
Youth Strategy 2022-2025

@surfcoastyouth

Acknowledgement of Country

Surf Coast Shire spans the traditional lands of the Wadawurrung Peoples, and the Gulidjan and Gadubanud Peoples of the Maar nation. We acknowledge their Ancestors who cared for the land, rivers and sea - and all of its creatures – for thousands of generations. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future who continue on this path.

Surf Coast Shire Council is seeking to build strong relationships with our Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our community. Council is working towards ongoing partnerships with Traditional Owners, that are respectful of their culture and traditions and supports their respective strategic goals.



Celebrating Diversity and Inclusion

We will make every effort to ensure that all of our facilities, programs and events are respectful and inclusive of everyone in our community, including LGBTQI+ people, people with disability and culturally and linguistically diverse people. We will foster a safe and welcoming environment for everyone. We will work hard to address the needs of all young people so they can thrive.

In delivery of this Youth Strategy we will ensure all we do is cognisant and considerate of our diverse community.

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Message from the Mayor

Being a young person today is very different to how it was for me.

There's the internet, social media, smartphones and so much information at our fingertips. Then throw in two years of intermittent lockdowns and remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

It's been a period of significant change.

At the same time, we have a generation that is extremely tech-savvy, creative, entrepreneurial, connected and caring.

Our goal is to ensure that all 5,200 of our local young people living in the Surf Coast Shire, aged 12 to 25 years, find what they're passionate about and are supported to thrive in life. We want our young people to be heard, to make a difference and be supported as they navigate their way through our changing world.

Council's role here is to support young people to reach their potential by partnering with experts and focusing on preventative care. We need to ensure our approach is tailored to the needs of young people in today's world.

Recently, we ran a Youth Census (2021) to find out what matters most to our local young people and how we can help. This invaluable insight along with the work we do with external partners and our local young people has greatly assisted in guiding the development of this Youth Strategy.

The Youth Strategy sets the direction for Council's work and how we collaborate with other organisations and groups so that young people in the Surf Coast Shire can live healthy and happy lives.

I am looking forward to seeing this strategy and actions evolve to support the young people of our community.

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Liz'.

Cr Liz Pattison

Mayor, Surf Coast Shire Council



Message from the Surf Coast Secondary College Principal

Our youth are not just the future, they are what matters right now. Investing in supporting our young people to grow, learn and flourish is one of the most important actions that we can take as a community to ensure that it prospers into the future.

I am very privileged to work each day with almost 1000 of the young people that live in our local area as the principal at Surf Coast Secondary College. That is one fifth of the current youth population in the Surf Coast who are supported locally by our great school to engage in furthering their learning and wellbeing in their local community. As a school, we understand that learning takes place beyond the classroom walls, and working in partnership with the Surf Coast Shire and other local entities to ensure that our young people have an abundance of opportunities to connect to their local community, find meaning, give back and discover more about themselves is vital.

The Surf Coast Youth Census of 2021 has helped our community to identify some important areas for us, as adults, to work together on to improve further the great opportunities that young people have in our local area. I know that the students from Surf Coast Secondary College who participated in the survey, and the focus groups that followed, felt listened to, valued and look forward to seeing what the community can deliver to make a positive impact on improving their experiences even further.

The youth that I am lucky to work with every day are incredible people; they are passionate about local issues, they are supportive of each other, they want to contribute to a brighter future and they all value where they live. I look forward to all of the local schools in the Surf Coast area working in collaboration to help make this Youth Strategy's vision a reality for our young people and to empower the voice of our youth further as we begin to make the words on paper take shape.

Erin Wright

Principal – Surf Coast Secondary College



Message from the Lorne P-12 College Principal

Every child and young person along the coast has an abundance of strength and knowledge that deserves to be heard and supported. We know that good physical and mental health is integral to youth resilience and a quality life.

Our youth draw their resilience from positive experiences and qualities that start from a very young age, and this helps shape them into becoming caring, responsible, and productive adults. We want to support our young people, so they feel confident and equipped to face the challenges that come their way. Along the Surf Coast we want to create an environment where young people, parents and carers can easily access reputable services, credible information, and a broad range of opportunities to help them better understand the world around them.

The Surf Coast youth were given the opportunity to be heard, in the recent Youth Census and this is an important step moving forward and not only listening to their voice but more importantly valuing it. Being connected and having a sense of belonging is important to our students and their overall resilience and wellbeing. Students at Lorne P-12 College benefit from having positive connections with their family, at school and within the community. Our students shared in the recent survey, that they want to feel empowered. They want to feel safe and be involved.

We have a great opportunity in the Surf Coast shire, to create an environment where young people feel engaged and heard, are connected, and have the skills and opportunities to thrive in an ever-changing world. Their active participation in decision making processes in issues that affect them is a key factor to the engagement of our young people in the Surf Coast shire.

Our young people make invaluable contributions to communities and are empowered themselves when they participate. These are exciting times and when it comes to building our global future, there is no bigger asset than today's youth.

"Investing in adolescent health and wellbeing brings a tripe dividend of benefits – benefits for adolescents now, for young people's future lives and for the next generation." – Lancet Commission on Adolescent Health and Wellbeing.

Carly Stafford

Principal - Lorne P-12 College

Youth Strategy Vision

To create a community and environment that empowers young people to thrive.

Council's Purpose

To help our community and environment to thrive.



About Local Young People and this Strategy

From Torquay to Lorne - via the Great Ocean Road - and our hinterland communities, including Deans Marsh, Winchelsea and Moriac, our shire is home to around 5,200 young people aged 12 to 25 years, who make up 14% of our local population.¹

Surf Coast Shire has 12 primary schools spread throughout most townships in the shire. Primary schools feed into two local secondary schools: Surf Coast Secondary College, located in Torquay and has around 1,000 students, and Lorne P-12 College, which has close to 100 students in years seven to 12. Many other students residing in the Surf Coast Shire travel to Geelong to complete their secondary schooling. With no tertiary education facilities located within the shire, many young people enrol in university and TAFE options outside of the area, often in nearby Geelong or Melbourne.

The issues affecting young people today are as diverse as young people themselves, however, they are the first generation to have lived their entire lives with the internet, grown up with the evolution of social media and experienced the opportunities afforded by innovations in digital technology. The COVID-19 pandemic, including two years of intermittent lockdowns and remote learning, has also had a major impact on young people.

Mission Australia's Youth Survey 2021 was completed by more than 20,000 15 to 19-year-old Australians. According to this cohort, the key issues Australia needs to address are the negative impacts of COVID-19, the environment, equity and discrimination. The same survey found the top personal concerns for young people are: coping with stress, mental health and school and study problems.²

The aim of this Youth Strategy is to set the direction and long-term structure for Council's work with young people. We look forward to sharing the Strategy with others so that together we can ensure we lead a collaborative approach to supporting young people in the Surf Coast Shire.

What we do and who we work with?

Our Surf Coast Shire Youth Development Team exists to empower local young people aged 12 to 25 years to thrive, now and into the future.

Our goal is to provide young people with the tools and confidence to pursue their passions, have a voice, make informed decisions, and be able to easily access the support services they need.

Our work has a strong health and wellbeing prevention focus and involves linking local young people with relevant and meaningful specialist support services.

To do this work, we must partner with a wide range of groups and agencies, including local schools and government agencies, sport and recreation clubs and associations, community and social groups and health and wellbeing support services.

External funding plays a key role in supporting the delivery of programs, activities and initiatives that make a meaningful impact on our young people. In partnership with key stakeholders, Council will endeavour to source funding through grant and other opportunities to deliver increased initiatives, activities and programs that benefit young people of the Surf Coast.

¹ Australia Bureau of Statistics National Census Data 2021

² Mission Australia Youth Survey Report 2021

The Role of Council

- To focus our resources on prevention rather than treatment of health and wellbeing.
- To partner and network with professional support services and organisations to ensure local access is available for the community.
- Act as a facilitator in driving collaborative conversations between key stakeholders in the youth space.
- Apply for grants and funding to deliver programs, activities and initiatives that benefit our young people.
- Provide opportunity to hear the voice of young people for future strategies, planning and feedback to inform decision making.
- Advocate for young people in the Surf Coast.

Our Current Programs for Young People



The Torquay Youth Space runs after school hours during the week at the Kurrambee Myaring Community Centre. It provides a space where young people can socialise, play music and talk to team members.



The Pod is a converted shipping container that has found a permanent home in Winchelsea. It provides staff and the local youth group with a dedicated youth facility that can be used as a local meeting place. Its opening times are based on community needs.



The FReeZA program is funded from a Victorian Government grant to support young people to engage in the arts. The program is funded until December 2024, activities are youth-led with support from the Youth Development team.



Engage! is funded by the Victorian Government to help young people actively participate in and connect with their local community. The program is funded until December 2024 and the work plan includes programs to support mental health, create positive environment action, develop pathways to employment and support opportunities to enhance social connection.

Victorian Youth Fest

Victorian Youth Fest is a month-long celebration across Victoria highlighting the contributions and achievements of young people in their communities. The initiative is funded by the Victorian Government.



Good Times, Great Breaks is Surf Coast Shire's harm minimisation program targeting the more than 4,000 school leavers who visit the shire in November/December each year to celebrate finishing high school. The Youth Development team coordinates the efforts of the many organisations that play a vital role in ensuring they return home safe.

Future Focus

While Council does not access or provide direct funding or service/program delivery to the Primary School age cohort of 5 – 12 year olds, we acknowledge this is an important age to begin the impact of preventative care of health and wellbeing. A future focus for Council is to work closely with our local Primary School sector and community, to ensure this age group and their parents/guardians have access to prevention based education and services, programs and other initiatives.

Additional future focus areas;

- Source funding for ongoing initiatives and activities that engage our young people.
- A greater focus on activities and initiatives for young people outside the Torquay Township.
- Assist the community to create more 'things to do' in our remote areas of the Surf Coast Shire.
- Assist in addressing the need for more employment opportunities for our young people in Surf Coast.
- Assist in creating more local volunteering opportunities for our young people.
- Ensure data collection to inform decision making will be inclusive, representing the diversity of Surf Coast's young people.

Our Engagement Methodology

Our engagement approach for the development of this Strategy has focused on results of the 2021 Surf Coast Youth Census. The Youth Census was commissioned in 2021 to support Council in better understanding what matters to young people, including their health and wellbeing, challenges, interests and opportunities, as well as the impacts of COVID-19.

In addition to the Census, the development of the Youth Strategy has been informed by the following research and engagement activities:

- Desktop research of current local, state and national data and trends (a desktop research report was completed of existing data).
- In-person forums and focus groups, which were held in the four Wards to allow real time opinions to be heard as Census results were being captured via the online questionnaire.
- Consultation with local education providers and health and wellbeing services, via Council's regular youth network meetings, attended by representatives of local schools, police and health and wellbeing support agencies.
- Consultation with young people during youth programs such as the Music and Arts Program, youth spaces, recreation and health and wellbeing programs.

Results and feedback from this research and engagement inform much of the Surf Coast Shire Council's future action plans, programs and services for young people.

Key Stakeholders Engaged in Strategy Development

- Barwon Child Youth Family Services
- Victoria Police
- Surf Coast Secondary College
- Lorne P-12 College
- Torquay College
- Drummond Street

Other Key Youth Stakeholders

- Barwon Health
- Headspace
- Training Providers
- Regional Parenting Service (Geelong)
- G21 - Geelong Region Alliance
- Primary schools within the shire
- Geelong Regional Libraries (GRLC)
- Victorian State Government

Surf Coast Youth Census

The Surf Coast Youth Census was designed to provide comprehensive research and analysis of young people aged 10 - 25 who live within the Surf Coast Shire. Young people aged 10 and 11 years were included in the Census as they will soon enter the youth age demographic, therefore their opinions are highly valuable for future planning. Council's Youth Development Team and consultants 'Youth Gurus' worked collaboratively with a team of young people from across the shire to co-design a questionnaire and roll-out process that were both accessible and youth friendly.

The Census was advertised for participation widely via online channels, local signage, and through all schools within the shire. An abbreviated hardcopy questionnaire 'postcard' was produced and disbursed throughout the schools and community to enable increased participation.

A total of 1,084 young people from across the shire, from three age cohorts; 10 - 14 years, 15 - 19 years and 20 - 25 years completed the questionnaire component of the Census. This participation equates to 21% of our youth population in the shire at the time of the Census taking place.

Engagement Findings

A number of key themes regarding 'what matters to our young people' emerged from the Youth Census, including environmental issues, a need for diverse recreation facilities, and support for social and emotional issues.

Environmental issues were identified as the two biggest issues in the community for young people. In particular they identified rubbish as a problem followed by the need for climate action.

Young people strongly expressed a desire to have improved access to recreation facilities, with the focus being outside of traditional sports. Desires included:

- The creation of expert and advanced level mountain biking facilities.
- Improved parks and age appropriate playgrounds or 'hang out areas'.
- More access to and improved youth spaces, groups and activities

Support for social and emotional issues was a trend throughout the Census data. Issues included:

- Supports for young people to access mental health and alcohol and other drug support services.
- Creating opportunities for young people to connect and socialise in environments where they feel safe, to combat social isolation.

Consultation with local education providers, police and health and wellbeing services indicated a need for improved supports for parents and the need for increased parent education to equip them with skills and strategies to help address youth wellbeing.

SURF COAST YOUTH CENSUS



Final Report



surf coast youth census report back



Engagement Overview

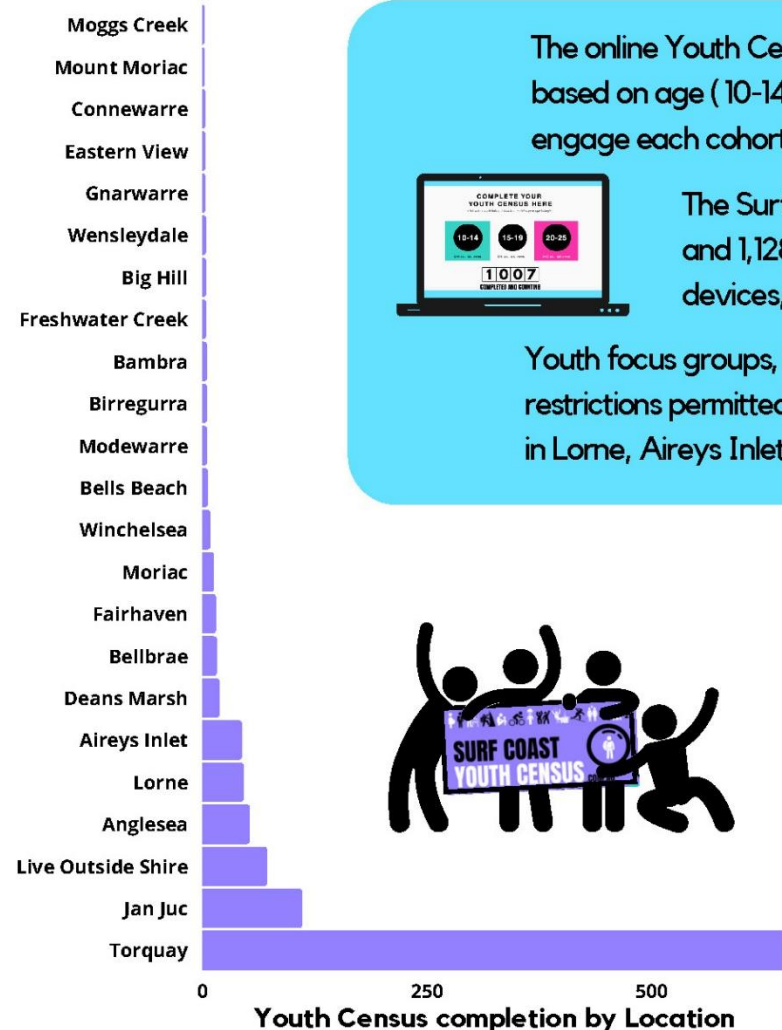
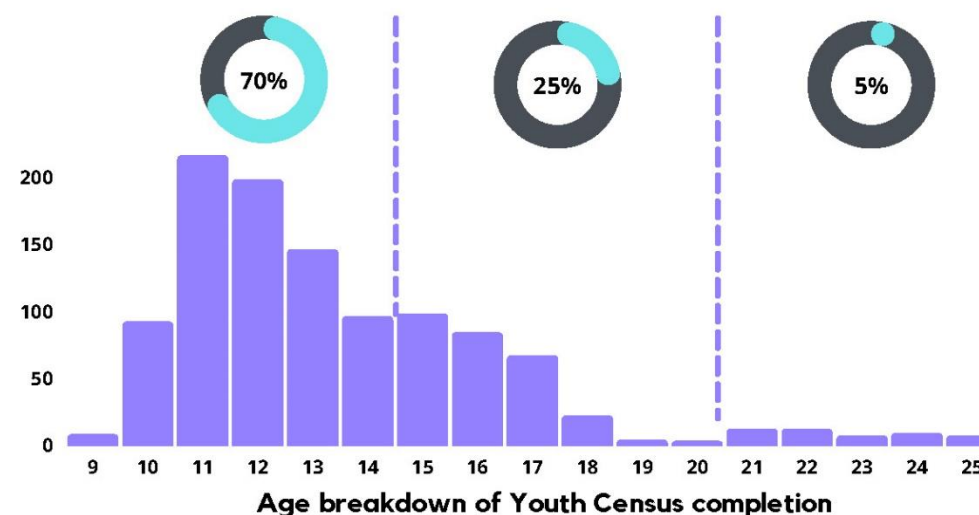
In the second half of 2021 the Surf Coast Youth Census was conducted in partnership by Surf Coast Youth, Youth Gurus and the Surf Coast Shire Council. In total 1,084 young people aged between 10 and 25 years of age completed the online youth census providing data and insight that has helped create this final report.



The online Youth Census survey was designed to target three separate cohorts based on age (10-14 | 15-19 | 20-25 year olds) with survey questions being curated to engage each cohort on key issues and topics in an aged appropriate manner.

The Surf Coast Youth Census website attracted 910 unique site visits and 1,128 site sessions (572 from desktop computers, 521 from mobile devices, 35 from tablets/iPads).

Youth focus groups, forums and engagement activities were held when Covid restrictions permitted across all four wards and engaged 150 young people including in Lorne, Aireys Inlet, Anglesea, Torquay and Winchelsea.



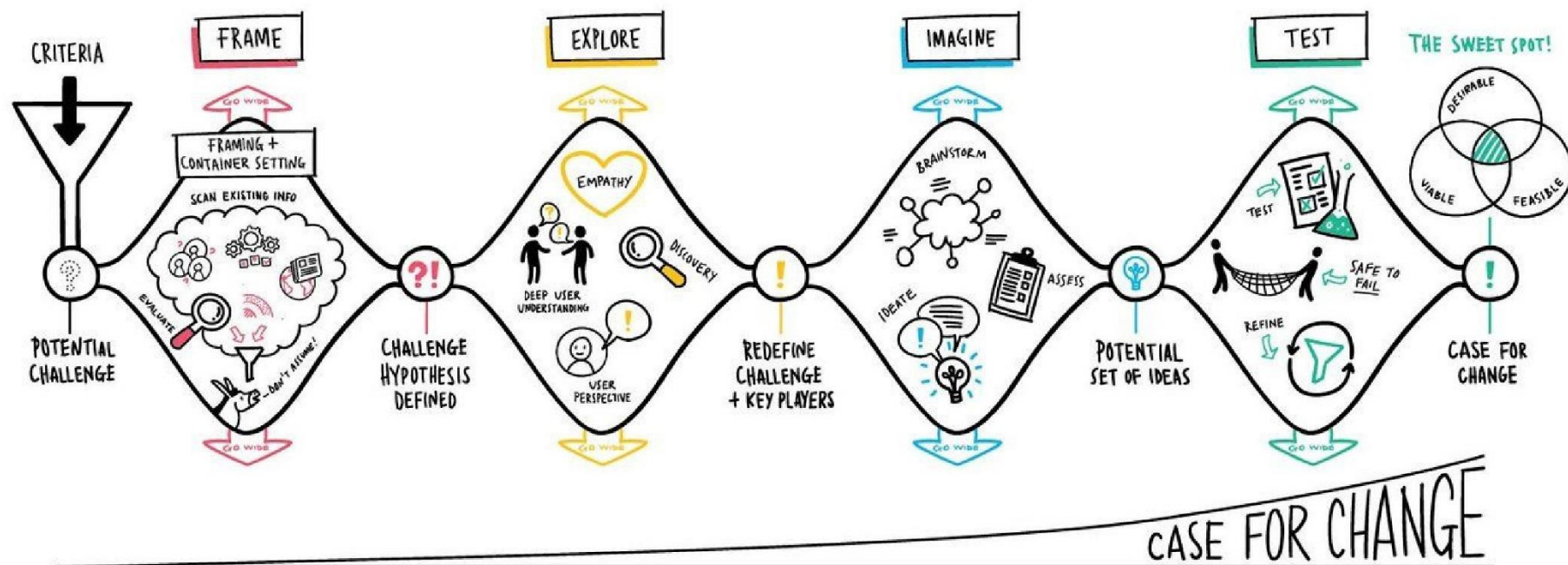
surf coast youth census report back



Background

The Surf Coast Youth Census was commissioned to support the Surf Coast Shire Council to better understand young people including the health and wellbeing, challenges, interests and opportunities, as well as the impacts of Covid-19, and inform the Surf Coast Shire Council's future action plans, programs and services for young people.

The Youth Census was conceived as a mechanism to undertake a comprehensive research and analysis of young people aged 10-25 who live within the Surf Coast Shire. Youth Gurus and Surf Coast Youth worked collaboratively with a team of young adult co-designers from across the Shire to bring the initiative to life using the human centred design approach (below) and manage its rollout amidst Covid outbreaks/lockdowns.



surf coast youth census report back



97% of young people would describe living on or near the Surf Coast as either good (22%), great (35%) or amazing (40%)



95% of young people said they were excited about the future. (sometimes 31% mostly 44% always 20%)



72% of young people told us they have a strong connection to their community (38% sometimes 34%)



52.5% of young people were unsure if they would be living, working or studying on or near the Surf Coast in ten years time, or not?



9 out of 10 young people thought their parents/guardians set appropriate rules and boundaries for them in regards to:



i) how they choose to spend their own money



ii) where they go out with friends and their curfew



iii) what they eat and drink



iv) how much time they spend on screens/devices

What young people do for fun (top 10)

Hanging out with friends
Watching shows or movies
Listening or playing music
Time with pets/animals
Hanging out with family
Online gaming
Playing sport
Physical exercise
Social media
Spending time in nature



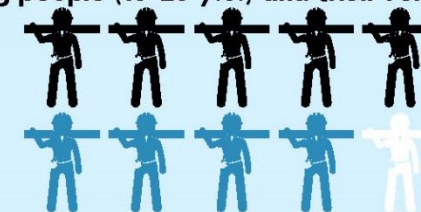
Young people described their relationship with social media as:

Healthy (51%)

Addictive (32%)
Educational (27%)
Helpful (27%)
It's Complicated (25%)



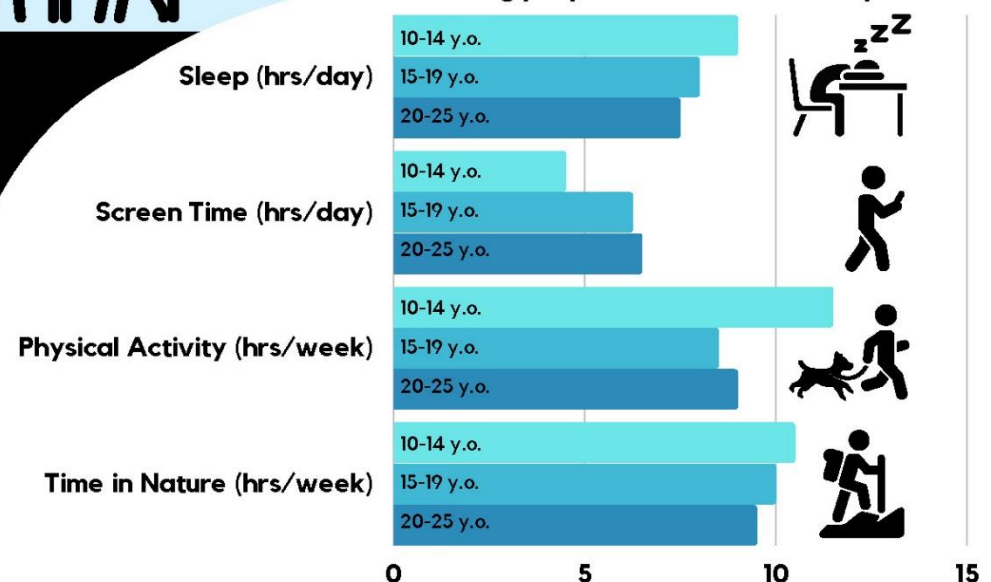
Young people (15-25 y.o.) and their relationship with work:



5 out of 10 young people were happy with their work status

4 out of 10 young people wanted work or more work.

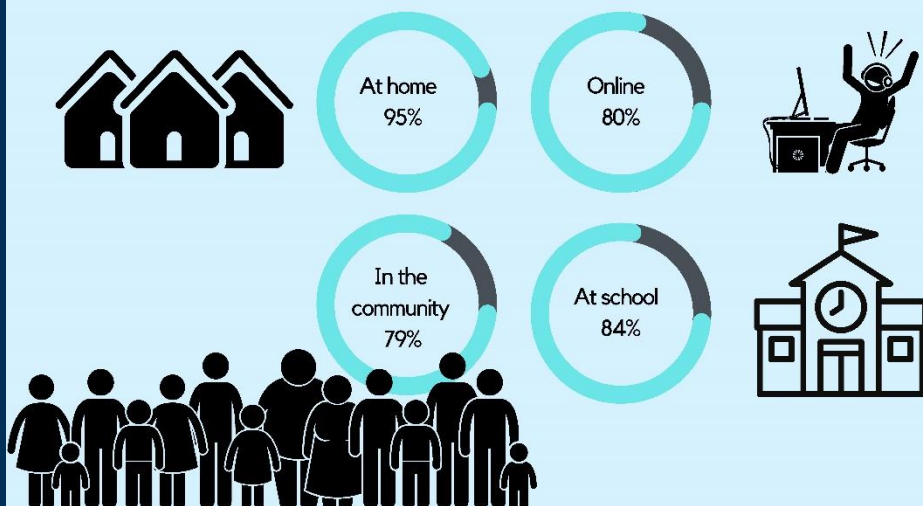
Young people and their relationship with time:



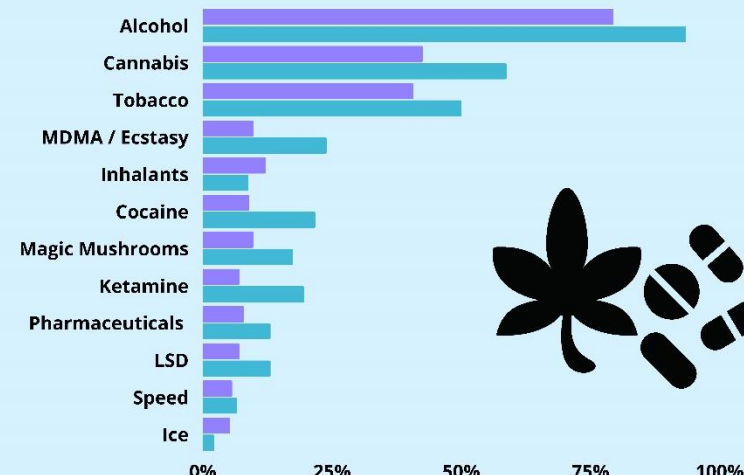
surf coast youth census report back



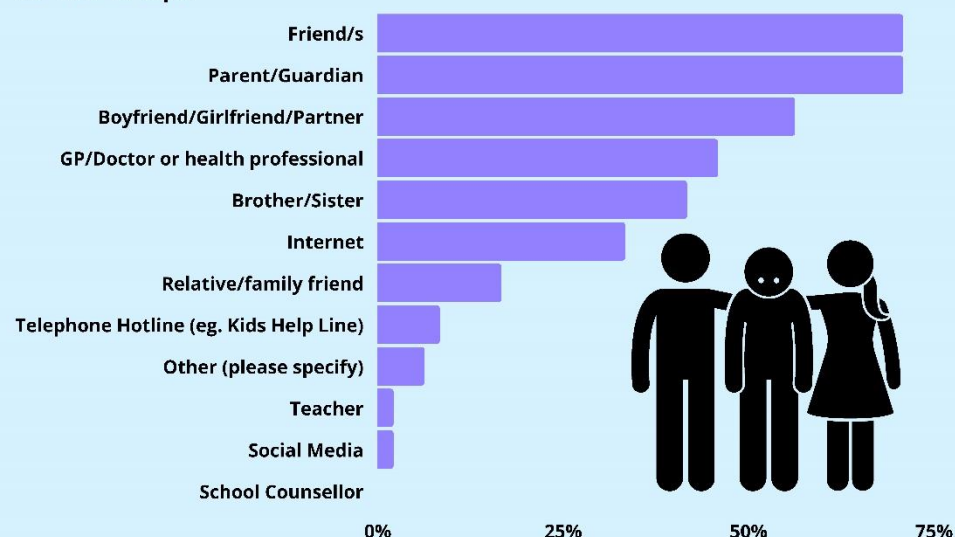
Where young people 10-25 reported feeling safe:



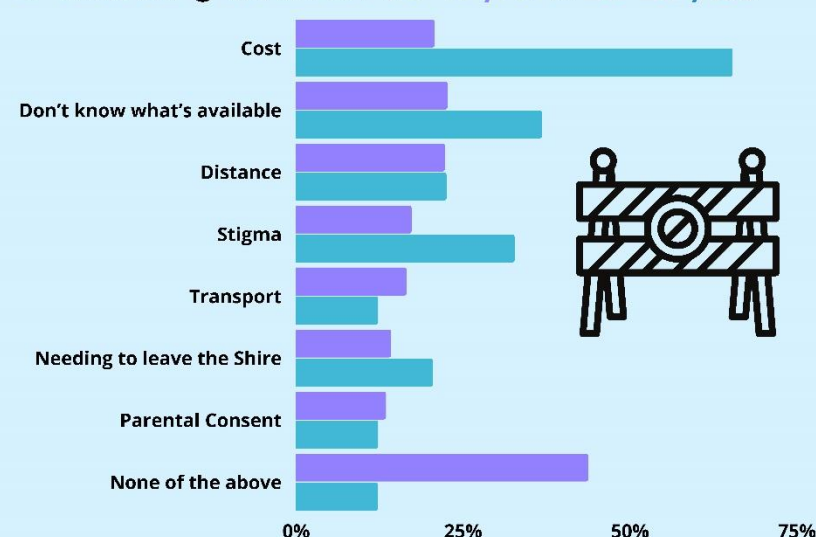
The substances young people (15-19 y.o. & 20-25 y.o.) self report ever having used before:



Where young people (10-25) reported that they would go to for help:



The barriers that exist for young people seeking help or accessing services? (15-19 y.o. & 20-25 y.o.)



surf coast youth census **report back**



The biggest personal challenges faced due to COVID-19:



#1 Social Isolation



#2 Remote Learning



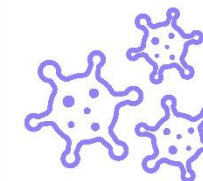
#3 Mental Health



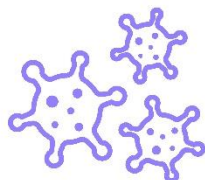
#4 Family Separation



#5 Participation in Sport



COVID-19 has negatively impacted upon young peoples (15-25 y.o.):



#1 Activities/Interests



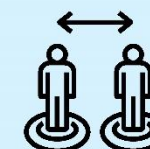
#2 Education



#3 Mental Health



#4 Physical Health



#5 Friendships

The important things in life in a COVID-19 world:



#1 Friendships



#2 Family



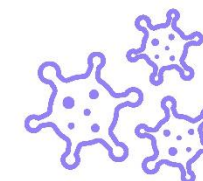
#3 Mental Health



#4 Physical Health



#5 Internet Connection



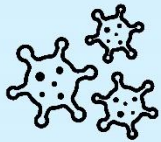
Young people were able to clearly articulate the challenges and negative impacts resulting from COVID-19 but also the things they found important in their life at the time. Like most Victorians they were frustrated by and suffering from having to isolate at home during lockdowns, not being able to see their friend and family, and from not being able to participate in social, recreational and educational activities as they normally would. The data sets above provide Surf Coast Shire Council with a set of clearly defined areas for continued and future investment to support our young people in those areas COVID-19 has had the most negative impact upon and helps reinforce and reinvest in those things young people identify as the most important things in life - friends, family, mental health, physical health and online connectivity.

surf coast youth census **report back**



The issues of greatest personal concern to young people aged 15-25 y.o.

#1



Covid-19 (64%)

#2



Mental Health (60%)

#3



Anxiety (53%)

#4



Coping with Stress (53%)

#5



Body Image (52%)

#6



School/Study Problems (50%)

#7



Climate Change (45%)

#8



Physical Health (31%)

#9



Suicide (27%)

#10



Family Conflict (22%)

#11



Relationship Issues (21%)

#12



Financial Security (19%)

Data from the Surf Coast Youth Census is comparable to the finding of Mission Australia's Annual Youth Survey (15-19 y.o.) 2021:

#1 Coping with Stress

#2 Mental Health

#3 School or study problems

#4 Body Image

#5 COVID-19

#6 Physical Health

#7 Climate Change

#8 Personal Safety***

#9 Family Conflict

#10 Discrimination

#11 Suicide

#12 Social Media

#13 Financial Security

#14 LGBTQIA+ Issues

#15 Bullying/Emotional Abuse

It is not surprising to have **COVID-19** listed as the #1 issue as the Youth Census was conducted in the second half of 2021 when Victoria was still in and out of lockdowns and remote learning. **Mental health** in all its forms (including anxiety, stress and suicide) is of concern to our young people who want more resources and supports allocated to address youth mental health in our communities.

Body image was an issue that was consistently raised by young people, at a higher frequency than anticipated and recorded in other statewide surveys, that should be a priority area for further examination and increase support. **Suicide** was listed as an issue by just over 1 in 4 young people in the Youth Census signalling it as a topic young people have an increased awareness of within our community and along with mental health are keen to see additional resources and youth-led initiatives delivered in the Surf Coast.

***Personal Safety was added in 2021 and not measured in the Surf Coast Youth Census.

surf coast youth census **report back**



What young people (10-25 y.o.) see as the biggest issues in their community

#1



Rubbish

#2

Climate Action
& the Environment

#3

Sport | Recreation
Mountain Biking

#4

Anti-Social Behaviour
Crime | Eshays

#5



Alcohol & other Drugs

#6

Urban Growth
& Development

#7



Covid-19

#8



Mental Health

#9

Bullying &
Discrimination

#10



Road Safety

#11



Shops | Retail | Eateries

#12



Inclusion & Diversity

What young people said:

"I want policy to make rental and home ownership more accessible. I want free programs to empower people to affect systemic change to address the climate crisis."

21 yo Torquay

"I think that there is a lot of stigma and stereotypes that teenagers are bad ... it would be nice to just be seen as a person and not a 'teenager' along with all their stereotypes."

16 yo Torquay

"We need to be making mountain biking more accessible for kids looking for a sport. We need more jumps and tracks in more places in the Surf Coast please."

17 yo Lorne

Young people in the Surf Coast Shire are upset by amount of **rubbish** left on our beaches, foreshores, parks and playgrounds. They are extremely passionate about protecting our **natural environment** and want to be better resourced to take **climate action** on both a local and global scale. Young people reported they struggled with **safety** because of discrimination, cyber-bullying or the threat of violence / sexual assault on our streets from eshays and 'creepy' or 'drug affected' men. **Drug and alcohol** use was identified as a big issue in the community, especially the youth vape culture, with higher rates of drug use reported by the older youth cohort. Young people who are concerned about the rate of **urban growth** and its impacts on the natural environment and our community, but also **a lack of affordable housing** forcing young people to leave the shire before they are ready to leave.

surf coast youth census **report back**



What would make the Surf Coast Shire better for young people (10-25 y.o.)

#1



Recreation

#2

Youth Spaces
Groups & Activities

#3

Entertainment, Shops,
Retail & Eateries

#4



The Environment

#5

Mental Health
& Support Services

#6



Less Rubbish

#7

Diversity
& Inclusion

#8



Education

#9



Transport

#10



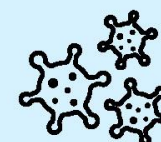
Job Opportunities

#11



Housing & Development

#12

Better Covid-19
Response

Breakdown of Recreation by number of mentions



Mountain Bike Jumps/Tracks (198)



Parks & Playgrounds (179)



Organised Sport (128)



Skateboard / Scooter Parks (80)



Music, Arts & Culture (77)



Aquatic Facilities (76)

More/better recreational opportunities was not only #1 way young people think we can make the Surf Coast Shire better for young people, it was also raised by 738 respondents, which is more than the rest of the top 5 topics combined. The desire to have increased **mountain bike facilities** was the standout suggestion with young people throughout the shire consistently speaking about the need for more jumps and tracks with great passion and excitement. Parks, playgrounds, skate/scooter parks, pools and splash parks as well as organised sports and music/arts/culture events were all identified as priorities for young people in their local community (as shown on the righthand side of this page).

Annual Review

For the duration of the Youth Strategy (2022 – 2025), actions will be reviewed annually against each strategy and focus area to determine the progress and outcomes achieved and to provide an opportunity to assess the relevancy of actions as the Strategy ages. As part of this annual review process, actions may evolve or change to adapt to the current societal/ demographic issues and challenges that arise.

Although this annual review will be completed by the Youth Development Team, overall responsibility for implementation and achievement of the Youth Strategy lies with the entire Surf Coast Shire Council. Some aspects will be the responsibility of one area of Council, whilst others will be the responsibility of multiple units working together in partnership.

Council will also be working closely with a number of external stakeholders who will be pivotal in helping to achieve success together for our young people.

Measures of Success

The below key measures are embedded in the annual review process to ensure progress in achieving the outcomes of this Strategy;

- Key stakeholders recognise Council's role in health and wellbeing preventative care rather than treatment for the community.
- Adherence to State and other funding partner criteria and requirements.
- Young people across the Surf Coast Shire participate in and attend the FReeZA and Engage! programs and events.
- Regular opportunities are provided to ensure the voice of our young people is heard.
- Outcomes of the actions are aligned to the Council Plan 2021- 2025 (incorporating Health and Wellbeing Plan).



Focus Areas

A series of focus areas form the key priorities of this Strategy. Aligning with the objectives of the Council Plan 2021 - 2025, and based on insights gained through our community engagement consultation, the key priority areas of this strategy are:

- Recreation
- Arts
- Culture
- Mental health support
- Alcohol and other drug support
- Environment



Focus Area One: Recreation

Outcome: Recreation facilities and programs meet the needs of young people.

Key Stakeholders Include:

Local sport and recreation clubs, leagues and associations, government agencies, not-for-profit sport and recreation organisations, non-traditional recreation activity providers and young people.

Strategy	Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating Health and Wellbeing Plan)	Action(s)
<p>When recreation facilities are being considered, ensure the voice of our young people is heard and considered.</p>	<p>Council Plan</p> <p>Theme 2: A Healthy Connected Community</p> <p>Goal: To foster a thriving, connected, healthy community</p>	<p>1.1. Ensure there is a youth friendly engagement process to capture the voice of young people in the planning and design of new facilities and upgrades to existing facilities.</p>
<p>Enhance existing facilities for young people which creates opportunities that allow them to excel in their interests and socialise in spaces that meet their needs.</p>	<p>Health and Wellbeing Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase Healthy Eating and Active Living - Improved Mental Health and Social Connection 	<p>1.2. Inform young people of proposed facility plans and encourage and support them to engage in a youth friendly consultation process.</p> <p>1.3. Continue to grow, explore new opportunities and develop current youth spaces and groups such as the KMCC Youth Centre, Youth Pods, FReeZA and Youth 4 Climate.</p> <p>1.4. Investigate opportunities to establish new youth groups to support the specific needs of young people in our community, such as a LGBTIQ+ youth group.</p>
<p>Enhance sport and recreation activity participation opportunities for young people.</p>		<p>1.5. Collaborate with local sport and recreation providers (clubs and associations) to ensure they have participation opportunities available for the 12 – 25 year old cohort.</p> <p>1.6. Promote participation opportunities available across the community for young people to engage in.</p>

Focus Area Two: Arts

Outcome: Arts programs are high quality and valued by young people.

Key Stakeholders Include:

The Push, State Government FReeZA Program, Multi Arts Centre (MAC), local schools, Aireys Inlet Open Mic Group, local committees, local artists, mentors, musicians and young people.

Strategy	Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating Health and Wellbeing Plan)	Action(s)
Foster an environment where young artists and creatives are valued in their community and have the opportunity to pursue their passions.	Council Plan Theme 6: Arts and Creativity Goal: Acknowledge the value of arts and creativity and nurture their growth	<p><i>2.1. Continue to grow and explore new opportunities to develop the FReeZA program where young and emerging artists can build connections and skills with like-minded people in a safe and approachable environment.</i></p> <p><i>2.2. Host and support partners to deliver high quality and meaningful events where young artists can perform and showcase their talents to the community.</i></p> <p><i>2.3. FReeZA staff pursue opportunities to nominate young artists to perform at community events delivered by both internal and external stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>2.4. Engage industry professionals to provide training opportunities to assist young artists in pursuing their passions and redefining their skills and expertise.</i></p> <p><i>2.5 Encourage and promote volunteer opportunities for our young people to gain valuable experience and give back to their community.</i></p> <p><i>2.6 Facilitate discussions with key stakeholders regarding local employment, work experience and other career opportunities for our young people.</i></p>

Focus Area Three: Culture

Outcome: Young people are empowered to be a part of Reconciliation with Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and are inspired to understand local Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Key Stakeholders Include:

Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, and Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and young people.

Strategy	Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating Health and Wellbeing Plan)	Action(s)
<p>Provide opportunities for young people to contribute to the national conversation of Reconciliation with First Nations People.</p>	<p>Council Plan</p> <p>Theme 1: First Nations Reconciliation</p> <p>Goal: Reconciliation with Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our community through respectful engagement, acknowledgement and collaboration</p>	<p>3.1. Actively pursue Reconciliation learning opportunities for young people. E.g. Reconciliation Australia Frameworks discussion with schools.</p>
<p>Support young people to grow their understanding of local Aboriginal cultural heritage and pursue respectful relationships with Traditional Owners.</p>		<p>3.2 Engage and work with local young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to share their voice in the community.</p> <p>3.3. Continue to provide Walking On Country (WOC) cultural education opportunities for young people by pursuing further opportunities for cultural education from Traditional Owners within the Surf Coast Shire, including Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation and Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation.</p>

Focus Area Four: Mental Health Support

Outcome: Mental health services and resources are relevant, meaningful and available to young people.

Key Stakeholders Include:

Barwon Child Youth Family Services, Head Space, Barwon Health, Training Providers, Regional Parenting Service (Geelong), Victoria Police, local school Principals and staff, Drummond Street, parents and carers, mentors and young people.

Strategy	Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating Health and Wellbeing Plan)	Action(s)
Enable access to mental health education programs that develop the skills of young people and their families to better support each other and make informed decisions.	Council Plan Theme 2: A Healthy Connected Community Goal: To foster a thriving, connected, healthy community	4.1. Upskill, educate and support our adult community to better support young people by working collaboratively with external providers and partners to deliver workshops, seminars and programs. 4.2. Work collaboratively to engage our adult community to participate as mentors/ role models for our young people.
	Health and Wellbeing Plan - Improved Mental Health and Social Connection	4.3. Deliver Teen Mental Health First-aid courses to 300 young people in the shire. 4.4. Ensure the Youth Team is engaged with our local school communities to support the delivery of beneficial programs that support mental health and wellbeing.

Engage young people across the shire to provide input and feedback on mental health initiatives to ensure they are relevant, accessible and meaningful.

4.5. Work collaboratively with and support expert service providers and agencies to ensure services with a focus on mental health are available for our Surf Coast community.

4.6. Actively facilitate and contribute to working groups to devise collaborative and consistent approaches and messages to tackle mental health issues.

4.7. Use existing and emerging youth working groups to discuss issues young people are facing and gather their input on creating beneficial and meaningful solutions.

Focus Area Five: Alcohol and Other Drug Support

Outcome: Young people make informed choices in regards to alcohol and other drugs.

Key Stakeholders Include:

Barwon Child Youth Family Services, Barwon Health, Training Providers, Victoria Police, local schools, parents and carers and young people

Strategy	Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating Health and Wellbeing Plan)	Action(s)
<p>Collaborate with specialist alcohol and other drug services to provide local access support services to young people and their families.</p>	<p>Council Plan</p> <p>Theme 2: A Healthy Connected Community</p> <p>Goal: To foster a thriving, connected, healthy community</p>	<p>5.1. Enable specialist alcohol and other drug support services to be delivered in the local community.</p>
<p>Partner with community and specialist stakeholders to address local alcohol and other drug concerns.</p>	<p>Health and Wellbeing Plan</p> <p>- Improved Mental Health and Social Connection</p>	<p>5.2 Upskill, educate and support our adult community to better support young people by working collaboratively with external providers and partners to deliver workshops, seminars and programs for adults to attend.</p> <p>5.3. Remain flexible and progressive in the services we advocate for and provide to ensure we are meeting the ever-changing needs of our community.</p> <p>5.4 Actively drive and contribute to working groups to devise a consistent approach and message to tackle drug and alcohol usage across our community.</p> <p>5.5 Work collaboratively to engage our adult community to participate as mentors/ role models for our young people.</p>

Focus Area Six: Environment

Outcome: Young people are educated, empowered and informed to take positive environmental action.

Key Stakeholders Include:

State Government Engage! Program, local environmental groups, Surf Coast Youth 4 Climate and young people.

Strategy	Alignment to Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating Health and Wellbeing Plan)	Action(s)
Ensure young people are heard and represented on key environmental matters.	Council Plan Theme 3: Environmental Leadership Goal: Protect our environment and help our community to thrive through environmental leadership	<i>6.1. Utilise existing and emerging youth working groups to discuss environmental issues/impacts young people are facing and support them to take action.</i>
Empower young people to incorporate climate mitigation into their lives.	Health and Wellbeing Plan - Tackling the impacts of climate change on health	<div> <i>6.2. Support community events to provide a platform for young people to educate the community on environmental issues and encourage climate action at a local level.</i> </div> <div> <i>6.3 Provide opportunities to engage and educate young people empowering them to take positive environmental action.</i> </div> <div> <i>6.4 Encourage and promote volunteer opportunities for our young people to gain valuable experience and give back to their community.</i> </div> <div> <i>6.5 Work collaboratively to educate young people to better understand the importance of climate change and maintaining and nurturing our local natural environment.</i> </div>

