



Cardinia Shire Council

## Youth Policy and Strategy

### Background Paper

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## **I Introduction**

### **I.1 Introduction**

The Cardinia Shire Council, Background Report provides an overview of Cardinia Shire Youth Services, methodology, federal, state and local government policy context as well as demographic and consultation data summary's. This information has been compiled to highlight the key themes and formulate the basis of the Cardinia Shire Council Youth Policy and Strategy.

### **I.2 Cardinia Shire Youth Services**

The Youth Services team sits within the Community Wellbeing Department of Council.

Cardinia Shire Youth Services have a key responsibility in providing a range of programs and services to young people who live, work, study or recreate within the Cardinia Shire.

The purpose of the Cardinia Shire Youth Services is to:

- identify current and future needs of young people and effectively pursue avenues in which to address these
- provide access to information, services and resources for young people and their families
- assist young people to gain the skills, confidence and resources to address their own needs and be active participants in their community.

Cardinia Shire Youth Service provides/facilitates the following programs and services.

#### **Cardinia Shire Youth Network**

Cardinia Shire Youth Services convenes a bi monthly Youth Network meeting with key youth agencies, schools and services to share information and develop initiatives to improve service delivery within the Shire.

#### **Personal development programs**

A range of personal development programs which run over a 4-8 week period during a school term. Programs are targeted at grade 6 to year 12 students. Previous programs have included party safe, self esteem and rights and responsibilities.

#### **Workshops**

A variety of workshops are facilitated by Youth Services to either small or large groups of young people on a variety of topics. Previous workshops have included; Study Skills, Party Safe and Young Peoples Rights and Responsibilities.

#### **FReeZA**

Cardinia Shire Youth Services is funded by the Department for Victorian Communities to hold a minimum of five live music events across the Cardinia Shire.

A committee of young people 'Electric Productions' hold weekly meetings to assist in the co-ordination, planning and management of the events. Previous events have included a Battle of the Bands and Pool Party.

#### **Youth Participation and Access program**

The Youth Participation and Access program is funded by the Department for Victorian Communities. The program is aimed at young people who are considered to be disengaged or at risk of being disengaged. Programs are designed to engage young people in interest

based life skills programs. Previous programs have included; skate deck design, film making and mural projects.

### **Young Leaders program**

The Young Leaders program is held annually with year 10 students from local Secondary schools. The program runs for 5 consecutive days.

### **Reckless**

Cardinia Shire Youth Services in partnership with Victoria police produced an educational graffiti DVD and workshop. The DVD along with workshops is to be delivered to all grade 6 and year 8 students across the Cardinia Shire.

### **Paying Attention to Self program**

Paying Attention to Self is a program for young people who's parent or guardian suffers from a mental illness. The program is run in partnership with Cardinia–Casey Community Health.

### **Youth support**

Cardinia Shire Youth Services provide short term youth support to young people who live, work study or recreate in the Cardinia Shire.

### **Teenage School Holiday program**

Cardinia Shire Youth Services provide a minimum of six activities for young people during the school holidays. Previous activities have included; Snow trip, Skate and BMX clinics and a movie marathon.

### **Recreation programs**

Cardinia Shire Youth Services provide recreational opportunities which are inclusive of all young people.

Programs include;

- Hip Hop program for young people which is delivered in partnership with Connections Youth Service
- Koo Wee Rup After School Program

### **Youth Forum**

Cardinia Shire Youth Services facilitate an annual Youth Forum to gain information from young people about what the current needs and issues are for young people in the Shire. The data is provided through extensive consultation with young people and is then collated, distributed and used to provide direction for service delivery over the following twelve months and beyond.

### **Annual Events**

Cardinia Shire Youth Services hold the following Annual Events;

- National Youth Week Festival
- Australia Day Event

## **1.3 Adolescent development**

Adolescent development is the stage of development between being a child and being an adult. There is no set age at which adolescence begins and ends. It varies for each young person according to a range of social, cultural, biological and other factors.

A general guide is that early adolescence is between 10-14 years of age, middle adolescence occurs around 15-19 years of age and late adolescence is 20-24 years of age. (Steinberg, 1996)

Puberty is often seen as marking the start of adolescence. Physical growth is one of the biggest changes in the adolescent years. However adolescent development includes not only the physical changes of puberty, but also cognitive and emotional development. While concrete thought processes characterise early adolescence, by middle to late adolescence the ability for abstract thought develops, facilitating the formation of a self identity.

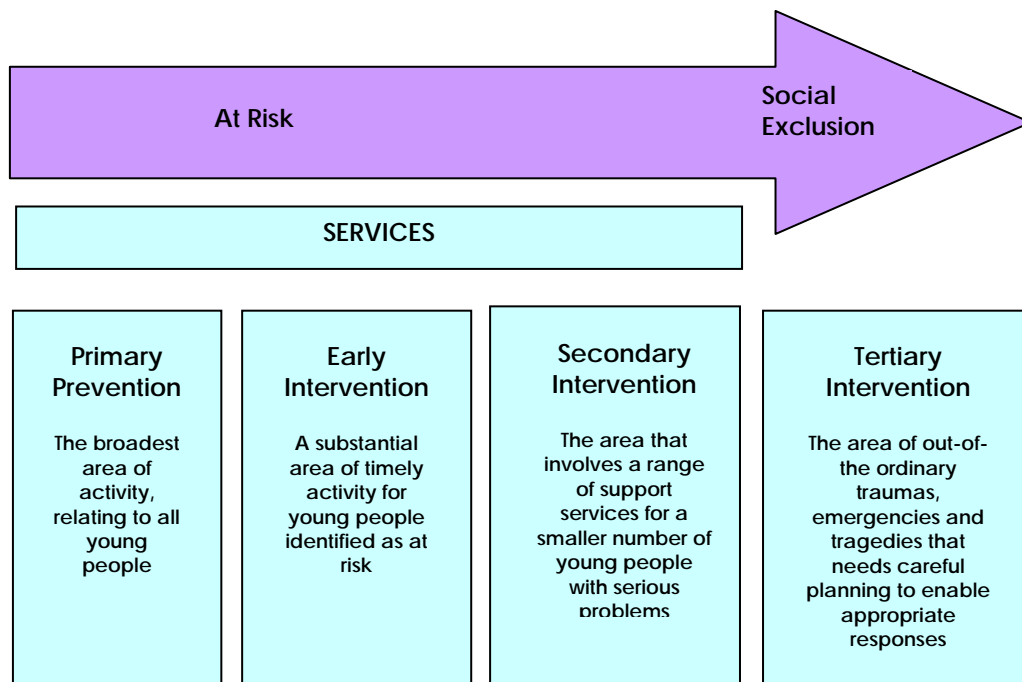
#### 1.4 Proposed model

##### **A model to deliver generalist youth work services across the Shire**

Staying Connected: Solutions for Addressing Service Gaps for Young People Living at the Interface, suggests a model for service delivery to young people that focuses on an integrated system. Cardinia Shire Youth Services has adopted this model to provide a continuum of evidence-based generalist youth services to support young people and their families through:

- prevention
- early intervention
- secondary intervention services.

The diagram illustrates the prevention – early intervention – secondary – tertiary service continuum. In this diagram, generalist youth services fall within the primary/early intervention and secondary level.



Characteristics of quality practice within this framework include:

- focusing on tangible outcomes for young people
- involving young people in a way that engenders ownership and values young peoples' commitment and contribution
- developing partnerships and alliances with a wide range of people in the community
- providing flexible, locally-driven service responses which address the concerns of young people themselves
- adequate resourcing.

Through the prevention, early intervention and secondary services model of generalist youth work, Cardinia Shire Youth Services aims to:

- improve the capacity and resilience of young people
- improve the resilience of families
- provide practical support and guidance, advocacy and referral
- build community connectedness
- strengthen engagement with education and training.

The programs are premised on services working predominantly with young people but where possible in the context of their families.

Cardinia Shire Youth Services operates within a youth participation and access framework which works within a community strengthening framework to improve participation of young people in community life.

## **2 Methodology**

### **2.1 Data collection overview**

The Development of the Youth Policy and Strategy had three key phases of data collection.

#### **a. Information gathering**

This incorporated the collection of a range of qualitative data including surveys of young people, information from committee members, surveys and/or interviews with service providers, a benchmarking survey of other interface councils and an analysis of relevant reports and government policies. Quantitative data was also collected to assist the Steering Committee; this data included statistics from Forecast id on population, birth notices, education level attainment data, health data and transport data. A number of key themes were identified and broken into ten key objectives which then formed the basis for the Action Plan.

#### **b. Information sifting**

Following the collection of data the project worker drafted a list of issues for the Steering Committee's consideration. From this list the Steering Committee selected a number of key issues for further consultation.

Four community consultation meetings were conducted in Koo Wee Rup, Cockatoo, Pakenham and Tynong. The aim of eliciting the views of community members in terms of key youth issues was to ensure that community views reflected that of the steering committee. These meetings were poorly attended although promoted throughout the Shire. From those who participated in the community consultation process consensus was established as feedback about what they viewed as the key issues reflected both the views and findings of the steering committee.

#### **c. Issues into action**

The third phase involved the Steering Committee addressing the questions of:

- What service model to be adopted by Council's Youth Team will best meet the needs of Cardinia's young people?
- What is a whole of Council approach to addressing the needs of young people?
- What is Council's role in addressing the other key issues?

Data collection for the third phase was collected over two Steering Committee Meetings with members developing recommendations. The models used by other Interface Councils were used to assist this process.

## **2.2 Steering Committee**

In order to develop a Strategy that reflected the needs of young people within Cardinia Shire, a Steering Committee was established. The work of the Steering Committee was to:

- review existing data about young people aged 10–24
- assist in the mapping of existing youth services and programs
- assist in identifying the needs of young people from both their own perspective and that of service providers.

The aim of the Steering Committee was to draft a Strategy for 10–24 year olds that would:

- identify the needs of 10–24 year olds in Cardinia Shire
- prioritise and direct the work of Cardinia Shire's Youth Services Team within current resources, including direct service provision, advocacy, program development and community development
- develop a whole of Council approach to youth, identifying priorities for areas including planning, infrastructure and recreation
- recommend a strategic service delivery model, including locations of services and programs, on a short-term basis (up to 2010), and a long term basis (up to 2020)
- identify partnership opportunities
- identify additional resources that will be needed to meet the needs of young people residing in Cardinia in 2007–10 and beyond
- develop an action plan for securing additional resources
- set youth planning objectives.

Committee members were selected for their capacity to contribute their expertise across different service types and different geographical areas. These contributions included information gathering, providing links to other networks and advice to the Youth Strategy Project Worker.

The Steering Committee was resourced by a part-time Youth Strategy Project Worker who was responsible for liaison with Committee members, drafting agendas, taking minutes, collecting and collating qualitative and quantitative data, organising meetings and community consultations and drafting the Strategy. The Steering Committee met on several occasions. In October 2006 four community consultations were held.



**Table I: Steering Committee Members**

<b>Steering Committee Members</b>		
Cr Brett Owen	Central Ward Councillor	Cardinia Shire Council
Diane Wilson		Outlook
Kelly Hicks	Young Citizen of the Year	
Lorien Vechellio	CALD Youth Worker	SEMRC
Emmanuel Merambeliotis	Assistant Principal	Pakenham SC
Bridgitte Karnakowski	Team Leader, Youth Team	Casey-Cardinia CHC
Annette Toth		Casey-Cardinia CHC
Kerry Fleming/Craig Cochrane		WAYSS
Wayne Collins	Director	ECHO
Ranai Costa	Clinician	SEADS
Paul Di Masi/Shannon Cheal		LLEN
Roby Galluci	Psychologist	CAMHS
Thomas Kuster/Emma Firth	Coordinator, Youth Services	Cardinia Shire Council

### 2.3 Community consultation

Community Consultation occurred in the following ways:

- input from service providers through their membership on the Steering Committee
- surveys of service providers
- the 2006 Youth Forum (annual consultation with young people by the Shire's Youth team)
- contact with service users through Steering Committee members
- formal community meetings at three locations across the Shire.
- open invitation to the public through [youth@cardinia.vic.gov.au](mailto:youth@cardinia.vic.gov.au)

### 2.4 Youth consultation

The 2006 Youth Forum aimed to identify the concerns and needs of young people in Cardinia Shire. Cardinia Shire Council Youth Services visited secondary schools across the Shire asking two broad open-ended questions:

*What would make your community a better place for young people?*

*What would make your life better as a young person?*

Schools that participated were Koo Wee Rup Secondary College, Emerald Secondary College, Pakenham Secondary College, Community VCAL, St Francis Xavier College, Chairo Christian College, and Beaconhills Christian College. Cardinia Shire Council Youth Services staff visited during recess and lunch breaks and approached young people on a one-to-one or small group basis.

Of the 181 participants who were aged between 12 and 18 years, 34 per cent were male (n = 62) and 66 per cent were female (n = 119).

The 2006 Youth Forum identified five key issues of concern to young people; these were identified as recreation, community, safety, transport and communication. These findings were supported by data collected through a youth survey conducted by the Casey Cardinia Community Health Service.

It is anticipated that the key issues may change over the duration of the Youth Policy and Strategy and therefore consultation with young people shall take place annually. Findings will be shared with youth service providers for future planning.

### 3 Policy Context

There are a range of Policy contexts at the Federal, State and Local, Interface and Non-Government levels which assist in shaping the Youth Policy and Strategy.

#### 3.1 Federal Government Context

**The National Youth Affairs Research Scheme (NYARS) Scoping Study of Youth Policy Priorities and Directions (2005)** identified a range of general priorities as youth policy issues that cut across government departments and portfolios over a broad range of areas. Key issues identified were-

*Youth participation:* including the provision of a wider range of mechanisms for participating in decision-making; increasing the range of organizations which encourage such participation; and involving a broader range of young people at more meaningful levels of participation in a broader range of areas, not just on issues that pertain only to young people. This would require efforts to encourage a culture-shift for many organizations working with young people from “doing for” young people to a culture of “doing with” young people, where developing youth policy direction and program delivery involves young people to the maximum extent possible. .

*Prevention and early intervention:* A greater investment in prevention and early intervention was considered to be a priority because it was likely to be a cost-effective investment for the community. The Scoping Study identified the importance of developing the connections of young people, including with families and carers, educational institutions; as well as with individuals and organizations in the wider community.

*Communication-related priorities* - Many of those consulted emphasized a range of communication-related priorities that impact on young people. They saw a need to pay greater attention and commit more resources to influencing the portrayal and perception of young people in the media and the general community, so that views are better balanced and more positive. This may include raising the profile of youth-specific events, initiatives and awards, the greater promotion of the stories of young people from all walks of life, and various ‘attitude-change’ strategies such as community education. Another communication-related priority identified in this Scoping Study was the need to better communicate what is available to young people. There is a need to increase the amount and effectiveness of communication about the range of programs and services available, across the whole population of young people.

Priorities within Government portfolio areas:

##### *Education and training*

- A continuing need for more flexible education and training opportunities;
- A need for schools to be involved in the provision of more youth services;
- A need to continue with efforts to provide widespread career and transition support;
- Ensuring the curricula covers a diverse range of issues to assist young people’s personal development and to assist in the transition to independence;
- The rising costs of education; and
- The need for workforce planning to avoid skills shortages.

#### *Employment and income*

- The availability of apprenticeships and traineeships; and
- The growth of casual employment, which was seen as adversely affecting young people's skill development and transition into economic and social independence.

#### *Environment*

- A particularly strong concern for young people, including environmental sustainability and protection.

#### *Health and safety*

- Obesity
- Mental health
- Risk-taking behaviours; and
- The need for more youth-specific services.

#### *Housing and homelessness*

- A lack of public housing, both for emergency and long-term accommodation;
- The need for more preventative measures to tackle homelessness as well as more appropriate support for young people who are already homeless; and
- The 'housing crisis' in the private sector, restricting the ability of young people to rent or buy.

#### *Justice*

- Where the main issues identified was a desire for a less coercive and more supportive justice system, with a focus on rehabilitation and looking after the interests of the young person rather than punishment and community protection.

#### *Recreation, arts and leisure*

- The need for opportunities for young people to develop and express their creativity and to celebrate
- What they have to offer society; and
- A lack of places for young people to go simply for company and support.

#### *Transport*

- Where the main issues identified were accessibility and affordability.

### **3.2 State Government Context**

There are a range of Victorian Government policies which impact on young people including:

**Growing Together II** identifies a vision for Victoria based on a stronger, more caring and innovative State. This vision articulates a clear direction for the State's Social and Economic Development.

**A Fairer Victoria** released in May 2005, makes the commitment to reform Government approaches to community strengthening so that people and communities better determine what is best for them.

**Putting Children First – Next Steps** identifies new policy directions and is being further developed through the Office for Children; Department of Human Services will provide a stronger framework for protecting and improving stability for children and young people. These developments will link primary, secondary and tertiary services with an emphasis on

early intervention. They will also improve responses that deal with social, family life and community risks faced by children and families through priority services. Putting Children First –Next Steps, Growing Together II and A Fairer Victoria all have major implications for Youth Policy.

**Respect: the Government’s Vision of Young People (2002)** has guided youth policy up until recently when a refreshed youth policy Future Directions 2006 was introduced.

**Future Directions (2006)** outlines a list of 40 actions that the Government has invested in, so as to achieve five key objectives. These objectives are to increase the number of young people who:

- contribute more to their communities and want to make a difference
- make a successful transition from school to a job they like
- know how to access information, support and services they need
- lead healthy, active and culturally diverse lifestyles, and
- live in a secure environment and choose safe behaviours.

These objectives are concerned with some of the central elements of young people’s wellbeing. Other key factors include positive health and wellbeing, opportunities for ongoing learning and development, employment and recreational opportunities, and access to transport.

To better support and promote the wellbeing of young people, an integrated service system along the continuum of prevention – early intervention – secondary – tertiary is required. Primary or universal services are those that are directed to the whole target population – all young people. Secondary or selected services are those that are directed to clients who have a particular issue or concern and need assistance to resolve this. Tertiary or targeted services are those where the issue, problem or concern is one that requires intensive and often ongoing support. This comprehensive model provides a sound framework for timely interventions as young people transition from adolescence to adulthood

**The Victoria Police Child and Youth Policy, 2006-2008** provides the framework and principles by which Victoria Police will continue to move forward and identify new and innovative ways to improve the lives and social outcomes for young people. The focus is on identifying early preventative and intervention strategies that interrupt the circumstances that lead to the over representation of young people in crime and road statistics, both as victims and offenders. The policy identifies the following seven principles:

- *Recognition of diversity:* Children and young people are representative of the diverse nature of our community. The range of policing services and programs developed for them must therefore reflect this diversity.
- *Participation:* Inclusion and participation by young people in our community is imperative to their health and social development. The involvement of young people in decision making is an important step towards ensuring a policing response that is informed and relevant.
- *Early intervention:* To ensure optimum outcomes that reduce the likelihood of further harm occurring, effective police response is required to occur at the earliest opportunity. Early intervention is essential to a proactive and strategic service response to crime and victimization matters experienced by children and young people.
- *Harm minimization:* “Risk taking” is widely recognized as a predominant mark of adolescent behaviour and development. It is necessary that young people are able to explore options for their behaviour, in a way that minimizes harm to themselves and the community.
- *Fairness and respect:* Children and youth are amongst the least empowered in our community. They have a right to be treated fairly and with dignity irrespective of age, gender, race, culture, or socio-economic status. Shared respect and understanding needs to underpin the relationship between police and young people.

Further police services should engender equity and access within the community and afford young people equal rights and opportunities. This will enhance young people's self worth and connection to community in which they play a vital role.

- *Diversion from the criminal justice system:* Diversion is of critical importance in protecting young people from the negative affects that exposure to the criminal justice system may bring. Community partnerships, referral and the use of discretionary powers in utilizing pre-court and non court options should be a priority for police to divert children and youth from the criminal justice system.
- *Social cohesion:* Police have a significant role to play in maintaining and enhancing the quality of life for all Victorians and in building social cohesion. This is done through establishing community partnerships and in undertaking social responsibilities. The importance of young people's contribution to a diverse and healthy society is acknowledged by Victoria Police.

**Melbourne 2030** is a strategic tool for the State Government and gives an overview of the directions for growth for Metropolitan Melbourne. It identifies Pakenham as a "Major Activity Centre" and much of the Southern section of the Shire is identified within the "Urban Growth Boundary". Given these location features, the Shire is rapidly changing and experiencing enormous pressure to accommodate an increasing population.

Melbourne 2030 identifies a list of neighbourhood planning principles which represent the characteristics of liveable neighbourhoods. This list includes:

- An urban structure where networks of neighbourhoods are clustered to support larger activity centres on the Principal Public Transport Network
- Compact neighbourhoods that are oriented around walk able distances between activities and where neighbourhood centres provide access to services and facilities to meet day-to-day needs
- Reduced dependence on car use because public transport is easy to use, there are safe and attractive spaces for walking and cycling, and subdivision layouts allow easy movements through and between neighbourhoods
- A range of lot sizes and housing types
- Integration of housing, workplaces, shopping, recreation and community services to provide a mix and level of activity that attracts people, creates a safe environment, stimulates interaction and provides a lively community focus
- A range of open spaces to meet a variety of needs, with links to open space networks and regional parks where possible
- A strong sense of place created because neighbourhood development emphasizes existing cultural heritage values, attractive built form and landscape character
- Environmentally friendly development and protection and enhancement of the native habitat

### **3.3 Local Government Context**

The cornerstone of **Cardinia Shire's Vision** is for "A rapidly growing and vibrant community whose sense of pride in belonging to Cardinia results from a lifestyle in safe, sustainable built and natural environments." In keeping with these principles, the work of Council with young people should foster a community and partnership approach meeting their needs.

**The Cardinia Shire Council Social Planning Framework for Growth Areas 2004-2030 (September 2004)** supports the Melbourne 2030 framework and aims to create a more consistent and integrated approach to socially sustainable planning within the Cranbourne-Pakenham Growth area.

It identifies a hierarchy of community hubs- neighbourhood, urban, district and regional, with each hub having generic requirements that must be provided. The hierarchy is to act as a guide to differentiating between the roles different localities play in the provision of services and facilities that support community well being. It does not clarify what is considered the appropriate level of hierarchy for youth specific services.

The framework identifies that in terms of young people:

- Council currently has a limited role in youth services
- most meeting space provided for young people is generic
- youth specific services and facilities are limited within the Shire
- cross municipal service access plays a large role in youth services.

**The Cardinia Shire Council Plan 2007-2011** refers to a number of key goals that relate and/or benefit young people. They are:

“To foster a variety of lifestyles through recreation, education, health and support services that promote and develop the wellbeing of all our community.”

Including desired outcomes to:

- “increase satisfaction by youth with services and facilities.”
- “increase perception of safety within the community.”

The Council Plan identifies that planning, development, implementation and resource allocation occurs in the context of enormous population growth, posing considerable challenges for Council over the entire range of its activities.

**The Municipal Health Plan (2005–08)** is a vehicle through which Cardinia Shire Council can advocate, on behalf of the community, to improve the community’s health and well being. It is based on the social model of health, which incorporates social, cultural, environmental, biological, spiritual, political and economic determinants.

Issues that relate to young people include:

- oral health and a paucity of affordable dental health services
- obesity
- inadequate diet and nutrition
- increase in numbers of sole parents families
- pressure on disposable household income for families with newer mortgages
- high rates of early school leaving
- lower than average Year 12 completion
- low participation in post-school training
- lack of bulk-billing GPs
- underdeveloped public transport
- absence of methadone programs

The Municipal Health Plan identifies a number of strategies which relate to young people. These are:

- expanding the diversity of local recreation, leisure and cultural opportunities for marginalised groups
- provide innovative activities that promote learning and employment
- develop partnerships with local service providers and business to support young people
- advocate with other levels of government for improvements to public transport services.

**Disability, Access and Inclusion Policy and Implementation Strategy (May 2007)** states:

“Cardinia Shire Council is committed to a community which is welcoming and inclusive, one in which diversity is valued and where respect for the individual is prized. In line with this, Council will provide services and facilities that are flexible, responsive and accessible to meet the diverse needs of our community.” The Disability, Access and Inclusion Policy and Implementation Strategy is indented to change those Council practices which may result in discrimination against people with a disability.

The principles underpinning this strategy are:

- people with a disability are members of the diverse Cardinia community and share the same rights and responsibilities as other members of the community.
- Council is aware that people with a disability can face barriers to participation that are not necessarily put there on purpose.
- Council is committed to providing facilities, services and programs that are accessible to, and inclusive of, all community members.
- Council is committed to providing opportunities for people with a disability to participate in community consultations and decision making processes which help inform and shape the future of the Shire.
- Council policy development should be designed to be reflective of the changing needs of the whole community.

### **3.4 Interface Context**

**Staying Connected: solutions for addressing service gaps for young people living at the Interface** was released in October 2006, is a report commissioned by the Interface Councils in Metropolitan Melbourne.

The report explored the needs of young people living in Interface municipalities and the capacity of the service system to meet these needs. Building on the outcomes of previous research and relevant data, the project has sought to determine whether there are factors that impact on young people of Interface municipalities differently from those living in rural and metropolitan municipalities. The issues we have identified for young people in Cardinia are consistent across most interface councils.

As well as identifying these issues, “Staying Connected” identifies the challenges facing the youth service system and analyses how well the current services and funding models meet the needs of young people and their families at the Interface. Importantly, the project has sought to develop a framework for addressing these challenges, identifying and building on best practice within municipalities and elsewhere.

In terms of us developing solutions to meet the challenges in Cardinia, “Staying Connected” provides some important insights.

#### Healthy Development for Young People

Research evidence has established that brain development begins well before birth and, that during the prenatal period; the brain needs protection from environmental hazards which can be detrimental to its development (Shonkoff and Phillips, 2000). Brain research has emphasized the fact that nature and nurture work in tandem. Although brain development relies on experience, it is genetically driven. Appropriate care, nutrition and stimulation affect the actual ‘wiring’ of neural pathways which are essential to development and learning (Ochiltree and Moore, 2001). This impacts on the wide range of factors that determine healthy outcomes, health and wellbeing, education, family and school environments, and the broader social, economic and political environments. New imaging studies are now also revealing patterns of brain development that extend into the teenage years, with a wave of growth and change occurring in the brain in the pre-puberty years and extending into adolescence (Giedd et al, 1999, National Institute of Mental Health, 2005). Researchers believe that the activities in which adolescents engage can have a profound impact on brain development and on the wiring of the brain, thus influencing functioning for the whole of life. This research strengthens the importance of the need to promote healthy development in young people.

*“(The teenage years) is a time of enormous opportunity and of enormous risk. And how teens spend their time seems to be particularly crucial. If the “lose it or use it” principle holds true, then the activities of the teen may help guide the hard-wiring, actual physical connections in their brain...”*  
(Giedd, 2005)

Healthy development involves providing support, relationship experiences and opportunities that promote positive outcomes for young people, enhancing their capacity to be happy, healthy and successful (Resnick, 2005).

The factors which form the building blocks of healthy development have been described as *development assets*. These relate to a range of external and internal factors (Search Institute, 2006). The external factors include:

- Support, including family, school, community;
- Empowerment, including young people as resources, services to others and safety;
- Boundaries and expectations, within the family, school and community; and
- Constructive use of time – being involved in a range of activities.

The internal factors include:

- Commitment to learning, within school and at home;
- Positive values, including social justice, honesty, responsibility and integrity;
- Social competencies, including planning and decision making, resistance skills and peaceful resolution of conflict; and
- Positive identity, including self esteem and a positive view of the personal future.

#### A Framework for Quality Practice in Youth Services

A framework for developing quality services, which enhance development within the context of strong communities, is fundamental to addressing the needs of young people living at the Interface. There are clear indications about the interventions and the aspects of quality practice that are required. These include:



- Young people require support with interpersonal and relationship issues – there is a need to focus on counselling and support services for young people;
- Engagement with school is a critical factor in supporting young people to develop and maintain socially positive behaviours;
- There is a powerful association between antisocial behaviour and substance use, which highlights the fact that antisocial adolescents frequently experience a wide range of difficulties, indicating the need to assist these young people in a number of areas of their lives (AIS, CPV, 2004);
- The environmental context – family, school and peers are powerful influences on children and young people. The need for a mix of community-based and school-based initiatives, together with individualized approaches, are likely to provide the most effective means of preventing and reducing the development of anti-social behaviour

### 3.5 Non Government Organisation Context

**Who's Carrying the Can?** Is a project by The Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS) and the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic) which involved collecting data from the youth and community sectors through surveys and community forums to enable youth service providers to share their knowledge of the gaps and the impact of these gaps in youth support services in their region. The key recommendations from these report findings include:

- That the Victorian Government develop and invest in a locally-based, integrated and comprehensive youth services system in Victoria, that is structured along a prevention, early intervention, secondary and tertiary service continuum.
- That a project be undertaken to develop a framework for a strong youth services system, identify best models of service delivery, and where the youth service gaps are in Victoria.
- That the Victorian Government dedicate new resources to creating more generalist youth support positions and services in Victoria, and that these be delivered within flexible funding models that allow for a range of support responses to young people.
- That local planning process and structures be resourced at the local government level across Victoria.
- That the development of a youth services system structured along a prevention – early intervention – secondary– tertiary service continuum include targeted resources to provide mental health support at the early intervention and secondary levels of the service system.
- That mechanisms be established to improve collaboration across the youth and community sectors and across Government departments. Specifically, the objective of these mechanisms would be:
  1. To develop and strengthen the integration of youth specific services provided by the youth and community sector. Summary of recommendations VII VIII Youth support services: Who's Carrying the Can?
  2. To develop clear strategies and measures to improve collaboration across government departments and between levels of government regarding youth support services.
- That Government improve its investment in the development and sustainability of the youth and broader community sector, specifically in the areas of workforce development, training, and ensuring adequate resourcing of services to ensure appropriate and timely support can be available for young people.

### The Hills Sub-region

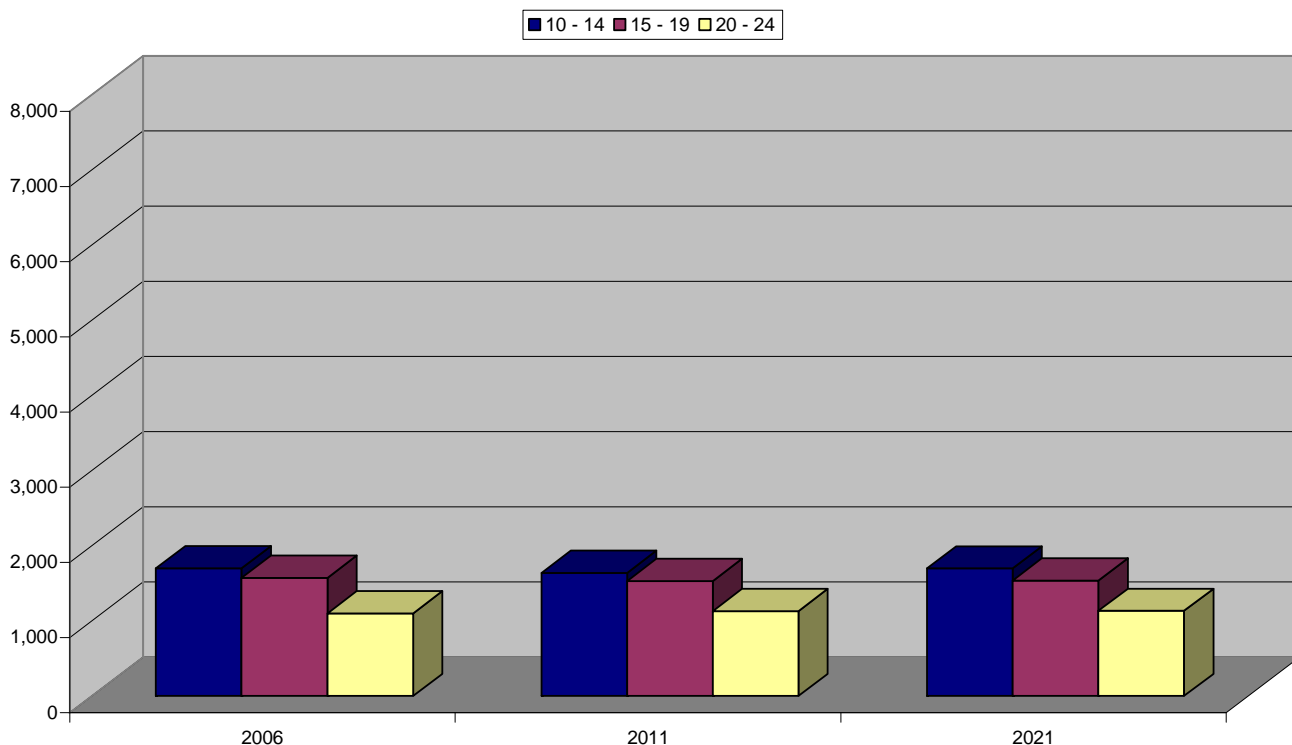


Containing a grouping of smaller areas, which are Upper Beaconsfield, Guys Hill and Dewhurst; Emerald, Clematis, Avonsleigh and Menzies Creek; Cockatoo and Nangana; Gembrook and Northern Rural.

**Table 3: The Hills Sub-Region – Youth Population Projections**

Cardinia's Hills Sub-Region Youth Population Projections	2006	%	2011	%	2021	%
10 to 14	1,702	8.4	1,639	7.9	1,698	7.8
15 to 19	1,573	7.8	1,530	7.4	1,537	7.0
20 to 24	1,100	5.5	1,133	5.5	1,134	5.2
TOTALS	4375		4302		4369	

**Figure 2: Hills Sub-Region Youth Population Projections**



Source: Forecast Id Data, Population Projections.

The above data demonstrates that the youth population in The Hills sub region is significantly less than that of the Growth Corridor however this is an area that needs to be considered to ensure youth service provision to this area, in particular for the 20 to 24 year old age group

## 4 Research

### 4.1 Demographic Data

The data for this report is derived from Forecast Id. A strong process of consultation ensures that forecasts are validated by local government professionals, such as statutory and strategic planners, and community service experts and other relevant parties, such as developers. Statistics for Cardinia Shire’s demographic data have been collated to for 2006 with projections for 2011 and 2021 and divided into the following areas:

#### The Growth Area Sub-region.

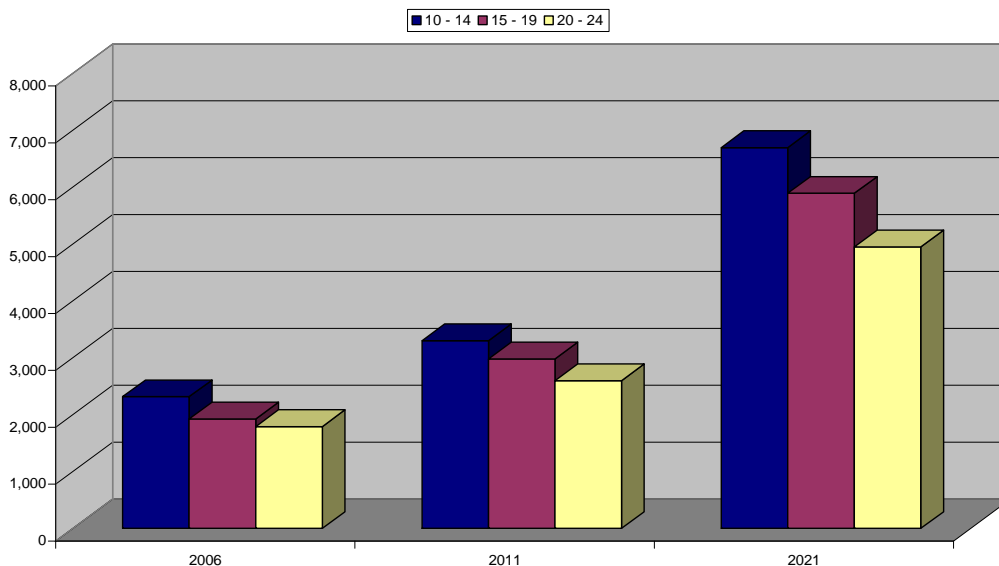


Containing the areas of Pakenham, Beaconsfield and Officer

**Table 2: Growth Area Sub-Region – Youth Populations Projections.**

Cardinia’s Growth Area Youth Population Projections	2006	%	2011	%	2021	%
10 to 14	2,316	8.4	3,300	8.0	6,692	8.0
15 to 19	1,925	7.0	2,979	7.2	5,891	7.0
20 to 24	1,793	6.5	2,599	6.3	4,950	5.9
TOTALS	6034		8878		17533	

Figure 1: Growth Area Sub-Region Youth Population Projections



Source: Forecast Id Data, Population Projections.

The above graph demonstrates the increasing youth population in the Growth area of Cardinia Shire particularly with the 10 to 14 year old age group. All age groups in this region have a steady increase.

## The Rural Sub-Region

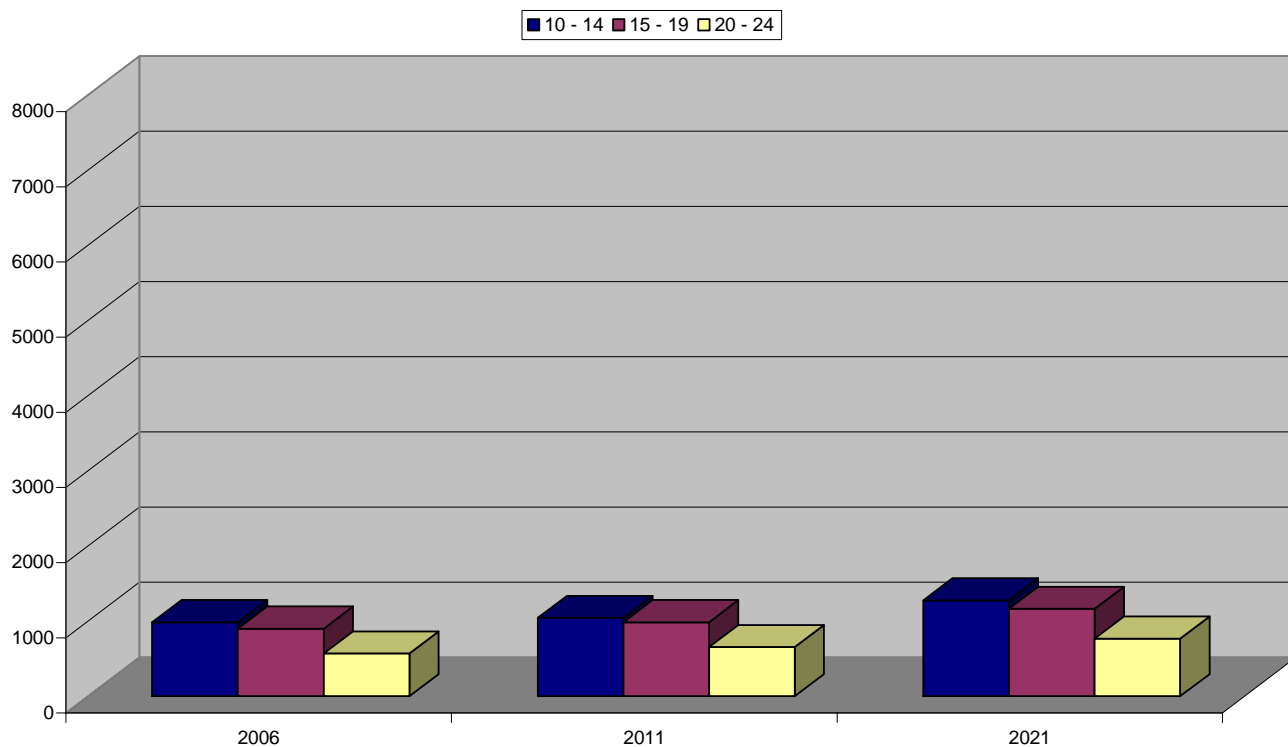


Containing the South and East Sub-region containing the areas of Southern Rural, Koo Wee Rup, Lang Lang, Nar Nar Goon and Tynong, Garfield and Bunyip.

**Table 4: The Rural Sub-Region – Youth Population Projections**

Cardinia Rural Sub-Region Youth Population Projections	2006	%	2011	%	2021	%
10 to 14	986	8.4	1,044	7.8	1,275	7.7
15 to 19	900	7.6	987	7.4	1,165	7.1
20 to 24	570	4.8	655	4.9	768	4.6
TOTALS	2456		2686		3208	

**Figure 3: Rural Sub-Region Youth Population Projections**



Source: Forecast Id Data, Population Projections.

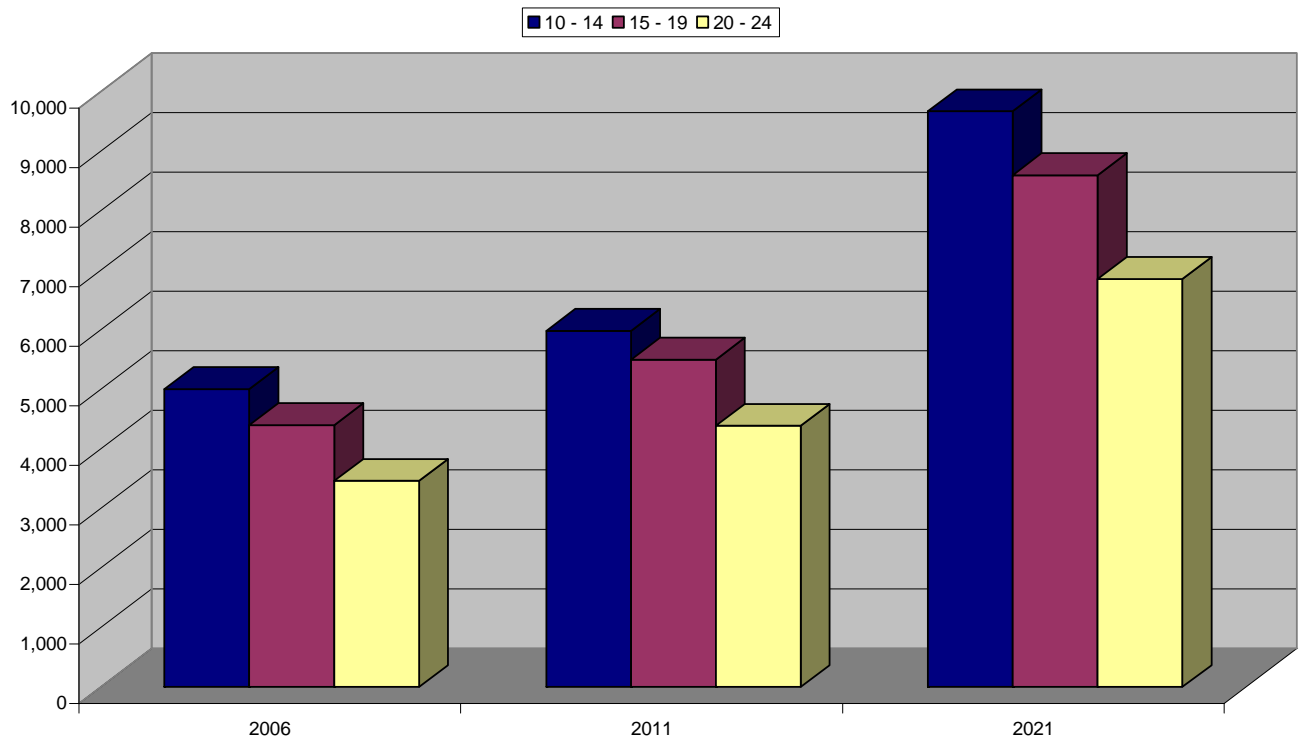
The Rural Sub-Region data indicates a steady increase in the youth population for all age ranges.

The following data related to Cardinia Shire as a whole and shows clearly that all age ranges between 10 and 24 will increase in population, in particular from 2011 to 2021 across the Shire.

**Table 5: Cardinia Shire Youth Population Projections**

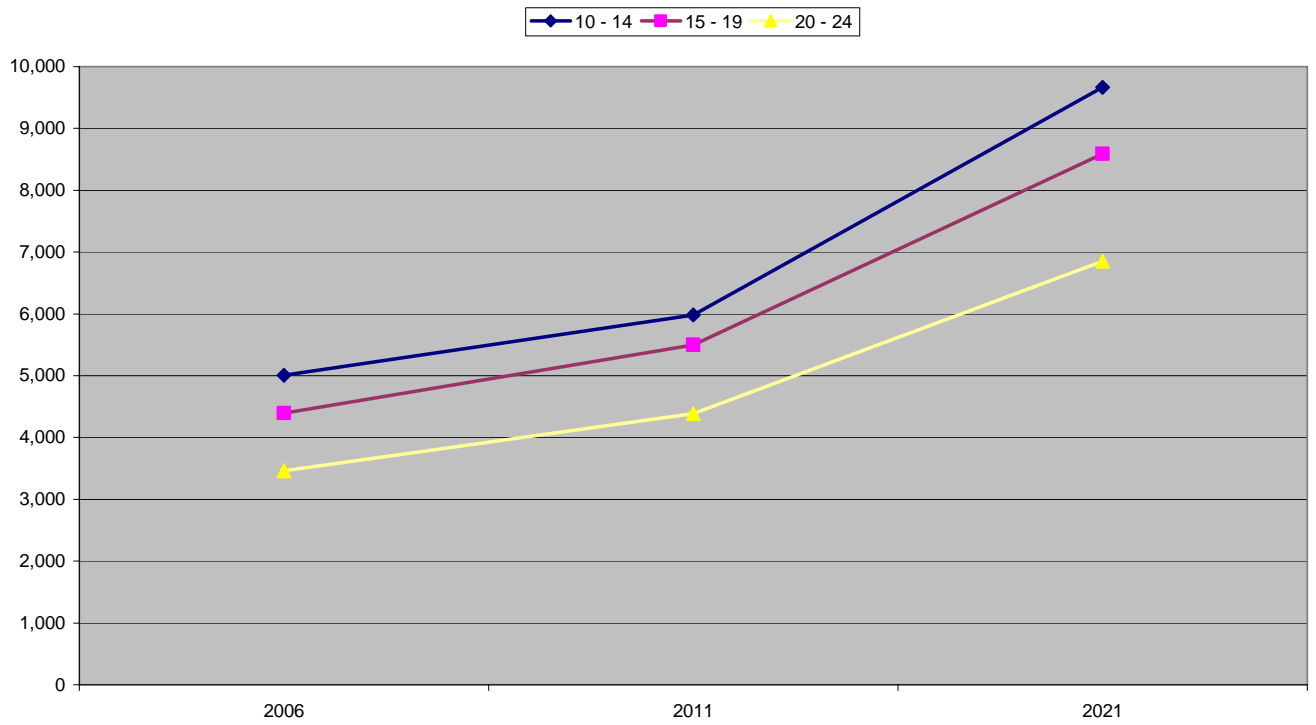
Cardinia Shire Youth Population Projections	2006	%	2011	%	2021	%
10 to 14	5,004	8.4	5,983	7.9	9,665	7.9
15 to 19	4,398	7.4	5,496	7.3	8,593	7.0
20 to 24	3,463	5.8	4,387	5.8	6,852	5.6
TOTALS	12865		15866		25110	

**Figure 4: Cardinia Shire Youth Population Projections**



Source: Forecast Id Data, Population Projections.

**Figure 5: Cardinia Shire Youth Population Projections**

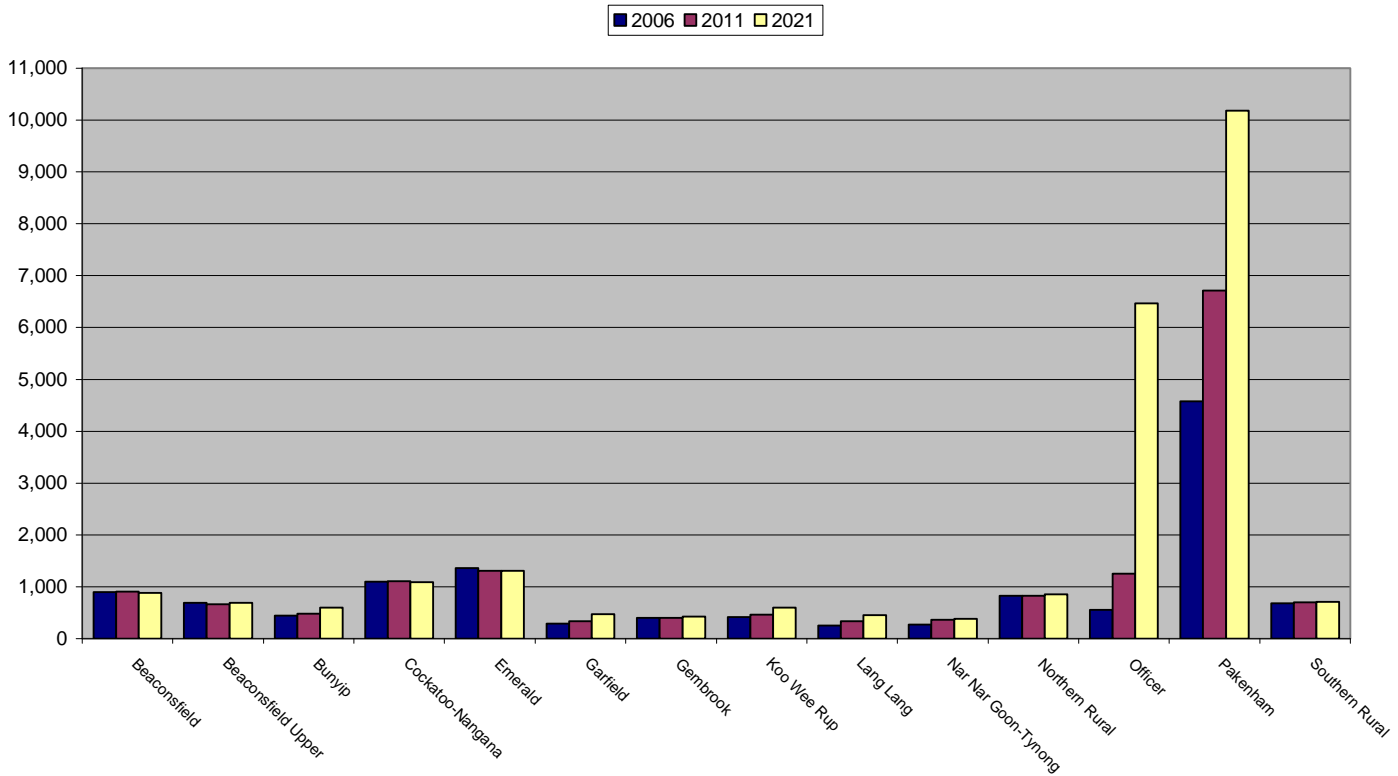


Source: Forecast Id Data, Population Projections.

## Township Youth Population Growth Areas

Youth population projections are shown to be particularly high in some of the townships within Cardinia as indicated in the graph below.

Figure 6: Township Youth Population Data (2006-2011-2021)

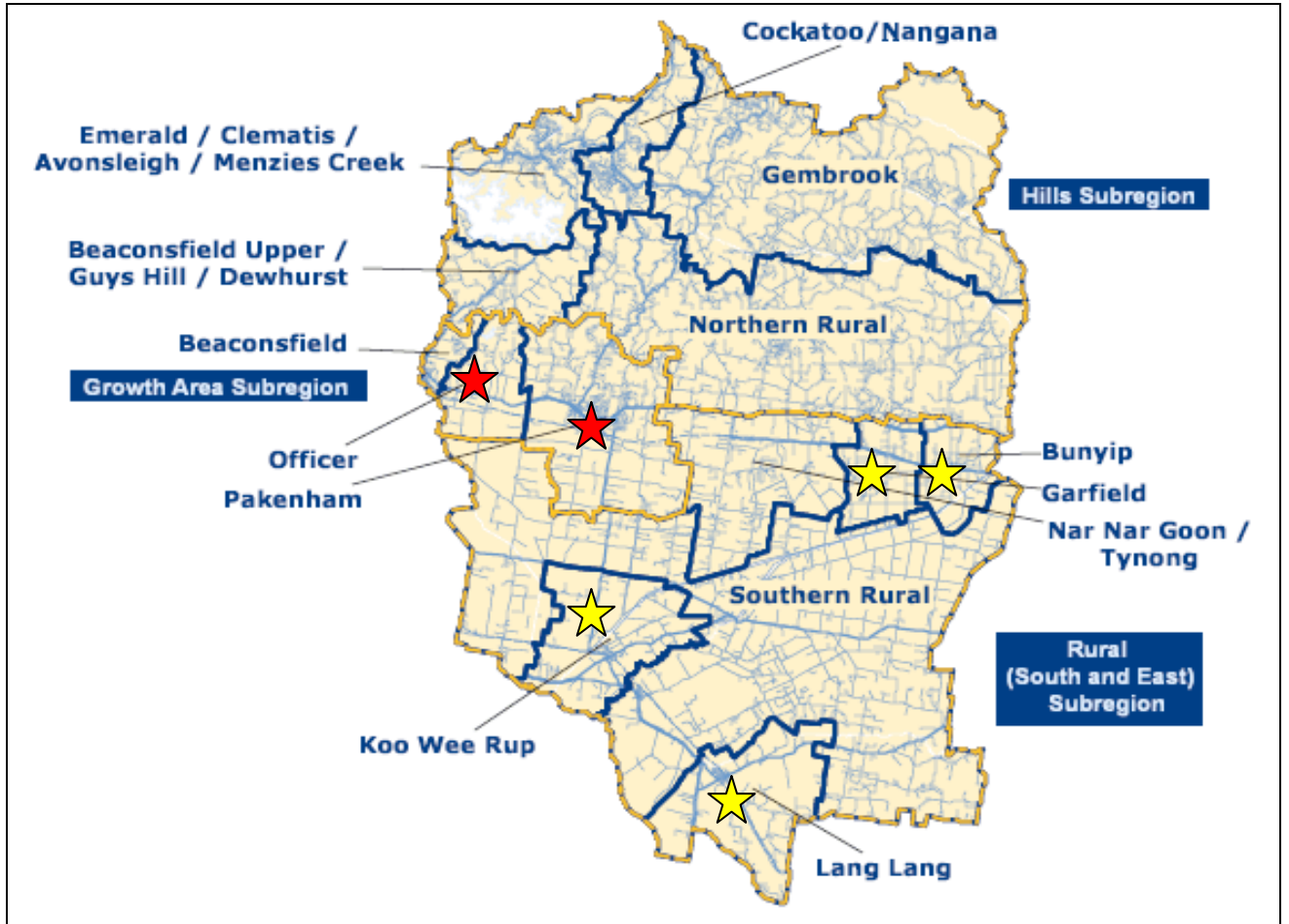


Source: Forecast Id Data, Population Projections.

The above graph clearly demonstrates the townships which have a dramatic increase in youth population. The townships that have the largest increase are Pakenham and Officer. Bunyip, Garfield, Koo Wee Rup and Lang Lang also have significant increases which in some cases the prediction for the population is almost double the current population for the 10 to 24 year age bracket which demonstrates a need for youth services in these areas to meet the population demand.

The map below shows the townships which make up Cardinia with those high youth growth areas depicted with a star. The red star indicates a very high youth population growth where predictions forecast the population to triple in size. The yellow star indicates a youth population growth that is predicted to almost double in its current size.

**Figure 7: Youth Population Growth Map**

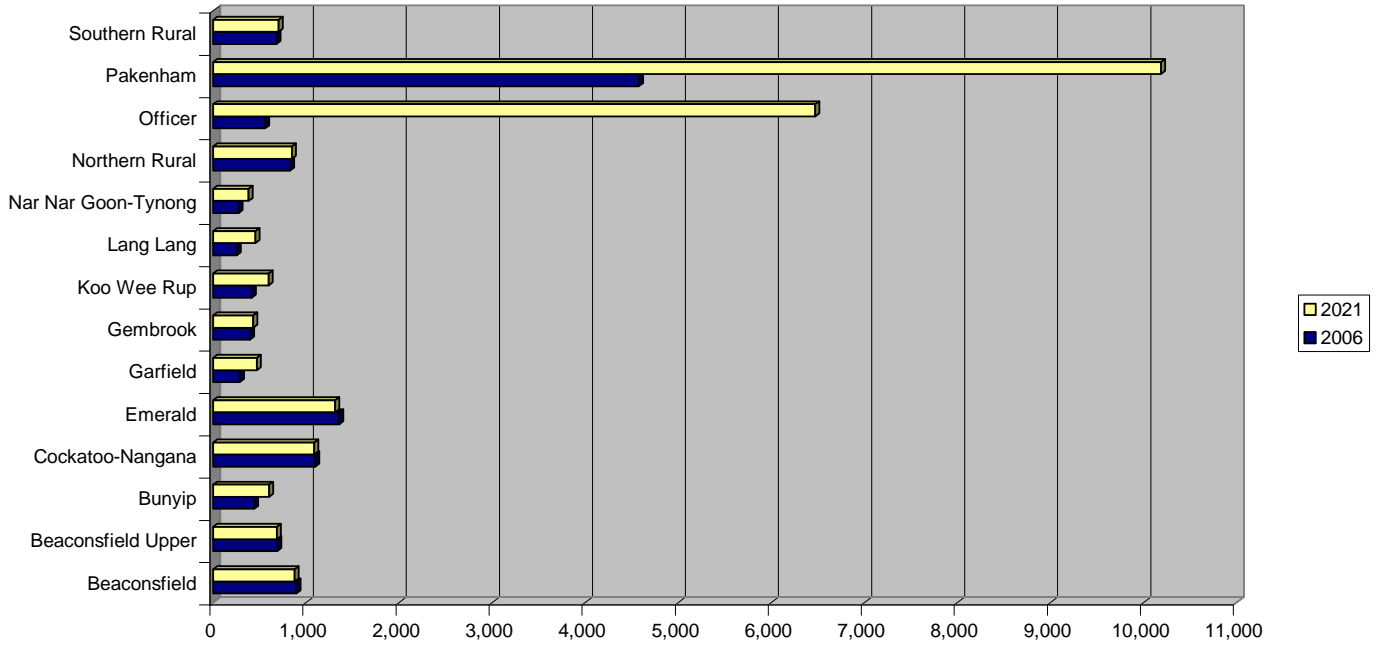


Source: Forecast Id.



Youth Population projections from 2006 to 2021 are shown in the graph below where it is visible that the majority of the townships show an increase in population growth of youth aged 10 to 24 years.

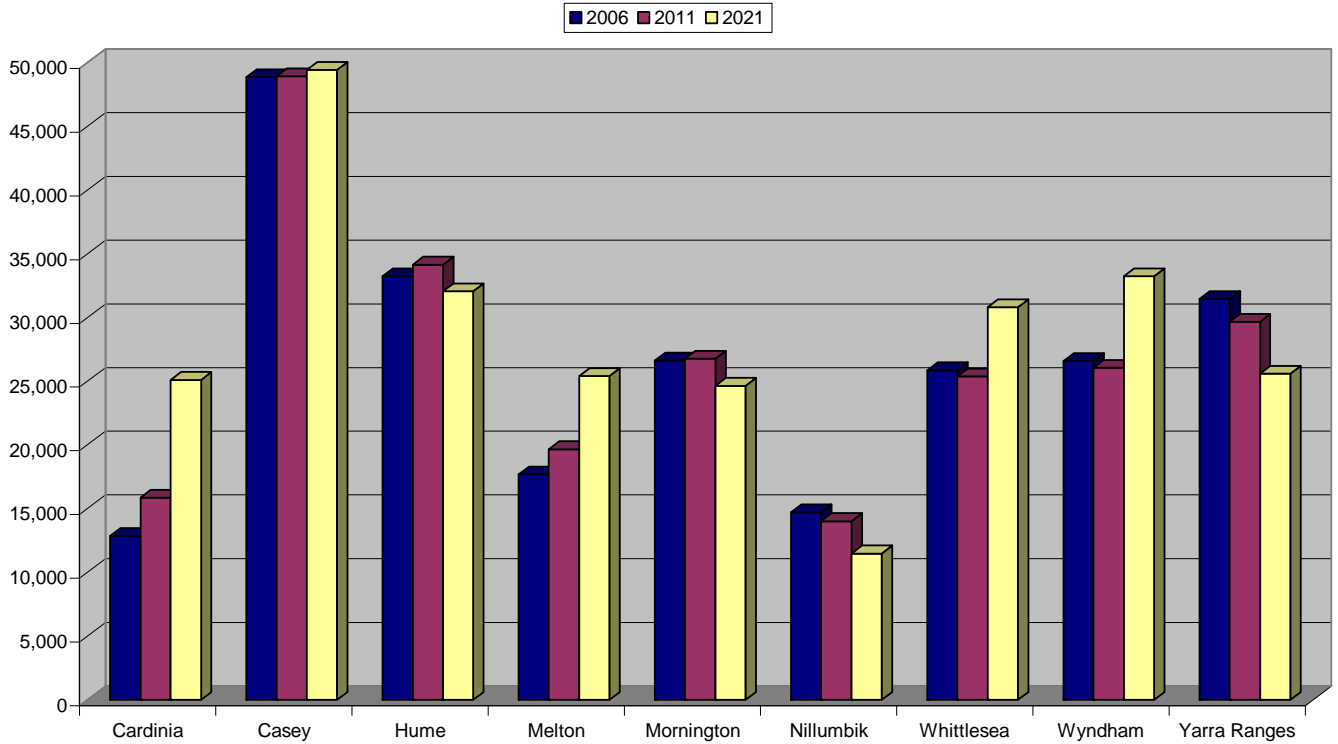
Figure 8: Youth Population changes 2006-2021



Source: Forecast Id Data, Population Projections.

## Youth Population Projection Interface Council Comparisons

Figure 9: Youth Population Interface Comparisons



Source: Department of Sustainability and Environment, 2005.

In comparison to the youth population projections across the Interface, Cardinia youth population rate shows the most dramatic increase. Whilst other Councils show increases in their youth population, Cardinia and Melton Shire’s are the only Councils with such a drastic incline.

## **Education Data**

The Interface Councils Report “Staying Connected: solutions for addressing service gaps for young people living at the Interface” compares the educational outcomes for young people (19-23 years) living in the Interface and reports as shown in the tables below that there is a marked difference between these young people and those living in the Metropolitan area.

**Table 6: Highest Educational Outcome Year Ten (19-23 years) at the Interface**

	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>State Ranking</b>	<b>Metropolitan Ranking</b>
<b>Cardinia</b>	32%	16%	24%	31	1
<b>Casey</b>	27%	17%	22%	43	3
<b>Hume</b>	25%	16%	20%	48	7
<b>Melton</b>	29%	14%	22%	45	5
<b>Mornington</b>	26%	16%	21%	46	6
<b>Nillumbik</b>	13%	5%	9%	68	21
<b>Whittlesea</b>	21%	12%	16%	56	11
<b>Wyndham</b>	26%	14%	20%	49	8
<b>Yarra Ranges</b>	27%	15%	22%	44	4
<b>Metro Melbourne</b>	17%	10%	13%		
<b>Victoria</b>	19%	11%	15%		

Source: Census 2001

As the data above demonstrates young people living in the Interface achieve lower qualifications than those living in Metropolitan Melbourne. High proportions of those are not attending any educational institution and are unemployed, therefore could be classified as disengaged.

Cardinia was ranked number one which means that young people living in Cardinia have the lowest level of educational outcomes of all Metropolitan Councils and ranked 31<sup>st</sup> across the state. More males than females completed year ten only. The differential at the Interface between males and females is far greater than at Metropolitan and State levels, in particular with Cardinia where more than twice the proportion of males than females completed year ten only.

**Table 7: Highest Educational Outcome Year Twelve (19-23 years) at the Interface**

	<b>Male s</b>	<b>Female s</b>	<b>Tota l</b>	<b>Stat e Rank ing</b>	<b>Metropolita n Ranking</b>
<b>Cardinia</b>	50%	72%	61%	40	31
<b>Casey</b>	57%	72%	65%	35	28
<b>Hume</b>	60%	74%	67%	29	24
<b>Melton</b>	53%	74%	63%	37	29
<b>Mornington</b>	58%	72%	65%	34	27
<b>Nilumbik</b>	77%	89%	83%	11	11
<b>Whittlesea</b>	64%	80%	72%	23	22
<b>Wyndham</b>	59%	75%	67%	30	25
<b>Yarra Ranges</b>	58%	74%	65%	33	26
<b>Metro Melbourne</b>	72%	83%	77%		
<b>Victoria</b>	68%	80%	74%		

Source: Census 2001

As shown in the table above, a similar pattern exists when comparing the completion of year twelve with just 61% of people living in Cardinia completing year twelve.

The flow on affect of this trend is that only 22% of young people from Cardinia Shire participate in post secondary education, compared to the state average of 36% (Census 2001). Cardinia's average Enter Score is 55 which ranks quite poorly in comparison with other Local Government areas as reported in the Interface Report "Staying Connected."

The Community Atlas data reports that of the 767 persons in the Shire of Cardinia who are aged 19 to 25 years and left school at Year 10 or below, nearly 68% lived in the suburbs of: Pakenham (275 persons), Emerald / Clematis / Avonsleigh / Menzies Creek (90 persons), Cockatoo / Nangana (58 persons), Southern Rural (49 persons) and Beaconsfield (48 persons). The following table from the Community Atlas data demonstrates that Cardinia in 2001 was already had a higher percentage of youth aged 19 to 25 leaving school at year ten or below than the Melbourne Statistical Division.

**Table 8: Persons aged 19 to 25 years who left school at year 10 or below**

Persons aged 19 to 25 years who left school at year 10 or below (Cardinia)	2001		
	Number	Total persons 19-25	Percent (%)
Beaconsfield	48	2,210	2.2
Beaconsfield Upper / Guys Hill / Dewhurst	29	2,924	1.0
Bunyip	35	1,919	1.8
Cockatoo / Nangana	58	4,217	1.4
Emerald / Clematis / Avonsleigh / Menzies Creek	90	6,578	1.4
Garfield	19	1,140	1.7
Gembrook	14	1,682	0.9
Koo Wee Rup	36	1,971	1.8
Lang Lang	26	1,198	2.1
Nar Nar Goon / Tynong	22	1,530	1.4
Northern Rural	46	3,372	1.4
Officer	20	1,135	1.8
Pakenham	275	12,620	2.2
Southern Rural	49	2,790	1.8
<b>Cardinia Shire</b>	<b>767</b>	<b>45,305</b>	<b>1.7</b>
<b>Melbourne Statistical Division</b>	<b>40,672</b>	<b>3,338,704</b>	<b>1.2</b>
<b>South East Metropolitan region</b>	<b>6,332</b>	<b>344,775</b>	<b>1.8</b>

Source: Community Atlas data 2001

## **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities Data**

A recent snap shot of school enrolments in Pakenham shows children from 30 different non English speaking backgrounds. These included European countries, and countries in the South Sea Islands, Asia, South America, Africa, Asia and the Middle East, the majority coming from European countries, Asian countries and the South Sea Islands.

Anecdotally, service providers and schools in Pakenham have noted a growing number of people from Africa. This is consistent with trends indicated from CYMI, the Centre for Multicultural Youth Affairs, and the South Eastern Migrant Resource Centre. There is a clear trend for people arriving as refugees to settle in metropolitan fringe areas, where housing is comparatively cheaper.

CYMI and the South Eastern Migrant Resource Centre both indicate that there will continue to be growing numbers of people from CALD communities settling in Cardinia, and more specifically Pakenham.

## **CALD Communities and Youth Policy, Programs and Services**

In the next 10 years Cardinia will see increasing numbers of young people who come from CALD communities. This will be a significant challenge for Cardinia both in terms of ensuring policies, programs and services meet the needs of these young people, and in creating a culture that is accepting and inclusive.

CYMI- the Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues is the peak body advising government and the youth sector on the particular needs of young people. What follows is an analysis of key issues affecting these young people.

## **Key Issues Affecting CALD Young People**

### **Family and Community**

- The dynamics within CALD families and communities are often complex. Juggling family and community expectations with individual goals and aspirations can be challenging.
- Family roles on CALD families may be different , and non-biological members can play significant roles
- Roles within CALD families may change significantly once they are in Australia. Their family unit may be restructured; family members may be missing, separated or unable to migrate. Siblings and extended families may have guardianship roles
- Migration can result in a loss of status professionally, resulting in a class shift.
- Financial pressure scan be severe, and unemployment can be high
- Larger families can find it difficult to find affordable or appropriately sized housing
- Limited access to child care can mean less access to employment & recreation, or children taking on child care roles
- Young people in CLD families may have to take on a role of providing assistance with settlement issues such as language. They can also face different expectations from Australian culture and their family's cultural values, leading to family conflict
- Parents fears about the Westernisation of their children can be strong
- CALD families can fear that mainstream youth services encourage their children to leave home

- There can be confusion by parents about the education system, and frustration because they cannot help their children with education

#### Accessing Services

- Lack of culturally appropriate service options prevents many CALD young people from using them. This can include issues around gender mixing, diet, and other cultural and religious practices
- CALD young people often experience barriers in accessing appropriate health services which are culturally sensitive. This can result in serious ongoing health issues
- Racism and discrimination are common experiences for CALD young people
- Accessibility, affordability and safety of public transport are a major issue, as well as insufficient information on how the system works. In outer suburbs the cost is prohibitive

#### Police and Justice

- CALD young people are over represented in the juvenile/adult correction system. There are strong economic and social forces contributing to this, such as family and community disconnection, unemployment, lack of recreational opportunities and marginalisation
- Relationships between police and CALD young people can be problematic, with CALD young people perceiving they are targeted unfairly, feeling “over-policed”
- Young People from CALD communities can lack of awareness or understanding of their rights across a range of areas, including the juvenile justice system
- Media representation of CALD young people is often negative, often referring to “gangs”. There is little representation of strengths
- By virtue of their high profile and visibility in public places, young people are often in conflict with the police. This is compounded by a lack of “youth friendly” spaces available for young people
- Driving without a licence can become a real choice when they face a complex car purchasing process, huge debts and language problems

#### Sport & Recreation

- The experience of re settlement in a new country is daunting and involvement in sport and recreation may not be seen as a high priority. Other commitments may take priority making commitments to participate, volunteer, spectate or be transporters, difficult
- The costs of sport can be too high
- Paucity of public transport impacts on participation
- Some CALD young people may never have formally participated in organised sport and the notion of sporting clubs and their processes can be challenging
- CALD young women can have less opportunities due to cultural norms and difficulties in securing female coaches
- Experiences of discrimination, ranging from not feeling welcome to verbal and physical abuse, can deter involvement

#### Youth Participation

- Strategies for including young people from CALD communities can be unappropriated
- There can be a fear of voicing opinions because of a distrust of those hearing them
- Participation is a concept in some of the countries from which families arrive that is treated with suspicion

## **Youth Drug and Alcohol Data**

The Victorian Youth Alcohol and Drug Survey in 2003 reported the following statistics after surveying 3,084 young people aged 16–24:

*Alcohol:* 96% of males had tried alcohol at least once and 91% had consumed alcohol in the previous 12 months. 96% of females had ever tried alcohol and 92% had consumed alcohol in the previous 12 months. Of respondents who had drunk alcohol in the previous 12 months, 54% of males and 55% of females perceived themselves to be social drinkers.

*Illicit Drugs:* The most commonly reported reason for trying illicit drugs was curiosity (69%), followed by a friend using or offering a drug (38%). Of those respondents who had not tried any illicit drugs, the most commonly reported reason for not trying was worry about health problems (39%), followed by not being interested (37%).

*Cannabis:* 57% of males had used cannabis at least once and 37% had used cannabis in the previous 12 months. 49% of females had used cannabis at least once and 27% had used cannabis in the previous 12 months.

*Amphetamines:* 17% of males had tried amphetamines at least once and 11% had used them in the previous 12 months. 14% of females had tried amphetamines at least once and 9% had used them in the previous 12 months.

*Ecstasy:* 21% of males had tried ecstasy and 15% had used it in the previous 12 months. 18% of females had tried ecstasy and 12% had used it in the previous 12 months.

*Inhalants:* 5% of male respondents had tried inhalants. 3% of female respondents had tried inhalants.

From a Local Government perspective the Interface Councils Staying Connected report details that Cardinia Council has slightly higher substance use than the Melbourne Metropolitan average for marijuana and alcohol as reported in the Staying Connected, Interface Councils Report in 2006.

A recent study within Victorian schools conducted by the Australian Drug Foundation, reported that the majority of youth have been exposed to drugs by the age of 13 years. This data has been supported by increase the Australian Drug Foundation has had in the number of requests from parents for Drug information through concerns for their children.

The Staying Connected report indicates that a particular concern for Interface Councils is the abuse of legal and illegal substances more than their counterparts in the inner suburbs. The South East Drug and Alcohol Service only outreach to the Cardinia Shire one day per week. For young people to access this service at other times they are required to travel 52 km to Dandenong. This is the same as travelling from Dandenong to Melbourne.



## **Youth Mental Health**

A combined research report from Cardinia and Casey in 2002 reported a number of issues of concern for young people aged 13-19 including depression, low self esteem, lack of confidence. Southern Health reports that collating data regarding youth mental health is difficult given the lack of resources for research in this area. Southern Health's Mental Health Project Officer reported that the following areas are a concern for youth residing in Cardinia with state data supporting these concerns.

The Department of Premier and Cabinet carried out a study in 2004 investigating the emerging issues for Victorian families. Along with specific health related issues, mental illness is reported as being of great concern for Australian children and families. The study further identifies that in 2002 the Australian Institute for Health and Welfare states that "the highest burden of disease for Australian children is caused by acute and chronic respiratory diseases and mental disorders."

The Western Australian Child Health Survey identified that 16% of 4-11 year olds and 20% of 12-16 year olds had a significant mental health problem and 15% of boys and 14.4% of girls aged 4-12 years have emotional and/or behavioural problems.

Until recently there has been little research regarding children of parents with a mental illness which is a rising concern for child and adolescent development. The Schizophrenia Fellowship reported in 2001 "Families in which a parent has a mental illness are at increased risk of experiencing poverty, housing problems, family disruption and disorganisation, marital conflict, reduction of social and leisure activities, disruption of children's schooling and isolation as a result of the parental illness (AICAFMHA 2001)". The related effects for children caring for a parent with a mental illness include increased responsibility, disruption to education, reduced continuity of care and family cohesion.

The Interface Council Staying Connected Reports that mental health services across the state have long waiting lists and limited resources for young people. This concern is exacerbated by the lack of early intervention mental health services in Cardinia. Young people are expected to travel large distances to access services with concerns across the Interface Councils that if youth do not have parental support or financial stability their motivation to seek help will be diminished.

## **Social Disadvantage Data**

Cardinia Shire's social disadvantage can be measured using the SEIFA index which ranks relatively disadvantaged areas with a low index score. In comparison with other Victorian Councils Cardinia's score indicates some disadvantages in the areas of low income families and people with little training and in unskilled occupations. It is important to understand that a high score here reflects lack of disadvantage rather than high advantage, a subtly different concept. This is another area Cardinia Shire will need to consider in regards to youth training and education and the flow on affects to the wider community.

**Table 9: SEIFA Index of Disadvantage: Melbourne**

<b>SEIFA index of disadvantage</b>	
Local government areas in the Melbourne Statistical Division (ranked from greatest to least disadvantaged)	<b>SEIFA index of disadvantage</b>
Greater Dandenong (C)	876.88
Maribyrnong (C)	915.36
Brimbank (C)	918.64
South East Metro Region	951.33
Hume (C)	954.16
Whittlesea (C)	962.40
Darebin (C)	966.80
Moreland (C)	984.56
Hobsons Bay (C)	988.72
Frankston (C)	992.72
Casey (C)	993.76
Melton (S)	997.36
Wyndham (C)	1,007.52
Yarra (C)	1,013.92
Moonee Valley (C)	1,016.40
<b>Cardinia (S)</b>	<b>1,018.88</b>
Kingston (C)	1,024.08
Mornington Peninsula (S)	1,027.84
Yarra Ranges (S)	1,037.12
Melbourne (C)	1,037.60
Knox (C)	1,041.04
Maroondah (C)	1,052.96
Monash (C)	1,053.12
Banyule (C)	1,057.92
Whitehorse (C)	1,067.68
Port Phillip (C)	1,078.72
Glen Eira (C)	1,083.20
Manningham (C)	1,086.64
Nillumbik (S)	1,107.68
Bayside (C)	1,107.76
Stonnington (C)	1,108.00
Boroondara (C)	1,122.16

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), 2001.

## 4.2 Consultation Data Summary

### Key Issues for Young People

Appendix A shows a full table which reports on the information gathered from youth service providers and research regarding the key issues and needs of young people within the Cardinia Shire. The main themes arising from these issues and needs have been summarised in the table below.

**Table 10: Key Issues and Needs of Youth in Cardinia**

<b>Recreation (sport)</b>
Absence of hockey, rugby and soccer venues
Shortage of girl only teams for football, cricket and soccer
Absence of , or poorly linked footpaths and bike trails
Absence of 50 metre pool in growth corridor
No pool in Hills sub
Cost of sport is out of reach of some families
Lack of transport limits opportunities to participate
<b>Recreation (non-sport)</b>
Shortage of opportunities to access the Internet
Shortage of dancing schools operating at club level
Shortage of after school activities
<b>Young People at School</b>
Bullying
Absence of outside school hours care services for those at secondary schools
Absence of programs for the increasing number of under 15 olds who are disengaged from school
<b>School Leavers and Training</b>
Shortage of IT training and independent living skills training for young people with disabilities
The need for user friendly, high quality information for young people about to leave school about services and resources
Problems with referral pathways for training and support for unemployed young people
High Unemployment and lack of local employment options
<b>Generalist Youth Services</b>
Limited access to existing services by young people in rural townships and to those who do not have transport
No youth specific venue
Lack of knowledge/communication and consultation about youth programs
Difficulties referring people into mental health services
<b>Transport</b>
Limited or non-existent public transport between rural townships and Pakenham
The fare system is expensive and inflexible
<b>Health</b>
Growing incidence of self harm depression and suicide
<b>Community Safety</b>
Perception in the community that young people pose a threat to public safety
<b>Housing and Material Aid</b>
Absence of emergency refuge in Cardinia

## Service Mapping

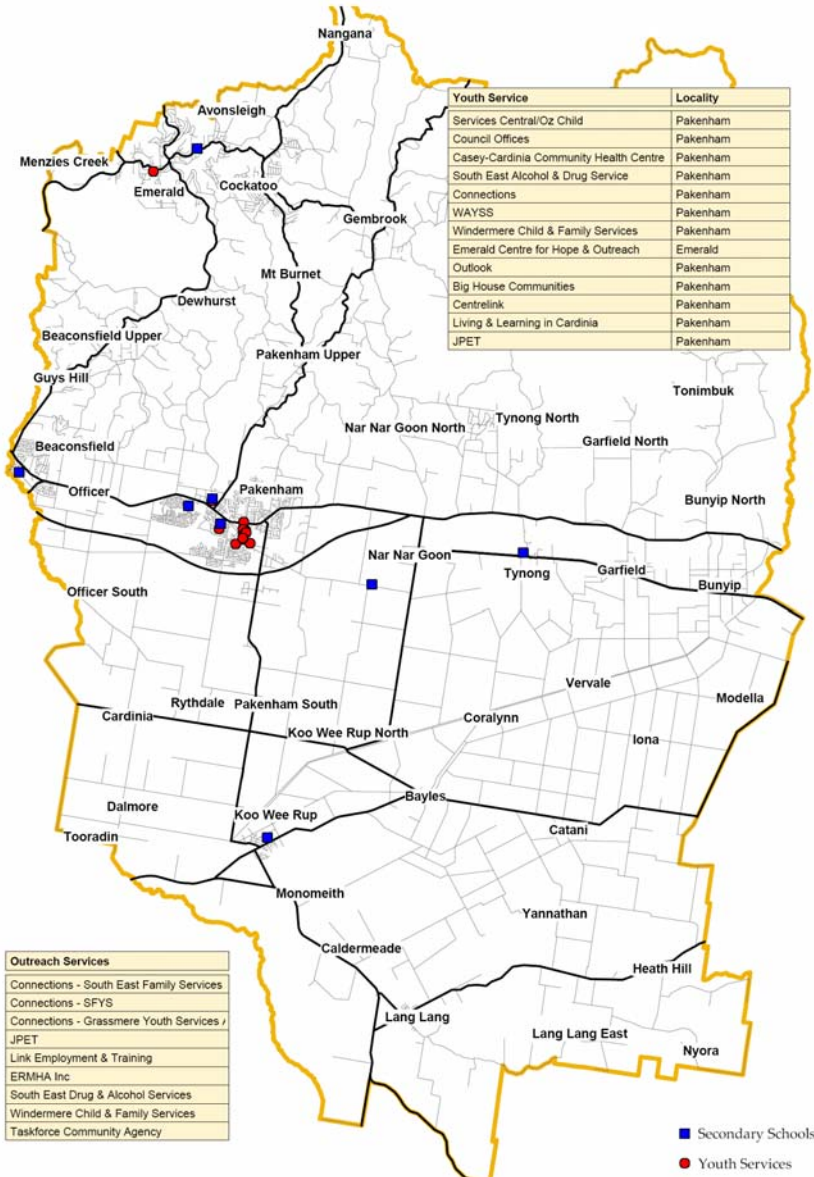
A survey form was sent to all agencies that provide generalist and specialist youth services to young people, as well as to organisations known to provide youth programs and activities. Sixteen were returned.

The surveys aimed to establish what services, programs and activities existed for young people from Cardinia, where they were delivered, their cost, the length of waiting lists, referral issues and whether the agency had sufficient resources to deliver the. The survey also asked workers to identify common requests from the public for youth programs/ activities, changes in their client group over the past five years, and three key issues affecting their lives.

## Location and Nature of Services

Cardinia's youth service locations are shown in the map below; there are also a number of services that provide outreach to Cardinia.

**Figure 10: Cardinia Youth Services Map (shown below)**



## **Consultation with youth service providers**

The Casey Cardinia Community Health Centre reported that it had a waiting list of 4-6 weeks with 20-30 young people on the waiting list for youth health services per month.

The following referral issues were identified by local youth services:

- Difficulties referring to mental health services due to strict eligibility criteria of CAMHS
- Lack of transport in some townships limits ability to make referrals
- Lack of family counselling for 14-25 age group
- Age restrictions for using services
- Lack of knowledge/communication and consultation about youth programs
- Absence of a family planning service in the Shire

Changes in client group:

There were consistent themes in workers perceptions of changes in the client group over the past five years. The most frequently mentioned themes were that -

- The age of clients was decreasing
- Increasing numbers of 12-15 year olds are disengaged from school
- The complexity of their problems was increasing
- Serious Mental health issues were increasing, including depression, self harm and suicide
- More young people were needing emergency housing
- Schools were asking for more programs and support
- Increase in parents needing support and education to manage difficult behaviours
- Family structures were becoming more complex
- Young people are less likely to commit to things until the last minute
- The need to support children better in primary school
- Young people are more mobile

The following common themes were identified by local youth service providers:

- Depression, self harm
- Lack of confidence and positive experiences and relationships
- Need for alternative education programs
- Early disengagement from school
- Lack of public transport
- Lack of youth housing
- Bullying in schools
- Lack of physical activity
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Low disposable income of families
- Both parents are working
- Increase in after school activities
- Low expectations for the future
- Inconsistent parenting
- Unemployment
- Isolation
- The need for a place to access information and support, access shower, food and clean clothes.
- Lack of affordable housing for single young refugees and large refugee's families

- Discrimination and racism towards CALD young people in everyday life including housing, employment and police contact
- Barriers to education for CALD young people, including English training opportunities, interrupted schooling
- For young people with a disability the key issues are lack of public transport, lack of activities and isolation

**Key Research on Young People and Transport**

Source- Extracts from “Rural and Regional Young People and Transport- Improving Access to Transport for Young People in Rural and regional Australia”, National Youth Affairs Research Scheme.

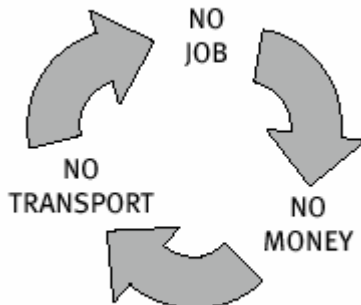
This project, commissioned as part of the program of the National Youth Affairs Research Scheme (NYARS) aims to investigate transport and travel for rural and regional young people, to examine successes and challenges in improving the provision of transport services to young people, and to focus on viable solutions to their transport needs.

Key points identified were:

There is a clear relationship between transport options and social exclusion. Inadequate transport can stop people from participating in work, learning, health care, food shopping and other activities, such as volunteering and community participation.

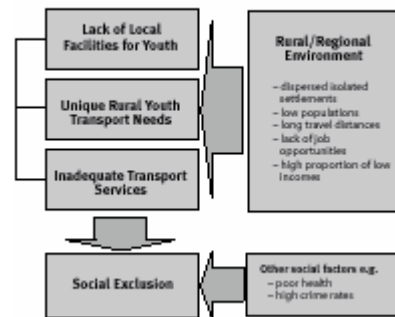
**Figure 1 I: The Relationship between Transport, Rural Characteristics and Social Exclusion**

Figure 2.7: Lack of transport in rural areas can impact on life opportunities.



Source: B002 Allen Hamilton 2003 based on CTA 2002.

Figure 2.2: Relationship between transport, rural characteristics and social exclusion



**Table 11: Impacts of Transport Problems on Young People in Rural and Regional Australia**

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Frequency of comment</b>
Restrict education and employment opportunities	93
Restricted social opportunities.	90
Restricted service (e.g. medical) opportunities.	52
Isolation, insularity.	52
Car dependency, reliance on others, no independence.	32
Stress/dismay.	28
Early age drinking/mischief.	25
Car purchase results in debt problems.	13
Arrive late to work, school or appointment.	13
Unsafe behaviours e.g. hitchhiking.	11
Drink drive.	9
Unlicensed driving.	8
Unsafe walking long-distances.	7
Strain on accommodation near education and employment centres.	6
Poor drive skills/driver fatigue – accidents.	6
People leave township.	4

Source: Phase I Consultation Submissions – from young people and youth workers in rural and regional Australia.

Appendix C supports these transport related findings and lists suggested transport Improvements to assist young people in rural and regional Australia.

### **National Youth Survey 2005- Mission Australia**

Since 2002 Mission Australia has conducted an Annual Survey of Young People. The primary purpose of the Survey is to identify and clarify the key and emerging issues of young people. Approximately 10,000 young people participated nationally, 1246 of these were from Victoria.

The following table shows the responses from these 1246 Victorian Young people to the question:

The following have been identified as issues by young people and have been ranked in order of most pressing issue by data collated by Mission Australia.

**Table 12: Mission Australia: Issues of Concern for Young People**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>% Respondents</b>			
	<b>11-14y</b>	<b>15-19y</b>	<b>20-24y</b>	<b>Totals</b>
<b>Depression</b>	33	43	57	42
<b>Suicide/Self harm</b>	44	41	31	40
<b>Physical/sexual abuse</b>	42	32	39	34
<b>Coping with Stress</b>	25	36	40	34
<b>Family Conflict</b>	32	33	24	32
<b>Alcohol and other Drug Issues</b>	41	30	24	32
<b>Bullying/emotional abuse</b>	36	30	28	31
<b>School or Study problems</b>	14	27	15	23
<b>Discrimination</b>	19	21	26	21
<b>Sexuality</b>	14	10	16	12

Source: Mission Australia. Data is aggregated and includes items ranked one, two & three by respondents.

### **Victoria Police Youth Resource Officer in Pakenham**

To support these findings, partnership consultation with Victoria Police has resulted in the following issue identification.

The following is a summary of a phone interview conducted with Senior Constable Sharon Patterson, Youth Resource Officer at Pakenham Police.

Key issues relating to young people identified were:

- An increase in criminal damage, property damage and graffiti, mainly in the Pakenham CBD.
- An increase in school age drinking, including some sporting organisations continuing to foster a drinking culture
- An increase in young people skipping school (truancy), and truancy with younger and younger children. Truancy and school disengagement is one of the factors increasing the rate of criminal and property damage and graffiti.
- An increase in assaults by and on young people
- A growing incidence of young people who are perpetrators of domestic violence
- An absence of mental health services that can support families where parents or young people have mental health issues
- A change in culture which results in young people seeking external sources of recreation, rather than developing their own entertainment

It was suggested that a partnership between Council and the Police to promote and expand participation by Sporting Clubs in the Good Sports Program would be a useful way of addressing the increase in under age drinking at a number of sporting clubs.



## **2006 Youth Forum Findings**

The 2006 Youth Forum aimed to identify the concerns and needs of the Youth in the Cardinia Shire. Schools that participated were Koo Wee Rup Secondary College, Emerald Secondary College, Pakenham Secondary College, Community VCAL, St Francis Xavier College, Chairo Christian College, and Beaconhills Christian College. Cardinia Shire Council Youth Services staff visited during recess and lunch breaks and approached young people on a one-to-one or small group basis. Participants were aged between 12 and 18 years of age:

<b>Age</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
12	10%
13	12%
14	8%
15	25%
16	32%
17	10%
18	3%

Of the 181 participants 34% were male (n = 62) and 66% were female (n = 119)

### **Recreation**

- In six of the seven schools young people identified that they would like additional sports teams (particular sports mentioned included hockey, soccer, football and basketball). Further discussions revealed that students would like to get to know students from other schools and that competing in sport would be a way of achieving this.
- Students also identified a need for more 'disco' style music events, students at Pakenham Secondary College elaborated further by suggesting that a committee be made up of students from each school to organise inter-school discos. Singing, craft and drama were also suggested.
- Outdoor activities suggested included ski trips and a graffiti wall project. Students also raised concerns that they are unaware of motorbike and horse riding trails in the Shire, and that a map could be available outlining where they could ride, and further that additional tracks with obstacles (e.g. jumps) would be appreciated.
- Participating students would like to see additional retail outlets, cinema and a games arcade. The desire for more music venues that were accessible to underage patrons was also a common suggestion.

### **Community**

- Participating students from Pakenham identified the need for parks, gardens, sport grounds / courts and an outdoor swimming pool –“places to hang out safely”. These suggestions came from young people needing a place to meet with their friends.
- A job / career group and learner driving study group were suggested as practical and beneficial programs to be run for young people.
- The lack of accessible public transport between towns was raised as a concern. The cost of public transport and the safety of current train stations and bus stops were also mentioned.
- Students from every participating school raised the need for a youth centre. It was envisaged that the youth centre would be a place for young people to socialise and meet people; it would also serve as information / referral service and a place where young people could develop their skills. Further to this a suggestion from the community VCAL students for a community café developed, which ideally would enable young people to gain

practical work experience whilst supporting the community. Students from St Francis Xavier College elaborated on the suggestion by adding a charity function, where young people could actively raise money, giving participating youth a sense of social esteem.

- Learner Drivers identified street lighting and particular roads as hazardous while learning to drive.

### **Safety**

Of the seven schools participating, students from five of those identified concerns around safety in public areas.

- Participants raised concerns that they feel uncomfortable and fearful. Concerns raised included vandalism (including personal defamation), theft, lack of street lighting, and lack of discipline and respect from other members of the community.
- Participants suggested that safety could be improved by increasing police presence, installing security cameras in public places, increasing education for young people and their families, installing more street lights and laying more footpaths.
- As a result of feeling fearful in public areas students suggested that they would benefit from a self defence program.

### **Communication**

- The Youth Forum identified that communication between Cardinia Shire Council Youth Services and schools across the Shire could be improved. Students raised concern that they were generally unaware of what programs and events were available to them.
- To improve communication, students suggested advertising events at Fountain Gate shopping centre and local surf shops as both are frequented by young people. Further suggestions included a representative from Youth Services speak at school assembly, details to be advertised in school newsletters and through morning bulletins.
- It was also suggested that Youth Services could offer a mobile youth service and produce an independent youth specific newsletter.

## **Casey Cardinia CHC Youth Health Service Research**

The young people attending the Casey Cardinia CHC Youth Health Services were asked to complete a survey which asked two key questions:

- 1. What would make you community a better place for young people?**
- 2. What would make your life better as a young person?**

There were 31 surveys returned, and the responses are grouped into themes below. For full details of results refer to table Appendix B.

- a) Increased entertainment opportunities
- b) Increased recreation opportunities (Sport)
- c) Improvements in Transport
- d) Employment
- e) Positive stories about young people/opportunities to highlight strengths
- f) Greater income security

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## 7 Appendices

### Appendix A: Key Issues for Young People

Issue	Identified by Young People	Identified by Service Providers or community organizations	Identified by data, key reports, current research
<b>Recreation (sport)</b>			
Absence of hockey, rugby and soccer venues	✓	✓	✓
Shortage of girl only teams for football, cricket and soccer	✓	✓	✓
Absence of, or poorly linked footpaths and bike trails	✓	✓	✓
Absence of a range of sporting facilities within school grounds		✓	
Shortage of skate parks	✓	✓	
Absence of areas to ride motorbikes	✓	✓	
Absence of 50 metre pool in growth corridor	✓	✓	✓
No pool in Hills sub	✓	✓	✓
Need for Indoor recreation complex in Koo wee Rup		✓	
Shortage of tennis courts	✓	✓	
Some from CALD communities may have never participated in organized sport and our notions of sporting clubs can be challenging		✓	✓
People from CALD communities have experienced discrimination that can deter involvement		✓	✓
Cost of sport is out of reach of some families	✓	✓	✓
Lack of transport limits opportunities to participate	✓	✓	✓
<b>Recreation (non-sport)</b>			
Shortage of opportunities to access the Internet	✓	✓	✓
Shortage of dancing schools operating at club level	✓	✓	✓
Shortage of opportunities for young people to be learn and be involved in classical music, dance and performance		✓	
Limited opportunities for youth theatre	✓	✓	
Absence of open air entertainment options	✓		✓
Need for cinema	✓		
Shortage of after school activities	✓	✓	✓
<b>Young People at School</b>			
Bullying	✓	✓	✓
Truancy		✓	

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Issue	Identified by Young People	Identified by Service Providers or community organizations	Identified by data, key reports, current research
Significant numbers of students are acting as primary care givers while their parents work long hours		✓	
Students are presenting with increasing number and with increasing complexity of problems		✓	✓
Absence of special school in Cardinia Shire for those students who fit current guidelines for enrolment		✓	✓
Population growth means there will be an explosion of Year 7 enrolments in Pakenham in the coming years		✓	✓
Absence of any technical facility		✓	✓
Absence of outside school hours care services for those at secondary schools	✓	✓	✓
Absence of programs for the increasing number of under 15 olds who are disengaged from school	✓	✓	✓
CALD parents can be confused by the education system		✓	✓
<b>School Leavers and Training</b>			
Higher than average early school leaving, lower than average Year 12 completion, and lower than average tertiary entrance rates.		✓	✓
Shortage of IT training and independent living skills training for young people with disabilities	✓	✓	✓
Inadequate career guidance/counselling for young people in year 10 and 11 who will not be going on to higher education	✓	✓	
The need for user friendly, high quality information for young people about to leave school about services and resources	✓	✓	✓
Problems with referral pathways for training and support for unemployed young people	✓	✓	✓
High Unemployment and lack of local employment options	✓	✓	✓
<b>Generalist Youth Services</b>			
Shortage of generalist youth services in the Shire		✓	✓
Limited access to existing services by young people in rural townships and to those who do not have transport	✓	✓	✓
Lack of transport in some townships limits ability to make referrals		✓	

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Issue	Identified by Young People	Identified by Service Providers or community organizations	Identified by data, key reports, current research
Referral pathways are problematic		✓	✓
No youth specific venue	✓	✓	✓
CALD families can fear mainstream youth services		✓	✓
Lack of knowledge/communication and consultation about youth programs	✓	✓	✓
Lack of skills/training to work with young people from CALD communities		✓	
Lack of children's services for 8-10 year olds is causing problems long term		✓	✓
<b>Specialist Youth Services</b>			
No reproductive health services in the Shire for young people		✓	✓
No Shire based mental health, emergency accommodation, services to CALD young people, sexual assault		✓	✓
Age restrictions for using services		✓	✓
Lack of family counselling for 14-25 year old group		✓	
Limited youth health services (waiting lists)		✓	✓
Difficulties referring people into mental health services	✓	✓	✓
Access and co-ordination problems with VCAL		✓	
Shortage of VCAL		✓	✓
<b>Transport</b>			
Limited or non-existent public transport between rural townships and Pakenham	✓	✓	✓
Limited or non-existent transport options within rural townships	✓	✓	
The fare system is expensive and inflexible	✓	✓	✓
Available public transport is perceived as being unreliable	✓		✓
CALD people have difficulties in understanding the public transport system	✓		✓
<b>Emotional Well Being</b>			
Serious Mental health issues are increasing, including depression, self harm and suicide		✓	✓
Low expectations and aspirations for the future	✓	✓	
<b>Family Stress/Conflict</b>			
High numbers of families where Parent/s are working long hours		✓	
Primary School children (8-11 year old) are in need of services		✓	



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Issue	Identified by Young People	Identified by Service Providers or community organizations	Identified by data, key reports, current research
Increasing number of blended families		✓	
Lack of parenting skills and/or parents needing support with increasingly challenging behaviours		✓	
CALD young people sometimes have to play adult roles		✓	✓
CALD families can fear Westernization of their children		✓	✓
Significant numbers of young people acting as carers of younger children while parents/s work or for parents with a disability		✓	✓
Increasing numbers of families which include a member with a disability		✓	✓
A significant number of families where young people are playing a major role in caring for a parent with a disability, and who are in need of support and respite		✓	
<b>Health</b>			
Growing incidence of obesity and disease relating to diet and lifestyle			✓
Growing incidence of self harm depression and suicide	✓	✓	✓
<b>Community Safety</b>			
Perception in the community that young people pose a threat to public safety	✓	✓	✓
Need to design public space to maximize safety and visibility to all.		✓	✓
Growing incidence of graffiti		✓	✓
CALD young people feel they are unfairly targeted		✓	✓
CALD young people lack awareness of their rights in the juvenile justice system		✓	✓
<b>Road Safety</b>			
High incidence of drink driving and speed		✓	✓
<b>Housing and Material Aid</b>			
Absence of emergency refuge in Cardinia	✓	✓	✓
Shortage of supported residential options		✓	✓
Absence of place to shower ,wash clothes, get food and access information and support		✓	✓
Lack of affordable housing for single young refugees and large refugee's families		✓	✓
<b>Participation</b>			
Young people are wanting to participate more in decisions affecting their lives			✓
<b>Alcohol and Drugs</b>			
Acceptance of drug use as part of life		✓	✓
Increasing alcohol consumption by		✓	✓

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Issue	Identified by Young People	Identified by Service Providers or community organizations	Identified by data, key reports, current research
younger age groups			
Alcohol use by parents is contributing to family conflict and breakdown		✓	✓
Underage drinking at sporting clubs		✓	✓

Source: Youth Forum 2006

**Appendix B: Casey Cardinia Health Service Youth Research**

<b>Individual Responses</b>	<b>Number</b>
More sporting facilities	12
Bus link from Koo Wee Rup to Pakenham	1
Bus link from Lang Lang to Pakenham	2
Cinema	12
More meeting places	2
Movies	2
Drama centre	1
Rollerblading	5
More skate parks	3
More things to do carnivals festivals	1
Less houses	1
Dirt bike tracks	1
Work for people who are not legally allowed to	1
More discipline from parents and police	1
More community activities	2
More chances to show young peoples strengths	1
Positive stories	1
Different activities	1
Publicity about what's on and where	1
No bullying	1
People knowing we are okay	1
Screening for mental illness and structure to prevent mental illness	1
Free education	3
More public transport, regular and on time	3
More clothing shops	1
Public entertainment	5
A good career opportunity	2
Bike track	1
Exciting events at lakeside	1
A place to hang out indoors	1
More sport in township	1
Adults being less strict	1
More money	1
Place for people to come	1
An allowance from the govt for young people themselves	1
To have a greater variety of friends	1
More social events	1
Fun park	1
Somewhere to hang art	1
Indoor skate ring	2
No violence be safe	1
Parenting education for parents	1

Source: Casey Cardinia Health Service Consultation

**Appendix C: Transport Research Findings – Youth Community Consultation**

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Frequency of comment</b>
<b>Public transport.</b>	
More public transport, provide some public transport	43
Run a local bus service with low fares/run a bus shuttle/run a community bus	35
Provide a public transport connection/link to larger centres.	32
Provide higher frequency services/more connections.	26
Provide more/some services on weekend services.	25
Develop more/some community transport.	24
Increase funding for more buses/more service.	21
Expand concession system to reduce fares for young people.	18
Lower fares for young people.	17
Provide more public transport in the evening.	12
Coordinate buses so you can change between them easier.	9
Increase the coverage of services into areas not served.	8
Provide on demand bus or taxi services.	4
Provide accessible bus services for people with disabilities.	3
Make public transport more reliable.	3
Run bus routes less indirectly.	3
Provide more comfortable buses.	1
<b>Car (driver/lift)</b>	
Encourage car owners to give youths a lift.	5
Make fuel/insurance cheaper to run cars more economically for young people.	2
Provide cheaper (local) driver training for the young.	2
<b>Taxi</b>	
More taxis in our area.	3
Subsidise cheaper taxi fares.	3
Taxi sharing schemes.	1
<b>Bike</b>	
Upgrade bike paths.	1
<b>Issues for government</b>	
Consider transport implications of government policies which centralise and rationalise local facilities.	4
Provide more outreach education services so we don't have to travel as far.	2
Have a youth transport voucher to use on all transport.	1

Source: Phase 1 Consultation Submissions.