



# City of Mandurah Youth Strategy 2014 – 2018

## City of Mandurah

The [City of Mandurah Youth Strategy 2014–2018](#) provides a vision for Mandurah's Youth. The Strategy aims to establish a clear direction and commitment to address the needs and aspirations of young people aged 12 to 25 years within the community, to create an environment where young people can thrive.

### Deciding

The City of Mandurah recognises the need to address local youth issues. The City first addressed its 'needs and gaps' in 1995, which has led to the development of several important strategies:

- 1996 – City of Mandurah Youth Profile Report and first youth services officer employed
- 2000 – Youth Strategic Review report
- 2009 – Youth Development Business Plan
- 2014 – Youth Strategy 2014-2018.

The City of Mandurah chose to involve young people in the development of the Youth Strategy 2014-2018 to ensure it had an understanding of the current needs and aspirations of young people living in Mandurah, and so those needs could be adequately addressed.

### Preparing

One of the challenges experienced during the development of the survey was determining the specific questions required to provide meaningful information that would be useful in setting the direction for the Strategy, and that were also engaging for children and young people.

Accessibility was a key consideration throughout the planning phase. The intent was to develop a Strategy that was readable and accessible, and this had implications for the type of questions and overall length of the survey.

A draft survey of 18 questions was developed based on research and best practice examples identified by City of Mandurah staff. Members of the City of Mandurah

Junior Council were asked to provide feedback on the draft questions, and this was used to refine the survey.

The survey was named 'Have Your Say' and a strategy was developed to promote it broadly in the community and encourage children and young people to participate.

This strategy included:

- enabling the survey to be completed both in an online format and in hard copy
- providing and promoting an incentive to complete the survey (an iPad)
- establishing promotional displays at local shopping centres, tertiary education centres and two local skate parks
- working with local youth services, such as Calvary Youth Accommodation Services, Passages Youth Services and Peel Youth Services, to provide an opportunity for young people at risk to complete the survey individually or take part in focus groups
- youth officers attending locations where young people visit, such as bus and train stations, to conduct one-on-one surveys
- youth officers meeting with young people with literacy and numeracy difficulties to support the completion of the survey
- advertising and promotion through local newspapers, school newsletters, libraries and recreation centres.

## Doing it

In the seven-week survey period, 469 young people aged 12 to 25 years completed the survey, 270 of which were females and 199 were males.

All survey results were analysed by an independent consultant who reported on the findings.

Some of the key findings included:

- To create a better Mandurah, young people would like to see increased safety, an improved reputation and increased opportunities.
- The key concerns for young people included feeling safe in the community, money/finances, bullying and emotional wellbeing.
- The key issues for young people were education, safety, employment and training.



As a result of consultations with young people, seven key focus areas were identified:

1. Education, training and employment opportunities
2. Safety
3. Public transport and infrastructure
4. Facilities and events for young people
5. Health and wellbeing
6. Sense of community and identity
7. Community participation

## Following up

Once the focus areas for children and young people were identified, the City worked on developing a range of practical and tangible initiatives that aligned to the key focus areas and framework of the City's Strategic Community Plan. The Strategy also sets out responsibility for each action item and relevant timeframes.

Some of these initiatives include:

- 2014-2015: working in partnership with government, non-government and private sector organisations to deliver events that target a broad cross section of Mandurah's youth, and evaluate such events annually through consultation with young people and the community to ascertain future direction.
- 2014-2018: promoting programs that recognise youth achievements and pursuing other youth leadership opportunities to engage youth.
- 2015-2017: using a range of marketing and media approaches, including social media, to promote key youth health services and options in Mandurah, and increase access and attendance.
- 2016-2018: undertaking a Youth Programs Feasibility Study to inform the future development of activities that meet the needs of 11 to 25 year-olds.



The Strategy contains photos of local young people participating in youth events, activities and programs showcasing the diversity of young people. It also includes an in-depth snapshot of demographics, issues, trends and current statistical information collected through the survey, which is vitally important as it highlights the social issues affecting young people in Mandurah.

The Youth Strategy was presented to Council on 14 October 2014 and endorsed "as a guiding document in the development of addressing youth needs and gaps for youth aged 11 to 25 years." An additional \$20,000 was added to the existing Youth Development Budget to address the development of a concept plan for refurbishments to the Billy Dower Youth Centre, and funding towards youth leadership donations. A number of strategies from the document have been achieved across various council departments working together.

A launch of the Strategy was held during National Youth Week 2015 at the Mandurah Masterpieces Youth Art Competition and Exhibition at the Contemporary Arts Spaces Mandurah with more than 100 people in attendance. Deputy Mayor Darren Lee launched the event and Director People and Communities Lesley Wilkinson spoke on the Council's commitment to the strategy, with Councillor Jane Field also in attendance. The audience included parents, young people, representatives from local youth agencies, schools and a representative from Murdoch University and Challenger TAFE.

Further promotion of the final Youth Strategy document was promoted in local community papers, Council Administration and Libraries, with copies being sent to key youth agencies involved, circulation at the Peel Regional Youth Services Network and key stakeholders within local schools.

For more information about this participation example, contact Sharron Jones, Coordinator Youth Development, at the City of Mandurah on telephone (08) 9550 3670.

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