

Central Coast regional consultation

On 11 September 2015, over 60 people who work with children and young people in the Central Coast came together to contribute to a new NSW strategic plan. This is what you told us.



what you thought was **working** for children and young people in NSW and in the Central Coast

Collaboration, leadership and passion: between agencies, between government and services, between services, between schools and council, effective networks, (long-term) partnerships, sharing information

Agency arrangements: visibility of DPC, common boundaries of Health, Education, FACS, Police and DPC; FACS “one stop shop” centralised help line; FACS Young Persons Accord (collaboration around OOHC)

Services and service streams: dedicated workers, youth workers; health, disability, housing opportunities, early childhood/primary, early intervention, pathways

Education efforts: non-academic subjects in high schools and links to training organisations, Aboriginal education, NGC school Karion, for young people not in mainstream schools; leadership days in schools; anti-bullying strategies; second chances; Language, Literacy and Numeracy online screening tool (assesses readiness and helps identify students who may need extra services)

Aboriginal children and young people: Bara Barang (eg Indigenous Skills Centre, Youth Connect)

Children (0-12): before and after school care

Young people: Youth drop in at Toukley Neighbourhood Centre (internet café, sports, games); services relocating to where young people are; ‘Lovebites’ program for respectful relationships; Headspace; Youth Central

Facilities: Better Futures Hub, PCYC, community run youth groups

Recreational activities: art, music, many sports programs, cultural opportunities, surf life saving, guides and scouts

Spaces to be: Kibble Park (an example of how it can work); environment

Other: social enterprise connecting youth with experience (self governing); Central Coast Connect Day for young people who are homeless, at risk or doing it tough

what you thought was **not working** for children and young people in NSW and in the Central Coast

A lack of funding or funding certainty: need to apply for funding each year, diverting effort and discouraging long term planning and partnerships, and leading to high staff turnover; a change of funding focus when the government changes; not enough funding for good ideas—or for basic services; too few volunteers

Health: lack of mental health support (particularly post crisis), alcohol and drug use; need for early intervention for families (D&A, mental health)

Gosford vs Wyong : in the Northern Sector a lack of transport, isolation, lack of entertainment and engagement, lack of connections; no youth refuge

Transport in general: public transport is disconnected, takes too long; discourages engagement; a car is necessary to get around; high cost for low income earners

Out of Home Care: high ROSH levels, services for high needs children especially mental health and therapy

Childcare and after school care: lack of access (eg transport, places, support funding, lack of engagement); transitions to school

Education and training: poor school retention from Y7, lack of central support, guidance, direction for schools; failing children across the board; Centrelink course requirements don't recognise different needs

An overloaded system: waiting list for essential service support, lack of DV support; lack of affordable housing; insufficient post leaving care (18+)—for example some young people need basic financial support, food, housing (especially with support)

Employment: lack of jobs and pathways for unskilled youth; high youth unemployment

Children with additional/complex needs: need additional support, for example DV-related;

Vulnerable youth: need for life skills help, such as job readiness (interviews, personal presentation); need for role models/mentors as a means to keep young people engaged; need post school options (16+) including work pathways

Young adults (18-24): lack of focus, lack of services; need better support for LGBTQI

Recreational activities: harder for girls to engage in sport; high cost of sport; not enough; need more focus on art and music

Communication: need to educate those working with youth; need free public internet; should use media innovations; lack of awareness of who does what

What you thought were **priorities** for children and young people in NSW and in the Central Coast*



Issues:

- Education
- Employment, training and career pathways
- Transport
- Affordable housing
- Crisis accommodation (and support)
- Affordable quality childcare
- Youth health care (including family planning)
- Keeping our kids safe

Approaches:

- Work experiences and life skills
- Support for young people in the workplace
- Flexibility for vulnerable youth in education and training
- Healthy relationships
- Service information available for families

Systems:

- Accessible mental health services
- Accessible AOD (alcohol and other drugs) services
- Wraparound services
- More recreation services
- More frontline services

*Your insights included the importance of belonging, the need for respectful connections with adults and having the time and space to have children and young peoples' voice heard.

we asked you:

What **three big ideas** do you have that could, if supported across the state, improve the lives of children and young people?

and we gave you some prompt questions:

What **state-wide directions** currently support **effective local decision making and service delivery** for children and young people?

What **state-wide directions** currently hinder **effective local decision making and service delivery** for children and young people?

What makes for **good child-centred practice** in this area

How should **children and young people** be involved

What **local initiatives** could be adapted and scaled up across the state?



you told us your big ideas for the strategic plan*

Vulnerable youth:

Share information: change legislation, new framework, better tools and risk management

Young people's education: expand into education of teacher training and national curriculum; engage business; include alternative education options such as DV (healthy respectful relationships), life skills (eg Y11 maths to look at car loans), make it more practical to get a drivers licence through school

Connecting up: a regional "pop up" outreach bus, operated in a collaborative way; expand Patchwork + good case work practice

Jobs, innovation, training:

Free education for under 25 year olds

HSC removed, or linked to broader competency

Free transport for under 18 year olds

Social enterprise as a means of building competence and contribution

Support for **traineeships and apprenticeships**

Transitions:

Build **Patchwork** into service specifications

Programs to support **underserviced years** (8-12)

Build connection/belonging through **Family Finding**—**expand** to all vulnerable CYP

Teaching **skills for life** in schools (primary to high)

Education: **reassess higher leaving age** as it is not appropriate for all young people; design around individuals, not programs

Young people leaving care:

Immediate review of **leaving care and after care** programs, consistent statewide approach, look at what is working, keep connection till 25yo

*And lots of other ideas about how to make the strategic plan work that we also captured.

here are more big ideas for the strategic plan

Activities:

Youth week: localised, central, bring in clubs, services educators to raise awareness of youth issues and services availability

Adopt a young person: corporate/philanthropic/personal sponsorship of activities to make them available to YP who can't afford them

Transport: use underutilised minibuses, buses from clubs, government to insure and contribute funding

Youth/digital hub: digital space where YP can enter postcode and find out what activities/services are available for them

Built and natural environment:

Support for local youth art: eg graffiti, sculpture, works to promote ownership and belonging

Creative use of reverse garbage: display products to build community and awareness

Water parks: eg the Entrance—a great example of a no-cost community opportunity for families

Different playground forms: eg musical community squares (eg music steps with lights); supported play yards with pedagogue, open ended materials, “play café” model in natural environment)



acy
p. thank you.



keep communicating with us via
acyp@acyp.nsw.gov.au

