

**Young Shire Council**



**2010**

# Young Youth Strategy [YYS]



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B App Sc [Environmental Planning]

Community Development Initiatives

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## CONTENTS

Message from the Mayor .....	4
Executive Summary.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Methodology.....	5
Council commitment to Youth.....	6
Youth Defined .....	6
History .....	6
Youth Data.....	7
AustraliAn Bureau of Statistics [ABS].....	7
Crime Data.....	8
Mental Health.....	8
Consultation process.....	8
Consultative Bodies .....	8
Schools .....	9
Forum.....	10
Councillors.....	11
Agencies and Community Members .....	11
Key Points .....	12
Key Outcomes and Actions .....	15
APPENDIX A - DATA SOURCED FROM THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS.....	18
Age of Youth in Young by Sex.....	18
Non-School Qualification: Level of Education by Age by Sex in Young .....	19
Indigenous Youth in Young By Sex And Age.....	20
Youth Marital Status by Age by Sex.....	21
Number of Children Born by Female Youth .....	21
APPENDIX B - MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION.....	22
APPENDIX C – SCHOOL CONSULTATION – QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES.....	23
APPENDIX D - AGENCIES AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS – MAIN RESPONSES.....	25

### **Disclaimer**

Community Development Initiatives [CDI] is an independent, non-political consultancy that provides assistance to community groups, state and local government and non-government agencies in the areas of social research and community development. It is anticipated that this project will be valuable to Young Shire Council by providing practical information on which to make decisions. The opinions in this publication reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the funding organisation.

### **Acknowledgement**

The consultation process was undertaken by John Craig, Director, Community Development Initiatives on behalf of Young Shire Council. The assistance of the Council staff and in particular Craig Filmer and Sally Atkinson has been greatly appreciated. The quality of the information relied on the contribution of the councillors, community, agencies and members of Youth Sub Committee. Those who attended the consultations, without exception, gave freely of their time and views with an understanding the experience of being a youth in Young could be influenced by their input. They are to be congratulated for participating in a process aimed at ensuring Young Shire has a sustainable direction for youth.

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# Young Youth Strategy [YYS]

## MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Youth are an integral part of the rich diversity that makes up the population of the Shire of Young. Recognising the contribution of young people, optimising opportunity for their development and participation in community and civic life are key drivers that underpin the Young Youth Strategy. The actions flowing from this plan provide the strategic direction for the development of services and facilities for youth within the Shire.

I take this opportunity to thank all of those agencies and community members who freely gave of their time to provide their thoughts and opinions that have led to the development of the detailed strategies. The Youth Sub Committee has acted as the reference body in the development of the strategy and their involvement has proved highly valuable.

This strategy gives us a clear pathway to enhance the experience of being young in Young and I commend the document to all who can assist in achieving the listed actions.

*Stuart Freudenstein*

Mayor

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Young Shire Council's Youth Strategy outlines more than just future priorities for youth within the Shire; it provides a basis for a whole of Council and community approach to support young people. Some of the ways it will do this are by implementation of strategic actions as set out below:-

1. Advocate at a high level to have key services for youth located in Young.
2. Improve mental health services for local youth.
3. Implement a parenting program
4. Identify existing programs or programs that are needed to provide viable options for youth that are disengaged from the community [or at risk of being disengaged].
5. Compile a comprehensive list of services that are available to youth.
6. Instigate the provision of a youth development officer so the actions flowing from this strategy and other youth issues can be addressed
7. Develop a youth council as a voice of youth in Young.
8. The Youth Sub-Committee should be retained by Council in its current form to act as the reference group for the Young Youth Strategy.
9. Identify the current shortfall in cultural facilities for youth
10. Ensure crisis accommodation is made available for youth.
11. Provide a suitable skate park
12. There is a need to compile a comprehensive list of facilities that are available to youth.
13. Keep facilities that are utilised by youth at a reasonable standard of repair.
14. Investigate the provision of a youth hub
15. Advocate for the development and continuation of the youth programs to emulate the success of the youth at risk soccer team and programs conducted by the Police & Community Youth Club [PCYC].

Council aims to implement the strategic actions over the next 5 years in partnership with other levels of government, agencies and community organisations. Young Shire Council will provide leadership and work in partnership with young people, families, the community, other agencies and business in achieving these key deliverables.

## INTRODUCTION

The Young Youth Strategy 2010 sets out the key actions that are likely to improve the services and facilities for youth in the Shire. It provides the framework for actions along with clear responsibilities. This Strategic Plan reaffirms Council's commitment to young people as valued and participating community members through the clear directions set.

This strategy has been commissioned by the Young Shire Council. The aim of the strategy is multi faceted and the desired outcomes are as follows-

1. Highlight issues relevant to young people living in the Young Shire
2. Determine the degree to which current services are meeting the needs of young people
3. Present a sustainable service delivery framework that meets the ongoing needs of young people
4. Present strategies that seek to improve the health and well-being of all young people
5. Identify short and long term directions for the provision of youth services

## METHODOLOGY

This strategy has been developed under the guidance of Young Shire Council officers and has been the result of widespread consultation. This consultation has been detailed under the heading 'Consultation Process'.

Young Shire Councillors, the Youth Sub Committee, local schools, agencies operating in Young, people working with youth and youth were actively engaged in the process and it is noted there was a strong willingness to participate. This spirit of co-operation was primarily based on the understanding that the final strategy would see positive outcomes for both current and future local youth.

In all cases the information flowing from individuals, agencies and groups has been aggregated so that individuals are not identified. This method is utilised so as to encourage a free flow of thoughts and desires.

## COUNCIL COMMITMENT TO YOUTH

Young Shire Council works to improve the capacity and resilience of young people through the provision of services, programs and activities such as:

- Recreation and sporting facilities
- Library Services
- Youth Forums
- Facilitation of Young Shire Youth Sub-Committee via the Healthy Shires Committee

In defining the role of youth in the community Council could consider adopting a commitment statement which may be as uncomplicated as the following three points<sup>1</sup>-

- **Empowerment:** supporting young people to have greater control over their lives.
- **Purposeful engagement:** providing young people with opportunities to address issues that are relevant to them and influence decisions.
- **Inclusiveness:** ensuring that all young people are able to participate.

## YOUTH DEFINED

There is no universally accepted definition of youth. Youth have been described many different ways; sometimes as a particular age group, as a stage of life or as an attitude.

For policy development and research purposes, age is the key means used to identify and target the population groups of children and youth.

In this context, the age groups used to define children and youth may be based on the developmental stages (physical, cognitive and social) that occur in the transition to adulthood. Age based definitions may also be related to levels of dependency (physical, emotional, social and financial) that are experienced at different stages of development. For youth, age is also associated with varying levels of social responsibility and legal rights. In addition, children and youth may be defined for a specific purpose at hand, for example the development of a program to target a specific group<sup>2</sup>.

For the purposes of this strategy youth has been identified as the 12 to 25 age group based on a secondary school and tertiary education group and the group most likely to be dependants.

## HISTORY

There has been a history of specialists being employed to work with the youth of Young however these positions have been externally funded, relatively short-term and have not been sustained beyond the funding term.

A **Commonwealth funded position** under a plan entitled "Project 360" ran for 2 years over the local government areas of Young and Cootamundra. The aim was to identify issues for young people and develop strategies to close service gaps. Youth Councils were a central feature of the project to ensure input from young people, with some resources available for brokerage e.g. emergency accommodation, and projects like pop concerts.

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<sup>1</sup> Youth Affairs Council of Victoria

<sup>2</sup> ABS - improving statistics on children and youth, an information development plan - 490 7. 0 - 200 6

The Project funded resources for youth drop in centres in each town as well as running regular youth discos. The youth workers (1 in Cootamundra, 1 in Young) were primarily employed as community development workers, but also provided a welfare role.

Unfortunately no other funding was forthcoming for the project, nor was there opportunity for new funding.

The final report on the project reflected that due to the nature of youth work that Council was perhaps not the best auspice/supervisory body as the workers would benefit from support from other staff in a welfare role.

A **NSW funded position** drew upon the resources of the Attorney General's Department as the community was classified as 'at risk'. Whilst the funding was based on a crime and safety plan covering the entire community the focus of the employee was with youth within the Shire. The funding for this project was for 2 years and subsequently extended for a further 2 years. When the funding expired the position was not financially supported by the auspice body and there was insufficient local funding to continue the position.

## YOUTH DATA

When dealing with governments or agencies, especially when seeking funding, it is important to be able to show how Young is different and therefore why it should have a priority.

Whilst some information is available for youth services in Young on the "Make a Noise" website a comprehensive list of services and facilities does not currently exist and it is imperative that such a list be compiled, made available to all and kept current.

Data specific to youth in Young is not easy to find however the following three sources of information help paint a picture of the current situation.

### AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS [ABS]

Youth population data and subsequent analysis is made difficult when the widely accepted defined group of 12 to 25 age group is not identified in the ABS data. Within this data figures are often present as ages 14 to 25 but even this varies depending on the data being examined.

At the time of the 2006 census there were 1,965 young people aged between 12 - 25 years residing in the Shire. This constitutes 16.4% of Young Shire's total population and this can be compared to NSW where this age group represents 17%.

Most of the young people live in the town of Young with only a small percentage resident in the villages and rural areas.

**Appendix A** shows a series of data sets which help to paint a picture of the youth of Young.

The figures and graphs are as follows-

- Age of Youth in Young by Sex
- Non-School Qualification: Level of Education by Age by Sex in Young
- Indigenous Youth in Young By Sex And Age
- Youth Marital Status by Age by Sex
- Number of Children Born by Female Youth

## CRIME DATA

All local government areas differ in the way their population interact and it is these differences that give each area its unique attributes. In looking at the youth of Young there seems to be considerable concern in the community that there are abnormal rates of crime within the Shire.

To gain a picture of the real situation statistics were provided by the Cootamundra Local Area Command and comparisons were drawn with other towns within that command. Whilst the data was not available for public release an analysis of the figures covering a variety of categories over the past 13 months shows that Young does, in fact, stand out as having high figures in many of the categories.

It is important to note that a juvenile, as described in the statistics, is someone aged between 10 and 17.

## MENTAL HEALTH

The Greater Southern Area Health Service conducted community consultation in Young in 2009 specifically to investigate youth mental health. Nine service providers were interviewed to identify issues, gaps in services and the capacities relevant to youth mental health in the Young community. Services targeted included: education, justice, drug and alcohol, mental health, employment, accommodation, recreational services and income support. During the time of the study Young Shire Council hosted the Youth Forum and information from this was included in the results and the discussion.

The results of this consultation are shown in Appendix B

## CONSULTATION PROCESS

Young Shire has a positive approach to community engagement and as a result has set in place mechanisms that allow feedback and input from residents and specialists alike.

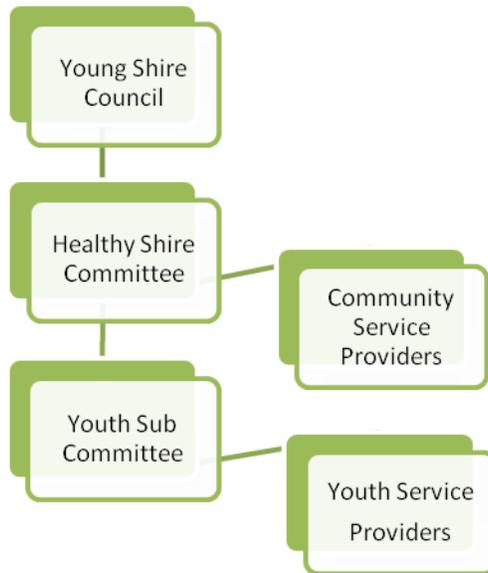
## CONSULTATIVE BODIES

The Young Shire Council has embraced the principles of the Healthy Shires program which focus on, and ultimately aims to improve, the social well-being of the community.

To assist Council to develop the program and to provide community advice on potential projects and services the Council developed a Healthy Shires Committee (YHSC). This Committee (Council's committee for social action) has become the reference body for Council's Social and Community Plan and the third version of this is currently in the process of development. It was recognised early in the life of the Healthy Shires Committee that there was a heightened emphasis on youth issues within the Shire.

In October 2008 the YHSC conducted a planning session related to youth and this was followed by a forum in March 2009. This forum involved a whiteboard exercise to specifically focus on youth issues. As a result a Youth Sub Committee was endorsed to specifically consider issues related to youth and to recommend actions to the Healthy Shires Committee. The Healthy Shires Committee in turn provides advice on community issues (including youth matters) to the Council. It is important to understand that the Healthy Shires Committee and the Youth Sub Committee are both advisory committees of Council and not bodies that have a mandate to take action in their own right.

A schematic of the hierarchy is shown below-



The Youth Sub Committee has been the reference group for the compilation of this strategy.

Following the collection of the issues from the community, youth specialists and agencies the pertinent points were analysed, grouped and condensed several times until a list that could be prioritised was produced. This list was then used by the reference group [Youth Sub Committee] to reach a final decision on the 15 highest priorities.

## SCHOOLS

In mid 2009 Young Shire Council invited the following schools to participate in a consultation process:-

### Primary

- Young North Public School
- Young Public School
- St Mary's Primary School
- Monteagle School
- Koorawatha School

### Secondary

- Young High School
- Hennessy Catholic College

The aim was to organise a forum with a representative group of students at each of the schools with a view to determining the issues that those in attendance saw as important for youth in their area. This process gave a sound representative sample. It should be noted that the feedback has been combined so that comments flowing from any one school cannot be identified. A full set of question and abbreviated responses is shown in Appendix C.

## FORUM

As part of the process to gain a better understanding of issues related to youth in Young a forum was convened in March 2009. This session was well attended by service providers and other interested parties. The aim was to broadly analyse the current situation related to youth in Young and tabulate a list of issues along with explanatory comments and a list of actions. The outcomes of the forum have been collated and analysed as part of the process to develop the Youth Strategy for the Shire.

### **SERVICE AVAILABILITY**

- There needs to be a comprehensive list of services available for youth
- There is a demonstrated need for Youth Assistance in the area compared to other towns
- Many services are from Out of Town
- what support resources are out there – people are unaware of opportunities
- Depression/suicide/mental health issues
- Crisis Accommodation & Homelessness
- How do we identify youth in need?

### **YOUTH INVOLVEMENT / EMPOWERMENT**

- Need to identify what Youth want
- Need to revitalise Youth Council

### **PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH**

- Programs needed for youth
- Have a central & accessible location where youth can access information
- Build on good things
- Drop in Centre
- Boredom
- Isolation

### **YOUTH FUNDING**

- Central point required for grant funding
- Youth worker or Coordinator needed to co-ordinate all available youth services

### **EDUCATION**

- Truancy
- Schools to provide opportunities for accessing TAFE
- Need to provide opportunities for alternate learning for less academic youth e.g. trade skills, etc
- Children have difficulty in engaging in School

### **PCYC**

- Needs to be accessible
- Underutilised
- PCYC image/issues

### **CULTURAL**

- Arts & Crafts Centre lacking

## OTHER ISSUES

- Parental involvement & responsibility (accountability)
- Need to have a family focus
- Lack of/access to facilities for Youth in villages.

## COUNCILLORS

The Councillors of Young Shire was interviewed individually in the course of the preparation of the new social and community plan. Although the discussion was based on a series of standard questions, including youth issues, there was ample opportunity for views to be expressed outside of the set questions. The responses to the questions have been aggregated to give a collective view from Councillors of youth issues<sup>3</sup> within the Shire.

- a. A centre dedicated to youth and centrally located would be beneficial
- b. A youth worker is needed
- c. Agencies that deal with youth matters are not permanently located in Young
- d. Better utilisation of the movie theatre
- e. Committed to the provision of a skate park
- f. Concern over vandalism and anti-social behaviour in general
- g. Establishment of the Youth Sub Committee was seen as a positive step
- h. Heated pool would provide all year around activity
- i. Lack of post-school opportunities for training
- j. Need mental health support for youth
- k. PCYC is valued by the community
- l. Provision of one-off entertainment for youth would be a positive step
- m. The library may need a revamp
- n. Youth and the community have a lack of knowledge of services available

## AGENCIES AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

A key focus of the consultation was seeking the active participation of agencies involved with youth within the Shire. It was gratifying to find that wherever possible the officers working within the agencies gave freely of their time and insightful observations.

The invitation to participate was also extended to community members by invitation and by public advertisement.

The main responses to come from these interviews are listed in Appendix D.

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<sup>3</sup> *These items are listed alphabetically and not in order of importance.*

## MAJOR POINTS

Have widely consulted within the community and obtained considerable feedback from a wide cross-section of people in Young, with an emphasis on those who engage with youth, the major points can be drawn out. These points have been sorted into five areas being-

- Leadership and Coordination
- Spaces and Places
- Connection and Partnership
- Transitions; learning and working
- Health and Well-being

### Leadership and Coordination

- (a) Central point required for grant funding
- (b) Council does not see as their responsibility - Council: Need to be more aware of needs
- (c) Current facilities – there needs to be a comprehensive list
- (d) Current services – there needs to be a comprehensive list of services available for youth
- (e) Empowerment: supporting young people to have greater control over their lives.
- (f) Have a central & accessible location where youth can access information
- (g) Hub for services needed
- (h) In defining the role of youth in the community Council could consider adopting a commitment statement which may be as uncomplicated as the following three points<sup>4</sup>-
  - **Empowerment:** supporting young people to have greater control over their lives.
  - **Purposeful engagement:** providing young people with opportunities to address issues that are relevant to them and influence decisions.
  - **Inclusiveness:** ensuring that all young people are able to participate.
- (i) Lack of onsite Government services / Varying boundaries for agencies
- (j) Lack of recognition of problems within the community
- (k) More advocacy.
- (l) Need a strategic approach
- (m) Programs are often short term
- (n) The availability of information on a whole range of issues with suggestions such as putting information on school diaries, phone and/or internet help lines and youth help cards - Youth and the community have a lack of knowledge of services available - What support resources are out there – people are unaware of opportunities - A method of advertising events and activities
- (o) The Youth Sub Committee has been the reference group for the compilation of this strategy- Establishment of the Youth Sub Committee was seen as a positive step - Youth Sub Committee is positive
- (p) Youth worker or Coordinator needed to co-ordinate all available youth services - Youth worker at higher level than case workers - Need a youth worker- Youth Community Development Officer is proposed if funding can be attracted. Council as funding partner - A youth worker is needed - Youth worker to drive the outcomes from the strategy

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<sup>4</sup> Youth Affairs Council of Victoria

## Spaces and Places

- (a) A centre dedicated to youth and centrally located would be beneficial - Drop in Centre
- (b) Better transportation as some facilities and activities difficult to get to
- (c) Crisis Accommodation & Homelessness - Lack of crisis accommodation is the biggest issue - Crisis accommodation – none available - Homeless youth have no options
- (d) Cultural activities are hit and miss dance is commercial and expensive - School of music - expensive - Limited graphic arts programs
- (e) Housing and accommodation in Young is a big issue – problem getting professionals to come
- (f) Infrastructure such as the swimming pool and park equipment needs to be well located.
- (g) Maintenance particularly related to litter, graffiti and public toilets were common issues;
- (h) More youth activity facilities including ten pin bowling, skate park, shopping mall and an upgraded movie theatre - More recreational facilities with the most mentioned being; ten pin bowling, skate-park, cycle tracks including BMX, rock wall climbing and an arcade type games venue - skate park – Council committed to the provision of a skate park - skate park needs progress- funding needs finalisation
- (i) The Cinema is good but needs regular big shows and more current movies even if this costs more - Better utilisation of the movie theatre
- (j) The library may need a revamp - The town library should be a focal point and safe haven for youth however it is unattractive and in need of a major upgrade - Library does not have as much use by youth as it should - Library does not have enough computers to cater to the need - Library needs a semi private area for youth
- (k) The swimming pool needs to be heated with more things to do. It is currently seen as uninviting - Heated pool would provide all year around activity
- (l) Youth centre and/or electronic games centre

## Police and Community Youth Club

- PCYC image/issues
- PCYC is valued by the community - Needs to be accessible - Underutilised
- PCYC was seen as a positive
- PCYC should be used more – some kids don't relate to it
- PCYC has a school holiday program but difficult hours for working parents
- PCYC good for sporty kids
- Supply more information on other services from the PCYC

## Connection and Partnership

- (a) There was a common belief that there were not enough organised youth events including those centred on bands/music - Provision of one-off entertainment for youth would be a positive step - The provision of more organised events with the common theme that these be based around music or culture - Passive entertainment especially after school
- (b) The Young Show needs to have greater emphasis on teens.
- (c) There is an apparent lack of “Communication” as the media are seen as “unprofessional” and there is a lack of opportunity to disseminate information regarding events and activities.
- (d) Non sport options needed – art classes, dances, music etc. - Arts & Crafts Centre lacking
- (e) Programs needed for youth
- (f) Agencies that deal with youth matters are not permanently located in Young - Many services are

from Out of Town

- (g) Lack of/access to facilities for Youth in villages.
- (h) Develop youth forum - There was support for a Youth Council which would meet face to face on a quarterly basis. Re-establish youth council - Purposeful engagement: providing young people with opportunities to address issues that are relevant to them and influence decisions.
- (i) Youth at risk soccer team has been successful with up to 15 players with limited funding

### **Transitions; learning and working**

- (a) A living skills program would be great
- (b) Alternative schooling for problem children - Children have difficulty in engaging in School
- (c) High suspension rate at high schools
- (d) May be high level of unemployment
- (e) Need a cafe to be used for training and social networking - Jamie Oliver type centre to teach cooking - Cafe could have other youth services and information available and maybe auspice by Neighbourhood Centre
- (f) Need appropriate local post-school education options - Lack of post-school opportunities for training
- (g) Need to provide opportunities for alternate learning for less academic youth e.g. trade skills, etc.
- (h) Parental involvement & responsibility (accountability) - Need to have a family focus - Building family skills important
- (i) Schools to provide opportunities for accessing TAFE
- (j) There is a demonstrated need for Youth Assistance in the area compared to other towns
- (k) Truancy - Truancy – reputedly an issue - Truancy is a problem
- (l) Youth allowance provided but this will change – must stay at school until 17

### **Health and Well-being**

- (a) “Headspace” not in Young
- (b) Assistance with issues was seen as a high need area whether this be within the family or from teachers or school counsellors.
- (c) Deliver Youth Mental Health First Aid annually to the Young service providers and professionals;
- (d) Depression/suicide/mental health issues - Need mental health support for youth
- (e) Drug and alcohol counselling needed
- (f) Educating parents
- (g) Explore the feasibility of delivering training covering topics such as eating disorders, deliberate self-harm etc.
- (h) Homeless an issue – in tunnels
- (i) Look at youth at risk
- (j) Need intervention with parents
- (k) Pilot an early intervention program in Young, possibly an adolescent parenting program which enhances family relationships and resiliency;
- (l) Pilot early intervention programs for depression and anxiety for young people; and
- (m) Rural situation has added to problems
- (n) Suicide normally raises the issues in town

- (o) Teen pregnancy – is this an issue?
- (p) There is a gap in the youth area because of lack of services
- (q) There should be more people working with youth - Short term intervention is missing
- (r) Youth suffer from boredom
- (s) Youth suffer from isolation
- (t) Youth suicide is an issue being addressed by Hilltop Suicide prevention network

## KEY OUTCOMES AND ACTIONS

In the 'Major Points' section of this report [see page 12] the 79 issues that were raised in the consultation were sorted into 5 categories. In this section each of those points is listed, a strategy devised and, where appropriate, action is recommended. This process was conducted by the Youth Sub Committee as the reference group. The issues are sorted into priority order for each of the 5 categories.

<i><b>Issue</b></i>	<i><b>Strategy</b></i>	<i><b>Action</b></i>
<b>1. Leadership and Coordination</b>		
1.1. Current services – there needs to be a comprehensive list	Compile a list of services that are available to youth.	The Youth Sub Committee would compile the initial list and pass it Council for publication on its website. The Youth Sub Committee will review the list on a quarterly basis and pass on alterations to Council for an update of the website.
1.2. Youth development officer	Provide a youth development officer so that the actions flowing from this strategy and other youth issues can be addressed	Request Council to instigate the employment of a youth development officer.
1.3. Continued role of the Youth Sub-Committee.	The Youth Sub-Committee should be retained by Council in its current form to act as the reference group for the Young Youth Strategic Plan.	Request Council to endorse the ongoing role of the Youth Sub-Committee
1.4. Current facilities – there needs to be a comprehensive list	Compile a list of facilities that are available to youth.	The Youth Sub Committee would compile the initial list and pass it Council for publication on its website. The Youth Sub

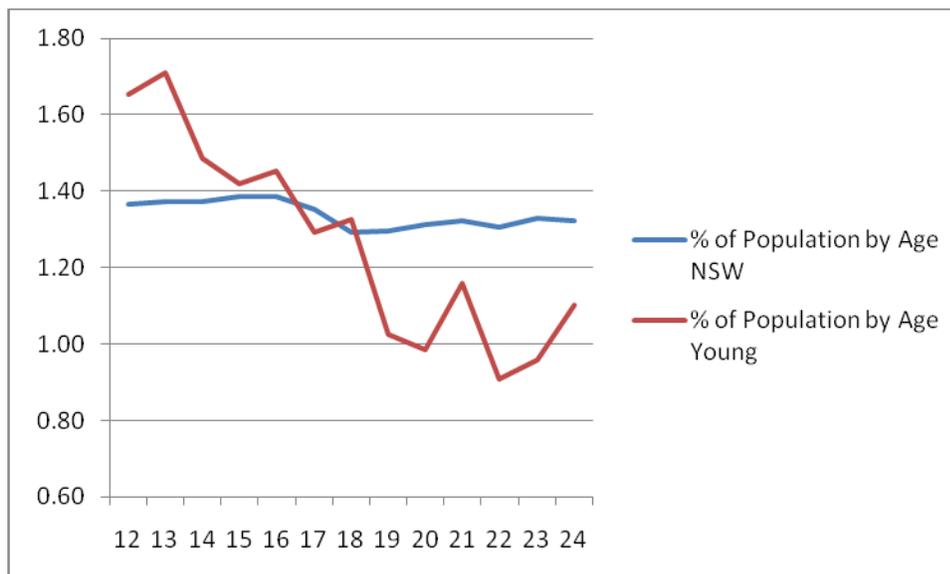
		Committee will review the list on a quarterly basis and pass on alterations to Council for an update of the website.
<b>2. Spaces and Places</b>		
2.1. Provide a location where youth can easily access youth related information	Investigate the provision of a youth hub	Request Council to consider the provision of a youth hub
2.2. Skate park	Provide a suitable skate park	Request Council to provide a skate park as a matter of priority.
2.3. Maintenance	Keep facilities that are utilised by youth at a reasonable standard of repair.	Request Council to investigate the maintenance standard for facilities with special attention to those used by youth.
<b>3. Connection and Partnership</b>		
3.1. Service providers for youth need to be located in Young	Advocate at a high level to have key services for youth located in Young.	Request Council to provide high level representations to have key agencies related to youth located in the town
3.2. Establish a Youth Council	Develop a youth council as a voice of youth in Young.	Request Council to establish a youth council.
3.3. Expand cultural facilities	Identify the current shortfall in cultural facilities.	Ask the Youth Council to identify the shortfall in cultural activities and present the results to Council for consideration
3.4. Youth engagement programs	Continue to foster activities with a special emphasis on sport to encourage youth at risk to interact with the mainstream community.	Advocate for the development and continuation of the youth programs to emulate the success of the youth at risk soccer team and programs conducted by the Police & Community Youth Club [PCYC].

<b>4. Transitions; learning and working</b>		
4.1. Alternate educational programs for disengaged youth	Identify existing programs or programs that are needed to provide viable options for youth that are disengaged from the community [or at risk of being disengaged] and seek to provide suitable programs.	Request advice from relevant agencies on the current availability of programs for disengaged youth with a view to providing suitable services.
<b>5. Health and Wellbeing</b>		
5.1. Mental Health issues	Improve mental health services for local youth.	Advocate with the Greater Southern Area Health Service to implement the strategies identified in the report entitled “Youth Mental Health in Young” vis. <i>Headspace</i> and other suitable programs.
5.2. Positive intervention with parents	Implement a parenting program	Request Greater Southern Area Health Service and other appropriate agencies to implement educational and or training programs to allow parent to better cope with the raising of children. Truancy should be one of the issues addressed in these programs.
5.3. Crisis accommodation	Ensure crisis accommodation is made available for youth.	Request Council to investigate the lack of crisis accommodation for youth and advocate for the provision of this vital service.

AGE OF YOUTH IN YOUNG BY SEX.

Age	Males	Females	Persons	% of Population by Age	
				NSW	Young
12	100	97	197	1.37	1.65
13	101	101	202	1.37	1.71
14	97	82	179	1.37	1.49
15	88	81	169	1.39	1.42
16	94	80	174	1.39	1.45
17	82	73	155	1.35	1.29
18	82	75	157	1.29	1.33
19	70	51	121	1.30	1.03
20	70	48	118	1.31	0.98
21	75	64	139	1.32	1.16
22	52	54	106	1.31	0.91
23	58	59	117	1.33	0.96
24	59	72	131	1.32	1.10
	<b>1,028</b>	<b>937</b>	<b>1,965</b>		

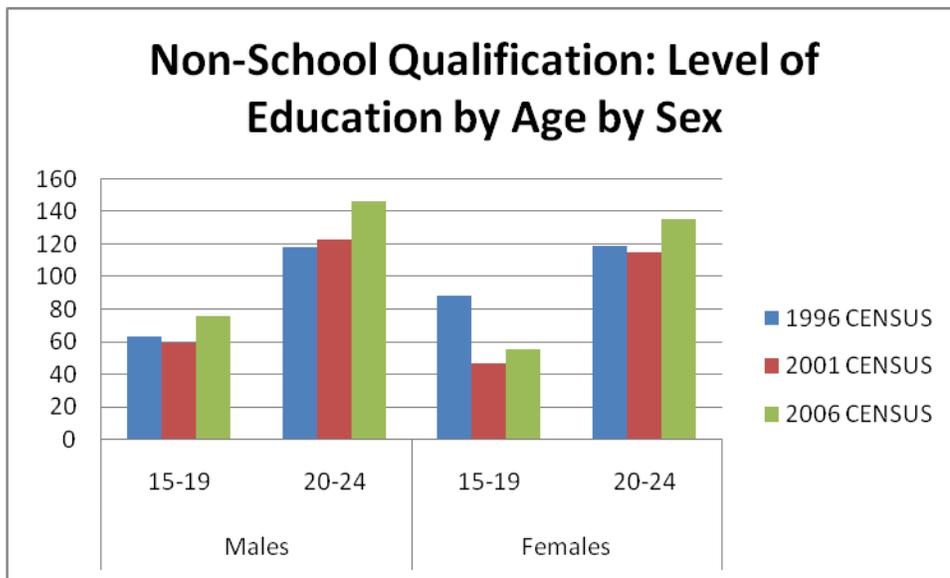
2006 Census of Population and Housing Young (A) (Local Government Area) - NSW Count of persons (excludes overseas visitors)



These figures show that the youth component of the population in Young Shire is greater than for NSW up to the age of 16 however the level falls below the NSW percentage in the 17 to 24 age brackets.

NON-SCHOOL QUALIFICATION: LEVEL OF EDUCATION BY AGE BY SEX IN YOUNG

	AGE				Total
	15-19	20-24	15-19	20-24	
<b>1996 CENSUS</b>	<b>Males</b>		<b>Females</b>		
Postgraduate Degree	0	0	0	0	
Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate	0	3	0	3	
Bachelor Degree	0	10	0	19	
Advanced Diploma and Diploma	0	6	0	25	
Certificate:					
Certificate nfd	<i>n.a.</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	
Certificate III & IV	11	74	3	14	
Certificate I & II	5	8	10	31	
Total	16	82	13	45	
Level of education inadequately described	0	0	3	0	
Level of education not stated	47	17	72	27	
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>388</b>
<b>2001 CENSUS</b>	<b>Males</b>		<b>Females</b>		
Postgraduate Degree	0	0	0	0	
Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate	0	3	0	0	
Bachelor Degree	0	6	0	17	
Advanced Diploma and Diploma	0	3	0	10	
Certificate:					
Certificate nfd	0	3	4	0	
Certificate III & IV(d)	17	74	8	36	
Certificate I & II(e)	0	6	0	23	
Total	17	83	12	59	
Level of education inadequately described	3	3	0.00	4.00	
Level of education not stated	39	25	35	25	
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>344</b>
<b>2006 CENSUS</b>	<b>Males</b>		<b>Females</b>		
Postgraduate Degree	0	0	0	0	
Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate	0	0	0	0	
Bachelor Degree	0	13	0	38	
Advanced Diploma and Diploma	0	6	3	10	
Certificate:					
Certificate nfd	0	3	0	9	
Certificate III & IV(d)	23	83	6	43	
Certificate I & II(e)	7	4	5	12	
Total	30	90	11	64	
Level of education inadequately described	3	6	4	3	
Level of education not stated	43	31	37	20	
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>412</b>



**Derived from ABS Table T22**

These tables show:

There is an increasing level of male youth in Young gaining non-school qualifications over the 3 census periods however the female age group 15 - 19 there has been a significant decline in those attaining a qualification. For females in the 20 – 24 age group the trend is positive.

#### INDIGENOUS YOUTH IN YOUNG BY SEX AND AGE

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
<i>1996 CENSUS</i>			
10-14 years	8	9	17
15-19 years	9	5	14
20-24 years	9	3	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>43</b>
<i>2001 CENSUS</i>			
10-14 years	12	8	20
15-19 years	12	11	23
20-24 years	11	4	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>58</b>
<i>2006 CENSUS</i>			
10-14 years	21	21	42
15-19 years	11	12	23
20-24 years	14	12	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>91</b>

Derived from ABS Table T06

Over the past 3 census periods the number of indigenous youth in Young has more than doubled however the group as a percentage of the population is small. In 1996 indigenous youth in Young represented only 2% of the population rising to 2.7% in 2001 and 3.9% by 2006.

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#### YOUTH MARITAL STATUS BY AGE BY SEX

##### Youth aged 15-19 years

	<u>Married in a registered marriage</u>		<u>Married in a de facto marriage</u>	
	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
1996 CENSUS	3	3	3	16
2001 CENSUS	3	0	4	24
2006 CENSUS	0	6	6	22

##### Youth aged 20-24years

	<u>Married in a registered marriage</u>		<u>Married in a de facto marriage</u>	
	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
1996 CENSUS	23	56	41	59
2001 CENSUS	18	41	62	75
2006 CENSUS	20	41	57	75

*Derived From ABS Table T05*

There are low numbers of married males and females in 15 – 19 age bracket in Young however there are greater numbers of females in *de facto* marriages.

In the 20 – 24 age bracket there are many more females than males in the in both marriages and *de facto* relationships. The figures have remained stable over the 5 year period from 2001 to 2006.

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#### NUMBER OF CHILDREN BORN BY FEMALE YOUTH

	<u>Number of children born</u>						<b>Total</b>
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6 or more</i>	
1996 CENSUS							
15-19 years	15	0	0	0	0	0	<b>15</b>
20-24 years	54	27	7	0	3	0	<b>144</b>
2006 CENSUS							
15-19 years	18	4	0	0	0	3	<b>44</b>
20-24 years	42	35	7	6	0	0	<b>157</b>

*Derived From ABS Table T07*

There has been a significant increase in the number of children born to females in the 15–19 age bracket when 1996 is compared to 2006<sup>5</sup>. It should be noted that there seems to be an anomaly in the 2006 census figures for the 15–19 year age bracket as 3 females are recorded as having 6 or more babies. If this is incorrect then the increase in babies born to this group would be dramatically reduced.

In the 20 – 24 age bracket the numbers have risen but modestly.

## APPENDIX B - MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION

The Greater Southern Area Health Service conducted community consultation in Young in 2009 specifically to investigate youth mental health. Nine service providers were interviewed to identify issues, gaps in services and the capacities relevant to youth mental health in the Young community. Services targeted included: education, justice, drug and alcohol, mental health, employment, accommodation, recreational services and income support. During the time of the study Young Shire Council hosted the Youth Forum and information from this was included in the results and the discussion.

The report concluded that “family conflict and breakdown” was the most common issue that young people presented with when they attended services. This was followed by the mental health disorders depression and anxiety. Anti-social behaviour was also identified as a concern, and was reinforced at the Youth Forum. These issues appeared to be compounded by a lack of prevention and early intervention programs for young people and their families. The majority of early intervention programs appeared to be targeted to pre-school and primary school aged children.”

The report noted that whilst there were agencies that were confident in identifying and supporting young people with emerging mental health issues such as depression, anxiety and substance use disorders however there was less confidence that those with deliberate self-harm, eating disorders, psychosis and Bipolar Affective Disorder could be catered for.

The concept of “Mental Health First Aid” was identified as an educational need for local community members and professionals. Furthermore, education programs regarding the disorders that people had less knowledge and confidence about may also be required.

The author concluded that “despite the gaps in service, Young has a strong foundation for expanding services to young people. Importantly, the community already recognises that youth is an important target group. There are numerous services who currently deliver services to young people, and a number of organisations have expressed interest in expanding or developing new avenues for programs.”

There were four substantive recommendations flowing from the report-

- Deliver Youth Mental Health First Aid annually to the Young service providers and professionals;

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<sup>5</sup> Figures for the 2001 census for this category are not available.

- Pilot an early intervention program in Young, possibly an adolescent parenting program which enhances family relationships and resiliency;
- Pilot early intervention programs for depression and anxiety for young people; and
- Explore the feasibility of delivering training covering topics such as eating disorders, deliberate self-harm etc

## APPENDIX C – SCHOOL CONSULTATION – QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

There were 10 questions asked and the common responses flowing from each question can be found in Appendix C is shown below.

### 1. From a youth perspective, what do you like about Young? What does Young do well and why are you proud to live here?

- The people of Young are friendly and the town is progressive. This has led to a feeling that they are part of a good community;
- Sporting facilities and opportunities presented to them are of a high standard, diverse and well organised;
- The town is clean, spacious and attractive;
- There were opportunities for youth in Young as the schools are good and the town is geographically well positioned;
- Parks and passive recreation areas were seen as a feature of the Shire
- There was a feeling of safety in the town.

### 2. From your viewpoint and age group, what is not to like about Young? What do we not do well?

- Many believed that more general facilities were required in town however there was a wide variation in what those facilities should be with no common theme.
- Maintenance particularly related to litter, graffiti and public toilets were common issues;
- There was a common belief that there were not enough organised youth events including those centred on bands/music;
- Many participants commented on the need for more youth activity facilities and suggested a variety of facilities including ten pin bowling, skate park, shopping mall and an upgraded movie theatre;
- There was a belief that some youth were involved in anti social activity.

### 3. What do you think Young needs, to make it better for you and people your age? Are we missing anything you need?

- More recreational facilities with the most mentioned being; ten pin bowling, skate park, cycle tracks including BMX, rock wall climbing and an arcade type games venue.
- The provision of more organised events with the common theme that these be based around music or culture.

### 4. Is there anything we need to do better? Something we have but you do not think it works

**or happens well enough?**

- The swimming pool needs to be heated with more things to do. It is currently seen as uninviting.
- The Young Show needs to have greater emphasis on teens.
- There is an apparent lack of “Communication” as the media are seen as “unprofessional” and there is a lack of opportunity to disseminate information regarding events and activities.
- Infrastructure such as the swimming pool and park equipment needs to be well located.
- The Cinema is good but needs regular big shows and more current movies even if this costs more.

**5. Do you have friends or know other students who have problems that do not seem to get fixed?**

The responses mostly fell into 2 broad areas:-

- The availability of information on a whole range of issues with suggestions such as putting information on school diaries, phone and/or internet help lines and youth help cards.
- Assistance with issues was seen as a high need area whether this be within the family or from teachers or school counsellors.

**6. Do you ever feel bored or that there is nothing to do? Explain why you feel that way or what can the government do to not have you feel that way.**

The most prevalent responses centred on the provision of facilities and activities.

- Passive entertainment especially after school
- Skate park
- Better transportation as some facilities and activities difficult to get to
- Youth centre and/or electronic games centre
- A method of advertising events and activities
- Non sport options needed – art classes, dances, music etc
- PCYC was seen as a positive

**7. Do you play sports or do something as a group activity (music, dance movies ride or hang out)? What is it and do we have enough things in this town to do it well?**

If the responses are shown as a guide the most popular sports in Young for youth are –

- |                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| • Music          | • Motorbikes [4]   |
| • Netball [5]    | • Rugby [4]        |
| • Soccer [5]     | • Rugby League [4] |
| • Swim [5]       | • Tennis [4]       |
| • Basketball [4] | • Cricket [3]      |
| • Futsal [4]     | • Pushbike [3]     |

**8. What do you want to be or study toward when you leave school? Is there training for that in our region? If you went away to study would you like to come back to Young? Why/Not?**

Of those who responded there was a great deal of diversity in the type of post-school ambitions. 66% of the respondents wanted to go to university with almost all stating that they would undertake some type of additional training when they left school.

Just over a quarter of those interviewed stated they would return to Young after they had completed their studies or training whilst another 50% were unsure. Only 23% said they would not be returning.

**9. Do you think people in government should actually talk to students and youth more often to consider their opinion? Would you be involved in a student forum or Youth Council if one was organised?**

The participants thought there was value in them being involved in consultation. There was support for a Youth Council which would meet face to face on a quarterly basis. The suggestion was that the Youth Council be Issues based, supported by a mentor and face-to face with community leaders. The issues/achievements of the Youth Council should be documented and distributed so that all youth had the opportunity to understand issues, processes and outcomes.

**10. If you needed help and support where in Young would you go to for help?**

This question was not well answered in the process however this may be a result of the participants not knowing where to access such “help”.

## APPENDIX D - AGENCIES AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS – MAIN RESPONSES

The following is a list of responses to the community and agency interview sessions. They have been sorted alphabetically as there is no weighting on any one point -

- “Headspace” not in Young
- A living skills program would be great
- A lot of homeless – in tunnels
- A youth needs analysis was done through TAFE
- Alternative schooling for problem children
- Building family skills important
- Cafe could have other youth services and information available and maybe auspice by Neighbourhood Centre
- Council does not see as their responsibility
- Council: Need to be more aware of needs
- Crisis accommodation – none available
- cultural activities are hit and miss
- dance is commercial and expensive
- Develop youth forum
- Drug and alcohol counselling needed
- Educating parents
- Gay and lesbian community growing – numbers can’t be measured
- High suspension rate at high schools
- Homeless youth have no options
- Housing and accommodation in Young is a big issue – problem getting professionals to come
- Hub for services needed
- Lack of crisis accommodation is the biggest issue
- Lack of onsite Government services / Varying boundaries for agencies
- Lack of recognition of problems within the community
- Library does not have as much use by youth as it should
- Library does not have enough computers to cater to the need

- Library needs a semi private area for youth
- Limited graphic arts programs
- Look at youth at risk
- May be high level of unemployment
- More advocacy
- Need a cafe to be used for training and social networking - Jamie Oliver type centre to teach cooking
- Need a strategic approach
- Need a youth worker
- Need intervention with parents
- Nothing to do
- PCYC good for sporty kids
- PCYC has a school holiday program but difficult hours for working parents
- PCYC is good
- PCYC should be used more – some kids don't relate to it
- Police – very hard on some kids who have had problems
- Programs are often short term
- Re-establish youth council
- Rural situation has added to problems
- School of music - expensive
- Short term intervention is missing
- Skate park needs progress- funding needs finalisation
- Sport is easily accessible
- Suicide normally raises the issues in town
- Supply more information on other services from the PCYC
- Teen pregnancy – is this an issue?
- The town library should be a focal point and safe haven for youth however it is unattractive and in need of a major upgrade
- There is a bad image created by a few
- There is a gap in the youth area because of lack of services
- There should be more people working with youth
- Truancy – reputedly an issue
- Truancy is a problem
- Youth allowance provided but this will change – must stay at school until 17
- Youth are often seen just hanging around
- Youth at risk soccer team has been successful with up to 15 players with limited funding
- Youth Community Development Officer is proposed if funding can be attracted. Council as funding partner.
- Youth is a problem – some big issues
- Youth Sub Committee is positive
- Youth suicide is an issue being addressed by Hilltop Suicide prevention network
- Youth worker at higher level than case workers
- Youth worker to drive the outcomes from the strategy