

WESTERN METRO LGAS YOUTH FORUM 2024



Apr 2024

Forum Outcomes

Western Metro LGAS Youth Forum 2024

FORUM OUTCOMES

Brimbank – Youth Unemployment

Root Causes:

- Racial discrimination - especially in retail / west
- Having a criminal record
- Cultural factors / family barriers
 - Beliefs regarding not working as a young person / migrant (female etc)
- Overrepresented in 'casual' roles - little transfer to part time or full time work
- Young people have little knowledge of work rights (vulnerable to exploitation - job ads target young people) - for example, youngest age to work
- few grad jobs
- Commerce / business industry have few employment opportunities for young people
- Hard to transition from casual jobs to career
- Lack of time / flexibility
- Lack of opportunities for career / professional development
- Lack of knowledge with regard to jobs, resume etc
- Little or no experience in getting into career
- Misconception of young people as 'unreliable'

Ideas/Suggestions:

- Awareness in earlier years regarding the job market
- Seek experiences relating to career of interests - work experiences
- Accessible work for young people - and variety
- Schools to implement programs to support young people
- Investment of resources
- More job opportunities in the West
- Better public transport - most frequent and efficient bus routes
- Education campaign of work rights for young people
- Young Workers Centre
- Challenge the stigma regarding work / community conversation
- Support for young workers
- Networking opportunity for young people
- Having active and visible career counsellors
- Advocacy to state regarding schools that may have barrier to get job

- Support young people to build the soft skills and communicate that in a resume / interview (transferable)
- Increase volunteer experiences

Actions:

1. Connecting young people to work
 - a. Where to look for jobs
 - b. Networking / pathway
 - c. Career counsellors and part time work
 - d. Knowledge of rights - raise awareness
 - e. Action: Collate key local information on the above (BLF, Eco Dev)
2. Transferable skills
 - a. Action: Youth Services to include soft skills learned through participation in programs
3. Incentives for business
 - a. Action: Accept invitation from the Minister of Youth to further advocate

Maribyrnong – Climate Change

Root Causes and Ideas/Suggestions:

- Carbon emissions
 - Other options other than cars (accessible park / car lanes)
 - Public transport more affordable and reliable
- Education around climate change
 - Encouraging students to be sustainable
 - Providing correct information
 - Make picking up rubbish a positive thing
 - Schools
 - More education regarding fire evacuation
- Deforestation
 - Tree planting
- Education focused on hope instead of anxiety and fear
- Destruction of ecosystems
- Making facilities more accessible via walking, cycling and public transport
- Ocean pollution
 - Charity
- Sustainability
 - Cultures at home
- Making infrastructure more designed for people rather than transport (cars)
- Community cultural education on recycling and climate change
- Lack of implementation despite knowledge (becomes part of routine / habit)
 - Incentives with recycling
- Mass confusion on climate change
- Installation of eco pro technology within the city areas
- Accessibility (need to use cars)
 - Unsafe bike routes
 - Inaccessible walking and unsafe areas
 - Unreliable and lack of public transport
 - Poorly connected public transport – trams, buses and trains
 - Train cancellations and Vline (for example, Tarneit and Melton)
 - Buses
 - Increase availability of public transport
 - Long wait times
- Increasing programs on climate change or recycling and initiatives to encourage recycling
- School programs (for example, picking up rubbish) to increase awareness and knowledge on sustainability and climate change
- Overcoming barriers with infrastructure (for example, safety and lighting)
- Need for more individual level interventions
- Protesting on climate change
- Education on cross contamination on recycle bins

- Education on where to recycle objects (for example, batteries)
- Education focusing on solutions
- Online resources and making sustainable resources more affordable
- Poor working conditions (for example, fast food outlets pouring oil into sinks)
- Encouragement (households to install water tanks and solar panels)
- Connecting positive association with collecting rubbish instead of punishment
- Oil pollution (Shell company)
- Urban shading - encouraging tree planting

Action Plan:

1. Access / safety: bike lanes
 - a. Protected bike lanes
 - b. Lack of consultancy - even if the public is consulted, it's disproportionate - young people (actual users) of the roads aren't asked - tokenistic advertisement doesn't reach the appropriate demographic
 - c. Solution:
 - i. Policy, sustainable urban planning - to do co design (partnership with Bike West) - lobby and advocate thought effective accessible public transport
 - ii. Bike West resources etc
2. Compulsory (\$\$) education at schools about sustainable practises in their curriculum
3. Presentation to Councillors at the end of the year (Mayor, Councillors, representative)
4. Overall aim to bring more awareness of climate change and grant youth the power to shape a more sustainable future - first step being: introduce safer bike lanes to encourage forms of transport that don't rely on fossil fuels that contribute to climate change effects

Wyndham – Sense of Community

Root Causes and Ideas/Suggestions:

- Lack of representation
 - (Inspired / Informed) - community programs and schools
 - Belonging
 - Reduce division
 - Role models
 - Racism and exclusion
 - Seeing themselves (gender, culture)
 - Positive - cultural and religious representation, parents and families, “can't be what you can't see”
 - (Inclusive)
 - Leaders (minority backgrounds, diversity, services, celebrating, normalising, interpreter, understanding)
- Lack of accessibility - lots of new people in Wyndham area (new to Australia or new to the area)
 - Schools and social media
 - Physical transport
 - Online or face to face
 - Young people prefer face to face
 - Accountability
 - Social interaction is priority
 - Incentivise (prizes, food)
- Lack of awareness
 - Storytelling
 - Social media
 - Youth led
 - ‘Memo Mondays’
 - Education
 - Delivery is important
 - Creative
 - Encouraging role models
 - Positive reinforcement
 - Target to young people's interests (drop in's – more) – inclusive
 - Youth participation - all abilities
 - Senior mentors - close to home
 - Leading the conversation – relevant
 - Attending assemblies
 - Inspirational speakers
 - Young people spreading information
 - Celebration of culture
 - More young people involved
 - Meeting new people
 - Sports

- Friends
- Schools
- Physical activity
- Mental activity

Additional Notes:

- Sense of community in other LGAs
- Maribyrnong - lots of diversity and council holds CALD events - more enjoyment from events, more representation and engagement (welcoming of all demographics)
- Melton - youth holiday program (no cost and cost) - first year low turn out but subsequent word of mouth engagement
- Council web page
 - Boring
 - Include trends (videos, blogs)
 - Not youth friendly

Action Plan:

- Representation
 - Small community events
 - Local areas
 - Bring a plate event
 - Publicise them
 - Where it can be physically exposed more
- Awareness
 - Assemblies
 - Promote Youth Services page
 - Service members network - info sharing (Zara)
 - Using reels / stories
 - Reposting
 - Public interviews at SKIS, shops and other recreational areas
- Accessibility
 - Prototype reels
 - What the young people want
 - What they have access to
 - In their interest range
 - Advocacy report (Evelyn and Tana)
 - Young people's voices
 - Awareness of events / resources
 - Use of social media to showcase the reps
- Build
- Send (with data)
- Share

Moonee Valley – Access to Youth Mental Health Services

	Root Causes	Ideas / Suggestions
Group 1	• Pandemic (social isolation) ○ Only seeing good part of someone's life ○ False sense of reality, 'fake support', not real action ○ Replaces human-to-human interaction • Social media • Wait times to get support • Access • Lack of support – family, school etc • Stigma	• Normalising mental health • Being open and communicating to your supports – teachers, parents, friends • Barriers to seeking support at school – separation of student and personal life • Social media campaigns • RUOK day • Education for parents / carers • Mental health first aid
Group 2	• Unemployment • Lack of access to services • Overconsumption of information ○ Social media, news ○ State of the world ○ Knowing how to process emotions related to overconsuming info – what tools do you have to regulate your emotions • Emotional intelligence and awareness	• Upskilling young people to develop strategies around mental health and emotional regulation (toolkit) • Lobby Council for Headspace or alternative service • Trauma and CALD specific services and support • Educating adults – Tuning into Teens
Group 3	• Expectations – family, study, getting good grades • Judgement from others • Isolation and social media • Mental health not being seen as important • Rejection	• Educating parents and carers – generational differences, credible experts • More than an ATAR score – different pathways, positive role models / speakers
Group 4	• Student wellbeing teams may not be educated on mental health challenges / learning difficulties • Loneliness – hard to detect – lack of connection, sense of community, place identity (is it warm and welcoming), not feeling supported / valued • Cultural communication and inclusivity	• More investment in community groups / uni and school groups • Places to make friends – bring awareness to supportive spaces • School teaching mental health and how to identify them – awareness and education – starts conversations with parents – access to info about school mental health services

Group 5	• Lack of counseling at schools – no programs or access to a professional – needs parent consent • Taboo for certain cultural backgrounds	• Mental health day at school after exams – raises awareness of coping mechanisms • RUOK day once every term – therapy animals, games, photobooths • Counseling at each school – early intervention • Parental and community education and awareness – intergenerational gaps • Mental health apps • Awareness of different tools – meditation, nature, journaling etc • Multicultural groups
Group 6	• Social media – how we talk to others in person • Transferring schools – not enough support	• Presenters at schools – self empowerment, education on social media • School transition support, findings • Awareness on how to make friends, talk to others, student bodies, booklet with info • Teaching independence

Root Causes:

- Lack of support
- The internet (social media)
 - False reality
 - Bullying and harassment
- Unrealistic expectations
- The pandemic (isolation)
- Wait times
- Cultural clashes / stigma

Actions:

- Destigmatisation

Hobsons Bay – Intergenerational Disconnection

Root Causes:

- Cultural and technological changes
 - Music
 - Technology
- Fitting into generational expectations / norms / trends
- Stigma – “Gen Z is lazy” etc.
- Lack of respect / declining levels of respect
- Generationally different ways of connecting with people (older and younger people use different ‘methods’ to meet and connect with other people)
- Cultural awareness and cultural differences – saying or doing the ‘wrong’ thing
- Cost and transport barriers prevent young people from accessing places where older people might be (e.g. the gym, pool)
- It’s seen as ‘weird’ to hang out with older people
- Council services in silos based on age cohorts – not enough intergenerational programming
- Younger people who have experienced trauma may not be comfortable connecting with older people
- Older people not participating as much in certain workplaces
- Media reinforces the differences, divide, stereotypes
- Youth unemployment means a lack of opportunities to mix with / work with older people

Ideas / Suggestions:

- Inspire, connect, join in (older generation)
- Don't always expect young people to reach out to the older generation - it goes both ways
- School program - for example, nursing home visits by students
 - Work experience opportunities
 - Learn, understand thinking
- Workshop to understand each other's generations
 - Exchange - for example, fashion, music, culture, social norms
- Don't make it compulsory - let people have the choice to participate
- Program in school - then visit to older people - safe for both older people and young people
- Intergenerational morning tea - sharing knowledge
 - For example, teaching recipes / technology
- Visibility can challenge stigma
- Intergenerational hobbies - for example, gardening club, crochet club
- Youth mentors / mentor programs - getting perspective
- Language learning - conversation club - partnering with local community centres
- Normalising intergenerational friendships
- Pen pals - writing letters
- Partnerships

- Work environment - feels safer to connect with others
- What did you do before computers?
- What did you do for entertainment?
- What about the older people who don't live in nursing homes (for example, those living alone or with family - how do we reach all older people)
- Operation hours for programs - for example, working hours
- Utilising existing programs and spaces to develop programs - for example, gyms and council leisure centres
- Improving opportunities to connect and participate
- Graduated students coming back to talk to current students (from all years, 40 years, 30 years, 20 years)

Action Plan:

- School based programs
- Exchange of knowledge and skill
- Mentoring (career)
- Actions:
 1. Reach out to schools
 2. Use council connections
 3. Reach out to nursing homes – first
 4. Continue planning

Melton – Youth Violence Prevention

Root Causes and Ideas/Suggestions:

- Living in poor conditions
 - Family relations / influences (positive connections, mentors)
 - Lack of role models to look up to
 - Respectful relationships
 - Mental health issues
- Boredom (engaging in other activities)
 - More variety of opportunities for youth - for example, access to a range of portfolios (music, sport, academic), resources, events etc (\$\$\$?)
 - Target transitional years of compulsory education
- Education quality - to advance tertiary studies
 - Schools own programs can reflect their community better (more inclusive)
- Low self esteem / self image
 - Touch in with youth's perceptions in social media – “what is real is in front of you, not always what you see online”
- Societal safety indoors and outdoors
 - Protection / safe from harm
 - More self defence / focus on social connections to build trust (respectful relationships)
 - Laws regarding weapon carrying (learn)
 - Community perceptions, known rates of crime, police on high alert
 - Help can be provided more readily – policy
 - Teach more ways to respond to events appropriately
- Social media / influencers
 - To engage people not at school
 - Newsletters
- Cultural norms / awareness
 - Sport and education programs targeting youth violence
 - Schools - students and teachers - police can present
 - include youth violence and its causes into curriculum - book and essay documentaries
 - understand definition of violence
 - Youth peer programme re youth violence
 - Self harm an indicator
 - Social / friendship activities – food / create social bonds / feel included / valued
- Need to prove yourself
 - Positive self identification and image
- Social responsibility
 - Feel a sense of ownership
 - Role model with lived experience – credibility
 - How to break habits / taught behaviours
- \$ Cost of engagement / affordability

- Grants / no cost activities
 - Sport / music / inclusion
- Stigma can influence engagement / reinforce violent behaviour
 - Breakdown stereotypes
 - Media messages identify not cultural group
 - Use of language in community
 - Set positive behaviour standards
 - Promote positive news stories
- Glorification of violence - some forms of violence are 'cool'
 - Present a realistic idea of prison / legal system
 - Impact of a criminal history
- People try to use violence to fit in / get attention
 - Notice young people for doing positive things
- West has an image of violence / it's expected
 - Positive role models
 - Positive aspirations / behaviours
 - Teach respect
 - Create positive experiences
 - Teach people to be happy to be themselves
 - Safe spaces that are accessible / inviting / accountability
- Membership in a gang can be about protection / fear / isolation
 - Recognise that not all young people will or want to use weapons / violence
 - Rehabilitation is key

Actions:

- Social responsibility
 - Jobs / employment
 - Family connection
 - Community programmes
- Mentoring
 - Relevant to young people
 - Contact agencies with ideal mentors
 - Lived experience – isolating
 - Storytelling
- Educational programs
 - Partners / schools
 - Community groups
 - Consequences program
 - Parent education workshops
 - Ripple effect
 - Prison system
- Self-worth
 - Social media / awareness
 - YAC involved
- Social engagement opportunities

- Newsletter / website promotions
- Social media – YAC
- Age based
- Culture based
- Sporting
- Music
- Low cost
- 12 to 14 year olds