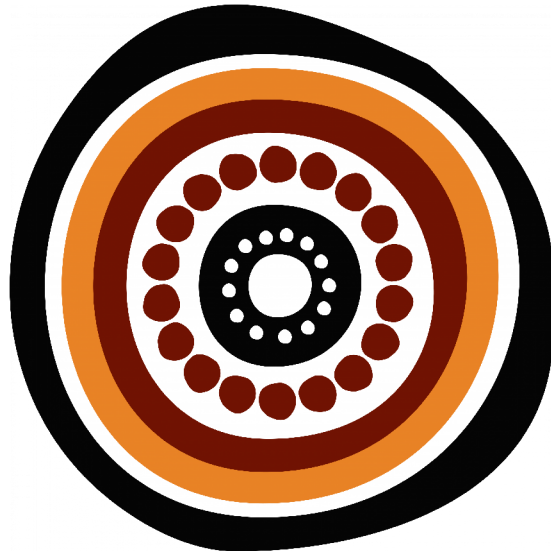




YOUTH STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2027





RECOGNITION OF THE CAMMERAYGAL PEOPLES

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters of North Sydney local government area, the Cammeraygal People.

We are committed to showing respect for Cammeraygal and all First Nations Peoples through the acknowledgement of country at ceremonies, meetings, functions and events.



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MAYOR'S MESSAGE

The Youth Strategic Plan is an important document which reaffirms Council's commitment to supporting and engaging with young people in the North Sydney local government area (LGA).

We want young people in our community to feel valued, to have opportunities for connection and fun, and to have confidence that we are creating a supportive and sustainable environment for the future. The Youth Strategic Plan outlines the strategies and initiatives we will undertake to ensure we are best supporting their needs.

In preparing this Plan, Council spoke to more than 500 local youth who live, study, work or visit the North Sydney LGA, to find out what they are concerned about and their current challenges and hopes. Three priority areas became apparent: Connection, Wellbeing and Opportunity. Over the next five years, we as a Council, and through partnerships with youth-focused organisations, will be committed to providing programs, activities and initiatives that support these focus areas.

Young people are the changemakers and thought leaders of today and tomorrow. Our aim is to provide support and opportunities that assist them to live up to their full potential.

PURPOSE

The Youth Strategic Plan 2023-2027 sets out Council's key commitments to the young people who live, work, visit and study in the North Sydney local government area.

It provides a framework and a clear direction for Council and partners to achieve improved outcomes for young people and to better meet their needs, interests, and aspirations.

The Plan has been informed by a consultation process with young people and the youth services sector and it aligns with State and Federal initiatives ensuring that young

people are considered in a consistent manner across all government priorities.

The Strategic Plan reaffirms Council's commitment to young people that they are valued and are an integral part of the North Sydney community with their needs afforded the same attention as the rest of the community.

While Council is not able to resource the provision of all services to young people it does play a crucial role in planning and collaborating with relevant partners to provide a comprehensive range of services and programs to the local region.

ROLE OF COUNCIL



FACILITATE the strategic planning, development and management of services for young people to cater for identified current and future community needs. Development of strategies and policies to support and address the gaps including identification of funding support.



PROVIDE direct delivery of Youth Services, including programs and events through direct funding, shared funding, and facilitated funding arrangements. Provide a range of youth focused infrastructure to be utilised by the community.



SUPPORT young people and their families, service providers, and other stakeholders with the development and enhancement of services and educational opportunities for young people.



WORK with the community, service providers, young people, community services and government sectors, to ensure that, programs and services for young people meet the needs of the community.



ADVOCATE provide leadership to the community when advocating to potential service providers, State and Federal government departments and funding bodies. Council also plays a role in recognising the outstanding achievements of young people in the LGA.



NETWORKS facilitate networks and partnerships with government and non-government agencies, to build capacity and to deliver programs and services to young people in an integrated and coordinated manner.



Thanks so much for all the support that has been provided to my daughter and me.

The commitment to ensuring a positive outcome for not just my daughter but for all her peers and the many other youths that come to Planet X for a safe haven is exemplary.



– Mother of 15 year old girl



POLICY CONTEXT

COUNCIL PERSPECTIVES

- Community Strategic Plan
- Delivery Program
- Arts and Culture Strategic Plan
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Library & Historical Services Strategy
- Family & Children's Services Strategy

STATE PERSPECTIVES

- NSW Strategic Plan for Children and Young People
- NSW Youth Health Framework
- Living Well - A Strategic Plan for Mental Health
- Office of the Children's Guardian - Child Safe Scheme
- NSW Premier's Priorities
- Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) - Better Systems, Better Chances: A Review of Research and Practice for Prevention and Early Intervention

FEDERAL PERSPECTIVES

- Australian Youth Development Index
- Australia's Youth Policy Framework
- Safe and Supported - The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021 - 2031

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

- UN Convention of the Rights of the Child
- UN Declaration of Human Rights

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

POPULATION



Total 69 460
Aged 12-24: 6924

NET MIGRATION

2012 to 2021

12 to 17 years **-227** →

18 to 24 years **+1,089** ←



YOUNG PEOPLE

Total 12-17 3.9%

Total 18-24 6.1%

Female 12-17 3.7%

Male 12-17 4.2%

Female 18-24 6%

Male 18-24 6.2%



3.7%

Secondary School



4.92%

Youth Allowance & Austudy



6.2%

Youth unemployment rate (15-24)



3.8%

Disengaged youth not employed or in education (15-24 years)



10 High Schools - 11 Primary Schools

Data compiled from profile.id.com.au/north-sydney. ABS Census 2021



WHAT COUNCIL OFFERS



Planet X Youth Centre



Netball & Basketball Courts



Tennis Courts



Indoor Sports Centre



Arts and Culture



Skate Plaza



Sport Fields



Sustainability Centre



Swimming Pools



Parks, Reserves,
Walks & Trails



Library



Community Centres



PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are crucial in providing youth services as they allow young people access to a comprehensive range of resources, experiences, and opportunities.

Collaborative and integrated partnerships also align with current Federal and State directives and strategies to work in a coordinated manner to better improve outcomes for young people.

Council plays a leading role in the coordination of service delivery in the North Shore region and will continue to build on the strong partnerships it has developed over time.

 ACCOMMODATION	 MENTAL HEALTH	 HEALTH	 EMPLOYMENT
 DRUGS/ALCOHOL	 COMMUNITY & JUSTICE	 EDUCATION	 POLICE
 COUNCILS	 FAMILY SUPPORT	 YOUTH SUPPORT	 INTERAGENCIES



“

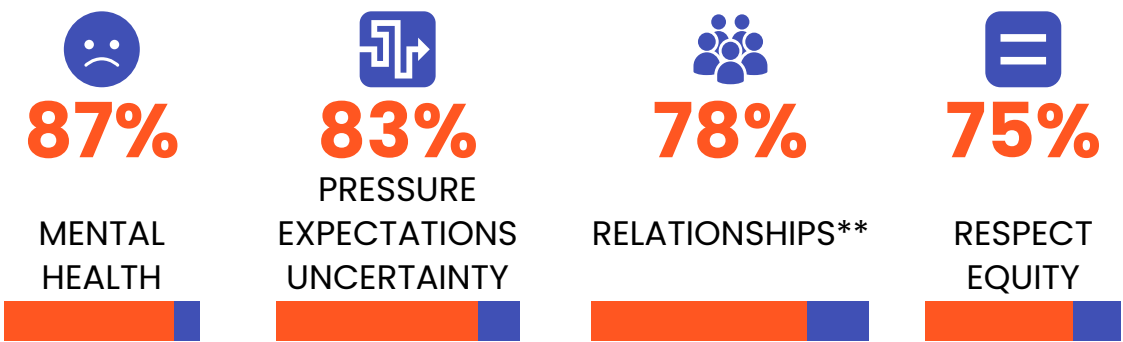
I think you should know the staff at Planet X Youth Centre don't realise the full extent of the impact they have on the youth that attend their service.

Not only as Youth Workers doing their job to the best of their ability, but as genuine, caring, compassionate people”
- 17 year old girl



CONSULTATION - Services*

ISSUES AFFECTING YOUNG PEOPLE



Council's community friendliness and their openness to collaborations and partnerships is greatly appreciated.

The Youth Workers go above and beyond for the young people in the region.

Department of Community and Justice

Health recognises the strong relationships Planet X has with young people and this has been an important component to the various partnerships that Health has had, and continues to have, with North Sydney Council.

Social Wellbeing Program - Health Department

* Youth services consultation in the region and Lower North Shore Youth Interagency, 2022/23

**Family, friends and intimate relationships

WHAT WORKS WELL

Good range of youth facilities and options - **Dept of Community and Justice**



Where young people don't have enough to eat at home, the free food that youth centres like Planet X provide is very important - **Mission Australia**

Council facilitating monthly Youth Interagency meetings - very useful and important.
Appreciate the lead taken to coordinate youth services in the region - **Health Dept.**

Council youth services are a key partner in the delivery of services - **Dept of Community and Justice.**



One of the real strengths of North Sydney Council has been to provide venue support to **Dept of Community & Justice** and to other community groups and services.
This is a real positive of Council and would love to see it continue.



Really value the relationship and partnerships with Planet X.
Ongoing for over two decades.
Strong support to each other and young people, particularly the vulnerable, high needs, and the disadvantaged - **Taldumande Youth Accommodation Services**

It has been beneficial engaging with Council and the Youth Workers.
Have experienced the benefit of Planet X and the work they do with students - **School Support Officer**

Services like Planet X talks to vulnerable young people earlier than Health which is vital to engaging them and getting the message out and providing referrals - **Health Dept.**



IMPROVEMENTS

Huge need for more study spaces - **School Support Officer**

Allowing sports fields to operate at night offers more community options - **Health Dept.**

Council could consider increasing the size of their Youth Services - **Dept of Community and Justice.**



Could always do with more parks, sport and recreational facilities as it has such positive impacts on the community - **Health Dept.**



Support for an alternative education campus - **Phoenix House Youth Services**



Essential youth options like Basketball courts and Skate Parks need to be maintained and not lost. Incredibly good for mental health, connection, socialisation - **Health Dept.**

Creating plazas, closing off street to traffic, pedestrianising. Council has been good with this, let's have more - **Northern Sydney Primary Health Network**



There's a whole cohort of young people who still haven't re-engaged with school/society due to the effects of Covid.

Any Council assistance appreciated - **School Support Officer**

Homelessness is ongoing. The young people have multiple problems and needs not just one issue - **Taldumande Youth Services**



Schools don't have the capacity to assist LGBTQIA+ students. Councils are well placed to assist - **School Support Officer**





“ North Sydney is a pleasant and safe area. It is well looked after which I am grateful for. ”

- 16 year old boy

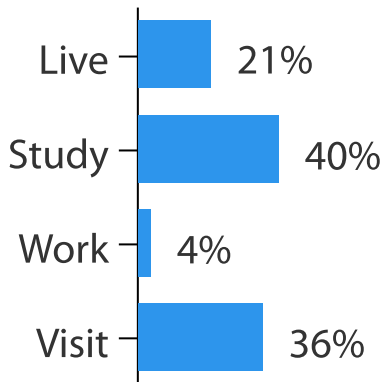
CONSULTATION - Young People

DATA

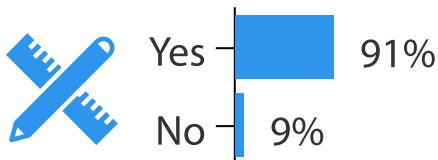


Youth engagement and consultations - 2022

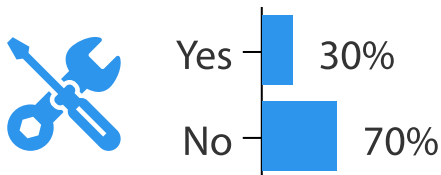
CONNECTION TO NORTH SYDNEY



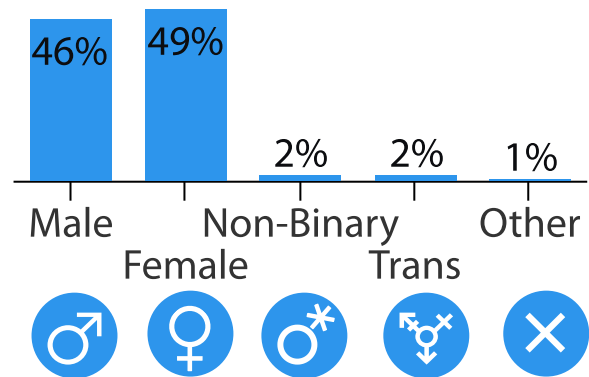
STUDYING



EMPLOYED



GENDER



TOP 3 PERSONAL CONCERNS



TOP 3 CONCERNS FOR FRIENDS/FAMILY

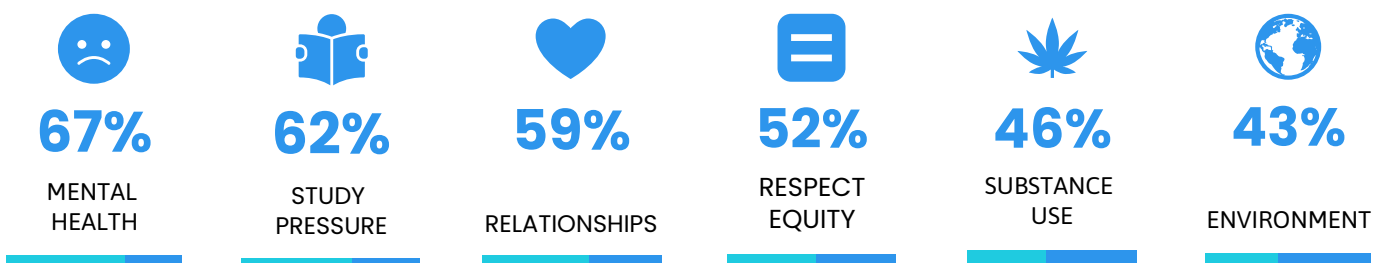


TOP 3 ISSUES AT PLANET X



*Family, friends and intimate relationships

TOP 6 ISSUES AFFECTING YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE LOCAL AREA



CONSULTATION - Young People

DO YOU FEEL VALUED IN YOUR COMMUNITY?



Yes  59.52%

No  40.48%

Valued



Connected - things are going well with:

- Friends
- Family
- School
- Work

Not Valued



Disengaged - things not going well with:

- Friends
- Family
- School
- Work

Being:

- Liked
- Accepted

Being:

- Not listened to
- Not taken seriously
- Ignored
- Judged

Knowing that there is:

- Hope
- Opportunity

Feeling that there is:

- No hope
- No opportunity

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF IN NORTH SYDNEY?



Study spaces



Events



Skate parks



Sporting facilities



Combined youth spaces with drop-in/chill-out areas, sports, skating, art, music which are central and easily accessible




Mental health facilities/programs

CONSULTATION - Young People

A lot of the infrastructure is near to a train station which is good.

Amenities are well located such as Luna Park and North Sydney Oval.

Council Skate Park. 
More skate parks needed.



Increase pedestrian crossings.



What I like about Planet X is that no one cares who you are. Everyone is accepted.

The Youth Worker at Planet X saved my life.

More help for homeless kids. We are doing it tough.



We don't have enough to eat at home.

Free or cheap food.

Sometimes the more young people are vocal the less they feel they aren't heard.

A lot of people forget that we are still experiencing the lockdown effects and the extra workload.

There is a "everything is normal" mentality.

Mental health services keep rejecting young people as they're seen as too complex.

We are extremely privileged.

I like being a young person in North Sydney.

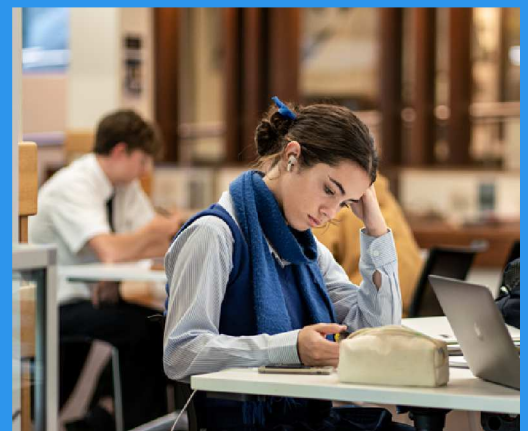
We are so privileged to live and spend time here.

Thank you for the facilities doing a good job, I have lived in plenty of areas, North Sydney is by far the best and most accessible to youth programs



More areas for water stations.

It would be great to have more rubbish and recycling bins – there is an increase in littering in crowded areas.



CONSULTATION - Young People

The amount of pressure put on students these days is pretty crazy – a lot of young people feel alone in that feeling.

It should be that it's not about your job status and the money that you earn that makes you worthwhile.



A parent education system about young people.



There are not enough adequate resources and funding to give the support we need.

Underlying foundation around mental illness – we are living in a society built and valued on efficiency.

Ironic paradox we are decreasing the quality of life – trying to change the mentality of young students – go into education to earn money – it's always about the finance and efficiency.

Make libraries open for longer on the weekend for students studying for HSC.

More study spaces



There is not enough support around neurodivergent students – this can be especially exhausting.

More support and validation that we are not the problem and giving solutions about how we can support ourselves including coping, managing stress and expectations that we are put under.

Young people being heard and (adults) actually doing something with it.

Important to consider the average young person who won't care about social justice or politics all the time.



The system is difficult – getting good clinicians is a gamble.

Mental health support should be free or cheap and accessible. Not adequate currently.

We want to participate with the rest of the world.



“ Thank you for the facilities. ”

- 15 year old boy

1. CONNECTION

OUTCOME 1

Young people from all backgrounds, cultures and abilities feel a sense of belonging.

Objectives

- * Increase the percentage of young people who feel a sense of belonging to North Sydney by 10% by 2027 from the 2024 baseline.
- * Increase the number of young people who participate in Council's events by 10% by 2027 from the 2024 baseline.
- * Increase awareness of Child Safety Standards across Council.

STRATEGIC APPROACH

- 1.1** Include two youth related articles every year in Council's community newsletter, North Sydney News.
- 1.2** Two Council Strategic Plans are reviewed each year to ensure youth needs are reflected.
- 1.3** Undertake an annual youth satisfaction survey during Youth Week.
- 1.4** Promote the biannual Liveability Census to increase youth participation by 5%.
- 1.5** Promote the Community Awards Next Generation Award to young people in the LGA via schools, youth networks, social media.
- 1.6** Implement the annual Victor Chang Science Students Awards to recognise young people's achievements in the Sciences.
- 1.7** Implement annually mental health programs such as Aunty Time, Lost Bird Found and Need a Lift? to provide opportunities for young people to participate creatively.
- 1.8** Develop a checklist for Council staff that can be used to increase attendance of young people at Council events.
- 1.9** Develop and promote events and programs in consultation with young people.
- 1.10** Involve young people in the planning, promotion, and implementation of Youth Week events.
- 1.11** Work with the Child Safe Committee to ensure all staff are trained in Child Safe practices and are aware of Council's legislative requirements of the Children's Guardian Act 2019.
- 1.12** The Youth Services Child Safe Management Plan to be updated by July 2023 to reflect the requirements of the Children's Guardian Act 2019 and reviewed annually.

2. WELLBEING

OUTCOME 2

Young people who are experiencing difficulties and challenges feel valued, engaged and supported.

Objectives

- * Continue to enhance the resilience and abilities of young people to deal with their challenges and personal circumstances.
- * Facilitate young people's access to services that support their physical, emotional, and mental well-being.
- * Determine young peoples' experiences on the services and assistance provided to them.

STRATEGIC APPROACH

2.1 Provision at Planet X Youth Centre of ongoing wellbeing and mental health support and activities.

2.2 The Youth Workers at Planet X to continue to build relationships with young people which foster trust, respect, and acceptance and provide mentoring, wellbeing support and appropriate referral pathways.

2.3 Planet X Youth Workers and young people to co-design activities that are meaningful to them such as art, craft, music, sport, as well as social and living skills programs to engage, support and improve their resilience and wellbeing.

2.4 Coordinate the Lower North Shore Family Support Network to offer support options such as seminars, workshops, referral pathways to build resilience in families experiencing difficulties.

2.5 Through the Lower North Shore Youth Interagency coordinate access to services and program provision that address identified youth issues.

2.6 Work with the Dept of Community and Justice, Northern Sydney Local Health, local youth accommodation services and the Police to provide support pathways and build resilience in young people to manage their challenges and difficulties.

2.7 Engage and consult annually with young people to inform strategies and service delivery.

3. OPPORTUNITY

OUTCOME 3

Young people are provided with the tools, resources and opportunities to support their diverse wellbeing, social, recreational, educational and employment needs.

Objectives

- * Increase young peoples' and families' awareness of the services and programs that are available to them by 10% by 2027 from the 2024 baseline.
- * Continue to provide educational and employment support services to young people.

STRATEGIC APPROACH

- 3.1** Update and print annually the Youth Card Guide to be distributed to schools, services, parents and young people.
- 3.2** In partnership with Lower North Shore Youth Interagency, map services and create an online, digital and print youth services directory for the community by 2025.
- 3.3** Council's website and Community Directory are updated in a timely manner and promoted widely to provide opportunities for physical and social activities and access of wellbeing services.
- 3.4** Obtain evaluation feedback following activities and events.
- 3.5** Provide HSC support programs for students and their families at Stanton Library.
- 3.6** Investigate options for a multi-purpose youth space which includes additional study spaces.
- 3.7** Planet X to continue to provide young people with educational and employment assistance when required for homework, enrolments, appropriate educational pathways, resumes, job applications, interview skills and family support.
- 3.8** Re-establish student's participation in industry experience programs at Planet X and explore additional opportunities within Council.
- 3.9** Coordinate a regional youth strategic planning day to enhance collaboration, build capacity for service delivery and produce a collaborative youth needs and issues paper.
- 3.10** Participate in the Lower North Shore Youth Educational and Employment Networks to identify educational and employment opportunities.