



2023-2026 Kingston Youth Strategy

KINGSTON **YOUTH SERVICES**

Supported | Acknowledged | Connected | Prepared

January 2023



Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Kingston proudly acknowledges the Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land, and we pay our respect to their Elders, past and present and emerging.

Council acknowledges the Bunurong's continuing relationship to the land and waterways and respects that their connection and spiritual identity is maintained through ancient ceremonies, songlines, dance, art and living culture.

Council pays tribute to the invaluable contributions of the Bunurong and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island elders who have guided and continue to guide the work we do.



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Mayor's Foreword

It is with great pleasure that I present our new Youth Strategy for 2023-2026.

This document is a strategic plan for the City of Kingston to support, empower and advocate on behalf of young people aged 12 to 25 years in Kingston.

This Strategy was developed with young people and for young people because

- The process empowers young people to actively shape the future of their City;
- Young people possess unique ideas and lived experiences that may differ greatly to adults; and
- Youth participation creates important partnerships between Council and young people where we better understand and learn from each other

From the many youth voices who shared their ideas and opinions during the surveying and consultation program, common themes emerged. These themes were reinforced in the views shared by parents/carers and representatives of our schools and youth services organisations.

The four priority areas are:

1. Supported
2. Acknowledged
3. Connected
4. Prepared

This Strategy shows Council's commitment to support our young people to achieve their goals and aspirations. It prioritises programs, services and initiatives that support youth mental health, resilience, empowerment, and voice.

I would like to thank the 830 young people, 49 parents/carers, and 68 education and youth services providers who contributed their thoughts, concerns and ideas that have informed the development of this Strategy. Thanks also to Council's Youth Advisory Committees members who reviewed the community feedback, deliberated priorities, and assisted with the development of this Strategy.



Cr Hadi Saab
Mayor

Our mission, commitment and approach to youth participation.

Our Mission – *“Here for young people”*



Our commitment to young people

Kingston Youth Services is committed to ensuring when we deliver our services and programs that we:

- Provide support where needed;
- Create meaningful opportunities for participation;
- Foster independence and prepare young people for their future; and
- Acknowledge that young people come with their own aspirations.

Our approach to genuine youth participation

Council's Youth Participation Framework (Appendix 1) outlines the commitment of Kingston Youth Services to the practice and principles of genuine youth participation. Youth participation has been articulated as a right in the United Nations Rights of the Child (Source: Articles 12 to 14) and identified as empowering to young people under Child Safe Standard 3 (Source: Commission for children and young people)

“Embedding the voices of children and young people in council planning yields many benefits for council. By empowering children and young people to contribute their experiences and ideas in meaningful ways, councils gain unique perspectives and benefit from new ideas coming directly from people who use council services and facilities” (Source: VicHealth Local Government Partnership)

Kingston Youth Services supports young people's right to be involved in decisions that affect them. We feel young people have the right to represent their own interests in decision making. This includes individual care planning and goal setting, program design and evaluation and strategic planning. Youth participation benefits both young people and our organisation.

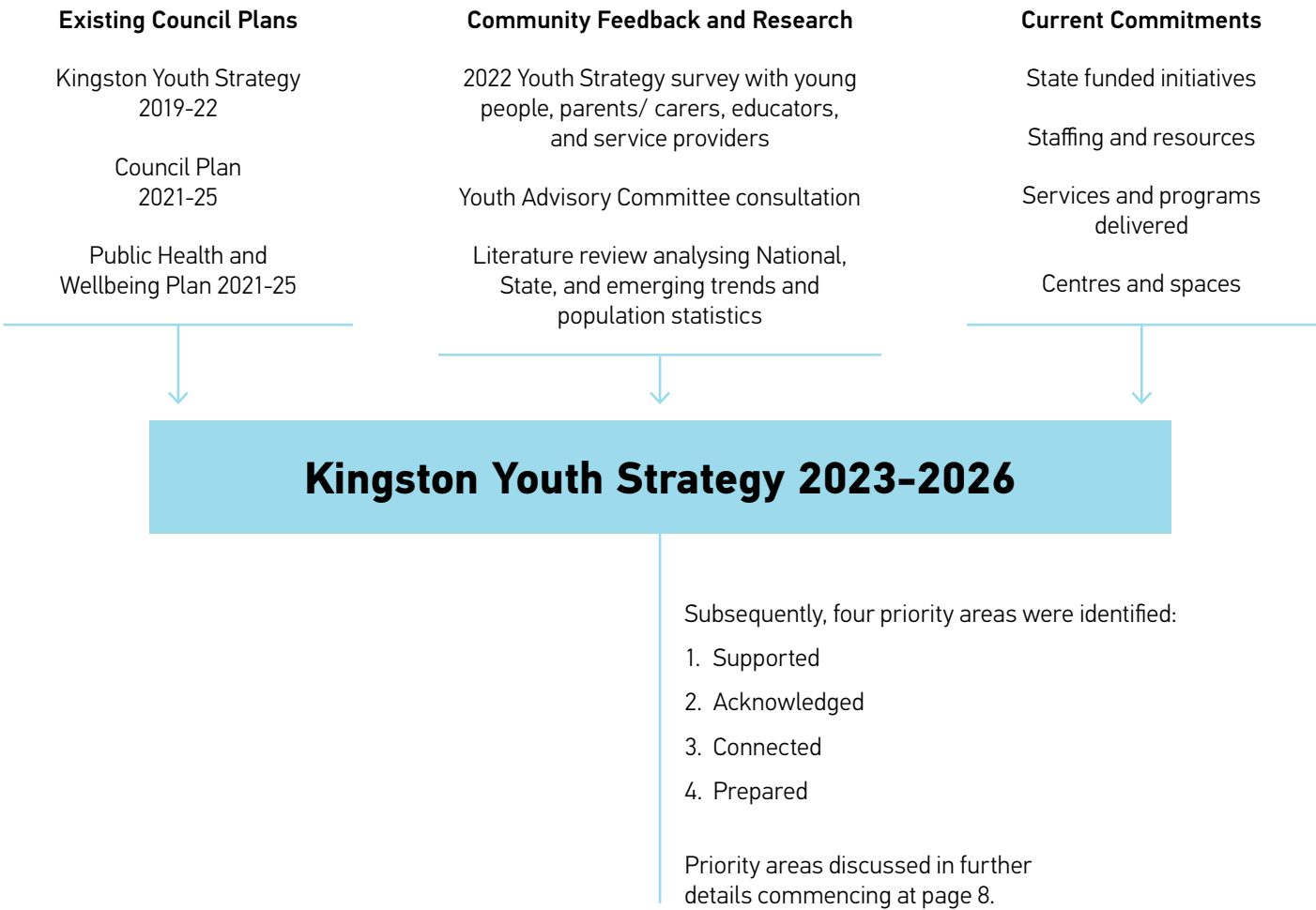
For further information about our approach please see Appendix 1.

Overview of key inputs for this Strategy

Inputs and Priorities

When determining priorities for the 2023-2026 Youth Strategy, several inputs were considered as shown below. This approach aimed to ensure the Strategy would align with existing organisational plans and current research, honour existing commitments, and encourage community ownership. For more details, see Appendix 2: Background Information

Diagram 1: Key Inputs



Some statistics about young people in Kingston

Key Statistics

14%

Many of Kingston's 159,567 residents are young people.
In 2021, 22,533 (and over 14% of) residents are young people aged 12 to 24 years¹.

33%

27,137 households in Kingston have children
In 2021, 33% of households comprise couples with children and around 11% are one parent families².

70%

of young people reported mental health is an important issue impacting young people³.

37%

of young people identified physical health is an important issue impacting young people³.

34%

of young people said body image is an important issue impacting young people³.

33%

of young people reported bullying is an important issue impacting young people³.

26%

of young people reported they are responsible for caring for other people³.

Top 5

issues for young people recognised by parents and carers:

- Mental health
- Body image
- Coping with stress,
- Physical health
- Lack of positive self-esteem and confidence³.

for young people recognised by Education and service providers:

- Mental health
- Relationships (parents, family, friends)
- Physical health
- Family violence
- Lack of positive self-esteem and confidence³.

¹ <https://profile.id.com.au/kingston/service-age-groups> | ² <https://profile.id.com.au/kingston/households> | ³ 2022 Kingston Youth Strategy Survey

Priorities, key directions and actions

Our Plan

These priorities and underpinning key directions aim to address the challenges facing our young people. To achieve these objectives, we will review and refine our existing commitment to services, programs, spaces and activities. We will also partner with education providers, youth support agencies, community organisations, parents and carers to enhance greater outcomes for young people.

A supporting Action Plan will set out the annual program of youth programs, services, initiatives and activities to track our progress against each key direction. Outcomes will be reported at the end of each financial year.

The following information is presented for each of the four priorities:

- High level description
- Snapshot of what young people, parents and carers, educators and youth services organisations have said
- Key points from research around Australia
- Key directions and actions for Kingston Youth Services

Four Priority Areas

1. Supported
2. Acknowledged
3. Connected
4. Prepared

Priority 1:

Kingston's young people are supported

Feeling supported is integral to good physical and mental health, youth resilience and a quality life. It is important that young people feel supported and can access resources in a way, and at a time, that works for them. Wellbeing and resilience are drawn from positive experiences and qualities that assist young people to becoming caring, responsible, and productive adults. We want to support young people, so they feel confident and equipped to face the challenges that come their way. We want to create an environment where young people, parents and carers can readily access quality mental health support and resources, as well as reputable youth services and information when needed.

What our young people told us

Findings from the 2022 Youth Strategy Survey for young people aged 12-25 years showed that young people could strengthen their health and wellbeing in several areas:

- **70%** reported mental health is an important issue
- **37%** reported physical health is an important issue
- **34%** reported body image is an important issue
- **24%** reported lack of positive self-esteem and confidence is an important issue
- **23%** reported coping with stress is an important issue



Priority 1:

Kingston's young people are supported

In the consultation for this Strategy we heard...

"Lots of people I know experience anxiety"

- Young person aged 12

"A lot of people suffer with mental health and don't get the help they need"

- Young person aged 17

"Myself and several people I know struggle with mental health and support can be hard to access"

- Young person aged 18

"Confidence and self-esteem are key to addressing so many other issues"

- Educator/Service Provider

"Physical health links to your overall health and wellbeing. It builds positive attitudes, healthy habits and builds resilience both physically and mentally"

- Educator/Service Provider

"Mental health services for the youth are critical for the individual and the community"

- Parent/Carer

What the research says

Research from around Australia highlights the importance of good youth mental health and resilience as well as health challenges and impacts relating to COVID-19 restrictions:

- The National vision is to support young people to navigate life's challenges and be engaged and active citizens who productively contribute to society. Young Australians have been among the hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, with significant disruptions to their education, major life events, family, and social interactions. A priority area identified in the youth consultation is health and wellbeing (Department of Health and Aged Care, 2021)
- The VicHealth vision is a place where no young person is denied a future that is healthy. Victoria will have vibrant communities where young people and children are connected, active, enjoy nutritious food and feel great (VicHealth, 2022)
- Rates of mental ill-health can be high or very high for LGBTQA+ young people when compared with the general population, particularly in the areas of psychological distress and suicidal ideation for young people aged 16 to 17 years (Hill et al., 2021)
- Coronavirus restrictions impacted the health and wellbeing of young people aged 15 to 29 years. Psychological distress was prevalent, 29% experienced severe or extremely severe symptoms of depression, 27% of anxiety, and 18% of stress (VicHealth, 2020)
- A heavy burden of youth mental health is falling onto schools. Schools must have adequate wellbeing staff, but better local service provision is also needed, from prevention to tertiary intervention (Youth Affairs Council Victoria, 2018)

Key directions and actions for Kingston Youth Services

Key directions	Actions
<p>1.1 Young people are supported when facing a set-back</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing more targeted resources and information nights: Providing further information and support to raise the awareness for parents, carers and educators about current issues affecting young people in Kingston. • Continue to provide a free counselling and youth work support service: Providing access to short-term youth work support and access to medium/long-term counselling at no cost to young people.
<p>1.2 Partnering with organisations and sporting clubs to enhance wellbeing opportunities for young people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating new pathways to accessing support: Leveraging existing and new partnership opportunities to strengthen young people's access to support and advice. • Providing further opportunities to support sporting and recreational clubs: Providing access to information talks and programs to meet the needs of young people.
<p>1.3 Young people have access to mental health support and resources in times that are challenging or stressful</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing understanding and awareness of mental health: Strengthening partnerships with schools, community agencies and sporting clubs to raise awareness of mental health, stress, anxiety and body image issues and reduce the stigma around seeking support. • Provide regular drop-in sessions at Platform 81: Providing a regular point of contact for young people seeking information and services.
<p>1.4 Young people and their families have easy access to youth-related information and resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using social media to encourage positive choices: Regularly providing information to young people about emerging health and wellbeing issues. • Strengthening our online and social media presence: Increasing and improving Youth Services' online and social media presence (i.e., Facebook, Instagram and emerging platforms). Establishing a profile for young people and adults supporting young people to locate credible youth-related facts, tips and resources. • Enhancing and expanding the Kingston Youth Services website: Reviewing and improving the capacity and user-friendliness of the Kingston Youth Services website, ensuring mental health resources and information is current and relevant.

Priority 2:

Kingston's young people are acknowledged

Young people in Kingston are “creative, resilient, adaptable, enthusiastic, and kind”. These are the themes that emerged from educators and service providers when asked what is great about young people. Many young people have a social conscience, are positive, inclusive, and accepting. We want to create an environment where young people feel welcome and their individuality and contributions are acknowledged, valued, and celebrated.

What our young people told us

Findings from the 2022 Youth Strategy Survey for young people aged 12 to 25 years showed some young people are participating, but this could be increased:

- **24%** reported discrimination (racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism) is an important issue
- **8%** reported disability/inclusion is an important issue
- **6%** reported access to recreational activities is an important issue

In the consultation for this Strategy we heard

“Discrimination affects a lot of people negatively and I believe we should put more effort to make people feel included”

- Young person aged 16

“We should be celebrating difference and the unique people in our community; we need different voices and perspectives to create a better society”

- Young person aged 23

“Recreational activities are important to the community and can make the community more vibrant. It's good to get out of the house and be part of the community”

- Young person aged 22

“Young people who are marginalized do not feel safe at schools and our community. We need more programs to teach young people about diversity. Most of the young people I work with experience some forms of discrimination or bullying. This contributes to poor mental health”

- Educator/Service Provider

“Disability support and inclusion can help community”

- Educator/Service Provider



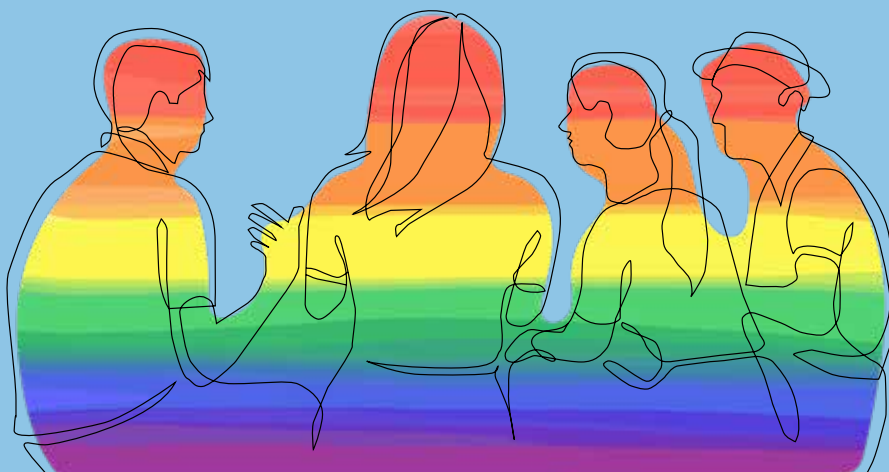
Priority 2:

Kingston's young people are acknowledged

What the research says

Research from around Australia highlights the importance of inclusion and young people being accepted, valued, recognised, acknowledged, and celebrated.

- A priority area identified in the youth consultation for the National Youth Policy Framework is youth empowerment and engagement (Department of Health and Aged Care, 2021)
- 63% of LGBTIQ+ survey respondents had accessed an in-person professional counselling or support service, 21% had accessed a professional text or webchat support service, and 13% had accessed a professional telephone support service in their lifetime. Overall, 63% of participants who accessed an LGBTIQ+-specific service reported that it had made the situation 'better/ much better' (Hill et al., 2021)
- Victorian Youth Week is a week-long celebration of young people aged 12 to 25 years that takes place annually. The week provides young people with an opportunity to express their ideas and views, and act on issues that affect their lives. It also celebrates the positive contributions that young people make to their communities (Youth Central, 2022)
- Children and young people are active members of communities and experts in their own lives. All children and young people should have a voice in identifying problems and finding solutions that impact their health and wellbeing. By empowering children and young people to contribute their experiences and ideas in meaningful ways, Councils gain unique perspectives and new ideas directly from people who use services and facilities and ultimately more efficient, democratic decision-making (VicHealth, 2021)



Key directions and actions for Kingston Youth Services

Key directions	Actions
2.1 Young people feel welcome and accepted	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encouraging inclusion: Providing youth events and programs that meet the needs of our diverse community. Encouraging young people to participate in planning and delivery of activities and events.• Providing places and spaces to socialise and build social connections: Exploring new ways that young people can socialise, participate in hobbies/activities and be comfortable with their uniqueness and diversity.• Ensuring youth friendly service provision: Working with young people to ensure Kingston Youth Services continues to be welcoming and easy to reach.
2.2 The efforts and contributions of young people are recognised and rewarded	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Celebrating young people’s talents, achievements and contributions: Delivering a series of events which celebrates the talents, achievements and contributions of young people in our local community.• Showcasing positive stories about young people through media channels: Using new and current media channels to regularly share a variety of stories about the efforts and journeys of young people.• Facilitating youth leadership and consultation: Ensure that young people have a genuine voice and contribution when participating in Kingston Youth Services leadership programs and consultation processes.
2.3 Young people are valued and acknowledged in their community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting the achievements and impact of young people: Highlighting the valuable impact of young people’s contributions across programs and services.

Priority 3:

Kingston's young people are connected

Being connected and having a sense of belonging is important to overall resilience, mental health, and wellbeing. Young people benefit from having positive experiences with their family, at school, within the community and online. Young people told us they want to feel empowered. They want to feel safe and supported to get involved. We want to create an environment where young people feel safe, engaged and heard.

What our young people told us

Findings from the 2022 Youth Strategy Survey for young people aged 12 to 25 years showed some young people are feeling connected, safe, and involved, although this could be increased:

- **33%** reported bullying is an important issue
- **27%** reported relationships (parents, family, friends) is an important issue
- **15%** reported environment and climate change is an important issue
- **10%** reported personal safety in public spaces is an important issue
- **9%** reported loneliness and social connection is an important issue
- **5%** reported online technologies (social media) is an important issue
- **3%** reported identity and connection to culture is an important issue

In the consultation for this Strategy we heard

"Bullying is not okay, and I experience it and I don't want people to go through it"

- Young person aged 12

"I like having trust and relationships with family"

- Young person aged 14

"If young people don't have a safe home life they can't be expected to concentrate at events like school"

- Educator/Service Provider

"Loneliness has been a huge issue during COVID. Helping people feel more connected is hugely protective of their overall health and happiness levels"

- Educator/Service Provider

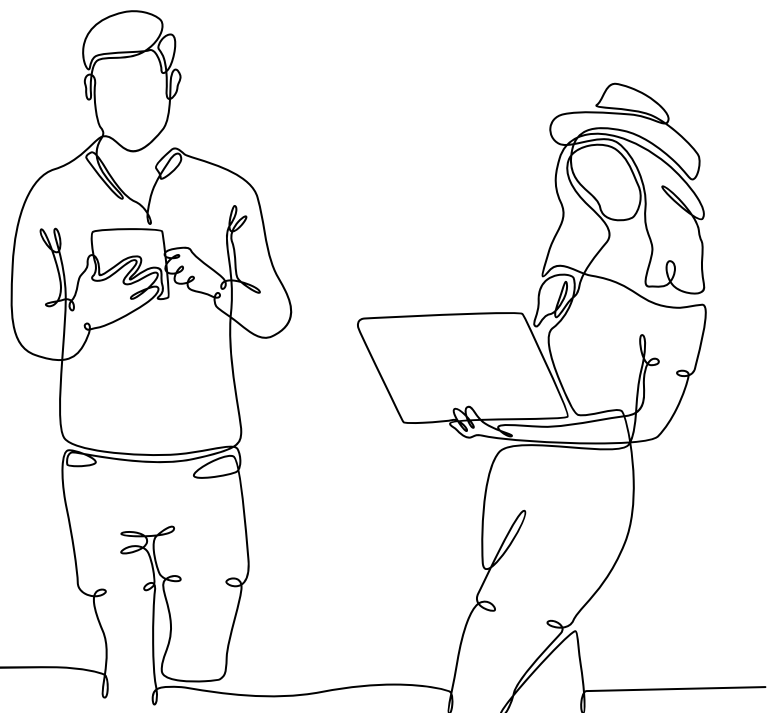
"The positive relationships that a child grows up in impacts their whole life and vice versa if it's negative"

- Parent/Carer

What the research says

Recent research from around Australia on young people focuses on student engagement and wellbeing as well as the safety and protection of children, young people, and families.

- Two priority areas identified in the youth consultation for the National Youth Policy Framework are Opportunity and security and Safety, inclusion, respect, and acceptance (Department of Health and Aged Care, 2021)
- Every school in Victoria is required to have a student engagement policy (State of Victoria, 2021)
- The Local Government Partnership Model aims to address local factors directly affecting the daily lives of children and young people. Children and young people aged 0 to 25 years are more vulnerable to inadequacies in the food system, have inadequate access to suitable physical activity opportunities, and have inadequate exposure to suitable social and physical environments which support social connection. This Model emphasises building capacity within councils to authentically engage and use systems thinking approaches to guide the development, prioritisation, and implementation of actions (VicHealth, 2021)
- Coronavirus restrictions impacted the health and wellbeing of Australian young people aged 15 to 29 years between April and July 2020. While social media was used to stay connected, 68% felt they were using too much social media. Many young people described feeling lonely and 37% disagreed with the statement, “I feel connected with others.” Young people aged 15 to 19 years and non-binary gender participants reported the highest average loneliness scores (VicHealth, 2020)
- There is a National plan supported by action plans to achieve a significant and sustained reduction in violence against women and their children (Commonwealth of Australia [Department of Social Services], 2016).



Priority 3:

Kingston's young people are connected

Key directions and actions for Kingston Youth Services

Key directions	Actions
3.1 Young people feel safe, connected and a sense of belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensuring young people have a genuine voice and input: Providing opportunities for young people to have direct input into Council plans, programs and services and ensuring that youth participation principles are applied.
3.2 Young people have multiple points of access	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnering with others to increase visibility in the community: Increasing outreach efforts, having a visible presence at Council events, partnering and co-branding youth events and communicating via school and community newsletters.
3.3 Young people are involved and have a voice in local matters that affect them	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnering with teams across Council departments: Having a visible presence in the community and building organisational capacity to consistently access and engage with young people.• Increasing our engagement with young people aged 18 to 25: Increased efforts in understanding the needs of 18-25 year old and providing additional services.



STATE OF MIND 2023
WOMENS
15-17 YRS
THIRD PRIZE

STATE OF MIND 2023
WOMENS
15-17 YRS
FIRST PRIZE

CURBSIDE
GOACHING

187
KILLER PADS

187
KILLER PAD

Priority 4:

Kingston's young people are prepared

Many young people told us they feel unsure about the future which can lead to feelings of anxiety and stress. Young people experience many significant changes and transitions including commencing Year 7, the next step after VCE/VCAL (Year 13), starting work, and becoming an independent young adult. We want to create an environment where young people feel optimistic, hopeful, and confident to take the next step and understand what that might look like.

What our young people told us

Findings from the 2022 Youth Strategy Survey for young people aged 12 to 25 years showed some young people have concerns about their current and future situations, and there are some areas where support could be increased:

- **19%** reported education and training is an important issue
- **17%** reported COVID-19 is an important issue
- **14%** reported homelessness and housing is an important issue
- **10%** reported finances and money is an important issue
- **8%** reported employment is an important issue
- **7%** reported public transport is an important issue

In the consultation for this Strategy we heard

“My future depends on employment, and it is important to me”

- Young person aged 16

“We're not really given any training as to how to deal with our personal finances, so they seem a bit overwhelming”

- Young person aged 21

“Education and training are the core foundation for growth and development of youth”

- Parent/Carer

“Everyone deserves and education or to be trained in an area they are interested in”

- Education/Service provider

“School is where young people spend most of their time”

- Education/Service provider

What the research says

Recent research from around Australia on young people focuses on being prepared for, and having support to navigate pathways, to work and independent living.

- A priority area identified in the youth consultation for the National Youth Policy Framework is navigating the system (Department of Health and Aged Care, 2021)
- Decision makers need to better understand the specific experiences, challenges and barriers faced by young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds (Centre for Multicultural Youth, 2021)
- Looking to the future of flexible work and impact of COVID-19, four pillars of good work have been identified for young people: Access and inclusion; Protection and wellbeing; Quality and control; and Growth and development (Foundation for Young Australians, 2020)
- In 2019-20, three of the main reasons young people aged 15–24 sought assistance from specialist homelessness services were housing crisis (17%), family and domestic violence (17%), and inadequate or inappropriate dwelling conditions (12%) (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2021)
- In a post-COVID world, students are looking for new ways of doing things. A combination of physical and digital engagement is needed to support the post-school decision making process. By leveraging the best of both worlds young people now have an even greater ability to make, what until that point, is the most important decision of their lives. The uptake of digital engagement in the post-school journey was accelerated by the pandemic (Walker, 2020)



Key directions and actions for Kingston Youth Services

Key directions	Actions
<p>4.1 Young people are supported to make informed choices and manage transition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnering to deliver tailored workshops: Covering life skills and general knowledge around financial literacy. • Strengthening support to Grade 6 and Year 7 students: Delivering a series of informative sessions developed to support and prepare students during peak transition times.
<p>4.2 Young people to gain transferable skills to strengthen employment options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating work-ready workshops and accredited training: Providing fully funded opportunities for young people to increase their capacity to seek employment. • Collaborating with key stakeholders to enhance young people's opportunities for employment: Delivering a series of community based sessions where young people have access to key opportunities for employment in their local communities. • Increasing young people's opportunities for paid employment: Providing pathways for young people to gain paid opportunities across services and programs within Kingston Youth Services.
<p>4.3 Meaningful developmental opportunities are available to young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-designing services and programs: Providing opportunities for young people to participate in the development of new and revised programs and services provided by Kingston Youth Services. • Creating short term internship opportunities: Collaborating with others to provide opportunities that allows young people to be gain hands on experience. • Increase local youth volunteering opportunities: Facilitating volunteering options where young people can connect, interact, develop new relationships within the wider community.



WHEN
ARE YOU
GOING TO
TELL YOUR
PARENTS
YOU'RE
STRAIGHT?

city of kingston presents



Implementing and Reporting

This Youth Strategy outlines Council's commitment to hearing from and collaborating with young people. The Youth Services team will oversee and coordinate the implementation of the key directions and actions in this Strategy. The team will also work collaboratively within Council, with external stakeholders and the community to implement or advocate for agreed key directions and actions. The team will monitor and report progress made on an annual basis.

These reports will be made available online via www.kingstonyouth.org.au

Young people's aspirations for their future

Healthy and happy
Young person aged 12

I am good at school and happy and healthy
Young person aged 12

I want to be an influencer, or a famous person only known for good
Young person aged 12

To be a famous actress
Young person aged 12

In 5 years, I would like to be overseas travelling and studying at university
Young person aged 13

I will have my driver's license, be studying, own a spare pen and be looking forward to life
Young person aged 13

No climate change
Young person aged 13

Construction worker
Young person aged 14

Graduated high school and going to uni
Young person aged 14

I hope I will be studying at a good university
Young person aged 14

Being an artist, having a job that I love
Young person aged 14

Doing the best I can
Young person aged 15

I'd like to be in a comfortable position where I can be self-sufficient / thriving financially
Young person aged 15

I hope that I would've successfully finished high school and started training/studying to become a paramedic or physio
Young person aged 15

I hope I am happy and not stressing about my life and what it will look like
Young person aged 16

Comfortable with money and myself, anxiety less severe
Young person aged 16

Running my own business
Young person aged 16

Hopefully an A grade electrician
Young person aged 17

When thinking about their future and the next five years, young people hoped for....

I want to have completed Year 12 and my certificate 2 in community services

Young person aged 17

I hope I will have a degree and possibly be studying a masters or have a job and stable relationships with my loved ones

Young person aged 17

Move out and study in Queensland

Young person aged 17

Stable job, own home, and a pet dog

Young person aged 18

I want to be rich and confident in five years

Young person aged 18

To have a good amount of stability and balance in my life

Young person aged 18

I hope to complete a postgraduate degree and either get a full-time job or delve even further into academia

Young person aged 19

Finished university and got stable employment in a workplace that I enjoy and brings personal fulfilment

Young person aged 20

Stable income, interesting career, or uni course

Young person aged 21

I haven't thought about it before. I think I'll think about it later

Young person aged 22

Being able to afford to move out and stay in the area and not move out further. Full time job in preferred career

Young person aged 22

Hope I'm in the property market and working off debt

Young person aged 23

Continue to support my family, be there for my friends and be doing well in my job

Young person aged 24

Haven't thought about it

Young person aged 25



Appendix 1:

Youth Participation Framework

Co-Design

Children and young people are active members of communities and experts in their own lives. All children and young people should have a voice in identifying problems and finding solutions that impact their health and wellbeing. Leading the Way – Engaging young voices for change developed by VicHealth provides best practice and evidence-based strategies for councils to ensure children and young people are at the centre of the design, delivery and governance of initiatives that aim to improve their health and wellbeing. Kingston Youth Services is working towards deeper partnerships with young people, with co-design being the most intense form of engagement. We are well positioned and resourced to commence more elaborate co-design. (VicHealth 2021)

Kingston Youth Services enables and promotes genuine youth participation by:

- Having a youth participation framework, action plan, policies and procedures that are clear and agreed upon as well as clear communication mechanisms so young people, families, staff and other stakeholders are aware of youth participation approaches, practices and outcomes.
- Supporting young people to understand their rights. Resources that can be accessed include: Rights and Responsibilities information, feedback and complaints mechanisms.
- Promoting and encouraging youth participation in strategic planning, program planning and review and project development.
- Dedicating resources to support and systematically monitor youth participation strategies and outcomes.
- Establishing a supportive, youth friendly environment for young people to ask questions, raise concerns and exercise their rights.
- Ensuring individual treatment, support planning and goal setting involves the young person and reflects their perspective.

Co-Design Spectrum



Taken from the International Association of Public Participation IAP2 spectrum. The inclusion of co-design takes participation to the next level of self determination.



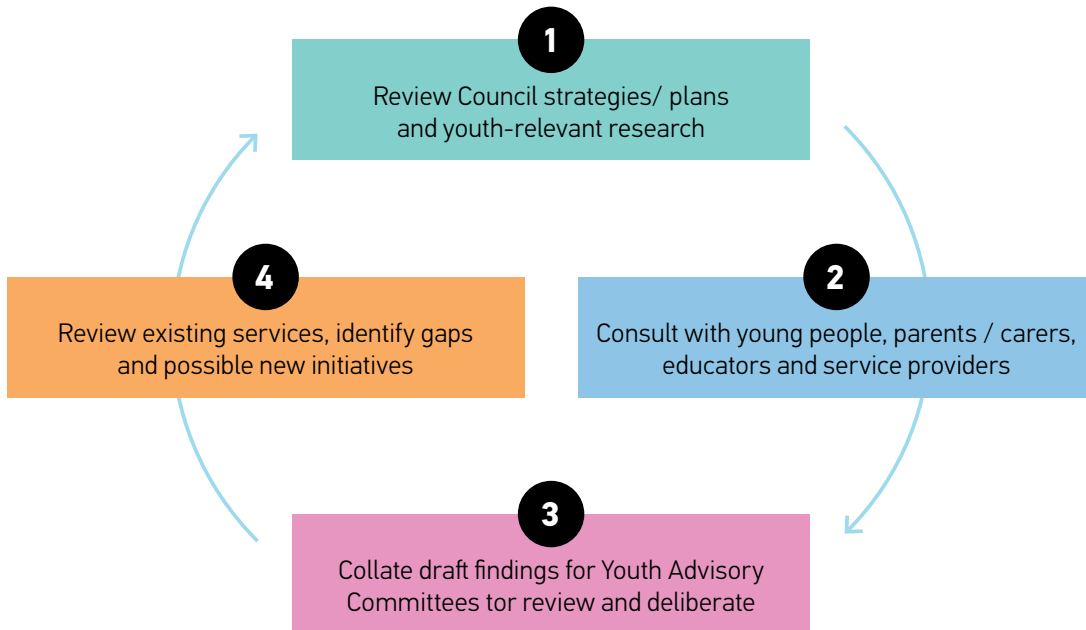
Appendix 2:

Background Information

Development of this Strategy

Kingston's Youth Strategy 2023-2026 is a partnership between Council and our young people and builds on the current support services, programs and events offered by Youth Services. It presents our shared, priorities, key directions and actions, new initiatives, and advocacy areas to empower local young people to be the best they can be.

This Strategy has been developed by Council based on direct input from local young people, parents/carers of young people and representatives of local schools and youth service organisations. This process involved four key steps as shown below.



Overview of consultation program and description of participants

In 2022, 947 participants and 10 participants were engaged via the following activities:

830	49	68	10
Youth iPad Survey responses (online and paper-based submissions)	Parent and carer online survey responses	Educators and youth services organisation online survey responses	Youth Advisory Committee participants in workshops

The demographic and descriptive features captured via engagement activity varied. However, the participation profile shows a broad cross-section of young people in Kingston participated. A variety of education and youth services representatives and organisations were engaged, and some parents/ carers were engaged.

2022 Youth Strategy Survey

830 respondents: Connections: 77% live, 58% study, 27% play or socialise, and 9% work in Kingston; Gender: 58% Girl/Woman, 34% Boy/Man, 4% Non-binary, 3% Prefer not to say, 2% Prefer to self-identify; Age: 93% aged 12 to 17 years, 7% aged 18 and 25 years; Diversity: 28% speak a language other than English with family or community; 26% have responsibility for caring for other people; 19% identify as same sex attracted/ intersex/ gender diverse or questioning, 7% identify as a person with a disability, 4% identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

2022 Parent/Carer Survey

49 respondents: Connections: 80% live, 27% socialise, 18% work, 14% study, and 10% volunteer in Kingston; Gender: 69% Woman, 31% Man; Age: 26-69 years of which 67% aged 35-39 years; 20% speak a language other than English with family or community (German, Hindi, Hindi Marathi, Italian, and Samoan). Cultural identity: Australian (16), Australian - Italian background, Buddhist, Cald, Caucasian, Hindu, Mixed, New Zealand (2), Samoan, Australian/American family, and white Christian professional. Country of birth: Australia (32): Canada, England (2), India (2), Ireland, New Zealand (2), South Africa, USA, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam

2022 Educators and Youth Services Providers (organisations) survey

68 respondents: representatives worked in a variety of roles in the following school, community or service providers: Alfred health - Headspace HYEPP; Aspendale Gardens Community Centre; Aspendale Gardens PS; Aspendale PS; Bayside City Council; Beaumaris Secondary College; Berendale School; Carrum PS; Chelsea Heights PS; Chelsea PS; Christ Church Dingley; Cranbourne West PS; Derrimut Weelam Gathering Place; Headspace; Heatherton Christian College; Highett Youth Club; Kingston Heath PS; Kingston City Council; Le Page PS; Le Page Tennis Club; Mentone Park PS; Mentone Girls Secondary College; Mentone Grammar; Mission Australia; Moorabbin PS; Mordialloc Beach PS; Mordialloc College; Mordialloc Secondary College; Neami YRR Moorabbin; neighbouring Council (education/ youth sector); OLA; Outlook Employment/ Jobs Victoria; Parkdale PS; Patterson Lakes PS; St Andrews Calisthenics (volunteer); St Joseph's; St Louis de Montforts PS; St Patricks Mentone; Southmoor PS; Victoria Police; Waves Leisure Centre; Westall Secondary College; and Yet Kieu Sea Scouts

Legislation surrounding the provision of youth services

In Australia, there is Federal and State Government legislation and regulations outlining the rights and entitlements of young people. Organisations, including the City of Kingston, providing services to, and interacting with, young people must consider establishing suitable structures and allocating sufficient resources to ensure compliant service provision.

Legislation and regulations relevant to young people Australia-wide includes:

- Australian Health Practitioner Regulatory Authority (Ahpra)
- Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 - Declaration of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Family Law Act 1975
- Family Law Regulations 1984
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Children rules)
- Youth Allowance (Activity Test Exemption Guidelines) Determination 1998

Legislation and regulations relevant to young people in the State of Victoria includes:

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- Child Employment Regulations 2014
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Regulations 2017
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017
- Education and Training Reform (School Safety) Regulations 2021
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Failure to Disclose 2014
- Failure to Protect 2015
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- Gender Equality Act 2020 (Gender Impact Assessments)
- Health Records Act 2001
- Local Government Act 2020
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
- Reportable Conduct Scheme
- The Commission for Children and Youth People Act 2012
- Working with Children Act 2005



Local government and youth services provision

The Victorian local government sector plays an important role supporting and empowering young people. There are several contemporary issues which may affect local government youth services provision.

The Child Safe Standards of Service Delivery impact the way Council interacts with young people. Since January 2016, all Councils have been required to meet 'child safe' standards of service delivery for children under the age of 18 years. Child safe standards apply to all staff and volunteers at organisations delivering services for children. The standards refer to cultures of child safety, commitments and codes of conduct, appropriate screening, supervision, training and staff practices, processes for reporting and responding to suspected child abuse, strategies to identify and remove risks of abuse, and strategies to promote children's participation and empowerment. Organisations must demonstrate particular measures to protect the safety of Aboriginal children, children with disabilities, and children from diverse cultural backgrounds. To read Council's commitment to child safety visit: [Child Safe Standards - City of Kingston](#)

The Code of Ethical Practice for the Victoria Youth Sector (YACVic) The Code is based on human rights: things that all Victorians—including young people—can expect to enjoy, such as their right to freedom of expression or right to take part in public life. The Code was first developed by YACVic in 2007, after consultation with the Victorian youth sector. The Code includes a set of youth work principles and ethical practice responsibilities. It supports, but does not replace the sectors legal responsibilities. Any person, group or organisation that works with young people can choose to use the Code. Kingston Youth Services follows the Code of Ethical Practice. The Code of Ethical Practice is scheduled to be reviewed in 2023.

The new Local Government Act 2020, a principles-based Act. The new Act aims to ensure all Victorians have the opportunity to engage with their council on local priorities and the future of their community. As the level of government closest to the community, councils have both the opportunity and the responsibility to enable participatory democracy. Many citizens, including young people, now want a stronger voice in shaping their community's future.

Emphasis on improving the quality of public participation and engagement approaches. Community engagement is an important part of the good and democratic governance of local government. Councils have been leaders in the constant challenge to adapt and find new ways to engage meaningfully with their communities, including young people. Kingston Council's Community Engagement Policy outlines our commitment to provide the community with genuine opportunities to contribute to and inform projects, strategies, services and decisions that affect them. To view the full Policy visit: [Community Engagement Policy - City of Kingston](#)

Councils play a lead role in community planning and advocacy, engage and consult with young people, provide funding for youth services, programs and events and have a compliance responsibility. Local government is the backbone of generalist youth service delivery in Victoria, working with large numbers of young people (Youth Affairs Council Victoria, 2016). Youth Services teams promote young people’s health, social inclusion, skill development and leadership, and provide young people with opportunities to engage in arts and culture, community strengthening and civic life and assist young people to navigate challenges and access specialist services where needed. Local government youth services include, but are not limited to:

- Leading community planning and advocacy for young people. Local government youth services play a vital partnership-building role, bringing together the different stakeholders that work with young people to coordinate service delivery, advocate for young people’s needs, and leverage resources to meet local priorities. Many services and schools would be impacted to work effectively together and access adequate resourcing without local government’s support.
- Engaging and consulting with young people, and building young people’s capacity as advocates and community leaders. Local government youth services are recognised as experts in youth engagement – an essential resource for councils wishing to hear young people’s ideas and solutions to local problems.
- Funding, planning and delivering services, programs and events for young people. These are very diverse, ranging from holiday activities to mentoring programs, anti-discrimination campaigns, volunteering opportunities, L2P programs for novice drivers, and social supports for young people at risk of disengagement or marginalisation.
- Enabling local governments to prepare for and comply with their statutory obligations in relation to children up to the age of 18.

Snapshot of Council's youth services provision

Council plays many roles in relation to young people in Kingston. Kingston's Youth Services team delivers a range of services, programs, spaces and activities that support young people aged 12 to 25 years who live, work or study within the municipality.

Counselling, Youth Worker support, information and referral:

Council provides free individual support services. Youth Workers work alongside young people to support them with problem solving, advocacy, linking to other services, empowerment, decision making, practical assistance, negotiating relationships and communication. Registered psychologists located at Platform 81 provide psychological counselling aimed at reducing emotional distress and strategies to cope with life's problems.

Community based youth programs:

Council provides a range of community based youth programs that are free, inclusive and provide young people with the opportunity to learn and develop skills. Current programs include AYC Cooking and Art Programs, FReeZA P81 Events, Universal youth magazine, Queer in Kingston, Youth Advisory Committees, Fully Funded Short Course, YA Chat in partnership with Parkdale Library, Junior Mayor Election and Junior Council Program.

School Based Programs:

Council develops and facilitates school programs available to all secondary schools to strengthen young people's capacity and address current youth issues as identified by schools and young people. Current programs include Grade 6 and Year 7 Support, School Information Talks on services and programs offered by Kingston Youth Services, lunchtime engagement sessions as well as tailored programs to meet the needs of young people.

Youth Spaces (newly established

Platform 81): Council provides a free space at Platform 81 Mordialloc for young people to access information, services and support. A free drop-in space is located at Aspendale Gardens Community Centre.

Youth Events and recognition:

Council provides free youth activities and events to promote drug and alcohol-free environments for young people to safely participate in. Kingston Youth Services promotes annual youth awards to recognise and celebrate the achievements and contributions of young people.

Youth Engagement:

Council engages with young people and provides input/feedback opportunities through surveys and participant evaluations. The Youth Advisory Committees also provide feedback to Council on local youth issues and provides a platform for other Council departments wishing to seek feedback from young people.

Parent Information Nights:

Council provides information for parents and carers about current issues affecting young people. These sessions are offered quarterly and focus on the main presenting issues facing our young people.

Youth Networks: Council supports and participates in youth networks to increase collaboration and information sharing between local youth service providers.

Networks include: Bayside, Glen Eira and Kingston Local Learning and Employment Network; Bayside, Glen Eira and Kingston Youth Network; Student Wellbeing and Teacher's breakfasts and YACVic's Youth Participation and Practice Network.

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