



Government of South Australia
Office of the Guardian
for Children and Young People



Government of South Australia
Training Centre Visitor

MEDIA RELEASE

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Training Centre Visitor congratulates Government on ban of spit hoods

Use of spit hoods are now prohibited in youth justice detention, bringing South Australia into line with all other Australian states and territories

Penny Wright, Training Centre Visitor, congratulates the Government on the absolute ban on the use of spit hoods at Kurlana Tapa Youth Justice Centre (previously the Adelaide Youth Training Centre) as of 1 July 2020.

This followed a report and recommendations by the Ombudsman in September last year, which identified that South Australia was the last remaining jurisdiction to use them.

“I congratulate the Government and the Department for Human Services in taking decisive action to accept the Ombudsman’s recommendations and then working to make the changes necessary to implement this ban.

“This is an important move to support the rights and improve the welfare of children and young people held in detention at Kurlana Tapa,” she said.

“The use of spit hoods was inconsistent with the guiding principles of rehabilitation in the youth justice system and was contrary to the Charter of Rights for Youths Detained in Training Centres,” Ms Wright said.

“Since the commitment was made to phase out the use of spit hoods, there was a steep decline in their use with staff using PPE instead. This does not run the same risk of exacerbating trauma or escalating the behaviours of children in distress.”

“The prohibition of spit hoods is another positive step towards children and young people in youth detention feeling safe and modelling the respect and dignity we would wish them to emulate.”

Ms Wright also stated that she is encouraged by other initiatives outlined in the recently released Youth Justice State Plan to consider the rights and welfare implications of isolation, segregation and use of force, together with her ongoing dialogue with Youth Justice regarding semi-naked searches and other restrictive practices.