



YOUTH STRATEGY

2018-2023

Youth friendly communities are enduring communities.

Document Author: Jackie
Merchant
Community Development Officer

CENTRAL COAST YOUTH STRATEGY 2018-2023

Who are young people?

The term “young people” describes men and women moving between childhood and adulthood, aged 12 to 24 years.

In the **Central Coast Youth Strategy** young people are defined as those in this age group who live, work, study and play in the Central Coast, recognising that there are varying needs within this age range.

Purpose of the Youth Strategy

The Youth Strategy is a long term guiding document for Council. It is intended to provide direction for Council rather than outlining a specific route, to allow Council to consult and engage with youth on decisions that affect them, and to remain flexible and responsive to the changing world in which youth and the community live. This will allow for new knowledge to be considered over the expected five year life of the strategy.

Motivation - ensuring the health and wellbeing of our young people

The health and wellbeing of young people not only affects their immediate quality of life and productivity but also shapes the future health of the whole population and in a broader social sense the health of society. Tackling health and wellbeing issues when they occur in adolescence is socially and economically more effective than dealing with enduring problems in adulthood. The benefits flow through the entire population in terms of stronger families and safer and more connected communities. 1 (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2011):p1

Youth friendly communities are enduring communities.

Defining Health and Wellbeing

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines health as a “state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” In 2008 the WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health established that health is influenced by the social and economic conditions of daily life as well as by biological conditions. Mental Health is defined by the WHO as a “state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community”.

Links to the Central Coast Strategic Plan

Strategic Direction 2 – A Connected Central Coast

- Engage with community to achieve meaningful local youth outcomes.

Strategic Direction 3 – Community Capacity and Creativity

- Investigate feasibility of developing youth specific spaces;

- . Support programs and activities that promote innovation and enterprise to young people;
- . Develop a pool of mentors and a program of activities to support emerging community leaders, innovators and entrepreneurs; and
- . Support actions that improve education attainment, retention and engagement.

Alignment to the Social Planning Framework

The Central Coast Social Planning Framework was developed in 2016 and guides and informs all Councils efforts to make a positive difference to the community health and well-being.

Building on the social determinants of health, the framework outlines health and wellbeing priority areas for action. These action areas will fall under one of Councils roles as either a provider, facilitator or advocate around the six elements, listed below that need to be addressed. These six elements are also the guiding elements for the Youth Strategy.

Active

Opportunities and facilities to gather and participate in recreational activities and cultural experiences.

Engaged

Capabilities and networks to volunteer our time and skills to engage in decisions that affect us.

Included

Connectivity and inclusivity for our communities to access services, shops, education, work and play.

Learning

The knowledge, skills and commitment to learning needed to participate fully in society and reach our potential.

Secure

Local work opportunities and affordable living in a well governed and safe community environment.

Healthy

Local resources to support good food and lifestyle choices that build physical health and emotional resilience.

Context

In July 2017 the Commissioner for Children and Young People in Tasmania released the 'Health and Wellbeing of Tasmania's Children, Young people and their Families report'.

The overview for adolescence within the document outlines that the adolescent years are a time of significant transition and possible disruption for young people as they develop their own sense of identity, become more responsible for their own decision-making, and begin to lay the foundations for their lives as adults.

There will be changes in a young person's social environment, with young people exposed to new activities and experiences, social status and acceptance by their peers is important during this time, and this plays a role in the way they see themselves, where they belong, and how they treat others. Protective factors for young people at this stage of their lives include social connectedness to peers, family, trusted adults and places (such as schools).

During this period young people begin to take more responsibility for their own health and the choices that they make during this stage of their lives can have a significant impact on their health and habits in the future.

Mental health is an area of vulnerability during this period of adolescence. It is closely linked to social and emotional wellbeing and can affect children and young people's engagement in all aspects of their lives.

Engagement with learning during this period influences future education choices and employment potential and aspirations, and strong engagement throughout this period is an important protective factor for the future. Attendance and engagement with school during this period is essential to achieving good educational outcomes as well as social and emotional development.

Criminal behaviour during this period is a concern and a risk factor for vulnerable young people.

Risk factors may include low levels of parental involvement, low educational aspirations, antisocial peer groups, socio-economic disadvantage and experiencing abuse and neglect as a child. Protective factors could be good social and emotional development, engagement in education and learning, and supportive parents and communities.

The framework also outlines protective factors which are most influential in a child's life. For those in middle childhood and adolescence (up to 18 yrs) the following factors are indicated:

- Optimal Exercise and Physical Activity
- Optimal Nutrition
- Positive Child Behaviour and Mental Health
- Optimal Language and Cognitive Development
- Prosocial Young People's Lifestyle and Law-abiding Behaviour
- Healthy Young People's Lifestyle
- Young People Complete Secondary Education

Tasmanian State Government

The State Government does not have an overarching Youth Strategy, however the State Government has made a significant commitment to addressing youth issues across the state, by leading and funding several strategies and initiatives such as the Youth Suicide Prevention Plan for Tasmania (2016-2020), the Youth at Risk Strategy and the Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework.

The Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT)

YNOT is the peak body for the non-government youth sector in Tasmania. YNOT represents both the interests of young people and the broader youth sector and community. Integral to

the work of YNOT is the youth participation structure, the Tasmanian Youth Forum (TYF). TYF is Tasmania's peak youth consultative and participatory body.

Over the past 4 years YNOT has consulted extensively with young Tasmanians on areas of concern to them and that they feel are important. The four areas were in 2014 Youth Employment, 2015 Mental Health Matters, 2016 Learning and Education and 2017 Respectful Relationships and Violence.

Each of the YNOT reports contains a list of 20 Findings. From these 20 findings, those which are areas in which Council can make a positive contribution through Provision, Facilitation, or Advocacy have been used to inform the Actions developed for this Strategy.

Findings from the 2014 YNOT Youth Employment Forum in which Council can play a role.

Finding: Young people want more opportunities to gain experience and develop their skills because they understand that this is important to help them prepare for the workplace.

Finding: Young people want to gain relevant, meaningful experiences and had suggestions on how career planning and support could be improved to better meet the needs of young people.

Finding: Young people identified that they did not know how to go about getting experience, even though they knew it was an important part to securing employment and they wanted to take these opportunities.

Finding: Young people want to understand how their current learning or job relates to their future aspirations for employment.

Finding: Young people need and want to know more about the workplace environment and what is expected of them during their first work experiences.

Findings from the 2015 YNOT Youth Mental Health Forum in which Council can play a role.

Finding: Young people understand that they need to take care of their mental health and wellbeing and use multiple strategies to keep mentally healthy.

Finding: Being mentally healthy is something that is important to young people.

Finding: Young people are more likely to access mental health services in times of crisis or need than a way to maintain their mental health.

Finding: Young people want more skills to support their friends and family with their mental health.

Finding: Young people want to encourage their peers to seek help and talk to people if they are experiencing difficulties with their mental health.

Findings from the 2016 YNOT Youth Learning and Education Forum in which Council can play a role.

Finding: A critical reason why young people may not want to continue studying or training after year 12 is that they may not know what they want to do.

Finding: Young people want opportunities to gain practical experience through work placements or volunteering but need support to identify opportunities to do this.

Finding: Young people feel confident they can achieve their plans if they can identify what they want to do and understand the pathway of how they will get there.

Finding: Young people learn best when they can identify a practical application for their learning.

Finding: Young people believe negative perceptions of them in the broader community can impact on their education and opportunities and wanted to take steps to address this.

Findings from the 2017 YNOT Respectful Relationships and Violence Forum in which Council can play a role.

Finding: Young people want to prevent family violence from happening.

Finding: Young people have an awareness of gender inequality and some of the causes and influences of this.

Finding: Young people want to learn about gender inequality from an early age.

Finding: Young people are unaware of how gender - based inequality can lead to gender-based violence.

Finding: Many young people hold stereotypical views of gender roles.

(NWAY) North West Action for Youth

Central Coast Council is represented by its Community Wellbeing Officer as part of the North West Action for Youth (NWAY) Group. The group focuses on networking and collaborative opportunities for youth sector providers across the North West Coast.

NWAY includes representatives from health, social, educational., recreational and cultural organisations at community, local and state level. NWAY hosts guest speakers throughout the year and Members attend the Tasmanian Youth Conference in Launceston.

Youth Engaged

Young people have valuable contributions to make in the Central Coast Community, these are not limited to matters pertaining to youth issues but rather across a broad spectrum of subjects that relate to the community. Council is committed to hearing its young people and working with them on matters of importance to them, knowing that they are the future and the future builders for Central Coast, and has developed 'Youth Engaged' for this purpose.

Youth Engaged, works to:

- Coordinate and support existing relationships, initiatives and programs between schools and the business and community sectors;
- Provides leadership in the development of new initiatives and programs, including mentoring in the workplace;
- Develops activities that engage young people currently not in employment, training or education;
- Promote leadership potential within the schools
- Support the ongoing development of lifelong learning and employment within the Central Coast Community; and
- Work with schools through Youth Engaged Steering Committee in supporting (advocacy role) the retention of young people in Secondary, Vocational and Higher Education.

MISSION Australia Youth Survey Results for Tasmania 2016 and 2017

Findings from the Mission Australia Youth Survey for 2016 and 2017 are consistent with the feedback obtained in the YNOT Youth forums.

In 2016 respondents were asked –

- **‘what they valued?’**, and they rated friendships and family, mental and physical health and getting a job as being extremely important
- **‘what issues are of personal concern?’** – those issues were, coping with stress was the top issue, school and study problems, body image and depression and family conflict
- **‘what issues do you people think are most important in Australia today?’** – the main issues identified were equity and discrimination, and alcohol and drugs, population issues and mental health were also named, and have been increasingly identified since 2014
- **Have young people experienced unfair treatment or discrimination?** – the top three reasons given for perceived discrimination were gender, physical health and race/cultural background, followed by mental health and sexuality
- **What activities are young people involved in?** – Young people are involved in sport both as participants and spectators, they also named arts and cultural activities, participation in volunteering and environmental activities also increased
- **How positive do young people feel about the future?** – six in ten respondents felt either positive or very positive about the future, three in ten felt neither positive nor negative and the remainder felt negative or very negative.

In 2017 respondents were asked –

- **‘what they valued?’**, and they rated friendships and family, mental and physical health and school and study satisfaction as being extremely important
- **‘what issues are of personal concern?’** – those issues were, coping with stress was the top issue, body image, school and study problems and depression

- . **‘what issues do you think are most important in Australia today?’** – the main issues identified were mental health and drugs, equity and discrimination, education and international relations
- . **What activities are young people involved in?** – Young people are involved in sport both as participants and spectators, they also named arts and cultural activities, participation in volunteering and environmental activities also increased
- . **How happy are our young people?** – 61.5% indicated they felt very happy with their lives overall.

Tasmanian Youth Local Government Conference Report 2017

The Tasmanian Youth Government Association (TYGA) is an apolitical, youth-led organisation aiming to provide young Tasmanians with a forum for their ideas, concerns and expectations about their government. Students come from years 9 and 10.

Each year TYGA coordinates the Tasmanian Youth Parliament, and in 2017 ran Tasmanian Youth Local Government. This program facilitated a forum for young Tasmanians on issues surrounding Local Government.

As well as providing awareness amongst young people of the issues and processes of government, TYGA aims to provide governing bodies with documents that express the considered view of young people on a range of issues.

Key ideas raised by youth as part of the Youth Parliament are:

- . the implementation of valued youth advisory groups in every Council area;
- . expanding environmental by-laws and incentives for businesses who comply;
- . improving employment initiatives through more holistic investment;
- . making public transport more transparent, accessible and efficient;
- . insuring development applications meet community standards; and
- . the importance of investment in mental health training options.

Development of Youth Strategy Actions

Central Coast Youth Strategy Actions have been developed in response to the consultation and research done by YNOT, Mission Australia, Tasmanian Youth Local Government and Youth Engaged, and with Councils Community Development Officer and Community Wellbeing Officer.

Actions are aligned to Councils Social Planning Framework and developed to respond to the areas of concern and interest raised by youth.

Actions are developed with consideration of Councils roles and capacity, and ability to facilitate and work with organisations and groups who specialise in the youth sphere.

The following actions have been developed in response the research findings of the Commissioner for Children and Young People Tasmanian Report, YNOT Consultations, Mission Australia, Tasmanian Youth Local Government Central Coast Council. Actions focus on where Council can respond to the issues raised by young people, building on initiatives and activities already taking place in the community, identify where research can be done to

find community solutions to identified concerns, and where including youth in activities and undertakings of Council can best deliver activities, projects and solutions in which our young people have their opinions and input considered, heard and included, and feel empowered as valued members of the Central Coast Community.

Central Coast Council Youth Strategy Actions

ENGAGED	Strategic Outcome	SPF Dimension	Actions/ related tasks	Council Role / Timings	Responsible Members	Start / Finish Date	Indicators
	Youth Engaged: Continue to develop the roles of young people participating in Youth Engaged	Capabilities	<p>A) Continue to facilitate Council's Youth Engaged Group.</p> <p>B) Work with schools to promote the role of Youth Engaged members to school and broader community.</p> <p>C) Utilise Council's FB pages to promote the work of Youth Engaged.</p>	Facilitator/ Advocate; Long term	<p>A) Community Wellbeing Officer</p> <p>B) Community Wellbeing Officer</p> <p>C) Community Development Officer</p>	Ongoing	<p>A) Youth Engage is ongoing</p> <p>B) Increased awareness of the role of youth engage within schools and the Central Coast Community</p> <p>C) Growing responses to Councils Youth Engage Facebook posts</p>
	The voice of Central Coast youth is valued, particularly in relation to Council decisions and policy shaping, that	Capabilities	<p>A) Consult with youth on the appropriateness, feasibility and roles for a Youth Council or, alternately Project Specific Groups to provide young persons' perspective and input</p>	Facilitator	<p>A) Community Wellbeing Officer</p> <p>B) Community Wellbeing Officer</p>	1 July 2018 - 1 March 2019	<p>A) Consultation completed, and outcomes documented.</p> <p>B) Central Coast Youth Council formed /OR Guidelines for project specific groups developed</p>

	impacts directly on youth.		<p>into Central Coast projects.</p> <p>B) Dependent on outcomes from A) establish a Youth Council for Central Coast young people or develop guidelines for project by project, interest-based youth consultation groups which is active for the term of specified projects. Targeting youth representation from those not currently serving on Youth Engaged</p>				
INCLUDE D	Engage with Central Coast Young people to collect their stories and perspectives of Central Coast	Inclusion	<p>A) Consult with young people to get their input into the content of Interpretation developments for Central Coast.</p> <p>B) Explore and implement ways to engage young people with the Council's Events Facebook page and the Council's Facebook page.</p>	Facilitator, Advocate, Medium term	<p>A) Community Development Officer</p> <p>B) Community Wellbeing Officer</p> <p>C) Community Development Officer</p>	1 June 2019 – 1 Feb 2020	<p>A) Consultation undertaken</p> <p>B) Increased utilisation of Councils Facebook page by young people</p> <p>C) Consultation undertaken.</p>

			C) Use Great Natured Place Brand positioning to explore developing monthly youth “What I’d like to say / see” content for use on FB and poster spaces.				
	CCC Youth specific community grant	Access	A) Review Council’s Small Grants guidelines to include a grant for a project developed and implemented by young people. B) Review small grants Application Forms to explore implications of adding “Demonstrated Inclusion” to assessment criteria.	Facilitator / short term	SPD Group Leader	1 Sept 2019	A) Outcomes of review implemented B) Review undertaken
	Identify the top 5 priorities / concerns for youth on Central Coast	Inclusion	A) Consult with youth and those that work with them to identify top 5 priorities or concerns for young persons in Central Coast B) Continue to work with IAST to understand the challenges facing “at risk” youth in our community	Facilitator / medium term	Community Wellbeing Officer	1 Feb 2019 - 1 June 2020	A) Top 5 priorities fed back to Council Departments for consideration in projects and planning, Central Coast Councillors and IAST B) Ongoing inclusion in IAST

<p>ACTIVE</p>	<p>More young people using Councils sport facilities, green spaces, parks and recreation assets and public spaces.</p>	<p>Participation</p>	<p>A) Explore funding opportunities to hold outdoor recreation activities for our young people on Central Coast. B) Promote use of open spaces for passive recreation and activity. C) Explore changing trends in types of recreational activities attractive to young people.</p>	<p>Facilitator /Medium term</p>	<p>A) Community Wellbeing Officer B) Recreation Facilities Officer C) Recreational Facilities Officer</p>	<p>1 Sept 2019 – 30 Nov 2020</p>	<p>A) Funding opportunities identified and applied for B) Promotional material and activities undertaken C) Documented consultation with young people and trends identified</p>
	<p>Work with Sporting clubs which utilise council facilities to developing capacity to increase social inclusion into their club culture</p>	<p>Participation</p>	<p>A) Work with sporting associations, advocacy groups and community house to help identify barriers to participation in sport for low socio-economic groups. Explore programs and or funding to facilitate membership. B) Work with Sport and Rec Disability Projects Officer to identify solutions and projects to overcome barriers to inclusion in sport for</p>	<p>Facilitator / medium term</p>	<p>A) Recreational Facilities Officer</p>	<p>March 2019 – December 2019</p>	<p>A) Barriers to inclusion identified, and collaborative projects/arrangements developed to overcome barriers. B) Efforts made to establish relationship / collaborative projects with Sport and Rec Tasmania Disability Project Officer (subject to successful funding applications)</p>

			young people with a disability.				
	Increased health and wellbeing of our young people through engagement in visual & performing arts	Learning	Apply for funding when available to develop opportunities for young people to participate in and experience quality arts and arts-based learning opportunities.	Facilitator	Community Development Officer	Jan 2019 - ongoing, Long term	Funding applications submitted for youth arts projects
	Recognise, support and promote the artistic achievements of young people in Central Coast including utilising Ulverstone VIC	Learning	Work with our groups including Leven Regional Arts, VIC schools and young people to develop opportunities to bring the artistic achievements of young people in Central Coast to more prominence and greater recognition.	Facilitator, Medium Term	Community Development Officer	July 2018 - Dec 2020	Opportunities developed to showcase artistic achievements of young people

	Central Coast Youth attending youth conferences, networking and training opportunities.	Learning	Council supporting Youth representatives to participate at Youth conferences and forums.	Facilitator	Community Wellbeing Officer	1 June 2018 - ongoing	Central Coast Youth attending a youth conference or forum annually
HEALTHY	Young people are more engaged in accredited programs that encourage better health outcomes through activity and good food choices.	Healthy	A) Support and promote “Move Well, Eat Well” program. B) Support and Promote “Walk to School” and “Ride to School”.	Advocate	Community Wellbeing Officer	August 2019 - annual	A) Established contacts with school-based drivers of programs. B) Baseline figures of participants collated for annual comparison C) Schools and Council cross posting content to the school and Council Facebook pages on activities and outcomes.
	Young people utilising Councils cycleway infrastructure, Mountain bike Park facilities and choosing cycling as a healthy transport, recreation and competition option. Pump and Jump developed if	Active	A) Support through advocacy and assistance with grant writing, the work of Cradle Coast Mountain Bike Club in developing their facilities for young riders. B) Consult with young people on what infrastructure would make cycling more of a transport option for them.	Facilitator	Community Wellbeing Officer Pump and Jump - Lions Club	Ongoing	A) Funding identified and applied for B) Consultation completed, findings fed to rest of Council C) Young people engaging with the Pump and Jump space

	collaborative funding arrangement is found		C) Include young people in the development of a Pump and Jump park in Ulverstone.				
	Mental Health – work with young people to develop / explore how to deliver good mental health messages, activities or practices to young people to assist them in managing / understanding their mental health	Healthy	Apply for Mental Health Week and Youth Week funding to develop ways of delivering good mental health information and to empower young people in taking good care of their mental health.	Facilitator	Community Wellbeing Officer		Initiative undertaken.
SECURE	Young people contributing to making Central Coast a community they feel safe in	Secure	A) Consult with our young people to understand how safe they feel in the Central Coast and what leads to these feelings. B) Workshop with young people what Council can do to make its young residents feel safe and	Facilitator / Long term	Community Wellbeing Officer	June 2019 – June 2020	Report prepared for Council

			feed input back to Council departments and Councillors for inclusion into planning and thinking.				
SECURE	Work with young people on ideas which they can develop to help them feel safe in Central Coast	Secure	A) Consult with young people on things which they can do to help them feel safe.	Facilitator / long term	Community Wellbeing Officer	Jan 2020	Ideas captured
LEARNING	Document stories of the Council's UTAS bursary recipients for use in promotion in the E-newsletter	Learning	Utilise the stories of bursary recipients to promote continuing education to Central Coast young people.	Facilitator / Long term	Community Development Officer	June 2018 - December 2019	More enquiries / applications about the Councils Bursary
	Understanding of Councils capacity to undertake the "Youth First Employment Program"	Skills	Explore Councils capacity to utilise the Youth First employment toolkit to develop a mentoring for employment program within Council.	Facilitator	Community Development Officer	March 2019	Council capacity to conduct Youth first employment program identified. Employment providers identified, relationships established with outside agencies. Pilot program undertaken.

	Career Information Forum Days	Learning	Work with schools and employment providers, speakers to provide careers days around different types of employment eg: Arts, sport, TARGA, media, television, science, environment and agriculture.	Facilitator / Medium term	Community Wellbeing Officer	1 April 2018 - 1 October 2020	1 or 2 Career Days held per year
--	--------------------------------------	----------	--	---------------------------	-----------------------------	-------------------------------	----------------------------------

References and further reading:

Mission Australia; *Youth Survey Report 2016*, Tasmania

Mission Australia; *Youth Survey Report 2017*, Tasmania

Tasmanian Youth Government Association;
Tasmanian Youth Local Government Conference Report 2017

Commissioner for Children and Young People Tasmania;
Health and Wellbeing of Tasmania's Children, Young people and their Families Report,
Part 2: Middle Children and Adolescence, Date current as at July 2017

Youth Network of Tasmania: Tasmanian Youth Forum;
Youth Employment – A report on ideas from young people about youth employment
December 2014

Youth Network of Tasmania: Tasmanian Youth Forum;
Mental Health Matters – A report on young people's ideas about positive mental wellbeing
June 2015

Youth Network of Tasmania: Tasmanian Youth Forum;
Learning and Education Forum – A report on Tasmanian young people's ideas about learning and education
April 2016

Youth Network of Tasmania: Tasmanian Youth Forum;
Respectful Relationships and Violence – What young people said.
A Tasmanian Youth forum report, Sharing the thoughts and ideas of young Tasmanians
May 2017

Youth Network of Tasmania: Budget Submission to Treasury for 2018 -19;
On Behalf of the Youth Sector
December 2017

Youth Network of Tasmania;
YNOT Annual Report 2017
December 2017