



**REPORT ON THE**

# **NSW YOUTH SUMMIT 2024**

**PUBLISHED 2025**



# A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER



**I am proud to present the report on the consultation through our Youth Summit and Your Voice, Our Future, an initiative designed to ensure the voices of young people from across NSW were heard and acted upon.**

Throughout 2024, the NSW Government actively engaged with almost 5,000 young people across the state. We made it a priority to meet you where you are, visiting schools, attending community events, hosting youth workshops and delivering the first-ever NSW Youth Summit.

To ensure young people from all regions and backgrounds had a chance to be heard, we also ran an online survey, with almost 1,000 young people sharing their experiences and ideas.

A highlight of the consultation was the NSW Youth Summit, held in November 2024, where close to 100 young people from across the state came together to speak directly with 12 government Ministers and members of parliament and four Commissioners on the issues that matter most to them. It was inspiring to see such a diverse group stepping up to lead discussions, including young people from regional and remote areas, First Nations and LGBTQIA+ youth, individuals with disabilities, along with refugee and migrant young people.

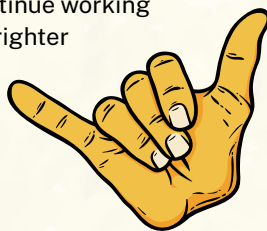
The conversations we had with young people were honest, passionate and clear. You are eager to have your voice heard and you called for action on key issues, including the cost of living, mental health, vaping, housing and climate change.

You made it clear that Government needs to do better to ensure young people are included in decision making. This is particularly so for young people from regional and minority backgrounds who often face barriers to participation.

We heard this message loud and clear and over and over again through the consultation. This is why, as a first step, we have created the NSW Office for Youth. This new office will act as a central point for all young people from across NSW to connect directly to government. This connection will allow us to deliver better, stronger and more consistent outcomes for young people across the state.

This report highlights the passion, resilience and vision young people bring to the table and your input has been invaluable. Thanks to your contributions, we are better equipped to ensure the voices of young people are at the forefront of decision making and as Minister for Youth, I am committed to ensuring these conversations continue.

Thank you to every young person who shared your voice throughout this consultation. Together, we will continue working towards building a brighter future for all young people across NSW.





# nsw youth summit



The NSW Government acknowledges that it stands on Country which always was and always will be Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters, and we show our respect for Elders past and present. We are committed to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work.



# HERE'S THE BOTTOM LINE

Young people aged 12–25 in New South Wales have a wealth of diverse experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds. Through the Your Voice, Our Future consultation, the NSW Government engaged with **4,558** young people, including **999** survey respondents and **193** workshop participants. Their message was clear: young people want to be actively involved in shaping the decisions that affect their lives.

We thank participants for their forthcoming responses, generosity and personal stories shared through the consultation process. The consultation and its outcomes are only as strong as participants ability to be frank and fearless with their opinions – and we really appreciate it.

Young people are deeply committed to building a fairer, more sustainable future and are calling for greater opportunities, support, and meaningful engagement. Young people are asking the NSW Government to prioritise their growth and development by creating genuine pathways for participation in policymaking and civic life.

A recurring message was that young people don't feel heard. Young people expressed a strong desire for direct dialogue with

decision-makers, including Ministers and senior officials. They want a seat at the table when it comes to designing youth-focused initiatives, particularly in areas they care deeply about: mental health, climate change, and social justice.

Young people also have a clear appetite for civic education. They want accessible, age-appropriate information about how government works, how to vote, and how to take part in civic action. While many recognise that programs and services exist, they are calling for more streamlined, youth-friendly communication and delivery.

This consultation highlights a generation that is ready to lead, eager to contribute, and looking for partnership. The insights from the Youth Summit and Your Voice, Our Future provide the NSW Government with critical, evidence-based guidance to realign priorities and strengthen its commitment to young people across the state.

Our involvement with young people across NSW has defined our guiding principles, of Voice, Action and Support.



# Guiding Principles

## VOICE

**Young people want to have a voice, to have a say and be heard.**

Young people are making it clear that they feel unheard, with two thirds of young people saying they don't feel listened to by the NSW Government. Young people feel like they don't have a voice in decisions that impact them, while key issues such as housing and cost of living are having a disproportionate impact on them. Polling and surveys promoted through social media rank highly as ways that the government can better engage with young people. Young people want two-way communication with government, where they can contribute, but also hear from government about the outcomes of key policies.

01

## ACTION

**Young people want to take action and make a difference in their communities.**

Young people are looking for opportunities to get involved and create solutions, including local volunteering opportunities, and being part of change-making on a broader scale. Young people want to increase their volunteering, but travel costs can be a barrier, along with time pressures for work and study. A lot of feedback from young people relates to community connectedness and young people not feeling like they belong. Young people want to be a part of solutions to address this but don't know how to get involved locally or where to find the relevant information.

02

**Young people have incredible potential, and with the right support, can achieve their needs and reach their goals.**

Young people are asking for more information and better skills for navigating adulthood, from financial skills, practical and domestic capabilities, through to knowledge about study options and career paths. Young people are asking the NSW Government to help them access the information and support they need. Young people want access to safe spaces and activities in their communities to help them build their support network, develop positive relationships and get better access to the services they need. Access to free or low-cost activities helps reduce financial strain for families and get more young people engaging in healthy activities that improve wellbeing.

## SUPPORT

03

# ENGAGING WITH YOU ON

= YOUR TERMS =

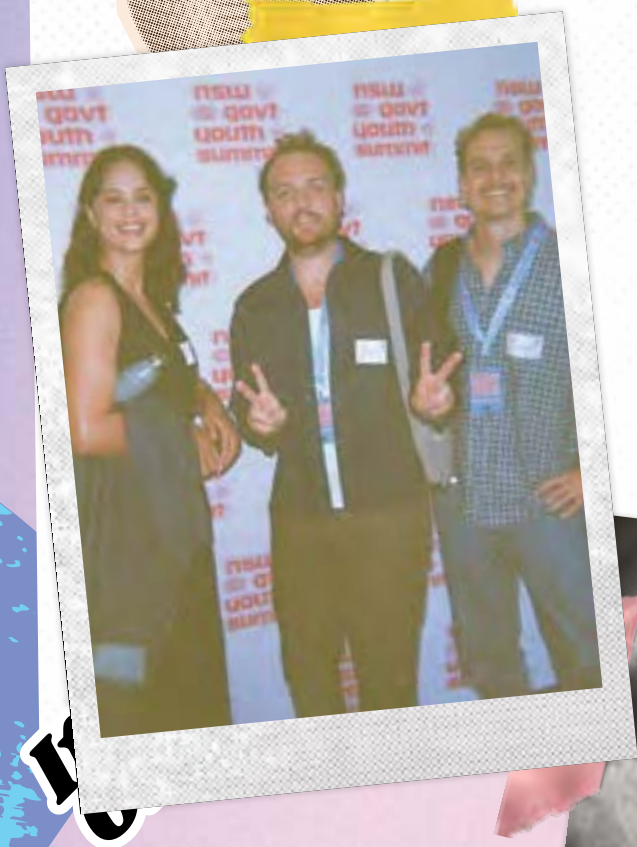
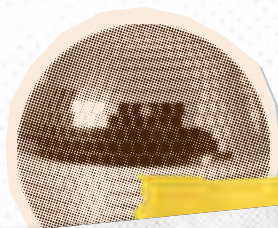
The consultation has informed and provided a template for the way that the NSW Government continues to engage with young people.

As part of our ongoing commitment to meaningful youth engagement, the NSW government pledges to take young people's voices seriously. This includes recognising their time, effort, expertise, and willingness to contribute.

We are committed to meeting young people where they are, ensuring engagement takes place in spaces that are accessible and familiar to them.

We will maintain open lines of communication, providing follow-up updates that reflect what they heard from us, what we heard from them and how we are using the findings.

The insights and perspectives shared by young people will be actively used to advocate for improved outcomes for young people in government decision-making. We will advocate for and assist the participation of young people in all government processes and decisions, including youth led co-design of solutions and processes where possible.





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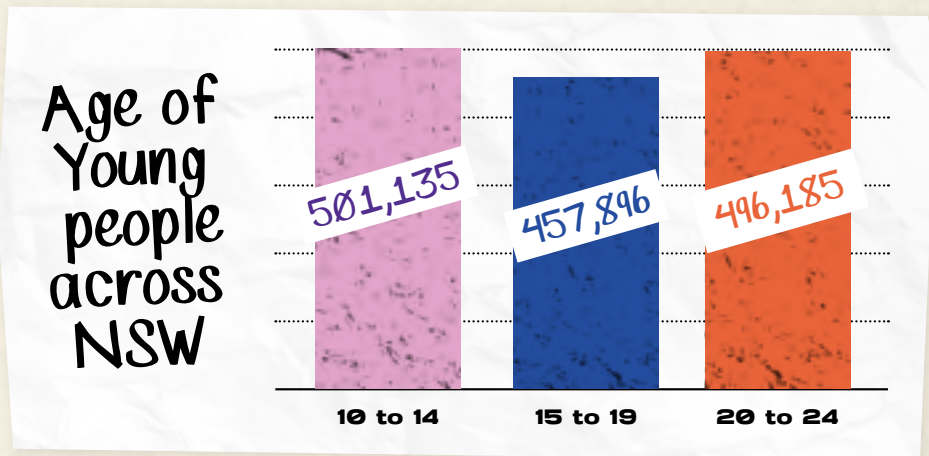
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# FROM CITY STREETS TO REMOTE TOWNS

*this is*

# NSW YOUTH

Young people are essential to shaping the future of NSW. Representing 18% of the state's population, they bring resilience, creativity, and diverse perspectives that contribute to solving complex challenges. The current youth population<sup>1</sup>, aged 10 to 24, totals 1,455,216 individuals, which are represented in the following cohorts:



2

The youth demographic in NSW is diverse and made up of people with many different needs, concerns and capabilities.

33% live in regional and rural areas<sup>3</sup>. Regional youth face greater challenges in work, wellbeing, connectivity, and community than youth in urban areas<sup>4</sup>.

According to the 2021 Census, 29.3% of all people in NSW were born overseas. Young people up to the age of 24 account for nearly half of all humanitarian and skilled visa settlements issued in NSW and a third of all family visas in the state. This diversity fosters innovation and inclusivity, driving positive change within local communities, but can also

lead to feelings of exclusion, isolation, and social complexities for many young people.

NSW also has a significant number of young people living with disabilities. As of February 2024, 206,000 students with disabilities were enrolled in NSW public schools, reflecting a 539% increase since 2002<sup>5</sup>.

Young Aboriginal people make up 4.5% of the youth population in NSW, the highest proportion of any Australian state or territory<sup>6</sup>.

In addition, young people in NSW face particular socio-economic issues. Youth aged 15 to 25 are twice as likely than the general population to require homelessness services<sup>7</sup>. The 2020 National Carer Survey identified 83,700 young

<sup>1,2</sup><https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/regional-population-age-and-sex/2023> <sup>3</sup><https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/2071.0main+features22016> <sup>4</sup>Department of Regional NSW, Youth Insights Report 2022 <sup>5</sup><https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/submissions/84820/0074%20AEU%20NSW%20Teachers%20Federation.pdf> <sup>6</sup> <sup>7</sup><https://www.nsw.gov.au/living-nsw/young-people/>



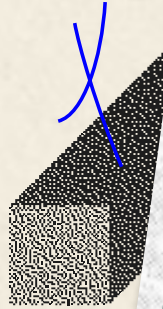
carers in NSW, with over 10% serving as primary carers and more than 20% living in rural areas. In 2021, approximately one in ten young Australians were not in employment, education, or training (NEET), compared to one in seven in the general population.

While young people in NSW undoubtedly face significant challenges, they are also actively engaged in shaping the future of the state. Young people continue to demonstrate their civic engagement and leadership across NSW. Approximately 85% of eligible young people in NSW participated in the 2023 state election, highlighting their commitment to having a voice in matters that affect them<sup>8</sup>. Across the state, a huge number of young people are involved in volunteering. 70% of young people aged 15–25 participate in a volunteering activity, with 35% of all volunteers being under the age of 30<sup>9</sup>.

3% of the population identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual. This figure is higher among people younger than 25 in Australia, rising to 4% for male and around 7% for females<sup>10</sup>. Just shy of 1% of Australians over the age of 16 are trans and gender diverse. Members of the LGBTQIA+ community experience lower self-reported health and wellbeing outcomes and are at risk of increased violence and bullying<sup>11</sup>.

Young people in NSW are driven by a shared vision of creating a more inclusive, sustainable, and equitable society. Their diverse backgrounds, cultures, and experiences enable them to approach problems with fresh perspectives and innovative solutions. Their resilience in the face of adversity positions them as transformative leaders, poised to drive positive change and shape a brighter future for all.

## YOUNG PEOPLE IN NSW ARE DRIVEN BY A SHARED VISION OF CREATING A MORE INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE, AND EQUITABLE SOCIETY.





# REAL CONVERSATIONS, REAL CONNECTIONS:

## Your Voice, Our Future consultation

**The NSW Government recognises that young people are diverse and bring varying perspectives. They are often left out of conversations regarding issues that impact them, however they want and need to have a say in these conversations. The NSW Government wants priorities for young people to be directed by young people.**

The Your Voice, Our Future consultation in 2024 sought to engage directly with young people in NSW across several different platforms.

The consultation sought answers to the following key questions:

- \* What is good about being a young person in 2024?
- \* What are young people concerned about?
- \* What support do young people need?
- \* Do young people feel the government listens to them?
- \* How do young people want to engage with government?
- \* How do young people want government to communicate with them?

Your Voice, Our Future was all about hearing directly from young people in NSW aged 12 to 24 years about what is important to them, how the NSW Government can involve young people in decision-making, and how the government can better support young people. We heard from young people living in regional and metro areas across the state. The consultation ran for the duration of 2024 and was a joint project delivered by the Office for Regional Youth, the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People, and the Department of Communities and Justice.

Young people want to contribute through diverse platforms and spaces, and it was really important to meet them where they were at, to gain authentic responses.

Your Voice, Our Future was designed to allow young people to have their say through mixed methods and multiple platforms, which included:





# ENGAGEMENT METHODS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE



Online youth survey for young people aged 14 to 24 years



Place-based projects, meetings, and committees

**Event engagements**



Review of current reports



Engagement through Grant Programs

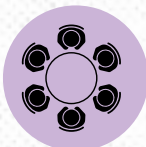


**Youth Summit**

Bi-monthly youth newsletter, socials



Youth Workshops



Ministerial Roundtables



NSW Legislative Council Bicentenary Youth Forums

Career expos



Subject matter experts



## THE NUMBERS

3266

young people were consulted at community events by Regional Youth staff

999

young people completed the online survey



92

young people attended the NSW Youth Summit

193

young people attended deep dive workshops



# YOUTH VOICES, LOUD & CLEAR

The following findings are an encapsulation of the entire Your Voice, Our Future consultation. From the online survey, deep-dive workshops and engaging with young people at community events, young people's voices were heard loud and clear.

## What is good about being a young person in 2024

Young people have expressed a strong sense of gratitude for the many benefits of living in a safe, progressive society, especially when compared to previous generations and global events. They recognise and appreciate the shift in societal focus toward issues that are deeply important to them, such as climate change and mental health. This evolving narrative in the media resonates with their values and experiences, creating a sense of connection to the broader global conversation. They deeply value their local communities and the support networks they have built, and they recognise the importance of family, friends and peers.

engage with others, share experiences, and find a sense of belonging, regardless of their location. Online resources, such as learning tools, virtual study platforms, and social media groups, have bridged gaps in access to opportunities, offering young people the chance to learn, connect, and grow regardless of geographic limitations. Young people acknowledge "third spaces" (a safe, inclusive space that exists outside home and school/employment) and credit social media for fostering this environment. This access to resources ensures that all young people, no matter where they live, can continue to expand their potential.

The availability of leadership opportunities, through advisory groups, committees, and extracurricular activities, has allowed young people to step up and actively shape their communities.

The progress made by previous generations has played a crucial role in fostering greater openness around cultural diversity, sexualities, and mental health, creating a more inclusive environment for today's youth. This cultural shift has provided young people with more opportunities to thrive and feel safe to be themselves.

'The Government hears from young people via advisory groups and committees already. They hear our voices, but how are they listening and when are they creating action?'

Access to technology and social media has empowered young people to express themselves in ways that were previously unimaginable, creating new spaces for connection and self-exploration. Safe online spaces allow them to





## Is anyone listening?

Young people feel unheard by government. Young people want to have a voice, to have a say, and be heard. They don't have a voice in decisions that impact them and feel that key issues such as housing and cost of living are having a disproportionate impact on the younger generations.

## Engagement that works for young people

Despite young people feeling unheard, they are very keen to participate with government. They want the chance to have their voices heard, and to liaise directly with government and decision-makers on issues that are of importance to them through:

- \* Youth forums and interschool events.
- \* The creation and accessibility of youth-friendly information that explains policy, legislation and voting.
- \* Future consultation opportunities.
- \* Social media platforms and youth-friendly content.
- \* Direct engagement with Ministers and decision-makers, and more access to people and departments relevant to their needs.
- \* Inclusion in government conversations that relate to their future, such as the environment, mental health and general health.

Social media is widely used amongst young people for a variety of different reasons. During workshops, young people told us that social media was used for:

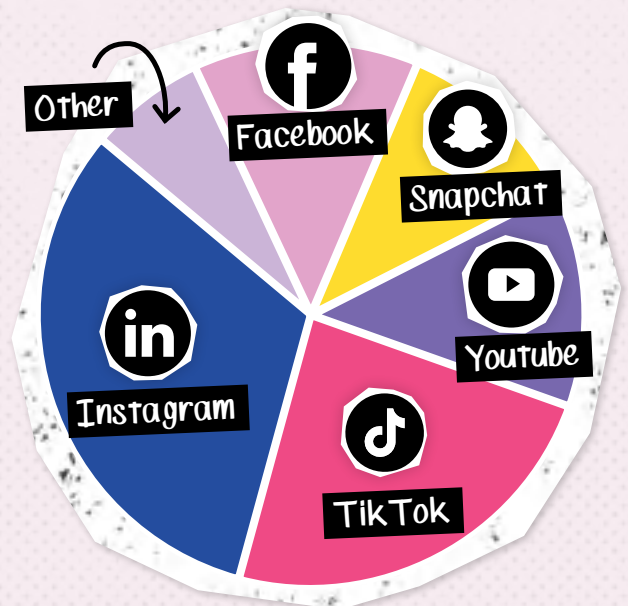
- \* Connecting with study groups and school cohorts for collaboration on group assignments.
- \* Developing and maintaining friendships.
- \* An extension of coping with the covid-19 pandemic restrictions and turning to online spaces for connection.

*'Invite young people in decision making scenarios - no decisions about us, without us.'*

- \* 'Third spaces' – a place to interact and make connections outside of study, work or home.
- \* A safe place to explore curiosities and interests outside of networks in real life, such as special interest groups and hobbies.

Young people would like to be updated by government on things that matter to them through social media. The combined results from the survey, Youth Summit and event engagements showed that the following platforms were their preferred avenue for obtaining resources and information:

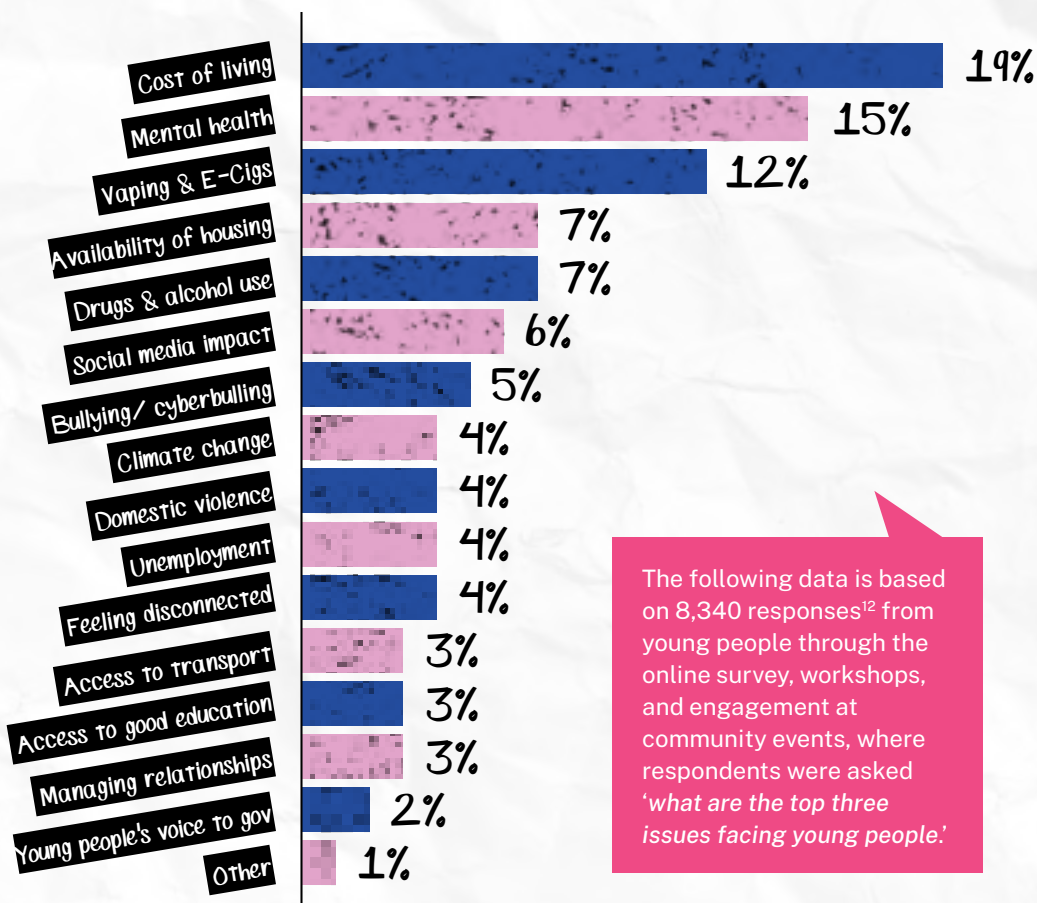
## WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE GET GOV INFO





# THE BIG STUFF ON YOUNG MINDS

Young people voiced their concerns about a variety of issues across the various consultation methods. Overall, young people continually told us about their concerns for the future, with the graph below depicting the order of young peoples' biggest priority issues.



<sup>12</sup>4,558 young people were engaged as part of the consultation process. Young people were able to provide three top priority issues, resulting in 8,340 responses from 4,558 people. <sup>13</sup>Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024), Consumer Price Index, Australia, March 2024 quarter <sup>14</sup>Foodbank (2023), Foodbank Hunger Report 2023 <sup>15</sup>Monash University (2024), 2024 Australian Youth Barometer <sup>16</sup><https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/publications/youth-survey/state-reports-2023?layout=columns> <sup>17</sup><https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/publications/youth-survey/state-reports-2023?layout=columns> <sup>18</sup>[https://youthaction.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/A\\_NSW\\_for\\_Young\\_People\\_Report.pdf](https://youthaction.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/A_NSW_for_Young_People_Report.pdf)



## THE FINANCIAL SQUEEZE ON YOUNG PEOPLE

Young people voted cost of living as the most important issue to them, with 19% of respondents naming it as their top issue. We know that households are now spending more on housing, food and non-alcoholic beverages than they did in 2019.<sup>13</sup> Many young people and their families are experiencing moderate to severe food insecurity.<sup>14</sup> We also know that an alarming 86% of young Australians aged 18 to 24 experienced financial difficulties in the last 12 months.<sup>15</sup>

Young people who participated in workshops detailed their efforts to save money by dangerously going without medication and stretching food resources over multiple meals. Participants also explained that cost of living was impacting other areas of their life such as their ability to fully participate in education or recreational activities. They described that they no longer freely participate in social outings and can find it challenging to find free or low-cost activities or places to socialise with friends that

**'As a carer of a child with a disability, my priority will always be him. When money is tight, I have gone without my medication to be able to use available funds to provide for him.'**

## CARING FOR OUR MINDS

Mental health was the second most important issue of concern for young people in NSW, with 15% of young people voting it as their top issue. This was consistent with the ranking in the Mission Australia 2023 Youth Survey, showing that mental health is an ongoing concern.<sup>16</sup>

Previous survey results have told us that more than 57% of young people aged 15 to 19 in NSW were experiencing moderate to high psychological distress with one in five young people feeling lonely all or most of the time.<sup>17</sup>

Many young people told us that while they felt more comfortable coming forward about their mental health concerns and

are safe, inclusive, and open outside of school or working hours.

Young people in employment still recall feeling that they could not afford the necessities they need. Conversations stemmed around the choice between pursuing higher education or going straight into full time work to finance necessities. Young people told us they struggle with the student lifestyle of capped earnings for multiple years on end, and often opt to go straight into the workforce, even at a lower earning capacity, as it is more practical for their circumstances. Young people who do pursue further education told us that they have a difficult time affording practical blocks of study such as with teaching or healthcare degrees, which often require extended time off work. This has resulted in some students deferring their degrees or extending the time frame of completion so they can save for time off.

**'There isn't enough support out there for young people going through mental health issues. I struggle with this, but have been told that I have exceeded my 10 sessions of counselling and now I have to pay for more which I cannot afford.'**

desire for support, they didn't think there were enough resources available to meet their needs. A common theme from young people was that waitlists and financial resources required to access support were stopping them from getting the help needed in a timely manner. Free supports through school counsellors, online resources and community services were acknowledged but were often paired with longer wait times.

Four out of five young people already find it hard to turn to support services when they need help<sup>18</sup>, with additional barriers of perceived extended wait times and inability to find affordable, safe, relevant services.



**'EVEN PLAYING SPORT IS SO EXPENSIVE'**

# BEHIND THE CLOUDS: YOUR THOUGHTS ON VAPING

Vaping & e-cigarettes were considered the third most important issue by the young people of NSW, voted for by 12% of respondents.

From 1 July 2024, nicotine vapes in Australia became regulated as therapeutic goods, meaning that they are only available at pharmacies and illegal to be sold by any other business.<sup>19</sup>

Young people are often exposed to vaping within education settings amongst their peers. With the increase of policies and legislation to reduce uptake and continuation of vaping, young people note the ease in obtaining vapes through other means.

Some young people were worried about the impact that vaping may have on the health of themselves and their peers in the future.

The dangers of smoking are widely publicised, however young people don't feel confident on the future impacts that vaping might have on their health and wellbeing.

They were also concerned about the use of vapes in public spaces. Young people spoke about groups gathering to vape in areas such as school bathrooms which felt intimidating particularly to younger respondents. This also made those opting to quit vaping face extra temptation, with some young people saying that it is too hard to quit because it's everywhere.

**Vaping is a health  
issue, not a  
drug issue'**



## FINDING A PLACE TO CALL HOME

7% of young people in NSW felt that the availability of housing was one of their top three most important issues.

**'MY FRIENDS AND I  
ALL LIVE AT HOME.  
IT'S NOT A HEALTHY  
SITUATION FOR ME,  
BUT I CAN'T AFFORD  
TO MOVE OUT.'**

Many of the young people we spoke with felt that affording their own home (whether renting or with a mortgage) was out of reach for them. With the rising cost of living including increased rents and mortgage

repayments, young people feel that saving a deposit for either a bond or a house deposit was unachievable. Previous surveys have told us that slightly less than half of those aged 18 to 24 thought it was likely that they would be able to purchase a property or a house<sup>20</sup>.

Young people described staying at home with family for longer than anticipated which can have a negative impact on family dynamics and the ability to be independent. It also limited their options in terms of work and study as they must

consider options only in the vicinity of their family home.

The Mission Australia Youth Survey found that in 2023, nearly one in 10 NSW young people aged 15 to 19 had experienced homelessness in the previous year.<sup>21</sup>

Young people spoke of the stresses involved in leases ending and finding another home to live in. Respondents recounted instances of couch surfing and temporary, sometimes unsafe, housing options before they could move into confirmed accommodation. They suggested that policies and legislations should be introduced to better assist young people in accessing rental properties, reducing bonds and upfront costs, assisting with the buying process and ensuring equity across all applicants and buyers.

**'IT IS REALLY HARD TO SECURE A HOME  
THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF MY FAMILY  
AND OUR BUDGET. AS A PARENT TO A  
CHILD WITH A DISABILITY THERE ARE  
CERTAIN FEATURES WE NEED IN OUR HOME  
THAT CAN BE REALLY HARD TO FIND.'**

<sup>19</sup>Department of Health and Aged Care (2024), New laws for vapes <sup>20</sup><https://www.ahuri.edu.au/analysis/brief/what-are-real-costs-housing-crisis-australias-young-people> <sup>21</sup><https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/publications/youth-survey/state-reports-2023?layout=columns>



'YOU CAN GET  
**ANYTHING**  
YOU WANT VIA  
WHATSAPP.'



## THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF SUBSTANCE USE

7% of young people indicated that drug and alcohol use was one of their top three concerns. These respondents were not necessarily talking about their own use, but the use of their peers and people around them, including family and people that they live with.

Young people recounted the ability to obtain drugs easily, through peers in person, and through connections via social media and messaging platforms. They spoke about drugs and alcohol being available to underage people too, through fake identification documents and through friends and family who purchase on their behalf.

From the online survey, 71 respondents highlighted the need for additional drug and alcohol support.

Whilst young people spoke of positive experiences with recreational drugs, they were concerned with the contents of things they were consuming. They were pleased about the recent NSW Government introduction of pill testing at festivals, however, were unsure about how safe it was to use this facility, and how it interacts with the police system.

Young people want to make informed decisions about their recreational behaviour. They know and understand the dangers of drugs and alcohol and wish that more safe-use education was provided.

'We will experiment as  
young people it would  
be good to be more  
informed in advance.'



## SOCIAL MEDIA: FRIEND OR FOE?

Young people use social media to connect with peers and family, communicate, network with those in similar situations, and seek entertainment. They prefer Instagram and Tiktok as a method of entertainment, and as platforms to connect with organisations and governments to receive information.

The younger generations tend to source news from family, friends and social media<sup>22</sup>. Often, young people are not intentionally seeking news from social media but are exposed to it when using social media recreationally. Young people recount trusting the news they see, however didn't seem to acknowledge the prevalence of algorithms and the impact that has on what they see.

However, young people do speak of some of the expectations that arise through use of social media. Comparison and unrealistic

beauty standards were said to negatively impact how young people feel about themselves, particularly young women. Across the engagement process, they spoke about influencers online setting unrealistic expectations of how their bodies, skin and general appearance should look. Despite this, young women in particular told us that they knew it was unrealistic. They know that filters are widely used and that things on the internet aren't always as they seem.

Young people are grateful for their ability to connect through social media. It creates a "third space" of connection outside of the home and education/work that provides a safe place to communicate, explore and connect. Young LGBTQIA+ people spoke of third spaces being paramount in safely discussing their sexuality and/or gender identity with like-minded people.



**It's hard to constantly see beautiful people on Instagram, but it's not real, it's just filters.'**

## FROM WORDS TO WOUNDS: THE POWER OF BULLYING

Bullying is a complex issue and comes in many forms and settings. It can have impacts on victims, perpetrators, and witnesses, as well as the broader social environment. Cyberbullying is a subset of bullying carried out through technology, such as the internet and mobile devices<sup>23</sup>.

Young people told us that bullying was an issue for them, both online and in person. They spoke of incidents within school and education settings where they recounted being a victim or witness to bullying, as well as the perpetrators. Young people from minority groups spoke of increased prevalence to the exposure of bullying, particularly those from the LGBTQIA+ community.

**'PEOPLE WILL ALWAYS FIND A WAY TO BE RUDE TO ONE ANOTHER, IT'S JUST PART OF GROWING UP.'**

Almost half of children aged 12–13 experienced at least one incident of bullying behaviour in the past year, however the same group also reported using bullying-like behaviour against another young person<sup>24</sup>. The most common form of bullying is hurtful teasing, followed by lies told about the young person. One in five

young school students report experiencing online bullying in any one year, and one in four reported being bullied every few weeks<sup>25</sup>.

Young people told us that bullying had impacted their desire to engage in their wider community, actively participate in school and education settings, and lead to them withdrawing from peers. However, most young people said that bullying was not a significant issue in their day-to-day life.

<sup>22</sup><https://www.abc.net.au/education/young-australians-increasingly-get-news-from-social-media/103016134> <sup>23</sup>Office of the eSafety Commissioner 2018

<sup>24</sup><https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/children-youth/australias-children/contents/justice-safety/bullying> <sup>25</sup>Bullying No Way <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/understanding/Documents/infographic-facts-figures.pdf>



'Young people are being handed a world that is already damaged and becomes an issue for us, whilst older generations who have created the issues will likely not see a result of their actions.'

'There are only so many paper straws I can use to make a difference.'

## FEAR AND ACTION: YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE CLIMATE CRISIS

Young people feel pressure about climate change and report that it impacts on their mental health. They feel excluded from conversations and decision-makers regarding the environment and climate change, however, feel disproportionately impacted by the decisions.

Young people wish there was more that they could do but wish that organisations and governments took on more responsibility. They told us that small, collective action feels a bit useless, and without ample political and legislative change young people feel like they will not be able to get ahead of the impacts of climate change.

Young people feel some resentment towards previous generations who have been part of the declining environmental conditions.

Young people sometimes feel like their future goals are not worth pursuing when thinking about the state of the world. One respondent in Western Sydney told us "there is no point getting a degree when the world is on fire".

They also told us that climate change impacted other areas of their life. It added extra stress to their future and negatively affected their mental health and wellbeing. Young people also spoke about personal action they could take with climate change, including protesting. They were concerned about the right to protest being taken away from them and were unsure where to turn next.

'THERE  
NEEDS TO BE A BIGGER  
STRIVE TOWARDS  
INTER-GENERATIONAL  
EQUITY MEANING THAT MORE  
NEEDS TO BE DONE FOR  
YOUNG PEOPLE WITH THE  
HOUSING CRISIS AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
ISSUES.'

## WE DESERVE SAFE HOMES

Many young people are living in situations of domestic and family violence or are victim to domestic and family violence directly. Research shows that the prevalence of violence against women is highest for young people, and those aged 18–24 are twice as likely to experience sexual assault, with some estimates that those aged 15 to 19 are four times as likely<sup>26</sup>.

Young people told us that the cost of living was inhibiting their ability to move out of home and domestic violence situations sooner. This meant young people were staying in violent situations well into adulthood, and unable to escape from the cycle or shield themselves from the impacts of witnessing abuse.

Young people recounted feeling helpless in unhealthy family relationship dynamics. They spoke of withdrawing from family and spending as much time as possible outside of these environments, utilising libraries, schools, friends' houses and public spaces. Whilst in many cases the young person spoke of feeling out of influence in these violent situations, they did confide in friends, school counsellors and support networks to learn coping mechanisms. Oftentimes, they were actively looking for, or saving for, alternative accommodation options.

The rise of online help platforms and chat bots were credited as ways to quickly receive assistance and de-escalation techniques for violent situations with friend groups and home environments.

**'The generational cycle  
of family and domestic  
violence is really difficult  
to break because you  
don't know any different.'**



## BREAKING THE BARRIER TO EMPLOYMENT

Young people are concerned about their future and ability to obtain sufficient employment. Young people want jobs that are fulfilling, that will align with the rising cost of living, and that are in industries that will see continual growth for them personally. Young people feel that there is a disadvantage for them in being a successful applicant in a role and feel that there can be an age bias that favours older applicants. They want to gain experience but find it difficult to be given those opportunities.

**'Employers want experienced staff,  
but how do you get experience  
if you can't find a job?'**

Young people in regional NSW detail the hardships they experience in trying to access jobs locally. They recall feeling as if certain industries and roles are out of reach as they are not offered in their local regions, and moving out of their communities for work is not always an option.

Young people want more career guidance earlier in life. They want more substantial career counselling, education and awareness of options earlier in their future decision-making process. They told us that they are opting for jobs based on a sustainable income rather than roles of interest, and creative based positions feel risky. Young people told us they feel pressure from themselves and their families to obtain suitable professional roles that have the ability to support them and sometimes those around them.



'Where do I fit in if I don't go to school, have a job, or go to Uni or TAFE?'



'Young people need a variety of services and programs, including employment guidance, internship opportunities, vocational training and skills upgrading courses to help young people enter the job market and develop their careers'

'It is competitive to get a role, and qualifications like RSA and similar are expensive and difficult to obtain.'



'Leaving school provides challenges to maintaining relationships and meeting other people.'

## FINDING YOUR PLACE IN THE WORLD

Young people rely on their friends, family, networks and wider communities to give them a sense of belonging. Whilst in the school system, they speak of an in-built community network of like-minded people. Those who participate in sporting groups, committees/ advisory groups, special-interest hobby groups, or volunteering felt the highest sense of belonging.

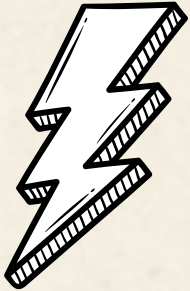
Young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) have an increased sense of long-term disconnection. Youth who are neither in employment nor education are at risk of becoming socially excluded with income below the poverty-line or lacking in the skills to improve their economic situation<sup>27</sup>. A group of young people who completed a workshop told us that they were eager to obtain work for both financial and social benefits of having a purpose and finding their networks.

Young people with a disability told us that they found it harder to establish and maintain friendships due to barriers, including financial, mobility and social aspects.

Similarly, young people in the LGBTIQ+ community spoke of feeling disconnected from their peers. They did credit "third spaces" as a place for connection though and referenced social media as a way to find connection with people of a similar interests if they are not attainable in their immediate circle.

The rising cost of living meant that social activities can be cost-prohibitive, and participation is harder than it used to be. A young person spoke of their desire to play sport and connect socially in team environments, but registration and equipment fees deterred that possibility.

# TRANSPORTATION: A ROADBLOCK FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



Young people find transport, particularly in regional areas, quite challenging. Transport is central to how young people experience the community and impacts almost every aspect of their lives. Young people need access to a full range of reliable, consistent and safe transport options. It is essential for their participation in society and in engaged and active communities.

Young people told us of a lack of services and irregularity in transport, particularly at nighttime and in regional areas. On top of this, nighttime services that were offered were often recalled as feeling unsafe.

Not being able to access transport services means that young people are often limited with their work and recreational options unless they have a personal vehicle or are supported by family. This can be a barrier to connecting with friends, accessing community services, and attending appointments or work and education commitments. The flow on effects of lack of transport filters into other areas of their lives.

Those who do use public transport told us that they valued student

and concession discounts and the convenience of various transport methods, particularly in metropolitan areas.

For young people seeking independence, many thought obtaining drivers' licences was quite difficult. The supervision learning requirements on young people and their network felt demanding and

**'WE NEED ACTIVE  
TRANSPORT OPTIONS  
AND CHEAPER  
ACCESS TO BICYCLES.'**

unachievable. Young people who lived in a family home without a vehicle did not believe they would ever be able to get their learner driver hours.

Young people want more consistent, affordable, safe transport options that will allow them to access education, work, recreational and social events at all hours of the day and night.

**'Cost of living essentials  
like transport impacts  
how much I can hang  
out with my friends.'**





**'Young people are struggling with paying tertiary education fees due to cost of living being so high.'**



## **ACCESS TO GOOD EDUCATION: THE PATH TO OUR FUTURE**

Generally, young people feel they have access to good education in New South Wales. They are grateful for opportunities to study at high school, VET courses, and pathways to universities and apprenticeships.

Young people spoke of their gratitude towards the pivot to online education platforms which allows them to live in their communities and pursue their desired education online. They valued hands-on approaches in high school and through TAFE courses, which take theories into practice and allow for a taste of what professional work might look like.

Young people spoke of their satisfaction with school staff and teachers, and valued the guidance of Student Support Officers however wish they had more of them, or more time with them regularly. They want to have access to Career Guidance Counsellors earlier in their schooling years so they can make more informed decisions regarding subject choices and extracurricular activities.

Whilst young people in NSW believe they have access to good education, they wish they had more time and balance to fulfill requirements. They want more dedicated time to study and prepare and feel as though they do not have ample time outside of school hours to meet these requirements on top of other responsibilities.

Young people were grateful for the flexibility of tertiary education, and the ability to transfer degrees, transfer campuses/universities, defer, and change subject loads throughout their courses. They do think that being a university student is expensive, especially for those who have had to move out of home, and additionally for those who have to complete practical hours as part of their degrees.



**'I WANT TO DO WELL IN SCHOOL BUT I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO STUDY'.**



**'I didn't realise how many things I said regularly that could be considered as abuse. They were always jokes, but school programs helped me have better communication and respect with my friends.'**

## **NAVIGATING LOVE, FRIENDSHIP, AND BOUNDARIES**

Young people know the importance of respectful relationships romantically, socially, and amongst family members. Whilst young people rely on their social and personal networks for joy and healthy dynamics, it is important to acknowledge that unhealthy relationships also exist, and young people need to be informed on how to understand and approach these dynamics. Unhealthy, coercive, controlling and negative behaviour can take a toll on mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing, and extend well-beyond the young person's relationship<sup>28</sup>.

As part of the workshops, young people spoke about the value they found in school

programs that focused on coercive control, consent, and healthy relationships. They specifically recounted the value in understanding how to communicate effectively, warning signs of power imbalances in relationships, how to support friends, and definitions around sexual harassment and discrimination.

Young people also found value in pop culture and the media which profiled both healthy and unhealthy relationships. They spoke about watching TV series with their friends and using this as a discussion point for unpacking what would be considered healthy or unhealthy behaviour.

**XOXO**

**LOVE**

**BE MINE...**



**'MY FAMILY IS VERY LOVING AND SUPPORTIVE. I HOPE THAT MY ACTIONS ALLOW MY FRIENDS TO EXPERIENCE LOVE AND SUPPORT FROM ME. HEALTHY MODELLED BEHAVIOUR IS IMPORTANT, I AM LUCKY'**

<sup>28</sup><https://pro.playsafe.health.nsw.gov.au/tools/healthy-relationships-helping-young-people-recognise-red-flags>



# YOUNG VOICES, BIG IMPACT

**'LIVING IN REGIONAL  
NSW, I FEEL YOUNG VOICE  
IS LOST IN GOVERNANCE.'**

Young people want to engage with government agencies and decision-makers. They want more pathways to connect with people who are making decisions on behalf of them and wish that there were more avenues into these discussions.

The young people we spoke with recounted with enthusiasm about how to hear from and speak to government. They mentioned the following methods of engaging with young people:

- \* Information via school newsletters, providing political and voting guidance from a young age.
- \* Information sharing through social media platforms. They suggested content that is youth-lead and tailored to younger audiences.
- \* Hearing directly from Ministers through school programs and at events like the NSW Youth Summit.
- \* They want opportunities to ask senior government leaders and Ministers questions.

\* They would like to participate in more workshops and discussions and would like these to take place in regional NSW too.

\* They would value an annual online youth survey to ensure that they can regularly speak to those in power.

Young people in NSW are innovative leaders, change makers, resilient beings and have valuable opinions. They bring diverse experiences and backgrounds to discussions and want to be involved in decisions that impact them. They told us about their eager desires to be involved in more youth advisory groups, committees, councils, and leadership forums, and they want to engage in their community about things that matter to them.

The NSW Government and other relevant organisations should prioritise youth-lead solutions where feasible and involve young people in each step of decision making.

**'Actively involve youth  
organisations and student bodies in  
[decision-making] to ensure a diverse  
range of young voices are heard.'**



FROM POLLS TO SKATE PARKS

# WHERE WE LISTENED





# NSW YOUTH SUMMIT

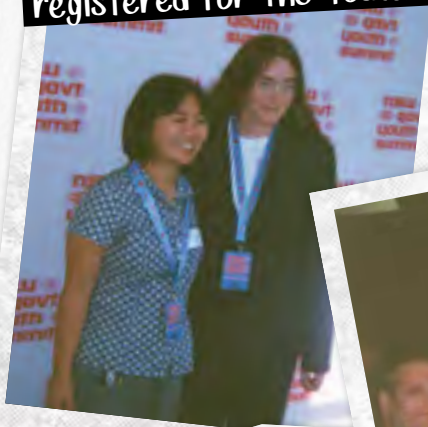


The inaugural 2024 NSW Youth Summit put youth voices front and centre on the challenges young people across NSW are facing. Young people spoke their truth, engaged directly with NSW Government Ministers, and government officials and were heard loud and clear. A full account of the Summits findings can be found at Appendix 1.

The Summit was a keystone event in the Your Voice, Our Future initiative, and showed that government needs to be active, to engage with, listen to and meet young people where they are at. The event was a collaboration between the Office for Regional Youth, The Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People, and the Department of Communities and Justice. A full agenda can be found at Appendix 2.

## ATTENDEES

Close to 100 NSW young people registered for the Youth Summit including:



49

young people from regional NSW



20

NSW Government Executives and Managers



12

NSW Government Ministers/members including the Minister for Youth



4

NSW Commissioners



## CO-DESIGN

Young people want to have a say in the programs and policies impacting young people. They would like planning and decision making to be done in collaboration, not on behalf of young people. They want to be informed, included, and for the government to trust young people. Young people want localised, tailored solutions that work for individual communities.

"The concept that we ask young people to share their input without inviting them onto the journey is flawed. A true engagement model empowers people to see the full process"

# KEY THEMES AND OUTCOMES

## FROM THE SUMMIT

"Keep young people in the feedback group in the feedback loop"

### CLOSING THE FEEDBACK LOOP

Young people want to see the outcome of consultations. It can be disheartening to share experiences and ideas and not see anything come of it. Young people want to know what happens next and to be part of the whole journey.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

Young people want genuine conversation; to be heard; and for their voice to lead to change. They would like to know what the government plans to do with information shared during consultations and engagement and see how their voices make a difference.

"Tell us what comes from today" or from our feedback  
"close the full circle of consultation vs taking information but giving nothing back"



Engage with marginalised groups "What about young people in detention centres" They are highly impacted by government decision making" But do they have a voice to government

GO TO SCHOOLS - THAT'S WHERE MOST YOUNG PEOPLE GET INFORMATION ESPECIALLY IF THEY'RE NOT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Go to young people yourself and meet with people who don't actively engage.

## INCLUSIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Young people want equal access to have a voice to government, not just those who are able to seek out opportunities to have their say. The government should meet young people in person where they are at and see the lived experience of young people across the whole community.

Keep in mind niche minority groups that are hidden in general public and are overlooked

"Meet people where they are at" If you get involved in what they are already doing "e.g. sports" arts" festivals" community days" etc you are more likely to get buy in

If you only engage with young people at government events you are missing a lot of young people, and those people are likely more affected by policy

Many of us miss stories or news due to lack of access to social media - there needs to be more ways to tell stories.

## YOUTH COUNCILS/ ADVISORY GROUPS

Young people would like more opportunities to be part of youth councils and advisory groups and to see minority groups more broadly represented.

"Youth advisory groups are a great way for organisations and government to educate and consult, but they are also a good avenue to share information e.g. into schools. One of the most resource efficient ways to spread information is through representatives from these groups"

Model diversity "Seeing yourself reflected in government and organisations is empowering

## DIVERSITY

Young people value diversity and want diversity to be valued by all. Young people would like diversity to be accepted and embraced. They would like the government to learn from minority groups and for all young people to be equally represented in decision making.

"There should be more emphasis on a cultural change vs meeting a quota of underrepresented groups in the workplace"

# QUICK CLICKS, BIG ANSWERS:

## Online Survey

**The detailed report on the online survey provided by the Advocate for Children & Young People can be found at Appendix 3.**

The Minister for Youth and the NSW Government sought feedback from young people aged 14-24 through an online survey about how the government can better support them. The survey was developed by the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People (ACYP), the Department of Communities and Justice and the Office for Regional Youth.

Data was collected from 999 eligible responses between May and December 2024.





In addition to demographic questions, the survey requested responses about:

### **The top issues young people face**

**Feeling listened to by the NSW Government**

**Things that are missing or not working well to support young people**

**What services and programs young people need**

**How the NSW Government can include young people in decision-making**

**How the NSW Government should connect with young people on social media**



## **YOUNG PEOPLE SPEAK UP**

- \* A large proportion of young people do not feel listened to by the NSW Government (76% of respondents).
- \* The most common concerns about things missing or not working well for young people were:
  - cost of living (23.3% of responses)
  - access to mental health support (17.4% of responses)
  - availability of housing (16.6% of responses).
- \* The most suggested services and programs that respondents thought young people need were:
  - mental health support;
  - education support; and
  - youth groups, community centres and
  - social opportunities.
- \* The top methods of engagement requested by young people include:
  - sharing their opinions through surveys and polls
  - talking directly with young people
  - allowing young people to vote on topics of interest or be involved in decision making.
- \* Young people identified they would like to be reached through social media on:
  - Instagram (32% of responses);
  - TikTok (21% of responses) and
  - Facebook (17% of responses).





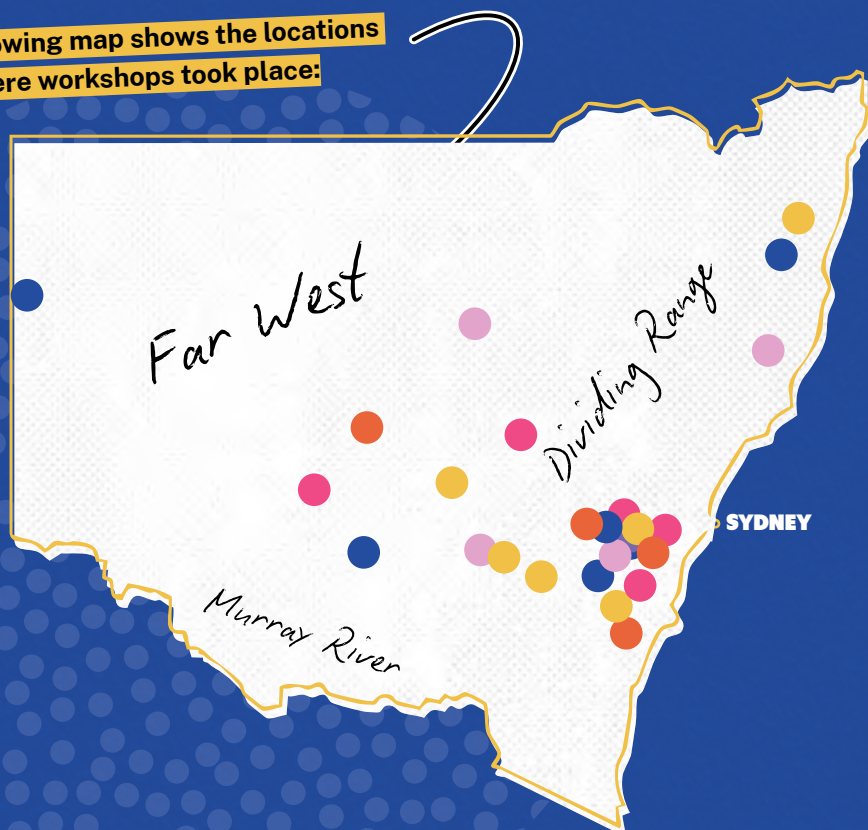
# OUR TIME, OUR SPACE, **OUR VOICES**

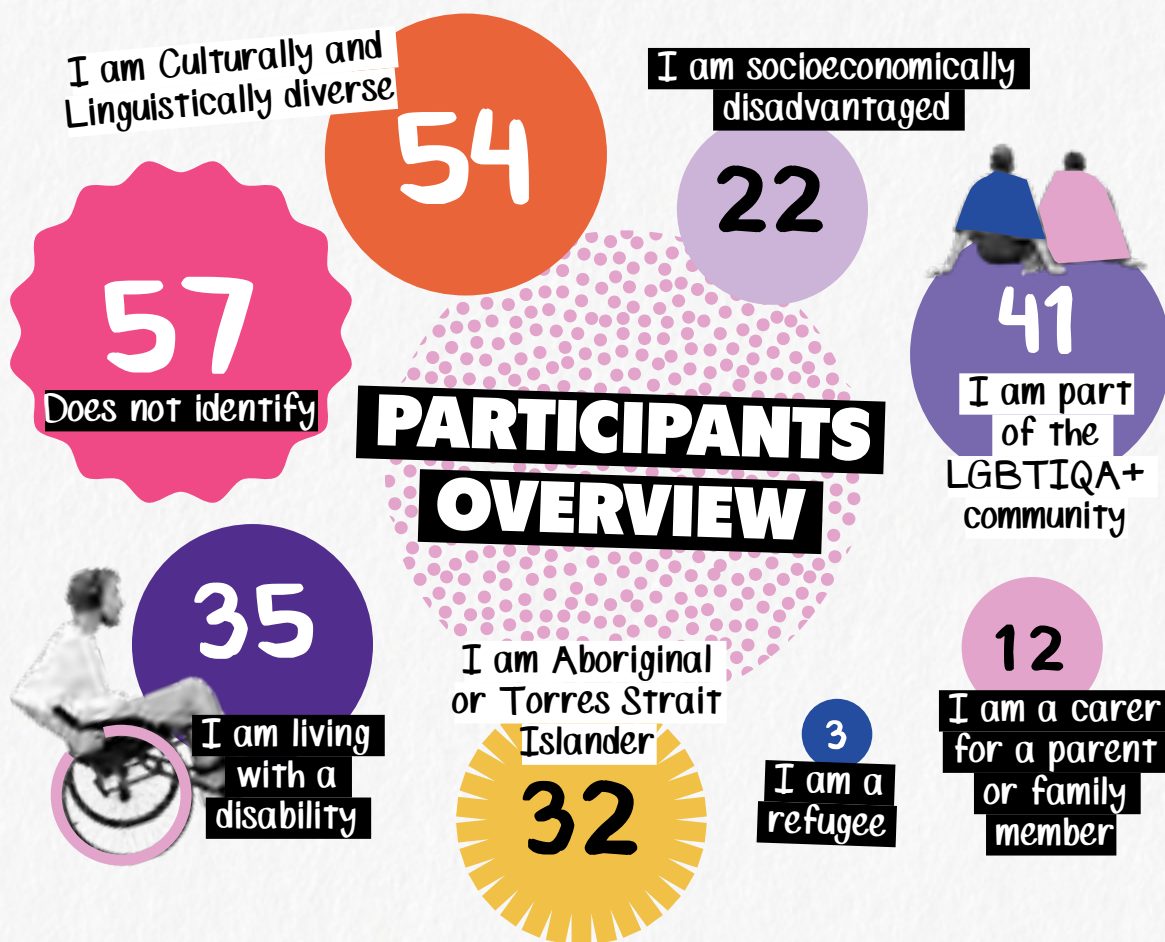
## WORKSHOPS

Staff from the Office for Regional Youth attended and hosted 100 events across metropolitan and regional NSW. A detailed summary and list of workshop locations is provided at Appendix 4. Of these events, 27 were smaller, in-depth workshops hosted by the Office for Regional Youth, allowing for meaningful conversations with

193 participants. Young people of **varying backgrounds, ethnicities, sexualities, genders, abilities** and **interests** spoke to Regional Youth staff at these workshops about what is important to them. Workshop participation allowed for deep dives into specific themes with a place-based, cohort-specific approach.

The following map shows the locations where workshops took place:





## Mapping our conversations

Young people appreciate their local communities. From family, friends, teachers, youth support workers, the wider public and networks, young people are reliant on people around them. They also appreciate youth friendly spaces and natural resources, such as beaches, skate parks, youth centres, libraries, and community green spaces for socialising and connection. Young people across both metropolitan and regional NSW had similar views in this space.

Young people feel pressure to do well in education of all kinds to forge a better future. They told us of the stress and anxieties surrounding achieving good schooling outcomes and the conflicts in time management to juggle school, work and family commitments. Young people want more support to be able to excel in

school, requesting more free periods to study, career advice and guidance early on in their schooling, and realistic expectations from family and teachers.

Young people feel pressure to adhere to societal standards leading to unhealthy habits and anxieties about appearance and levels of career and personal success. They feel like this is enhanced by social media and societal norms of self-criticising, comparison, and added family pressure.

Young people are worried about the cost of living. Appointments with doctors and psychologists are often delayed due to out-of-pocket costs associated with visits. Lower cost or free options such as community services or school counsellors often come with a longer waiting period, which they feel are difficult to access in a timely manner.



Young people are aware of their peers and the inequality that exists for many of them in accessing opportunities, services and experiences across geographic regions, economic status, and identifiers. Young people of NSW want to see themselves and their peers thrive. They are grateful for previous generations paving the way in terms of acceptance of differences, sexualities, mental health concerns and feminism. Many young people raised their gratitude for generations before them who advocated for their rights to be who they are and express themselves in terms of their sexuality. They are grateful for more awareness and respect for mental health and acceptance in seeking help.

## YOUTH ROUNDTABLE

On 18 July 2024, the Hon. Rose Jackson, Minister for Youth, hosted a Youth Roundtable with youth-focussed organisations on the Central Coast. The attendees met to discuss the issues facing young people and how the NSW Government can better support them.

Attendees included 15 young representatives aged 12–24 associated with organisations such as The Y NSW, Regional Youth Support Services Inc, Barang Regional Alliance, Central Coast Council, Coastlink and headspace.

Member for the Entrance, David Mehan MP and Member for Gosford, Leisl Tesch MP were also in attendance.

The Roundtable discussion focussed on questions from the NSW Government's Your Voice, Our Future survey including the issues facing young people in NSW, what is missing or not working well to support young people in NSW and what services and programs do young people need.

### Issues facing young people:

- \* **Gaps in service delivery:** particularly around services for young people with a disability, young people between 18-24 and those that have left school, young people in out of home care, and those homeless or at risk of homelessness. Young people recounted a lack of connection between schools and service providers. Young people raised limited services available in some areas of the Central Coast and lack of funding or inequitable disbursement of funding.
- \* **Housing:** Young people felt like there is a lack of options for young people in terms of affordability and availability, and additional challenges for those coming out of care.
- \* **Education:** Young people spoke about current school structures not meeting the needs of many young people including those with disability. They spoke of an inadequate amount of public secondary schools on the Central Coast, and a reduction in funding to public schools means resources are not available to meet diverse needs of students.
- \* **Lack of opportunities for young people:** Young people desire more work experience, mentoring and recreational options locally.
- \* **Transport:** Young people recalled issues with local public transport systems which does not connect communities, making it difficult to access services, education and/or work. Northern Central Coast was said to be particularly isolated in terms of transportation options.
- \* **Mental health:** Young people highlighted a need to focus on early intervention and culturally safe support.
- \* **Access to support from trusted adults:** Young people, particularly unaccompanied young people feel concerned about disclosing information to adults and asking for support if it leads to mandatory reporting.
- \* **Discrimination and racism in schools:** Young people spoke of the need for safe and culturally appropriate support for young people from Aboriginal, migrant and LGBTIQ+ backgrounds. They recount a lack of local access to education offerings that may support these groups e.g. English as a Second Language, Aboriginal Studies.
- \* **Cost of living:** Young people spoke of the cost of accessing health services and gaining a diagnosis.



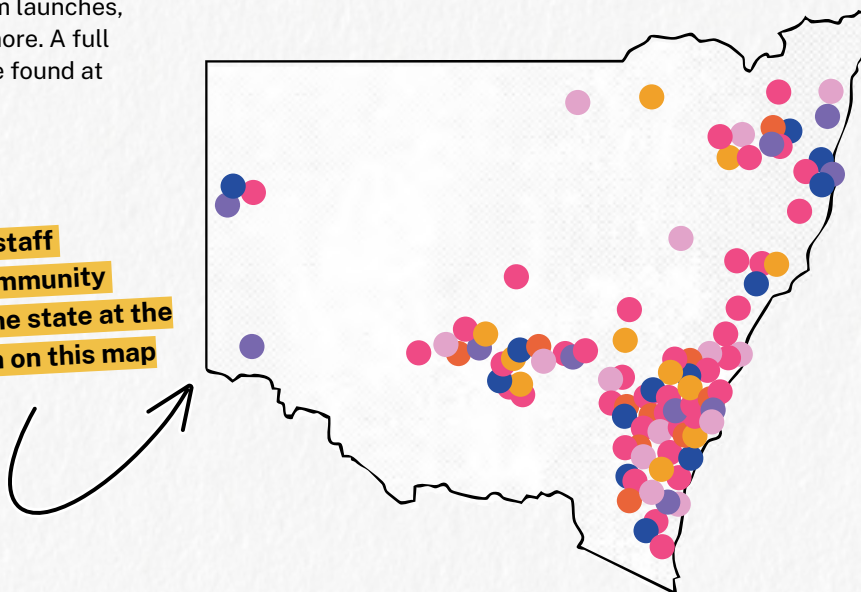
## Proposed solutions:

- \* Deliver programs that work – Love Bites, Rent Choice Youth, Brighter Futures Program, Alternative Education, local place-based services rather than nationally funded programs.
- \* Connection with youth and health services in schools.
- \* Consider broader public education options to meet diverse student needs.
- \* Enhance pathways to services and youth hubs that can provide independent support and early intervention to young people outside of the education environment.
- \* Implement all recommendations from the 2019 Family is Culture Review and NSW Government Local Aboriginal Decision-Making policy.

## SHOWING UP WHERE COMMUNITIES COME ALIVE

Throughout the consultation, The Office for Regional Youth were committed to engaging with young people across regional NSW, and importantly, meeting them where they already were. The Regional Youth team attended and convened community events in the form of career expos, awards ceremonies, festivals, art exhibitions, youth advisory committee meetings, workshops, program launches, celebrations, and more. A full list of events can be found at Appendix 5.

**Regional Youth staff  
attended 110 community  
events across the state at the  
locations shown on this map**



Over 110 community events were attended by staff across the state. Young people were engaged through conversations, with pre-formed stalls and activities, and free merch and incentives paired with meaningful discussions.

Young people engaged with enthusiasm, sharing personal experiences and anecdotes around their top three issues living as a young person. Across the consultation, the top priority themes remained consistent, with the cost of living consistently reported as the largest current issue for young people.

Young people also spoke to the good things about being a young person in 2024, and during these place-based events, told stories of enjoyment, opportunity and empowerment in their local communities, the joy that comes from being empowered to be themselves, and the gratitude for opportunities available to them.

At many of these events, community members and local adults were also in attendance. Often, they would ask for a copy of the brainstorming notes created during the discussions with young people at these events. The information gathered at events went directly into building this report, but was also fed back in real time, directly to the community, often to those who work with, and for, young people, such as Youth Coordinators in Local Councils, School Career Advisors and Teachers.

# REGIONAL ROADSHOW YOUTH FORUMS:

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BICENTENARY EVENTS

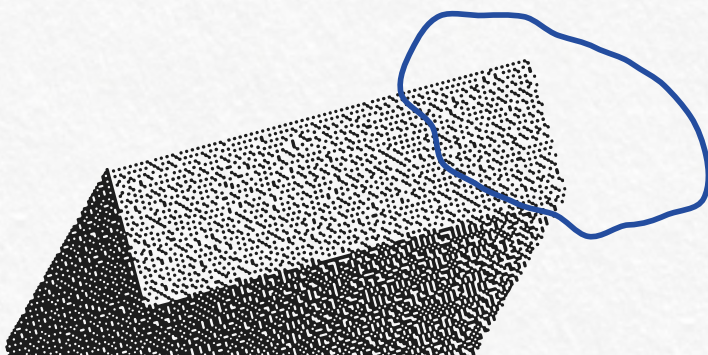
**The Parliament of NSW for 2024 conducted a regional roadshow to celebrate the Bicentenary of the Legislative Council, Australia's oldest legislative body, also known as the Parliament's Upper House.**

The roadshows took place in Lismore, Port Macquarie, Bathurst, Batemans Bay, Armidale and Wagga Wagga. Each location delivered a high school public speaking competition and youth forums, along with workshops on all things related to Parliament and democracy.

Ben Franklin MLC, President of the NSW Legislative Council hosted the events, with notable local community leaders, Parliament officials and emerging young voices joining to discuss all things democracy as well as key youth issues. The Minister for Youth, Rose Jackson MLC, attended, along with the Office for Regional Youth, with themes raised reported back to the team to inform the broader conversation.

The series of events each included:

- \* Workshops, for attendees to learn about the parliamentary process and discover opportunities for participation in democracy. Various workshops were aimed at young people, community members and government employees, and were free of charge.
- \* A public speaking competition for senior school students, empowering young people in their leadership journeys and equipping them with the platform to be a voice for their community.
- \* A youth forum, bringing together bright minds from schools across the region for inspiring discussions on leadership, representation, and a youth-led vision for a parliamentary democracy for the future with notable local community leaders, Parliament officials, chaired by the President of the NSW Legislative Council.







The issues that young people raised at each location during these forums included the following:

## LISMORE

Attendees raised concerns around the cost of living, education, and the accrual of HECS debt. They also flagged concerns about the balance of studying and working, mental health challenges, and the costs and access associated with healthcare.

## PORT MACQUARIE

Attendees flagged mental health challenges, and the costs and access associated with healthcare. Young people spoke of the lack of community connectedness and requirements for additional access to study spaces, public transport, regional facilities and arts programs. They also wished for more collaboration among local services and the need for role models and mentoring programs.

## BATHURST

Young people spoke of the accessibility issues related to opportunities to participate in youth councils and advisory groups. They recalled the lack of mental health support and safe spaces, and the need for additional support with educational barriers. They spoke of housing affordability, job insecurity, and agricultural challenges specific to the local region.

## BATEMANS BAY

Young people prioritised the need to create inclusive youth-friendly forums and spaces, with collaborative school events and opportunities. They spoke of the challenges around accessing healthcare, particularly mental health services, and the high costs of obtaining licences. The young people of Batemans Bay desired drug and alcohol awareness through education with practical approaches, and a need to build trust with law enforcement.

## ARMIDALE

Armidale youth flagged concerns around the uptake of vaping and ineffective enforcement of regulations and policies surrounding e-cigarettes. They spoke of teaching shortages and outdated school infrastructure, the need for restorative justice for youth crime, and better community facilities. They mentioned climate change and water security issues, as well as renewable energy development concerns.

## WAGGA WAGGA

Young people spoke of the public transport accessibility and affordability issues, as well as safety concerns particularly for young women. They mentioned the inadequate youth-friendly spaces and lack of inexpensive recreation activities, as well as a limited options for work experience and natural green spaces.



A hand with a halftone dot pattern, pointing upwards with the index finger. The background is a light purple color with the word 'APPENDICES' repeated in a bold, dark purple, sans-serif font, arranged in a grid-like pattern that slightly curves and recedes into the distance. A white, swirling line is visible in the upper left corner.

APPENDIX 1.

NSW YOUTH  
SUMMIT OUTCOMES

BREAKOUT SESSION  
OUTCOMES

A series of nine breakout sessions were run throughout the day to provide young people with an opportunity to talk about the issues impacting them in their communities. Each breakout session was allocated to a room with about 30 young people in attendance, spread across four tables. Each table had a staff member scribing details of the conversation, which was facilitated by the allocated Minister, Commissioner, and senior government staff members who rotated around the tables during the sessions.

Conversations were intentionally open-ended and led by the young people within the session. This meant that the participants could speak from their own personal experiences, bringing

their location-based lens and experiences to the conversation, without limitations or specifics. The groups discussed themes in conversation, rather than closed-ended questions, which ensured they were able to ask any relevant questions to their table facilitator. Conversations were prompted by asking young people what they value in the area of focus, and what they find challenging.

Tackling the Housing and Rental Crisis

Facilitated by The Hon. Anoulack Chanthivong, Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading and Trina Jones, NSW Rental Commissioner. Supported by Louise Pounder, Director, Strategy and Policy, Department of Customer Service, and Karishma Shringarpure, Associate Director, Impact Investment, NSW Treasury,

Young people value:	Young people advocate for change:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partnerships with Housing, Youth Justice and domestic and family violence providers</li><li>• The recent focus on renters and changes to rental laws with more protections and rights for renters</li><li>• Housing being more affordable in regional NSW.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of available, accessible and affordable housing in metro and regional areas</li><li>• Having to move away to find affordable housing</li><li>• Young people with disability being able to find suitable housing</li><li>• A lack of diversity in types of properties available in regional areas</li><li>• Transitional and crisis accommodation is hard to find</li><li>• Dealing with real estate agents with unclear regulation.</li></ul>



Reviving Arts and Culture and Rebuilding Nightlife

Facilitated by The Hon. John Graham, Minister for the Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy and Michael Rodrigues, 24-hour Economy Commissioner. Supported by David Everist, Manager Arts Funding, Create NSW, and Stephen Bray, Director, Social Policy and Intergovernmental Relations, The Cabinet Office.

Young people value:	Young people advocate for change:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The opportunity community radio provides for bands and artists to be heard</li><li>• Socialising and making friends at festivals</li><li>• Local bands in local, regional venues</li><li>• Promotion of events on social media</li><li>• Creating and attending diverse and multicultural community festival/events.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not being able to afford tickets, especially for those travelling from the regions</li><li>• Only hearing negative media about festivals</li><li>• Drug and alcohol use at festivals and events</li><li>• Not enough public transport to get home</li><li>• Cost of holding festivals means they cannot afford big names and therefore don't attract enough attendees</li><li>• Police and security putting people on edge and not making people feel safe</li><li>• Young people hearing about festivals if there's a social media ban.</li></ul>



## Climate Change and Responding to its Impacts

Facilitated by Maria Atkinson AM, Net Zero Commissioner and Shagofta Ali, Director Strategy and Policy, Climate and Environment

Young people value:	Young people advocate for change:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiatives/opportunities to act on climate change e.g.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– enviro festivals</li> <li>– Landcare, Streamwatch, Dunecare</li> <li>– environmental volunteering and stewardship</li> <li>– climate activities at school</li> <li>– youth and community groups</li> <li>– engaging with indigenous communities</li> <li>– photography competitions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Government legislation, policies and government agency programs, e.g.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Green Zones</li> <li>– Earn and Return programs</li> <li>– wind turbines</li> <li>– banning single use plastic</li> <li>– support of private land conservation</li> <li>– zero emissions transport</li> <li>– blocking mines.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Local council sustainability, e.g.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– residential Food Organics and Garden Organics waste collection</li> <li>– green waste bins</li> <li>– recycling/reusing</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Media initiatives and awareness raising e.g. ABC's 'War on Waste' and Deep Horizons movie at stations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessing career opportunities in climate change mitigation and renewable energy transition</li> <li>• New developments not including sustainable elements</li> <li>• The mental health impacts of climate change</li> <li>• Recycling initiatives not being more accessible to rural and remote communities</li> <li>• Not enough public transport in regional areas –needing a car to get around</li> <li>• Not enough opportunities for active transport e.g. E-bikes working well in metro but not regional areas</li> <li>• Misinformation about renewables and climate change and not enough media on Net Zero policy.</li> <li>• Disproportionate effect of climate change on regional and rural communities</li> <li>• Not enough information in schools about recycling and Net Zero policy</li> <li>• Poor land and environmental management</li> <li>• Industry regulations not being better</li> <li>• Not trusting the government due to lack of communication with young people on climate action, lack of government youth news outlet, the government prioritising the economy rather than the environment.</li> </ul>

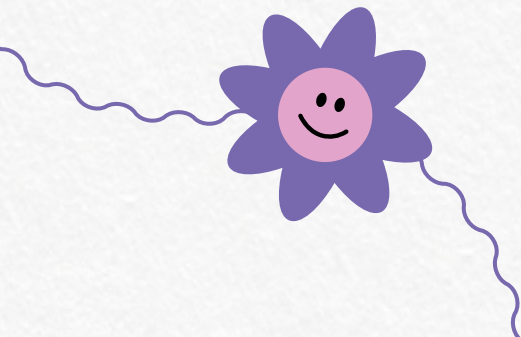




Affordable and Accessible Transport

Facilitated by The Hon. Jo Haylen, Minister for Transport. Supported by Christina Chellos, Director, Customer Journey Planning, Transport for NSW, and Vijay Singh, Senior Manager Customer Partners, Transport NSW.

Young people value:	Young people advocate for change:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Access to safe and efficient public transport (e.g. the new Metro)</li><li>• Local community services providing transport e.g. PCYC</li><li>• TripView App</li><li>• Concessions – school IDs, bus passes and discounts</li><li>• Chargers at stations</li><li>• Sunflower lanyards and priority seating badge</li><li>• Recognition of Aboriginal community in transport stations</li><li>• Bike lanes and bike parking at stations.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Unreliable public transport: buses skipping stops, services cancelled, bus and train timetables not aligning and regional buses stop running at 5pm</li><li>• Unsafe public transport: unclear how to get help on buses, improve safety at bus stops</li><li>• Lack of public transport preventing people getting to and from employment, sport or participating in other activities</li><li>• Accessibility for young people with a disability (e.g. mobility, neurodiverse) including having to rely on staff to help getting on and off transport, no lifts or lifts not working and ramps on buses too steep</li><li>• Expense of all transport</li><li>• Gaining a drivers' licence and owning a car due to number of hours required to get a licence, cost of gaining a licence, cost of buying and owning a car, roads in poor condition, dangerous roads and knowledge about how to buy and maintain a car.</li></ul>



## Education

Facilitated by The Hon. Prue Car, Deputy Premier and Minister for Education and Early Learning and The Hon. Steve Whan, Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education. Supported by Nick Magriplis, Acting Director Public Schools, Department of Education, and Miranda Lee, Impact Investment, NSW Treasury.

Young people value:	Young people advocate for change:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accessing TAFE and the different pathways on offer</li><li>• Student Support Officers</li><li>• Work experience and professional development opportunities</li><li>• Connected Communities Program</li><li>• Increased awareness of neurodivergence.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School cultures where there is misogyny and bullying</li><li>• Limited availability and capacity of careers advisors (some schools do not have careers advisors at all)</li><li>• Regional and rural teacher shortage</li><li>• One size fits all approach to education</li><li>• Schools not promoting alternate pathways – the HSC is not everything</li><li>• Gap between regional and metro education</li><li>• Gender bias in career pathways.</li></ul>



## Wellbeing for the Future: Health, Mental Health

Facilitated by The Hon. Ryan Park, Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, The Hon. Rose Jackson, Minister for Mental Health and Jennifer Black, NSW Mental Health Commissioner. Supported by Deb Welsby, Manager, Youth Health and Wellbeing, NSW Ministry of Health, Tania Waitokia, Director, Mental Health Branch, Perinatal, Child and Youth, NSW Ministry of Health, Rachael Laidler, Senior Policy Advisor, Advocacy and Reform, Mental Health Commission, and Nick Rendell, Acting Director, Western and Sydney Academy of Sport.

Young people value:	Young people advocate for change:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services and programs such as Safe Havens, Pacer Program, local fitness programs for young people, Womn-kind, mobile health care centres, youth workers in clinical settings</li> <li>• Mental health plans</li> <li>• Women's health being taken more seriously</li> <li>• Access to mental health services – e.g. waitlist for headspace is not too bad</li> <li>• Medicare rebates and Public Benefit Scheme (PBS) being expanded</li> <li>• Resources in multiple languages</li> <li>• Lived experience peer workers</li> <li>• Using social media to counteract a rise in sexist, racist and anti-LBTQI+ commentary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of mental health support and services in regional and rural areas; young people experience long wait times to access services; need expansion of Safe Havens or similar</li> <li>• Cost of health services</li> <li>• Limits on accessing free services e.g. allied and mental health plans not extending beyond 10 sessions</li> <li>• Abortion discretion in regional hospitals</li> <li>• Dental care not covered by Medicare</li> <li>• With restricted social media access, it will be difficult for the government to communicate with young people about policies and initiatives</li> <li>• Insufficient eating disorder care - nurses and health staff are not equipped</li> <li>• Lack of health care for LGBTQIA+ people</li> <li>• Schools not supportive of LGBTQIA+ students</li> <li>• GPs and teachers needing more mental health training</li> <li>• headspace not handling complex cases</li> <li>• Stigma around mental health</li> <li>• The popularity of vaping</li> <li>• Young people needing to be taught stress management methods – mindfulness, interpersonal skills</li> <li>• Lack of education for parents/carers on mental health issues</li> <li>• Young carers sacrifice their own health and need more support.</li> </ul>

## Belonging in NSW: Inclusion, Diversity & Equity

Facilitated by The Hon. Kate Washington, Minister for Disability Inclusion, The Hon. Jodie Harrison, Minister for Women and Zoë Robinson, The Advocate for Children and Young People. Supported by Vanessa Ford, Director, Strategic Projects, Office of the Children's Guardian, Shannon Bishop, Associate Director, Community Engagement, Women NSW, Karishma Shringarpure, Associate Director, Impact Investment, NSW Treasury, and Greg Moore, A/Assistant Commissioner, Capability, Performance and Youth Command.

Young people value:	Young people advocate for change:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safe and accessible spaces including quiet spaces and sensory rooms, safe places in marginalised communities and accessible parks and playgrounds</li><li>• Accessible inclusion events and festivals in the community, schools, and universities e.g. multicultural youth festivals, celebrating International Day of People with Disability</li><li>• Disability support in TAFE and government subsidies to help young people attend TAFE</li><li>• Seeing visual inclusion e.g. LGBTQIA+ welcome signs and sunflower lanyards on buses</li><li>• Visibility such as Australian of the Year Awards showcasing, diverse people and ACON's connection with the community.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support not always available for regional young people, queer young people and marginalised groups</li><li>• Not always safe spaces for marginalised communities in regional areas</li><li>• Aboriginal communities not included</li><li>• Not enough opportunities for young people to talk and be politically engaged to speak up (not surveys)</li><li>• Schools not demonstrating inclusivity well</li><li>• Cost of psychologists and psychiatrists</li><li>• Toxic masculinity – allowing males to get away with bad behaviour</li><li>• Government policies are not community-led</li><li>• Not enough social events, including all-ages events by councils.</li></ul>

Indigenous Voices: Working Toward Reconciliation and Representation

Facilitated by The Hon. David Harris, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty and Andrew Higgins, A/Director, Regional Aboriginal Partnerships and Outcomes. Supported by Sam Crisafulli, Superintendent Youth Command, NSW Police, Chernai Smith, Senior Partnerships Officer - Aboriginal Affairs NSW, and Rubi Bourke, Executive Officer, Aboriginal Affairs NSW.

Young people value:	Young people advocate for change:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aboriginal focused programs such as Clontarf, PCYC, Youth Centres and Connected Communities model of education</li><li>• Empowering Aboriginal community through traditional storytelling, dance, cultural experiences</li><li>• Ongoing focus on culturally sensitive practice</li><li>• Education around culture and sites.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not enough Aboriginal people in leadership roles</li><li>• NGO and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations' funding accountability</li><li>• Negative interactions with Police</li><li>• Lack of trust with Government</li><li>• The 2023 Referendum created a lot of backlash: more online and in-person racism</li><li>• Lowering the age of criminal responsibility shows the Government is not listening to young people</li><li>• Need more opportunities to learn about Aboriginal culture</li><li>• Place-based services are inaccessible.</li></ul>





## Employment

Facilitated by The Hon. Sophie Cotsis, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Work Health and Safety. Supported by Milan Simic, SafeWork NSW, and Nathan Cooper, Manager - Public Sector Apprentices and Trainees Program, Training Services NSW.

Young people value:	Young people advocate for change:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supporting young refugees with life skills and educational support</li><li>• Information from unions about the rights and obligations for employees</li><li>• Support and guidance to write resumes, cover letters and career development</li><li>• Career advisors in schools</li><li>• Paid internships and subsidised placements</li><li>• Fee-free TAFE courses</li><li>• An increase in women working in male dominated industries</li><li>• Scholarships for schools and universities.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Racism in recruitment processes and some professions</li><li>• Lack of support for refugees to help find work</li><li>• Ability to find work experience to help secure paid work</li><li>• Limited work ready and life skills</li><li>• Barriers to securing a job in regional areas – transport, limited opportunities</li><li>• Lack of tailored support for young people with disabilities</li><li>• Limited knowledge about worker rights, discrimination in the workplace, employee obligations and awards and wages</li><li>• Low wages for juniors</li><li>• Cadetships and job opportunities for young people are poorly advertised</li><li>• Lack of connections with business professionals and potential employees.</li></ul>

# GUEST SPEAKERS

Throughout the day several guest speakers shared their political and advocacy experience. We heard about what they have learnt about how young people can make a difference in their communities.

## Afternoon Session 1: The Punter and the Politician

### Speakers:

#### The Hon. Emily Suvaal, BN MLC

The Hon. Emily Suvaal, BN MLC became a member of the NSW Legislative Council on 25 March 2023. She is Chair of the Standing Committee on State Development and is Member of several parliamentary committees, including the Joint Standing Committee on Net Zero Future, the Committee on Children and Young People, the Joint Select Committee on the NSW Reconstruction Authority.

#### Konrad Benjamin, Punter's Politics

Konrad is a political content creator and activist from Newcastle, NSW, known for making complex political issues accessible to the everyday Aussie. With a rapidly growing audience of over 300,000 followers, Konrad's videos break down topics like mining, inflation, and youth crime in a way that resonates with ordinary people. His signature catchphrase, "Power to the punters," embodies his mission to empower everyday Australians to navigate the often-divisive world of modern politics with confidence and clarity.

### Overview:

- A 'Punter' is an everyday Australian, and Konrad encourages everyday Australians to make a difference by educating themselves and speaking up
- Anyone can write letters or emails to a politician about issues that are important to them
- Community members can also go directly to your Local Member's office and speak to their staff
- In writing to a politician - keep it short, include a personal story, and follow up
- When raising an issue, the human element is important

- The right to protest is a fundamental part of our democracy; it is an important to do it and do it safely. What you do around a protest is also important; sustained pressure and advocacy is important.

## Panel Discussion 1: The Role of Civic Engagement in Shaping our Future

### Speakers:

#### Konrad Benjamin – Punter's Politics

Bio above.

#### Elfy Scott – Freelance presenter, journalist and author

Elfy is a journalist, author and presenter living and working on Gadigal land. Her journalism has appeared in publications such as The Saturday Paper, The Guardian, The Age and SBS News, among many others. She is also known for her time as a producer and host of the Spotify exclusive Australian politics podcast, Left Right Out and for appearing frequently on shows such as Mamamia Out Loud, Triple j's Hack and ABC Radio Sydney. Elfy's debut book The One Thing We've Never Spoken About was published by Pantera Press in 2023 and focuses on the experiences of people living with complex mental health conditions in Australia and the failures of the mental health care system.

#### Jack Toohey – Teach Us Consent

Jack Toohey can see a better future. And he wants to help us get there. You probably know Toohey as the guy in that viral video about how the Australian housing market is broken – the one that amassed over 20 million views between Instagram and TikTok by pointing out the irrefutable difference between buying a house in 1983 and 2023. That razor sharp video introduced Toohey as a creator, communicator, filmmaker and advocate with a knack for explaining complex topics simply. Since tackling the housing market, he's turned his focus to topics like gender pay gap, Australia Day, climate change, renters' rights and why the Australian government should provide free menstrual products. On TV and radio, he's appeared as the token millennial voice on programs like Sunrise, Triple j's Hack and ABC Radio National.



## Overview:

### Barriers to young people being engaged in politics:

- The age of eligible voters - the age of criminal responsibility is 10 years old, but you must wait another 8 years before you can vote
- There is a culture of older voters looking down on young people getting involved in politics
- There is a misconception that politics is complicated
- There is a myth that not all people are political due to a lack of understanding of what politics is
- Apathy is a cultural barrier in Australia, and not caring is sometimes worn as a badge of honour, especially amongst young people
- There is a misconception that things don't need to get better
- Lack of education – what we are taught about politics is a result of what we see, therefore we have misconceptions about what politics is.

### What can young people do to overcome these barriers and make a difference?

- Encourage people to start with small steps
- Show friends and people around you that it can be one volunteer moment, one day of participation, one moment of kindness that starts their journey
- Be open to learning and encourage others to learn. It's fun, it's how we grow and it's how we change the country or world to be a better place.

### Where can young people find hope when the system isn't working?

- Look for examples of how action can lead to change. Teach Us Consent is an example of this.
- Find like-minded people that are united in the hope that we can do better – having other people believe that change is possible is empowering
- Remember that it's not all on the individual, but you can do what you can do, so just do it anyway.
- Hope is a verb!

## Panel Discussion 2: Changemakers

### Speakers:

#### Ruby Riethmuller – Womn-Kind

Ruby Riethmuller is the Founder and Director of Womn-Kind, which is a youth mental health organisation on a mission to close the gap in effective wellbeing education and support for adolescent girls and gender-diverse young people. Womn-Kind works with a network of allied health professionals and qualified mentors with lived experience to deliver engaging, relatable, timely and largely preventative wellbeing support in innovative ways to optimise the mental health and leadership outcomes of young people. Since founding, Womn-Kind has provided support to over 25,000 young people and more than 5,000 young people engage with Womn-Kind services every day. Ruby has been shortlisted for the Young Australian of the Year, a finalist in the NSW/ACT Rural Women's Award, selected as a Future Women Rural Scholarship Recipient and nominated for the NSW Women of the Year.

#### Lottie Dalziel - Banish

Lottie Dalziel is an award-winning sustainability advocate and the founder of Banish, a marketplace designed to help Australians live more eco-friendly lives. Since its inception in 2018, Banish has become a trusted source for sustainable products, and Lottie has been recognised for her efforts with several prestigious awards. In 2023, she was named NSW Young Australian of The Year, a testament to her impact in driving sustainability awareness and change in Australia. She has also been listed in Forbes' 30 Under 30 for her contributions to sustainability and entrepreneurship.

#### Sam Fricker – Sam's Straws

Sam Fricker is an Australian diver who competed in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Fricker is also a Commonwealth Games medallist and was awarded the Australian Sports Medal by the Governor of New South Wales. Sam has a deep passion for environmental sustainability. At just 16, he founded Sam's Straws to combat the environmental impact of single-use plastics with eco-friendly wheat straws. In addition to his, he is an ambassador for the Starlight Foundation, Clean-Up Australia, and the Australian Olympic Committee's Change-Makers Youth Forum.



## **Mitch Wilson –Australian Festival Association**

Mitch Wilson (they/them) is the Managing Director of the Australian Festival Association (AFA), the national peak body for festival promoters and suppliers. With over a decade of experience in public policy, communications, and government relations, Mitch has previously worked as a political adviser across NSW, Victoria, and Canberra, as well in live music and festivals, including for Sydney Mardi Gras. Under their leadership, the AFA has grown in membership and influence, advocating for sustainable festival businesses in the face of regulatory challenges and high-profile event cancellations.

## **Zara Seidler –The Daily Aus**

Zara Seidler is the co-founder of The Daily Aus, Australia's fastest-growing youth news company, known for simplifying complex current affairs. She reaches over a million young Australians monthly through social media, newsletters, and podcasts, and has transformed The Daily Aus from a side hustle to a thriving business with her co-founder Sam. Zara leads a diverse newsroom delivering accessible news daily and is a regular commentator on ABC News Breakfast and The Today Show. Recognized in Forbes 30 Under 30 in 2022, she co-authored the bestselling book 'No Silly Questions' in 2023 to empower young people in important national conversations.

### **Overview:**

#### **What was your driver for making change?**

- Lived experienced as a teenager. Lack of the ability to help at a time in need. The lack of crisis management and early intervention
- A gap in awareness and response, and a belief that everyone should have access to information
- The desire to provide information written by young people for young people and to increase people's awareness and understanding of what's happening in the world
- Seeing the negative impacts of policy and the drive to make things better for everyone.

## **Lessons learnt**

- Learn from what goes wrong and focus on and celebrate the small wins
- Gain resilience through failure. Persevere and try again
- Focus on what can go right instead of worrying about all the things that can go wrong.
- Be ready for people to tell you that you will fail and remember that you are the only person who can prove someone wrong when they tell you that you cannot do something
- Believe in yourself and surround yourself with people who believe in you
- Making a change can be a long, hard process, but it's worth it
- Be willing to handle the heat, especially when you are doing well.

## **Call to action**

Don't wait until you feel ready to give something a go. Failure is not failure; it is an opportunity to try new things

Just give it a go –you're the only person stopping you from taking the first step

Get comfortable with being uncomfortable. Challenge the status quo

If a new opportunity presents itself, say yes

Visualise what you want to be and who you want to be and try it

If you believe in something commit to it. You will find your allies. We are collectively stronger together.

## **Afternoon Session 2: Workshop with the Minister for Youth**

### **Young People's Voice to Government**

Facilitated by The Hon. Rose Jackson, MLC, Minister for Youth, this workshop was about how to turn a one-day conversation from the event into an ongoing conversation between the Government and young people.

## Key themes from the Young People's Voice to Government workshop:

### What word best captures your vision for how to engage and represent young people?

Young people told us they need inclusive, meaningful, and empowering opportunities to discuss real-world issues with decision makers. They spoke of the importance of accessible platforms, youth co-design, meeting young people where they already are, and trusting the opinions and voices of youth.

### What is the best way for Government to reach and communicate with young people?

Young people suggested mass communication techniques through schools and newsletters, and through technology and social media apps. They would like to hear from Government in places they already are – such as social media ads, through sporting and interest groups, and ensuring that all consultation and engagement summaries and outcomes are fed back to the young respondents.

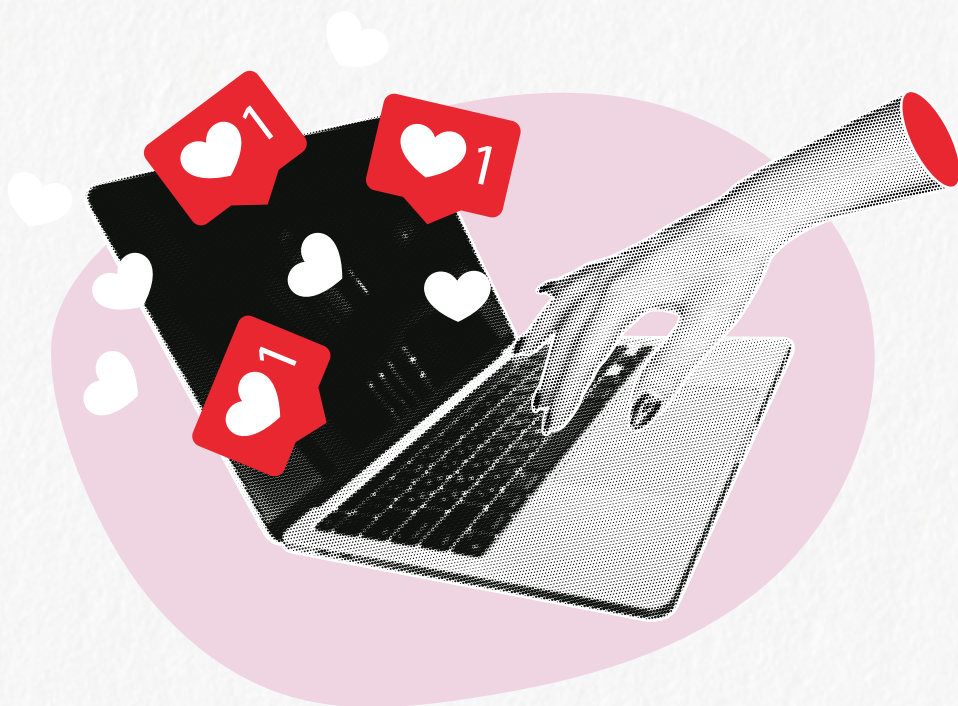
### How would you like diversity to be represented in Government interactions with young people in NSW?

Young people spoke of visibility in marketing and employment and ensuring that diverse young people are reflected in campaigns and in the workplace. Youth want opportunities that are safe for minority groups and actively seek people who represent the wider community.

### What does continuous engagement look like?

Young people want more summits and youth forums, and more platforms for engagement where it matters. Young people want options for engagement, such as shorter time commitments, online and regional options, accessible platforms and ample opportunities.

Young people want continuous engagement opportunities and are enthusiastic about civic engagement, being part of the decision-making process, and hearing from Government on platforms and networks that already exist.



# TELL ME ABOUT...

Young people were invited to write on pull-up banners in the registration area throughout the course of the day. They wrote the following:

Young People value:	Young People find advocate for change:
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Would like to see less single use medical devices</li><li>• Concerns about poorer health outcomes for Indigenous population</li><li>• Visiting a GP should be free</li><li>• More health care in regional and rural areas</li><li>• Free transport for attending health services</li></ul>
Mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Need more mental health services, and not just through telehealth</li><li>• After school/work hours appointments should be increased</li><li>• Should introduce peer workers in school settings</li></ul>
Indigenous voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is a Disconnect from country and culture</li><li>• Treaty</li><li>• Rural racism</li><li>• Youth should be included in consultations with Elders</li></ul>
Belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Young people need a right to protest</li><li>• Everyone should be welcome</li><li>• Increased volunteering opportunities</li></ul>
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fees are too expensive</li><li>• Need more options in regional and rural areas</li></ul>

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HEALTH  
MENTAL HEALTH  
VOICES  
BELONGING  
TRANSPORT

APPENDIX 2.

YOUTH SUMMIT AGENDA

Monday 18 November 2024, PARKROYAL Darling Harbour, Blackwattle Room, Level 2

9:00am – 9:30am	Registrations open (tea and coffee available)
	Welcome Ms Marlee Silva - Master of Ceremonies
9:30am – 9:33am	Acknowledgement of Country Savannah Fynn - Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council
9:33am – 9:35am	Inclusion Statement Sam Daykin - Youth Summit Working Group Member
9:35am – 9:45am	Opening Address The Hon. Rose Jackson, Minister for Youth
9:45am – 10:00am	Breakout Rooms Set Up – 15 minutes
10:00am – 10:45am	Breakout Session 1
	Tackling the Housing and Rental Crisis The Hon. Anoulack Chanthivong, Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading Trina Jones, NSW Rental Commissioner
	Reviving Arts and Culture/ Rebuilding Nightlife: Why Are Festivals Dying? The Hon. John Graham, Minister for the Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy Michael Rodrigues, 24-hour Economy Commissioner
	Climate Change and Responding to its Impacts Maria Atkinson AM, Net Zero Commissioner Shagofta Ali, Director Strategy and Policy, Climate and Environment Protection
10:45am – 10:50am	Move into next session - grab a morning tea snack
10:50am – 11:35am	Breakout Session 2
	Affordable and Accessible Transport The Hon. Jo Haylen, Minister for Transport
	Education The Hon. Prue Car, Deputy Premier and Minister for Education and Early Learning The Hon. Steve Whan, Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education
	Wellbeing for the Future: Health, Mental Health The Hon. Ryan Park, Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health The Hon. Rose Jackson, Minister for Mental Health Jennifer Black, NSW Mental Health Commissioner

<b>11:35am – 11:40am</b>	<b>Move into next session</b>
<b>11:40am – 12:25pm</b>	<b>Breakout Session 3</b>
	<b>Belonging in NSW: Inclusion, Diversity &amp; Equity</b> The Hon. Kate Washington, Minister for Disability Inclusion The Hon. Jodie Harrison, Minister for Women Zoë Robinson, The Advocate for Children and Young People
	<b>Indigenous Voices: Working Toward Reconciliation and Representation</b> The Hon. David Harris, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty Andrew Higgins, A/Director, Regional Aboriginal Partnerships and Outcomes
	<b>Employment</b> The Hon. Sophie Cotsis, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Work Health and Safety
<b>12.25pm – 12:40pm</b>	<b>15 minute break</b>
<b>12:40pm – 1:10pm</b>	<b>The Punter and the Politician</b> The Hon. Emily Suvaal Konrad Benjamin, Content Producer and Host, Punter's Politics
<b>1:10pm – 2:00pm</b>	<b>50 minute lunch break</b>
<b>2:00pm – 2:45pm</b>	<b>Panel Discussion 1: The Role of Civic Engagement in Shaping Our Future</b> Panellists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Konrad Benjamin – Punter's Politics</li> <li>• Elfy Scott – Freelance presenter, journalist and author</li> <li>• Jack Toohey – Teach Us Consent</li> </ul>
<b>2:45pm – 2:50pm</b>	<b>5 minute break</b>
<b>2.50pm – 3.35pm</b>	<b>Panel Discussion 2: Changemakers</b> Panellists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ruby Riethmuller – Womn-Kind</li> <li>• Lottie Dalziel - Banish</li> <li>• Sam Fricker – Sam's Straws</li> <li>• Mitch Wilson – Australian Festival Association</li> <li>• Zara Seidler – The Daily Aus</li> </ul>
<b>3:35pm – 3:50pm</b>	<b>15 minute afternoon tea break</b>
<b>3:50pm – 4:20pm</b>	<b>Workshop: Young People's Voice to Government</b> Facilitated by The Hon. Rose Jackson, Minister for Youth
<b>4:20pm – 4:30pm</b>	<b>Summit Summary and Reflection</b> Facilitated by The Hon. Rose Jackson, Minister for Youth Supported by Youth Rapporteur Sam Daykin.
<b>4:30pm</b>	<b>Summit close</b>



## APPENDIX 3.

# THE ONLINE SURVEY

## PROVIDED BY THE ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

### Purpose

From 16 May 2024 – 31 December 2024, the Minister for Youth, the Hon. Rose Jackson, MLC and the NSW Government sought feedback from young people aged 14 – 24 years on how the government can better support them. The online survey asked about:

- the important issues that young people face,
- what is not working well for young people in NSW,
- how the NSW Government should support and better engage with young people.

The findings of this survey will be shared across NSW Government departments to help design and deliver better programs and services for young people, and to inform ministerial priorities. The voices of young people, including their experiences and aspirations, will be invaluable during the development of policies and programs related to the identified themes.

This survey was developed by the Office of the Advocate of Children and Young People (ACYP), the Department of Communities and Justice, the Office for Regional Youth and the Minister for Youth, the Hon. Rose Jackson, MLC. The survey was administered by ACYP.

### Methodology

The survey had 11 mandatory questions for all respondents (there were 12 for those aged under 18). The survey was designed to be concise and also to collect an appropriate amount of demographic data, to complement the qualitative and quantitative insights gathered.

Of the 11 questions that all respondents

answered, five were demographic, used to capture information about respondents' ages, identities and locations. The remaining six questions were focused on gathering detail on the key issues and aspirations of young people, including:

- Three open-ended text questions, allowing respondents to provide detailed responses in their own words.
- Two multiple-choice and one yes/no question, designed to offer clear-cut insight and explore key trends.

A consultation was held with young people of the NSW Youth Advisory Council about the questions of the survey. The feedback they provided on the clarity, suitability, effectiveness and length of questions informed and shaped the final version of the survey.

To acknowledge the time and contributions of participants, respondents were given the opportunity to register for a monthly randomised prize draw upon completing the survey. Each month winners were awarded a \$250 gift card of their choice.

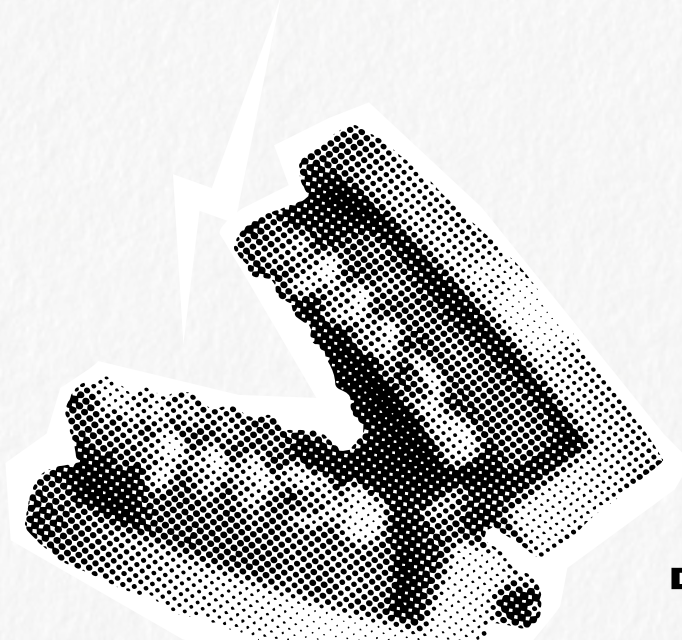


# SURVEY INCLUSION CRITERIA AND RESULTS

The total number of responses that met the inclusion criteria and fully completed the survey was 999, which is 26.21% of the total number of responses. A further 535 entries satisfied the demographic requirements but did not include responses to any of the topic questions.

Description	No. of responses
Total number of interactions with the survey	3811
<b>Qualifying responses from NSW</b>	<b>1534</b>
Complete and qualified responses*	999
Qualified responses but they did not answer beyond demo questions	535
<b>Total disqualified responses and reason</b>	<b>2277</b>
Entered age only but did not complete the rest of the survey	1042
Opened survey but did not enter any data	632
Completed the survey very quickly (under four minutes)	360
Responses from outside NSW	99
Respondent identified that they are over 24 years old	89
Not genuine response (i.e. the text answers for these responses were “test”, “:”, “/”, “NA”, etc.)	30
Flagged as suspicious, for example, repeat IP addresses from overseas submitted over 10 entries each with similar or the same information	25

\*The findings in this summary report is based on 999 complete and qualified responses



Demographics

Information about the age distribution of respondents – by frequency

Age	# of responses	% of total respondents
15	133	13.31%
14	126	12.61%
16	118	11.81%
18	115	11.51%
17	97	9.71%
19	88	8.81%
20	84	8.41%
24	75	7.51%
21	63	6.31%
23	56	5.61%
22	44	4.40%
Grand Total	999	

Self-selected identities - demographic breakdown

Demographic identity (self-identification)	# of respondents	% of respondents
I identify as LGBTQIA+	254	25.43%
I speak a language other than English at home or with my family	165	16.52%
I live with disability	164	16.42%
I identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	95	9.51%
I have had experience with Police and or the criminal justice system	82	8.21%
I am now or have been in out of home care	27	2.70%
I am a parent	25	2.50%
I am an international student	25	2.50%
I have arrived in Australia within the last 5 years as a refugee or migrant	22	2.20%
Prefer not to say	32	3.20%
None of the above	384	38.44%



## Number of respondents by NSW regions

Region of qualified responses	# of respondents	% of respondents per region
Greater Sydney	363	36.34%
Central West and Orana	133	13.31%
Riverina Murray	104	10.41%
North Coast	100	10.01%
Hunter	86	8.61%
Illawarra Shoalhaven	52	5.21%
Central Coast	44	4.40%
South East and Tablelands	40	4.00%
New England North West	40	4.00%
Far West	37	3.37%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>999</b>	

## Do you feel listened to by the NSW Government?

### Age

Young people are rarely given opportunities to share their experiences and beliefs and when they are, nothing comes of it. We are disconnected from the decision makers in our communities and feel as though our opinions are not considered..." (23, female, Greater Sydney)

Overall, across all age groups, 758 out of 999 respondents (76%) indicated they did not feel listened to by the NSW Government.

The highest percentage of dissatisfaction came from 20-year-olds, with 88% reporting they did not feel listened to. This was followed by 21-year-olds at 84%, 19-year-olds at 83%, and 17-year-olds at 82%.

The percentage of respondents who felt unheard decreased slightly for those in the youngest age categories, with 70% of 16-year-olds, 65% of 15-year-olds, and 64% of 14-year-olds indicating that they believed the NSW government does not listen to them.

### Demographics (not including age)

The highest percentage of respondents who

felt unheard by the government were those identifying as LGBTQIA+, with 87% selecting "no", followed by 82% of individuals with experience in the criminal justice system and 82% of young people living with disability. The percentage of the following respondents who also selected "no" were:

- 81% of those who had been in out-of-home care.
- 76% of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander young people
- 74% of those who selected "None of the Above"

The lowest dissatisfaction rates were from those who speak a language other than English at home at 65%, and international students, with a little over half (56%) reporting they did not feel listened to.

### Regions

Between regions, the highest percentage of respondents who felt unheard were from the Hunter and Illawarra Shoalhaven regions, both reporting 85% dissatisfaction. The North Coast and Central Coast followed closely with 82% of respondents feeling unheard.

In Greater Sydney and New England North West,

78% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction. The South East and Tablelands region had a slightly lower dissatisfaction rate at 70%, while the Far West reported 68%.

The Riverina Murray and Central West and Orana regions had the lowest dissatisfaction rates among the surveyed areas, both at 66%.

### **What is missing or not working well to support young people in NSW?**

“I feel like young people are unaware of how the decisions they and the government make now will impact them in the future. I want young people to understand that the decisions we make today will impact the future of our generation.” (14, female, South East and Tablelands)

Overall, the results emphasise widespread dissatisfaction with the availability and affordability of essential services, particularly in relation to support with mental health, housing, and financial stability.

The most commonly cited concerns were cost of living (233 mentions, 23.3% of responses), access to mental health support (174 mentions, 17.4%), and the cost and availability of housing (166 mentions, 16.6%), which includes rental arrangements.

There were 88 responses that mentioned both the cost of living and the cost and availability of housing, and there were 41 which mentioned the cost of living and access to mental health support.

“Cost of living and unaffordable/inaccessible housing is dealing a lot of stress and negative mental health issues. I see so many young homeless people around where I live - a lot of them are people I’ve gone to school with. It’s heartbreaking to see. I personally feel that a big part of this issue is exacerbated by landlords hoarding multiple rentals rather than young people being able to own a home.” (21, transgender, non-binary or another gender not listed, Central Coast)

Another significant concern was education resourcing (145 mentions, 14.5%), which encompassed the quality and resourcing of the education system, inequity that result from socio-economic and geographic factors, and need for more targeted support for students (i.e.

mental health, life skills and transitioning to the workforce.

“There aren’t any pathways to transition us from dependent teenager to independent adult. If your parents don’t support you or teach you the skills, you’re screwed.” (22, female, South East and Tablelands)

Young people also raised the following when asked about what is missing or not working well:

- engagement in decision-making and leadership opportunities (119 mentions, 11.9%),
- access to youth-specific services and supports (118 mentions, 11.8%),
- employment pathways (82 mentions, 8.2%), and
- access to recreational, social, and youth facilities (82 mentions, 8.2%).

“Young people are rarely given opportunities to share their experiences and beliefs and when they are, nothing comes of it. We are disconnected from the decision makers in our communities and feel as though our opinions are not considered. We have a lack of trust because the government (current and previous) consistently deprioritises the things young people call for, like access to affordable housing, support in the cost of living crisis, affordable access to mental and physical health services and the protection of our natural environment.” (23, female, Greater Sydney)

## **Demographics**

### **LGBTQIA+**

Among LGBTQIA+ respondents, the most common concerns were cost of living (75 mentions, 33.5%), mental health support (59 mentions, 26.7%), and housing affordability (61 mentions, 27.3%).

“Access to affordable medical treatment, allowing affordable medication for people who are on hormone replacement therapy and affordable gender transformative surgery” (20, transgender, non-binary or another gender not listed, Greater Sydney)

### **Those who speak a language other than English at home**

For those who speak a language other than



English at home, the key issues raised when asked what is missing or not working well for young people in NSW were the cost of living (49 mentions, 29.7%), education resourcing (35 mentions, 21.2%), and employment opportunities (24 mentions, 14.5%).

“Living in regional NSW, I feel young voice is lost in governance. I am the daughter of the migrant community, but I feel less community engagement is there when we consult about heritage, culture and tradition. Things are challenging when I am unsure how I will keep or preserve my ethnicity when we don’t have a Culture hub or language school in my region.” (14, female, Riverina Murray)

### **Young people living with disability**

Young people living with disability were particularly concerned about mental health support (45 mentions, 27.4%), cost of living (40 mentions, 24.4%), and housing affordability (34 mentions, 20.7%).

“I feel that there isn’t enough support out there for young people going through mental health issues. I struggle with this a lot and have just been told that I have exceeded my 10 sessions of counselling and now have to pay for more which I cannot afford so I now have to struggle alone again. I also believe that it is difficult to look for the light at the end of the tunnel when thinking about buying a house eventually. Affordable housing is hardly a thing anymore and the cost of living crisis makes it nearly impossible.” (19, female, Illawarra Shoalhaven)

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents highlighted concerns about their level of access to services (14 mentions, 14.7%), mental health support (14 mentions, 14.7%), and inequities that result from living in non-metropolitan areas (12 mentions, 12.6%), some responses included examples based on lived experience.

“Support for young people in NSW faces challenges such as long wait times for mental health services, barriers to education and employment, affordable housing shortages, and limited access to culturally appropriate services for Indigenous youth. Improved promotion of support services, expanded youth leadership

opportunities, and better access to healthcare and public transport are needed to address these challenges.” (24, female, Greater Sydney)

### **Young people with experience in the criminal justice system**

Individuals with experience in the criminal justice system cited cost of living (19 mentions, 22.4%), mental health support (19 mentions, 22.4%), and housing affordability (14 mentions, 16.5%) as key issues.

“Young people coming from poorer families and/or areas, lacking the support and resources to have access to quality education, health/mental health care, and future career opportunities. I have so many bright and talented friends who have never been given the chance to truly excel in life the ways I know they could, as they are held down by the unfair burdens their parents and community have given them. (15, transgender, non-binary or another gender, Central Coast).

### **What services and programs do young people need?**

“Services that are actually going to make a difference and are run by people who have experienced and know what the young people are going through. You can feel more comfortable getting help from someone who knows what your going through and knows exactly how to help.” (17, female, Riverina Murray)

The services and programs that most young people identified were mental health, education, housing, and cost of living. Some demographic groups, such as LGBTQIA+ youth, people with disability, refugees and migrant youth, and Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander young people, identified these needs on a higher-than-average needs basis across multiple areas.

Addressing these issues through targeted policies and programs is essential to ensuring that young people receive the support they need. Below is a breakdown by theme and demographics:

### **Demographics**

#### **Age**

The survey responses highlight key themes in the needs of young people across different



age groups. Younger respondents (aged 14-16) showed strong interest in youth groups, camps, and opportunities to connect, with 32 responses indicating this from 14-year-olds and 21 responses from 16-year-olds. Requests for services to support the cost of living and mental health of respondents also reoccurred as themes in the responses from young people within this age range.

“Youth groups, Mentors. Organisations that care about young people and want to engage with them, organise events that youth can participate in...Accommodation for youths to keep them off the street, provide food shelter for them safe place to be.” (14, female, North Coast)

For those in the 17-19 age range, there was a noticeable increase in responses related to housing and rental assistance, with 25 responses from 18-year-olds mentioning this, and 21 responses from 19-year-olds. Managing finances and legal support also became more prominent, especially among 18-year-olds (15 responses) and 19-year-olds (13 responses). Employment and working rights were increasingly relevant, with 16 responses at both ages 18 and 19.

“Affordable Housing Programs: Increased access to affordable housing options and youth-specific housing initiatives to support young people transitioning to independent living. Cost-of-Living Support: Financial assistance programs for rent, groceries, transport, and utilities to help young people manage rising living costs...” (18, female, Greater Sydney)

Among the respondents aged between 20 and 24 years old), housing and rental assistance remained a major need. Education support was also a key concern, particularly for 24-year-olds (20 responses) and 22-year-olds (19 responses). Mental health remained a significant issue across all age groups, with the highest number of responses among 14-year-olds (48 responses), 15-year-olds (51 responses), and 24-year-olds (36 responses). Additionally, cost of living and financial support remained a recurring theme across all age groups.

“More initiatives to push for government housing and developments. The developments also need to be built with public transport in mind and be accessible for disabled people.” (20, female, Greater Sydney)

The responses to this survey indicated that younger respondents tend to focus more on social connection and recreational opportunities, while older respondents prioritised housing, financial literacy, employment, and mental health support. This reflects how priorities can shift during the transition from adolescence into becoming a young adult.

## Summary of Key Themes, Including Demographics

### Mental Health Support

“I strongly believe that young people need access to places/environments to support their mental health and well-being, etc. Generally speaking, there should be programs for young people to help deal with things like their emotions, to help regulate their emotions and know strategies that can help them with big feelings, trauma and everything young people face.” (16, female, Greater Sydney)

361 respondents identified access to mental health services as a major area of need, making it the most frequently cited issue. This demand is particularly high among:

- LGBTQIA+ young people (118 respondents)
- Those living with disabilities (78 respondents)
- Young people who speak a language other than English at home (61 respondents)
- Refugees/migrants who arrived in Australia in the last five years (32 respondents)

These findings underscore the critical need for accessible and affordable mental health services, particularly for marginalised groups.

### Education Support

“Young people need a variety of services and programs to meet their needs and promote their growth. Here are some examples: 1. Career development support: provide employment guidance, internship opportunities, vocational training and skills upgrading courses to help young people enter the job market and develop their careers. 2. Education.” (23, male, Hunter)

218 respondents identified a need for education support, indicating strong demand for academic assistance, tutoring and career guidance. This was especially relevant for:

- LGBTQIA+ young people (66 respondents)

- Those who speak a language other than English at home (59 respondents)
- Young people living with disability (33 respondents)
- Refugee and migrant youth (20 respondents)

### **Youth Groups, Community Centres, and Social Opportunities**

“They need access to youth groups where they can discuss issues, strong support groups as well as access to free counselling services and careers advisory.” (17, female, Greater Sydney)

Social connection was also identified as a high priority, with 181 respondents highlighting the need for youth groups, community centres, and opportunities to connect and make informed decisions. This need was reported particularly by:

- LGBTQIA+ young people (43 respondents)
- Young people with disabilities (37 respondents)
- Refugees and migrants (18 respondents)

### **Housing and Rental Assistance**

“More initiatives to push for government housing and developments. The developments also need to be built with public transport in mind and be accessible for disabled people.” (20, female, Greater Sydney)

170 respondents mentioned housing availability and affordability, with support requested for home ownership and mortgage and rental assistance.

- LGBTQIA+ young people (67 respondents)
- Young people with disabilities (33 respondents)
- Refugees and migrants (16 respondents)

The responses indicated that young people would like more policies and programs to be delivered that support them to access safe and affordable housing.

### **Cost of Living (COL) and Financial Assistance**

“Financial support! The cost of living is absolutely wild at the moment. I am a full time student and for me to pursue my studies where I want to is virtually impossible because of

the cost of living and lack of financial support available to people in my situation.” (19, female, Central West and Orana)

160 respondents cited the cost of living (COL) as a pressing issue, with 97 respondents also highlighting the need for financial and/or legal support. Key groups affected include:

- LGBTQIA+ young people (66 respondents)
- Those who speak a language other than English at home (59 respondents)
- Young people with disabilities (33 respondents)

Additionally, 14 respondents specifically mentioned the need for grocery assistance, reflecting ongoing financial pressures related to food.

### **Employment and Job Support**

“Provide entrepreneurship training and financial support to encourage young people to start up and innovate in order to promote economic development and job growth.” (23, male, Greater Sydney)

A total of 116 respondents require employment support, including job opportunities, career advice, and workplace rights education. This was particularly relevant for:

- LGBTQIA+ young people (26 respondents)
- Young people with disabilities (17 respondents)
- Refugees and migrants (12 respondents)

Support in employment pathways and workplace rights education is essential for young people seeking financial independence.

### **Transport Accessibility**

“Better active transport options and cheaper access to bicycles.” (24, male, Central Coast)

74 respondents identified the accessibility, affordability, and reliability of public and private transport as a key concern, particularly from:

- Young people with disabilities (20 respondents)
- Those who speak a language other than English (16 respondents)
- Refugees and migrants (7 respondents)



## Other Support Requested

- 104 respondents emphasised the need for recreational and sporting opportunities, particularly for physical well-being and social engagement.
- 87 respondents called for better physical health services, including access to GPs (this does not include requests for mental health, see a separate theme above with that information).
- 71 respondents highlighted the need for drug and alcohol support.
- 34 respondents cited a need for social media/technology support and digital literacy, highlighting the importance of digital access for young people.
- 22 respondents indicated concerns related to the environment and climate.
- 8 respondents mentioned a need for more Arts and culture programs
- 6 respondents identified an interest in receiving more religious support

## Regional Analysis

In summary, across all regions, mental health support, employment opportunities, housing affordability, and recreational spaces are recurring concerns. Many areas also identified a lack of youth engagement in decision-making and gaps in access to essential services, highlighting the need for a more inclusive and comprehensive approach to supporting young people in NSW.

Below is a list of the top three supports requested by region, sorted by the percentage of respondents from each region:

### Illawarra Shoalhaven (52 respondents):

“The key issue affecting young people in NSW is the cost of living crisis which I have identified through personal experience. I have recently moved out of home to study at university college and have had the additional stress of financial crisis as I have to find a part time job in addition to my studies where I have taken on more hours than I can realistically fit in with my schedule due to the government’s lack of financial assistance.” (18, female, Illawarra Shoalhaven)”

1. Cost of Living: 34.62%

2. Mental Health Support: 26.92%
3. Cost and Availability of Housing: 23.08%

### New England North West (40 respondents):

“There need to be more schemes to help young people transition into adults, e.g. loans to help pay for their first house, etc. There needs to be a bigger strive towards intergenerational equity, meaning that more needs to be done for young people with the housing crisis and environmental issues.” (17, female, New England and North West)

1. Cost and Availability of Housing: 42.5%
2. Mental Health Support: 22.5%
3. Employment Pathways: 20%

### Hunter (86 respondents):

“Young people are missing out on the opportunities previous generations took for granted, however with these previous generations now in leadership not having to face the day to day struggle don’t truly understand what young people have to face. It’s surface level lies that keep us hoping but always disappointed, price of fuel and groceries are a joke considering they are essential. Interest rates are horrendous and the likelihood of being able to afford a home before my mid-thirties is very unlikely.” (21, female, Hunter)

1. Cost of Living: 27.91%
2. Cost and Availability of Housing: 20.93%
3. Mental Health Support: 19.77%

### Greater Sydney (363 respondents):

“Housing supply and affordability... Cost of housing is a joke. Sydney has ranked second most expensive city in the world - that’s disgusting.” (23, male, Greater Sydney)

1. Cost and Availability of Housing: 28.92%
2. Employment Pathways: 24.51%
3. Recreational & Social Facilities: 19.57%

### Riverina Murray (104 respondents):

“There is a shortage of psychologists, mental health resources and support systems targeted towards youth. This is especially prevalent in regional areas, with the vast majority of



psychologists and mental health healthcare workers working in major cities. Being forced to travel a long distance to access the required resources often dissuades young people from taking the next step to accessing professional help. This often occurs out of fear of burdening their family, guardians or friends, feeling a lack of privacy or being absent from school or work to travel.” (16, female, Riverina Murray)

1. Mental Health Support: 18.27%
2. Recreational & Social Facilities: 15.38%
3. Cost and Availability of Housing: 14.42%

### **North Coast (100 respondents):**

“I feel like for young people who want to try and get better, whether it’s their mental health or living situations, either can’t afford to use the services or if they manage to get some free sessions it’s not enough to fix the problem. Especially if young people are trying to be independent or have no choice but to be independent. (21, female, North Coast)

1. Mental Health Support: 21%
2. Cost and Availability of Housing: 21%
3. Recreational & Social Facilities: 16%

### **Central West and Orana (133 respondents):**

“i am really disappointed that people in small towns don’t get many helplines like other people do in the cities. We need more counsellors and more help in smaller towns. It’s not fair that we don’t get that help just because we are in a rural town. We are people too that need help.” (14, female, Central West and Orana)

1. Recreational & Social Facilities: 18.05%
2. Mental Health Support: 12.78%
3. Access to Services and Supports: 11.28%

### **Far West (37 respondents):**

“Support and check ups on young people struggling in school, young people going without things that are a need.” (16, female, Far West)

1. Mental Health Support: 21.62%
2. Engagement of YP in Decision Making: 10.81%
3. Access to Services and Supports: 10.81%

### **Central Coast (44 respondents):**

“Ability to find affordable housing is very difficult, and that which is there is often far from work, shopping, parks, pubs and other leisure activities without reasonable public transport access, forcing us to drive everywhere and increasing time that could be better spent on improving our own lives, family, mental and physical health and other skills.” (24, male, Central Coast)

1. Cost and Availability of Housing: 25%
2. Cost of Living: 25%
3. Mental Health Support: 15.91%

### **South East and Tablelands (40 respondents):**

“Young people are struggling with things like moving out of home, paying tertiary education fees due to cost of living being so high. We feel that between working and school we are still scrapping for bare minimum and live this repetitive lifestyle “ (18, female, South East and Tablelands)

1. Cost of Living: 15%
2. Recreational & Social Facilities: 15%
3. Mental Health Support: 14%

### **How can the NSW Government include young people, like you, in the decisions they make?**

“Direct involvement and conversations with young people. In different ways, such as informal and formal processes. I think more online polls / surveys would be effective in gaining general understandings. In person, discussions would be a really beneficial way to hear the nuanced perspectives of young people in NSW.” (20, female, Greater Sydney)

### **Age**

Across most age groups, young people requested similar preferences for how the NSW government can include them in decision-making. The key themes were to produce and draw on more surveys and polls, raised through 194 of the total responses (19%); talk with young people, listen to them, and take action, which was raised through 149 responses (15%); and to

allow young people to vote on specific topics of interest, which was raised through 80 responses (8%).

“Opening forums, attending summits, and giving us more opportunities (like this survey) to have our say.” (16, transgender, non-binary or another gender, Far West).

Other suggestions included hosting more summits, forums and conferences; improving diversity and representation in positions of power; changing the voting age; engaging through digital and social media; and including young people in consultation and codesign opportunities.

“The NSW Government can include young people in their decision-making in several ways. They could establish youth advisory councils or committees where young people can

directly contribute their ideas and perspectives. Organising regular consultations and forums specifically for young people to express their views and concerns would also be helpful. Additionally, using online platforms and social media to engage with young people and seek their input can be effective. Encouraging youth participation in community projects and initiatives related to government decisions can give them a practical role. Providing educational resources and information to help young people understand the issues at hand and how they can have an impact is important too. Finally, actively involving youth organisations and student bodies in the process can ensure a diverse range of young voices are heard.” (20, male, Central West and Orana)

Region

The table below highlights the top methods of engagement identified by young people, sorted by Greater Sydney and the Rest of NSW:

	Greater Sydney	Rest of NSW
Sharing their opinions through surveys and polls	113	199
The government should talk with young people more	78	128
Voting on specific policies or being involved in decision making	46	65
The government should contact young people in person	41	52
The government should contact young people Online	48	51
Creating youth jobs and opportunities in government	46	43
Having more diverse voices in decision-making	34	42
Youth advisory groups	34	37
Through forums, hearings, conferences summits, protests	49	30

The methods of engagement that less than 30 young from Greater Sydney and the Rest of NSW identified are included below and ordered by frequency (highest to lowest):

- Training, support and capacity building
- Lower voting age
- Youth participation/ consultation
- Communication
- Better government/ a different focus
- Through local services and youth organisations

## How would you like government to connect with you on social media?

Young people were given the option to identify how they would like government to connect with them (selecting as many options as they would like, and writing in an optional text field) with the following choices:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Snapchat
- TikTok
- YouTube
- Other -text

The responses of the young people's engagement preferences, displayed by age, are included below:

<b>Blank/ I ignore messages from gov</b>	7	5	4	7	4		4	1	1	2	1	<b>36</b>
<b>The gov should not use social media</b>	4	8	6	5	5	5	5	6		2	3	<b>49</b>
<b>Instagram</b>	74	84	79	64	95	76	69	49	36	43	55	<b>724</b>
<b>TikTok</b>	61	65	60	44	62	35	43	29	18	24	26	<b>467</b>
<b>Facebook</b>	43	46	40	33	34	34	37	29	24	30	37	<b>387</b>
<b>YouTube</b>	42	43	30	34	42	38	31	28	19	17	23	<b>347</b>
<b>Snapchat</b>	44	38	29	20	25	15	15	8	3	5	9	<b>211</b>
<b>Email/ Mail</b>	4	6	5	2	1	4		1		2	5	<b>30</b>
<b>In person (F2F, i.e. school)</b>	2	1	2	4		1					1	<b>11</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>2262</b>

"The reason I have selected all of these is because not everyone uses just one of these so you need to use all of these to send media to people." (15, transgender/non-binary or another gender not listed here, North Coast)."

The platforms and services that less than 10 young people identified in the text are included below and ordered by frequency (highest to lowest):

- Texting or iMessage
- Through television (including the news)
- LinkedIn
- WhatsApp
- Through blogs or forums (inc. Reddit and/Threads)
- Via a website or new app
- On Discord
- Through BeReal

These platforms were not included in the table due to the limited number of responses.



## APPENDIX 4.

# YOUTH WORKSHOPS

### Workshop structure

#### Workshops covered three main topics:

1. What is working well (strengths-based perspective on young people's experiences and communities)
2. What is not working well (issues that young people are concerned about or are impacted by)
3. How the NSW Government can involve and support them (How young people want to be involved)

#### Method:

Workshops were facilitated in an open discussion in a group setting, facilitators used a variety of materials deemed helpful for the cohort of young people, including butchers' paper, whiteboards, raising hands, speaking in order, or having participants scribe their response onto post it notes.

#### Primary discussion questions:

1. What is good about living in [location]?
2. What is good about being a young person in 2024?
3. What are the top issues facing young people in NSW?
4. How can the NSW Government include young people, like you, in the decisions they make?
5. What kind of information/posts would you like to see on NSW Government youth-specific social media account?

#### Post-workshop:

1. Facilitators summarised the session and completed data entry to collect responses and quotes from participants for wider Regional Youth analysis.
2. Facilitators completed a one-page summary document that was distributed to young participants as well as the host organisation.

### Summary of Youth Engagement Workshops feedback

A detailed list of workshop locations can be found in Appendix 4. All participants received a summary document outlining key discussions from their respective workshops, highlighting how their valuable contributions would inform this report and future government youth initiatives. The following is a comprehensive overview of the workshops, along with the central themes emerging from these engagements.

#### Positive Aspects of Being a Young Person in 2024

Young people shared a range of positive factors that shape their experiences today, including:

- **Education opportunities:** The availability of flexible education options, such as online and distance learning, and the ability to pursue passions through various subjects.
- **Personal freedom:** A sense of freedom to express themselves openly and authentically.
- **Career pathways:** Access to a wide array of career choices post-school, offering opportunities for growth and development.
- **Environmental spaces:** The presence of accessible recreational areas, such as beaches and local facilities, fostering a sense of community and connection with nature.
- **Cultural and identity acceptance:** Increased social acceptance of diverse cultures and identities compared to previous generations.
- **Social media:** The role of social media as an important tool for connection, self-expression, and building community.
- **Leadership opportunities:** Acknowledgement of various leadership roles available for youth to engage with and grow their influence.
- **Technology:** The use of technology as an essential resource for accessing information, support, and maintaining connections with others.

## Key Issues Impacting Young People

The workshops also highlighted several key concerns that are top of mind for young people across New South Wales:

- **Cost of living:** The rising cost of living is a significant barrier for young people trying to live independently, pursue further education, and support themselves. Issues such as high fees for sports activities and limited resources for young carers were frequently mentioned.
- **Mental health:** Many young people reported struggles with mental health, feeling disconnected and experiencing cyberbullying and racism. There was a strong desire for more affordable social activities and accessible mental health resources.
- **Pressure from school and study:** The intense pressure to achieve high marks and balance part-time work with academic requirements was a major stressor for many. Young people expressed concerns about the impact of educational pressures on their well-being and the weight of parental expectations to succeed.
- **Limited social connections:** Due to academic, work, and family commitments, many young people noted the limited opportunities to build social connections outside of school.
- **Employment challenges:** Regional youth spoke of limited job opportunities, especially in areas with inadequate public transport. They also noted the high cost and difficulty of obtaining qualifications like RSA (Responsible Service of Alcohol) through private institutions.
- **Housing issues:** Young people reported feeling discriminated against in the rental market, where older applicants with established rental histories were preferred.
- **Lack of life skills:** Many young people expressed the need for more practical, real-world education in areas such as financial literacy, housing, employment, and building healthy relationships.
- **Climate change concerns:** Young people voiced their concerns about the environmental challenges they are inheriting, with many feeling that they are being left to

address a world already impacted by climate change. They stressed that older generations, who contributed to the issue, will not face the same long-term consequences.

## Recommendations for Government Support and Engagement

Young people provided clear feedback on how the government can better support them and involve them in decision-making processes:

- **Involvement in decision-making:** Young people want to actively participate in decision-making, particularly in consultations and discussions with Ministers and senior government officials.
- **Opportunities for engagement:** There is a desire for more opportunities to engage through consultations and paid roles, ensuring that youth voices are integral to policy development.
- **Communication channels:** School email accounts were identified as an effective way to reach a wide audience of young people. Additionally, they expressed a preference for seeing government content on social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook.
- **Peer-led content:** Young people suggested that government communications should include content created by fellow youth, making it more relatable and engaging.
- **Annual youth surveys:** Some participants proposed conducting an annual government survey in schools to track progress and changes over time.
- **Early political education:** There was strong interest in receiving education on politics, voting, and democracy earlier in life, with a particular emphasis on prioritizing voting literacy.
- **Voting age:** A subset of young people advocated for the opportunity to vote at an earlier age than 18, reflecting their desire to have a say in the decisions that directly affect their lives and future.

This feedback provides a crucial insight into the priorities and aspirations of young people, which will help guide future youth-focused policies and initiatives.

## Workshop Locations

Organisation	Location
The Y	Sydney
Bayside Council	Bayside, Sydney
Western Sydney Local Health District	Westmead Hospital, Sydney
YES Youth Employment Services	Penrith, Sydney
Corrimal High School	Corrimal, Illawarra
Newtown High School	Newtown, Sydney
Scope Australia	Kingsgrove, Sydney
Mission Australia	Bankstown, Sydney
Griffith City Council	Griffith, Riverina Murray
Hume Conservatorium	Goulburn, South East
Hennessy Catholic College	Young, South East
Boorowa College	Boorowa, South East
Carers NSW	Statewide (online)
Mid Coast Community Council	Taree, Mid Coast
Orange City Council	Orange, Central West
City of Sydney Council	Sydney CBD, Sydney
Outloud, Bankstown Art Centre	Bankstown, Sydney
NSW Youth Council Conference	Parramatta, Sydney
Amity College	Shellharbour, Illawarra
Dubbo Regional Council	Dubbo, Central West
Lake Cargelligo Central School	Lake Cargelligo, Central West
Yass Valley Council	Yass, South East
Headspace	Bega, South East
Bongil Bongil Youth Collective	Bongil Bongil, North Coast
STARTTS	Wagga Wagga, Riverina Murray
STARTTS	Coffs Harbour, North Coast
Various collaborative	Broken Hill, Far West



## APPENDIX 5.

# EVENTS ATTENDED FOR CONSULTATION

Event name	Event organiser	Event location	YCC region
<b>The Y Youth Leadership Forum</b>	The Y NSW	Online	State-wide event
<b>My Voice My Journey</b>	Campbell Page	Bay Pavilions, Princes Highway, Batemans Bay	South East
<b>Queanbeyan Homelessness Cross Border Workshops</b>	Office for Regional Youth in collaboration with Wisdom Learning	Tuggeranong Community Centre, Greenway ACT	South East
<b>Youth Suicide Prevention Mural Launch</b>	Bega Valley Eurobodalla Suicide Prevention Collaboration	Hanging Rock Sports Complex, Beach Road Batemans Bay	South East
<b>PODS Milestone</b>	Youth Cottage Collective	SCCC - Wellness Centre	South Coast and Tablelands
<b>Armidale Youth Week Awards</b>	Armidale Regional Council	Armidale Regional Council - Town Hall	New England and North West
<b>Public Health Network Pitch Night Tamworth</b>	Public Health Network (PHN) HNECC	Tamworth Jockey Club	New England and North West
<b>Boomerang workshop</b>	Strong Spirit Connected Youth	Westport Campus	Mid North Coast
<b>Country Music Festival Youth Engagement</b>	PCYC Tamworth	PCYC Tamworth	New England and North West
<b>Breaking through Borders</b>	PCYC Gundy	PCYC Gundy	New England and North West
<b>Jubullum Healing Day</b>	Jubullum Youth	Jubullum Street, Jubullum Village NSW 2469	Northern Rivers
<b>Harden Aboriginal Collaboration</b>	Harden Aboriginal Collaboration	Murrumburrah High School	South Coast and Tablelands

Event name	Event organiser	Event location	YCC region
<b>Mural Launch</b>	Batemans Bay Youth Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Mural Project	Batemans Bay	South East
<b>Surf Skate Sound</b>	Bega Valley Shire Council	Barclay Street, Eden	South East
<b>Campbell Page Young Parents group</b>	Campbell Page	Campbell Page	South East
<b>World View Break Through Youth Program</b>	World View Break Through Youth Program	Queanbeyan	South East
<b>Youth Workshops</b>	Batemans Bay Youth Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Mural Project	Batemans Bay	South East
<b>Armidale Multi-cultural Youth Action Network</b>	YCC Funded project -ORY	Armidale	New England and North West
<b>Capacity Building - Youth Development Network</b>	Office for Regional Youth	Armidale Bowling Club	New England and North West
<b>NarraBRIGHT</b>	Narrabri Shire Council	Narrabri	New England and North West
<b>Casino Pop Culture Festival</b>	Rotary Club of Upper Richmond	Casino	Northern Rivers
<b>Charles Sturt University Careers Day - PMQ</b>	Charles Sturt University	Port Macquarie	Mid North Coast
<b>Northwest Regional Careers Expo</b>	The Rotary Club of Tamworth First Light	Tamworth	New England and North West
<b>Coffs Coast Careers Connection</b>	Mid Coast Connect	Coffs Harbour	Mid North Coast
<b>CSU Wagga Careers Expo</b>	Charles Sturt University	Wagga Wagga	Riverina Murray
<b>Port Kembla Youth Network - Lego &amp; Robotics Holiday event</b>	Port Kembla Youth Networks & EMBERS	Port Kembla	South Coast and Tablelands

Event name	Event organiser	Event location	YCC region
<b>Youth Markets at the Youth Pods</b>	BCR & Headspace	Sanctuary Point	South Coast and Tablelands
<b>EDGE workshop - Nowra Christian School</b>	RIEP, ORY & Sharna Dawson	Nowra Christian School	South Coast and Tablelands
<b>Warilla Youth Hub 50th Birthday Celebration</b>	Warilla Youth Hub & Shellharbour Council	Warilla	South Coast and Tablelands
<b>Yass Youth Forum</b>	ORY, Yass Council	Yass High School	South Coast and Tablelands
<b>EDGE - Nowra Anglican College</b>	RIEP, ORY and Sharna Dawson	Nowra Anglican College, Bomaderry	South Coast and Tablelands
<b>Charles Sturt University Careers Festival</b>	Charles Sturt Uni	Bathurst	Central West
<b>Nambucca Youth Speak</b>	Uniting Nambucca	Macksville High	Mid North Coast
<b>Illawarra Careers Expo</b>	Workplace Learning	Berkeley	Greater Sydney & Wollongong
<b>Wingecarribee Shire Council Careers Expo</b>	Wingecarribee Shire Council	Moss Vale	South Coast and Tablelands
<b>Harden Aboriginal Community Collaboration</b>	Zacs Place	Harden	South Coast and Tablelands
<b>Rural Women's Network - National Volunteers Week: 2023 Hidden Treasures Honour Roll</b>	Rural Women's Network	Wagga	Riverina Murray
<b>Coffs Harbour Youth Forum</b>	ORY and Blue Sky Community Services	Coffs Harbour	Mid North Coast
<b>Legislative Council Bicentennial Tour - Youth Forum (Port Macquarie)</b>	The President of the Legislative Assembly (Ben Franklin)	CSU Port Macquarie	Mid North Coast
<b>Legislative Council Bicentenary Bathurst Youth Forum</b>	NSW Parliament-Legislative Council	Bathurst NSW	Central West



Event name	Event organiser	Event location	YCC region
<b>JobPath Work ready skills Workshop</b>	OneTraining	Country Universities Centre, Olympic Street, Griffith	Riverina Murray
<b>JobPath Work ready skills Workshop</b>	OneTraining	Temora TAFE Campus - Temora	Riverina Murray
<b>Griffith Careers and Employment EXPO</b>	WorkForce Australia and Griffith City Council	Griffith Regional Sports Precinct Griffith	Riverina Murray
<b>Regional youth leadership summit</b>	Hay Shire Council	Hay Shire Council	Riverina Murray
<b>AgVision Yanco 2024 - Inspiring the Future of Agriculture</b>	AgVision Yanco 2024	250 Euroley Rd, Yanco NSW 2703	Riverina Murray
<b>Winter Soulstice</b>	Headspace Batemans Bay	Moruya	South East
<b>Coomealla High School Careers Expo 2024</b>	Coomealla High School	Dareton	Far West
<b>Kids Teaching Kids Showcase</b>	Eden Community Access Centre	Lumen Christie School, Pambula	South East
<b>Regional Roadshow Batemans Bay</b>	NSW Parliament	Batemans Bay	South East
<b>Crookwell High School Engagement Project</b>	ORY	Crookwell High School	South Coast and Tablelands
<b>Calrossy Anglican School - Career Class</b>	Calrossy Anglican School Career Advisor	Tamworth	New England and North West
<b>NSW Youth Health Consultation Forum</b>	Western Sydney Local Health District	Westmead Hospital, Westmead.	Greater Sydney & Wollongong
<b>Student Representative Council at Tomaree High School</b>	Tomaree High School	Salamander Bay	Hunter
<b>Braidwood Central School Engagement Project</b>	ORY	Braidwood	South East

Event name	Event organiser	Event location	YCC region
<b>NAIDOC Community Day</b>	Wollotuka Institute	Ourimbah	Central Coast
<b>Bayside Council workshop</b>	ORY and Bayside Council	Arncliffe, Sydney	Greater Sydney & Wollongong
<b>Careers on Country</b>	Department of Education	Walgett	Central West
<b>Central Coast Youth Roundtable</b>	Minister Jackson	Ourimbah, Central Coast	Central Coast
<b>Campbelltown Youth Forum</b>	Campbelltown city Council	Ingleburn	Greater Sydney & Wollongong
<b>CareerQuip</b>	Taree University Campus	Taree, NSW	Mid North Coast
<b>Bicentenary Regional Roadshow</b>	Office of the President, Parliament of NSW	Armidale	New England and North West
<b>AgVision Yanco 2024 - Inspiring the Future of Agriculture</b>	Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP) -Department of Education, Training Services	Yanco	Riverina Murray
<b>Grow the Future Morning Tea</b>	Grow the Future Organisation	20 Auckland Street, Bega	South East
<b>Broken Heel Festival</b>	The Palace Hotel	Broken Hill	Far West
<b>NSW Parliament Regional Roadshow, Wagga Wagga Youth Forum</b>	NSW Parliament -Office of the President	Wagga Wagga	Riverina Murray
<b>Hilltop Youth Action Group meeting - Young</b>	Hilltops Council - Emily Green	Young Town Hall	South Coast and Tablelands
<b>Youth Workshop - WSLHD</b>	Western Sydney Local Health District	Westmead Hospital	Greater Sydney & Wollongong
<b>Batemans Bay Career Expo</b>	Workplace Learning	Batemans Bay	South East

<b>Event name</b>	<b>Event organiser</b>	<b>Event location</b>	<b>YCC region</b>
<b>Everyone Belongs, Bowraville Central School</b>	Bowraville Central School	Bowraville, Nambucca Valley LGA	Mid North Coast
<b>Combined Eurobodalla Working with Youth Network and Youth Council Meeting</b>	Eurobodalla Shire Council	Council Chambers, Moruya	South East
<b>Youth Workshop - Corrimal High School</b>	Corrimal High School	Corrimal, Illawarra	Greater Sydney & Wollongong
<b>Youth Workshop - Newtown High School</b>	Newtown High School	Newtown, Sydney	Greater Sydney & Wollongong
<b>Youth Workshop - Carers NSW</b>	Carers NSW	Charlestown, Newcastle	Hunter
<b>Visual Dreaming Youth consultation</b>	Visual Dreaming	Wagga Wagga	Riverina Murray
<b>Combined Eurobodalla Youth Interagency and Youth Council Meeting</b>	Eurobodalla Shire Council	Moruya	South East
<b>Youth Workshop - Yes Employment Services</b>	Hannah Griffith	Penrith, Western Sydney	Greater Sydney & Wollongong
<b>Youth Workshop - Wollongong City Council - Teenz Connect</b>	Wollongong City Council	Wollongong	Greater Sydney & Wollongong
<b>Youth Workshops - Griffith City Council</b>	Griffith City Council	Griffith	Riverina Murray
<b>Youth Workshop - Mission Australia</b>	Mission Australia	Bankstown	Greater Sydney & Wollongong
<b>Youth Workshops - Sydney City Council</b>	Sydney City Council	Town Hall, Sydney	Greater Sydney & Wollongong
<b>Youth Workshops - NSW Youth Council Conference</b>	Fairfield City Council, Liverpool City Council, Canterbury-Bankstown City Council	Western Sydney	Greater Sydney & Wollongong



Event name	Event organiser	Event location	YCC region
<b>Social Cohesion youth satellite event</b>	Youth Action	Parramatta	Greater Sydney & Wollongong
<b>Youth Workshops - Hume Con</b>	Hume Conservatorium	Goulburn	South Coast and Tablelands
<b>Youth engagement workshop, Scope Australia</b>	Scope Australia	Kingsgrove	Sydney
<b>Youth Workshops - Amity College</b>	Amity College Illawarra Campus	Shellharbour	South Coast and Tablelands
<b>Boorowa Central School</b>	Boorowa Central School	Boorowa	South Coast and Tablelands
<b>RUOk Day - Goulburn High School</b>	Luke Wallace - Goulburn Youth Services	Goulburn	South Coast and Tablelands
<b>Connect Gloucester</b>	RIEP & Gloucester Business Chamber	Gloucester	Mid North Coast
<b>Terry Campese Youth Mentoring Graduation 2024</b>	Goulburn Youth Services & Terry Campese Foundation	Goulburn	South Coast and Tablelands
<b>Youth Workshops - Central Coast Council</b>	Central Coast Council	Erina	Central Coast
<b>Youth Workshop Orange</b>	Office for Youth and Orange City Council	286 Lords Place, Orange NSW	Central West
<b>Museum After Dark</b>	Wagga Wagga City Council	Museum of the Riverina, Wagga Wagga	Riverina Murray
<b>Youth Workshop Lake Cargelligo</b>	Office for Youth and Lake Cargelligo Central School	65 Canada Street, Lake Cargelligo	Central West
<b>Headspace Bega YRG Consultation</b>	Bega Headspace	Bega	South East
<b>Joint Regional Youth Project</b>	Growing Together	Moruya	South East and South Coast & Tablelands

Event name	Event organiser	Event location	YCC region
<b>Hearspace Day</b>	Hearspace Batemans Bay	Batemans Bay	South East
<b>Bongil Bongil Youth Collective Workshop</b>	Bongil Bongil Youth Collective	Toormina	Mid North Coast
<b>Dave Taylor Park Official Opening</b>	Argyle Housing	Griffith	Riverina Murray
<b>Hearspace Open Day</b>	Hearspace Wagga	Wagga Wagga	Riverina Murray
<b>Hearspace Day - Batemans Bay</b>	Hearspace Batemans Bay	Batemans Bay Botanical Gardens	South East
<b>Bega Valley Youth Pop Up Drop In Centre</b>	NSW Juvenile Justice	Bega	South East
<b>Hearspace Narooma Tour and Youth Art Exhibition</b>	Hearspace Batemans Bay	Narooma	South East
<b>Youth workshop - Bankstown Outloud</b>	Bankstown Outloud	Bankstown, Sydney	Greater Sydney & Wollongong
<b>Shellharbour Youth Summit</b>	Shellharbour City Council	Shellharbour	South Coast and Tablelands
<b>Armidale Multicultural Youth Action Network Consultation</b>	Armidale Youth Action Network	Armidale (online facilitation)	New England and North West
<b>Youth Engagement Workshop - Dubbo</b>	Regional Youth	Dubbo	Central West
<b>Grow the Future Planning Session</b>	Grow the Future Program Manager	20 Auckland Street, Bega	South East

Event name	Event organiser	Event location	YCC region
<b>Wagga STARTTS Consultation Workshop</b>	Wagga STARTTS (Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors)	Wagga Wagga	Riverina Murray
<b>Youth Engagement Workshop with STARTTS participants</b>	NSW Service for Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS)	Coffs Harbour	Mid North Coast
<b>Aboriginal Young People Engagement for survey "Your Voice, Our Future"</b>	David Stone - Clontarf	Port Macquarie	Mid North Coast





**Office for  
YOUTH**