12–21 – takes the stage to unpack the complexities of their online lives. They're here to fight for their digital participation rights and share their vision for creating the online world they deserve.

This session is a rare chance for innovators and leaders to hear directly from the next gen. Their insights will challenge current thinking and spark real change. Moderated by PROJECT ROCKIT cofounder Lucy Thomas OAM, youth advocate and global Safety Advisory Board member (Meta, Snapchat, Spotify) alongside teen members of the National Youth Collective.

Media In October-December



July

Vedrana and Hansika: SwissTV Current Affairs



October

Theo on ABC TV "Your say: The Digital Dilemma"

Patrick in Bloomberg News (international)



November

Maxine in CNN.com (international) ([link](#))

Darcey & Chloe - ABC News Breakfast ([link](#))



December

Darcey in NY Times (International) ([link](#))

Chloe - NBC.com ([link](#))

Lucy - CNN.com ([link](#))

PERSONAL IMPACT

A Member Experience (January 2025)

Noa, 17, shared a specific experience she had personally that was difficult, but in which she had to advocate for herself in the face of prejudice and antisemitism. She shared a voice note indicating that PROJECT ROCKIT and the COLLECTIVE were a big part of her having the confidence and skills to advocate for herself in that situation.

“PROJECT ROCKIT has sparked my desire to make a change and given me the confidence that I can. I’ve been part of the team since I was 13 and even then, my voice was championed and my opinions were challenged so that I could grow” - Noa



SHARED IMPACT

A Connecting Story (February 2025)

We are now co-presidents which is so groovy, Project Rockit LITERALLY brings young people together to make change!

Caitlin sharing the news with Dan

Rhea Lincoln is a member of our National Youth Collective. She lives in rural Queensland where she studies and was also part of a Triple J Heywire grant program and through that established a youth organisation "We Are Not Alone": A regional movement of youth disability justice and empowerment. [\[link\]](#) Last year, the group successfully received a grant for \$50,000 and asked for some advice and we had a couple of catch ups, and during that catch up we made Rhea more aware that Caitlin Blanch (another NYC member) from rural NSW (Tamworth) was also a big disability advocate having been on the CYDA Youth Advisory Council. They connected further - and now, they are co-presidents of We Are Not Alone and running their first event outside of Queensland in rural South Australia!

In February, Caitlin and Rhea attended the ABC Trailblazers event in Canberra. And were keen to meet Amal who they knew as a presenter from Behind the News - little did they know that Amal got her start as a PROJECT ROCKIT presenter and they were able to catch up and discuss the ongoing impact and legacy of our shared work.



INTERNAL IMPACT

Advice & Support Through School Engagement Team (March-April 2025)

A mother contacted the school engagement team seeking support for her neurodiverse 12 year old daughter. Our SE team engaged with the Collective and through a collaborative process developed questions with the family and had neurodiverse young people from the Collective (Lucia, Olivia, Max and Abbey) video answers to those questions. Those videos were then sent to the daughter and mum to watch and provide some further insight and support.

The daughter responded via email: *"I found them very helpful. Thank you. I do think these would be very helpful for others struggling with the same problem or a similar one. Thank you very much for your help*



PERSONAL IMPACT

"Being a part of Project Rockit's National Youth Collective has been a huge journey filled with growth and positive experiences that have and will continue to shape me as an individual. Through the work I do here, I've discovered more about myself, but more importantly, I've learnt so much about the world I live in, and how being a young person with a voice gives me the ability to go out there and make a change. The kind of work we do in the Collective cannot be defined by a few words; it's a whole collection of experiences that have made a big difference. From tackling issues like hate on the internet to creating content that's meant to help primary school students transition smoothly to high school, these projects reflect the organization's commitment to supporting and empowering young people, shaping the world they live in. Initiatives like these help build confidence, awareness, and a sense of belonging. Being part of the collective has not only allowed me to contribute to meaningful projects but has also shown me the value of teamwork, empathy, and community. Working alongside passionate youth and mentors, I've seen firsthand how collective effort can make a real difference—and I'm excited to keep learning, growing, and creating change." - Jovia

CONCLUSION

We want to say the biggest thank you, congratulations and admiration for the work of the National Youth Collective this year - not just with PROJECT ROCKIT, but across their communities. We have members who have starred in musical productions, who have published stories and articles, who have excelled academically, who have represented Australia in sporting pursuits. We have members who are running their own youth-led organisations, who are advocating and working with many other organisations, who are contributing to their local communities - of place, of faith, of interest. Thank you for all that you do, and we will keep working together to make a positive impact into 2026.

PROJECT ROCKIT's NATIONAL YOUTH COLLECTIVE ARE:

Nicholas, Hansika, Vedrana, Kanishka, Dhishana, Anju, Caitlin, Lamisa, Kris, Patrick, Konan, Dominik, Max, Fiona, Jolie, Abbey, Rhea, Christopher, Raghu, Chloe, Jovia, Lucy, Maxine, Emily, Megan, Noa, Theo, Olivia, Mia, Rispah, Marlene, Neerja, Lucia, Mackenzie, Hannah, Darcey, Ciri, Rehan, Bentley, Jensen, Aditya, Mannon, Taihan, Oscar, Ayush, Adriel, Michael, Eli, Mo, Mehela, Victoria, Joshua



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