

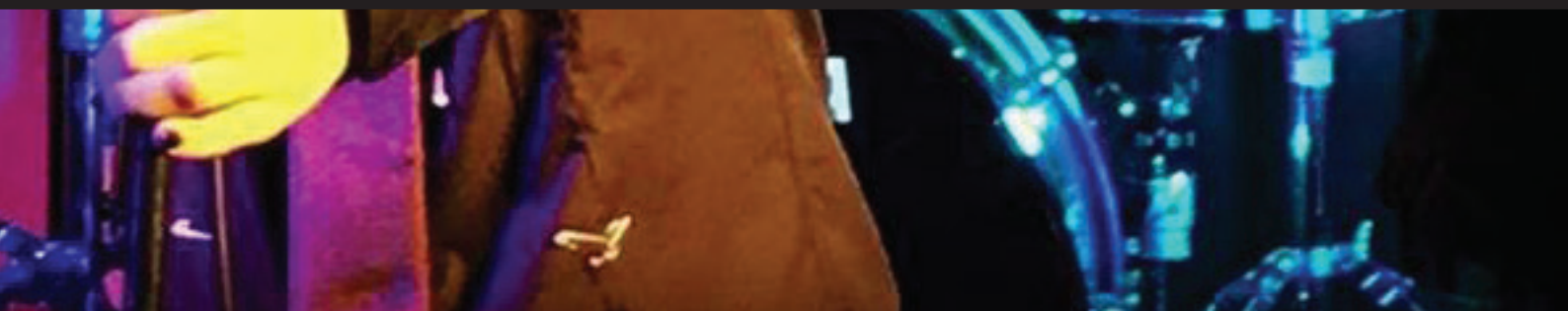
**"AS THE WORLD CHANGES  
WITH UNPRECEDENTED  
SPEED, YOUNG PEOPLE ARE  
PROVING TO BE INVALUABLE  
PARTNERS WHO CAN ADVANCE  
MEANINGFUL SOLUTIONS."**

Ban Ki-moon (then United Nations Secretary-General)



# Youth Development Action Plan 2019 – 2021

**NURTURING THE ADULTS OF TOMORROW**



## So, what's it like growing up in 21st century Australia?

### Is it noticeably different for young people living in Surf Coast Shire compared to the rest of the country?

Today's young people are the first generation born into the digital revolution. They have lived their entire lives with the internet, grown up with the evolution of social media and experienced the opportunities afforded by accelerating innovations in digital technology.



How can we work together as a community to support our young people in navigating the new challenges of today to become the best versions of themselves tomorrow?

This action plan outlines the steps Surf Coast Shire Council will take over the next three years to address these questions.

## AUSTRALIA'S YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY

Numerous studies confirm that young Australians are facing challenges.

**Mission Australia's** 2018 youth survey identified the top three issues of personal concern for young people as:



**STRESS**



**SCHOOL  
OR STUDY  
PROBLEMS**



**MENTAL  
HEALTH.**

**Beyond Blue's** latest data indicates that:



**1 IN 5** young people has experienced depression before the age of 18



**1 IN 7** aged up to 17 experiences a mental health condition in any given year



**1 IN 6** between 16 and 24 currently experiences an anxiety condition; one in 16 depression

**Youth suicide** remains the leading **cause of death** among young people.

**The Resilience Project** reports the amount of information today's young people receive in a week equates to what their parents at the same age would have received in a year with.

**94%** of Australians between 14 and 17 own a smart phone (Roy Morgan, 2016)



**1 IN 3** regularly use their phone between 10pm and 6am (Resilient Youth, 2018)

**ACCORDING TO THE  
LATEST CENSUS,  
ABOUT 5,000 YOUNG  
PEOPLE LIVE IN  
SURF COAST SHIRE,  
REPRESENTING  
14% OF THE TOTAL  
POPULATION.**



# SURF COAST'S YOUNG PEOPLE IN 2019

## Education-wise, there are two local secondary schools:

- **Surf Coast Secondary College** in Torquay opened in 2012, reaching full capacity in 2018. Current forecasts indicate student numbers will be well above 1,000 by 2021.
- **Lorne P-12 College** has seen a steady increase in student numbers over the past four years and currently has 100 students in years 7 to 12.

Secondary students who do not attend either of these local schools travel into Geelong for their education. Since the nearest university and TAFE institute are both located in Geelong, tertiary students are also required to travel or even to live away from home to pursue their studies.

Limited local employment opportunities also see many young people leaving the shire after completing their education.

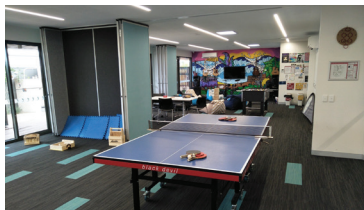
The personal issues that most concern our young people in the latest Surf Coast Shire Youth Survey are:

- Relationships
- School stress
- Mental health issues.

These correlate directly with the Mission Australia results.

## OUR CURRENT PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Surf Coast Shire Council currently coordinates the following programs through its Youth Development team:



**YOUTH LOUNGE** runs after school hours during the week at the Kurrumbee Myaring Community Centre in Torquay. It provides a space where young people can socialise, play music and talk to team members.



**THE POD** is a converted shipping container that is transported around the shire to provide young people living in smaller townships with a dedicated local meeting space. Its locations and opening times are based on community needs.



The **FReeZA** program is funded from a government grant to support young people in the fields of music and arts. Funded until December 2021, FReeZA activities are youth-led with support from the Youth Development team.



**ENGAGE!** is funded by the Victorian Government to help young people to actively participate in and connect with their local community, including via skills and knowledge development, pathways to employment, training and education, and improved health, wellbeing and social connection. Engage! is funded until December 2020.



**VICTORIAN YOUTH WEEK** is an annual week-long celebration of young people and the contributions they make to their communities. The Surf Coast Youth Awards are presented as part of Surf Coast's Youth Week activities.



**GOOD TIMES, GREAT BREAKS** is Surf Coast's harm minimisation program targeting the more than 4,000 school leavers who visit the shire in November/December each year to celebrate finishing school. The Youth Development team plays a vital role in ensuring they return home safe.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

Council's three-year Youth Development Action Plan focuses on achieving three interrelated outcomes:

Strong connections between our Youth Development team and young people, their families, schools, sporting clubs, community groups and health and wellbeing services.

Council acting as a respected and influential broker to ensure our community has the services it needs.

Prevention and intervention programs that help our youth thrive.

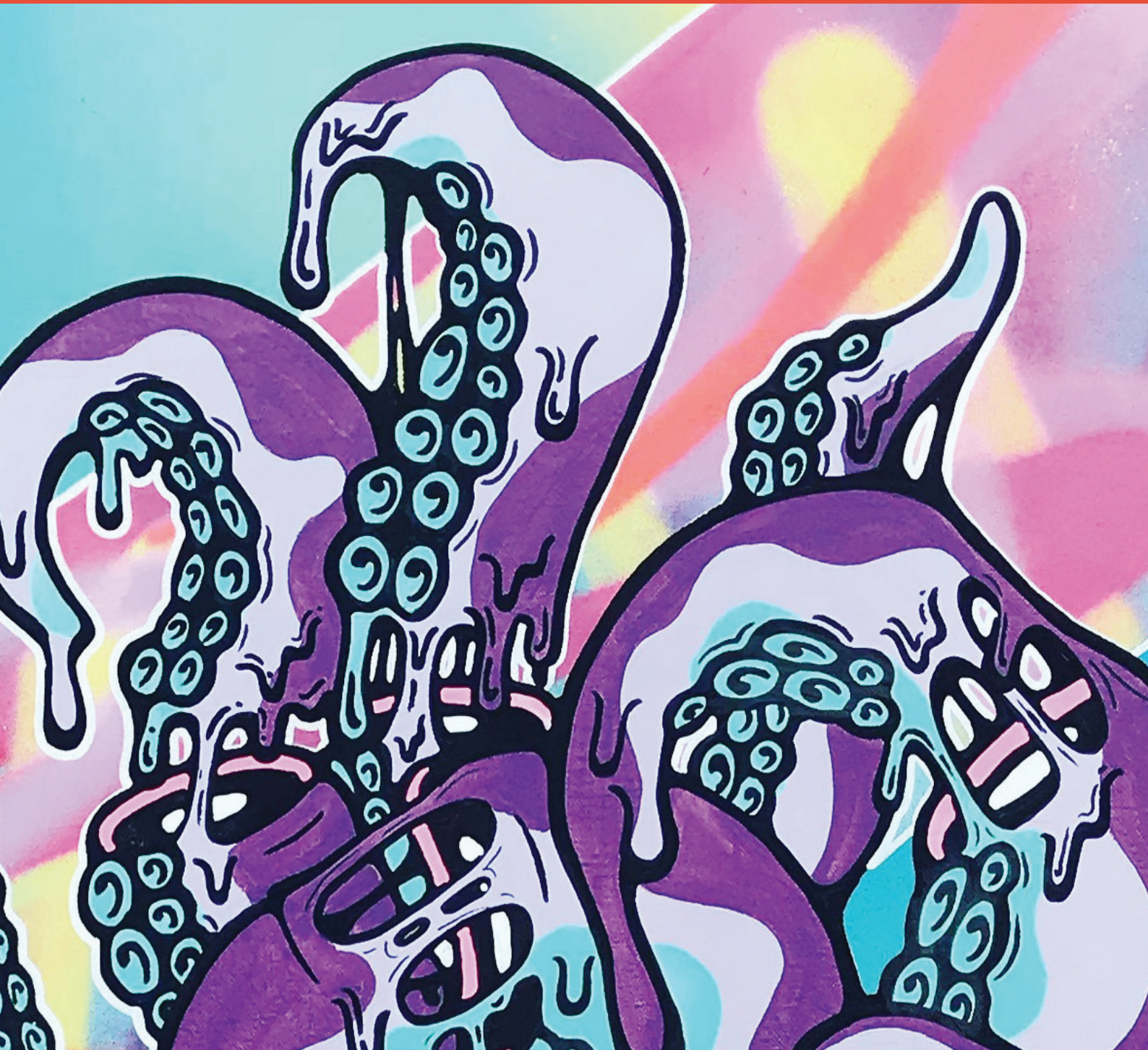
## KEY FOCUS AREAS

Connection to community and services

- Arts and culture
- Mental health
- Employment

As current United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres said in 2018, "The hopes of the world rest on young people. Peace, economic dynamism, social justice, tolerance — all this and more, today and tomorrow, depends on tapping into the power of youth."

We can all play a role in nurturing Surf Coast's young people to achieve their full potential now and in future. This plan provides a framework for how we will fulfil this role over the next three years.





# COUNCIL'S YOUTH DEVELOPMENT GOALS 2019-21

To create strong connections between the Youth Development team and young people, their families, schools, sporting clubs, community groups and health and wellbeing services.

To act as a respected and influential broker to ensure our community has the services it needs.

To run prevention and intervention programs that help our youth thrive.

## KEY FOCUS AREAS AND RELATED ACTIONS

### CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY AND SERVICES – We will:

- Operate youth-specific places, including Youth Lounge, Youth Pod and pop-ups.
- Facilitate the FReeZA program.
- Facilitate the Engage! program.
- Continue to work in partnership with Surf Coast Secondary College and Lorne P-12 College to implement programs.
- Continue our involvement in Australian Youth Week.
- Be accessible via current and emerging communication channels.
- Survey young people regularly.
- Continue our involvement in school leavers' safety response.
- Advocate for improved transport services for youth in rural communities.
- Foster young people's positive interest in the environment by creating opportunities for them to be involved in local initiatives.
- Actively participate in actions related to examining options for a dedicated youth facility, identified as a high priority in the Torquay-Jan Juc Social Infrastructure Study.

### ARTS AND CULTURE – We will:

Facilitate the FReeZA program and meet funding objectives.

### MENTAL HEALTH – We will:

- Arrange local parent workshops and seminars to upskill parents.
- Work with agencies to bring services to the Surf Coast.
- Facilitate mental health initiatives within the Engage! program.
- Offer programs to build the capacity of young people so they can better support themselves and their peers.

### EMPLOYMENT – We will:

- Work with young people, schools, local businesses, community groups and sporting clubs to identify skills that should be targeted.
- Bring service providers to communities where young people live as opposed to young people having to travel outside of Surf Coast Shire.

## LINKS TO COUNCIL PLAN

(relevant strategic objectives)

- a) Support people to participate in and contribute to community life.
- i) Ensure infrastructure is in place to support existing communities and provide for growth.

Support people to participate in and contribute to community life.

- d) Provide support for people in need.

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