



Tasmanian Youth Forum 2022 'I am Me' Info Sheet

What is 'I am Me' about?

'I am Me' is a discussion about what young people need to feel safe expressing who they are and to speak up on matters important to them.

Having a positive sense of culture and self-identity means that young people can...¹

- Find out about their family and personal history and be supported to connect with their culture or heritage
- Have a positive sense of self-identity and self-esteem
- Feel like they belong
- Are in touch with their cultural or spiritual practices and have these practices valued and respected
- Connect with nature and are supported to explore the environment as part of their culture and identity

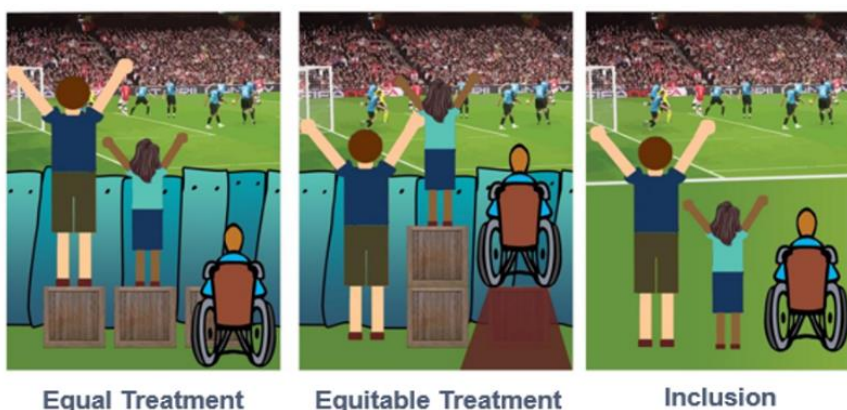
1. Tasmanian Government (2021) Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy. *It takes a Tasmanian Village.*

At TYF 2022 we will discuss:

Diversity is about all the ways in which we are different and how we express our personal identity. This could be our age, language, culture, ethnicity, religion, ability, gender, sex or sexual orientation, education, mental health, social and economic status, or even our family makeup.

Equity is about giving fair treatment, access, opportunity and advancement to all people, regardless of their identity and age. Equity means embracing our differences and providing more support or resources to those people who need it.

Inclusion is about giving everyone power, a voice and the ability to make or inform decisions. Inclusion involves removing or addressing the systems or beliefs that create inequality and prevent people from thriving based on their personal identity. It takes effort to create an inclusive environment that respects and values all people.



Equal Treatment

Equitable Treatment

Inclusion

Why is this an issue for young people?

Many young people feel discriminated against because of their age or identity. Sentiments like “Children should be seen and not heard.”, “It’s time for the adults to talk.”, “It’s just a phase. You will grow out of it.” may unfortunately be familiar to many young people.

Young people say that they sometimes feel scared to be themselves. It can be hard for young people to have a good sense of self or self-esteem if they have to hide who they are or pretend they are someone who they aren’t.

The Mission Australia 2021 Survey of young people aged 15-19 years found that:

- Equity and discrimination was the third biggest issue,
- 4 in 10 young people experienced unfair treatment because of their identity, such as age, gender or sexual identity, mental health, disability, religion or cultural background.
 - o 7 in 10 gender diverse young people reported being unfairly treated.
 - o 5 in 10 Aboriginal young people reported being unfairly treated.

Young people can experience discrimination and unfair treatment at school, in the workplace, at home, at a health service (like a doctor’s office or mental health service), at recreational or local services, in their community, and even when participating at community or sports events.

Discrimination based on personal identity has been linked to poorer outcomes in health and wellbeing and can result in reduced access to services and resources.

What has the Tasmanian Government done in this space?

- Developed the Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy (2021) and committed over \$100 million over four years to improve health and wellbeing outcomes. For example, education services and programs that support LGBTQIA+ students in schools, Multicultural and Aboriginal Liaison Officers in major hospitals, and establishing a Commissioner for Disability Services.²
- Government policies to support people from marginalised backgrounds including children and young people, women, carers and parents, people who experience disadvantage or ill-health, and people who identify as Aboriginal, LGBTQIA+ or from a migrant background. Some examples include Tasmania’s Multicultural Policy and Action Plan, LGBTQI+ Whole of Government Framework and Closing the Gap Tasmanian Implementation Plan 2021-2023.
- Scholarships and Grants for individuals and organisations delivering programs to support young people, carers, LGBTIQ+ and Women.

²See The Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy 2021, *It Takes a Tasmanian Village* for a full list of investments and initiatives.

What will we talk about at TYF ‘I am Me’?

Young people will have the opportunity to talk about equity, diversity and inclusion from their perspectives. It could be from their lived experience or as a supporter and ally to create an inclusive and equitable Tasmania.

Activities and discussions will include:

- Understanding diversity, equity and inclusion from the perspective of young people.
- Challenging stereotypes and our unconscious bias.
- Understanding what young people need to feel safe, have a positive sense of culture and self-identity.
- Identifying the systems and challenges that create disadvantage, discrimination or inequity for young people across different environments.
- Creating solutions that will improve outcomes for young people and Tasmanian communities.