

# RESEARCH SUMMARY

## Young people's experiences in Hobsons Bay



**Our health is determined by much more than genes and lifestyle decisions. It is determined by the circumstances in which we are born, grow, live, work and age. The health of young people (aged 12 to 25 years) is shaped by a complex interplay of genetic, social, environmental, economic and cultural factors. The impact of these factors in adolescence can affect an individual's health and wellbeing in adult life.**

Through its various functions, local government plays a major role in protecting, improving and promoting the health of its residents. As the closest level of government to the community, councils work to understand the populations they serve and ensure that all residents are provided with an environment which allows everyone to equally achieve the best health and wellbeing possible.

This research summary is aimed at providing information about the social and environmental conditions that affect the health and wellbeing of Hobsons Bay residents.

### How do our experiences in adolescence affect our adult health and wellbeing?

There is growing evidence that effective nurturing throughout childhood, and the psychosocial transitions to young adulthood, have significant effects on health and wellbeing throughout the life course (Queensland Health, 2001).

While all parents want the best for their children, not all parents have the same resources to help their children grow up healthy. Parents' education and income levels can create, or limit, their opportunities to provide their children with the support and

guidance they need during adolescence (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2008).

For some young people, the transition into adulthood may be complicated by a combination of their life circumstances and risk-taking behaviour. Furthermore, research indicates that adolescence is the peak period for the onset of mental health disorders (Kessler, R, C et al, 2008).

Young people who have support are at less risk of becoming disengaged from education, employment, and experiencing homelessness. In addition they are less likely to engage in risk taking behaviours such as tobacco, alcohol,

## RESEARCH SUMMARY

### Young people's experiences in Hobsons Bay



and drug misuse (Queensland Health, 2001). Those who have poor experiences in adolescence are also at greater risk of reduced emotional and physical health into adult life.

### What do we know about young people in Hobsons Bay?

#### Age composition

Table 1 shows that people aged 12 to 25 years comprise 15.3 per cent of the Hobsons Bay population<sup>1</sup>. This is below the average for Greater Melbourne (18.3 per cent). The number of 12 to 25 year olds declined by 3.7 per cent (518 persons) between 2011 and 2016.

**Table 1: Percentage of young people aged 12 to 25 years in Hobsons Bay - 2016**

Age	Number	Proportion (per cent)
12-18	6,383	7.2
19-25	7,232	8.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,562</b>	<b>15.3</b>

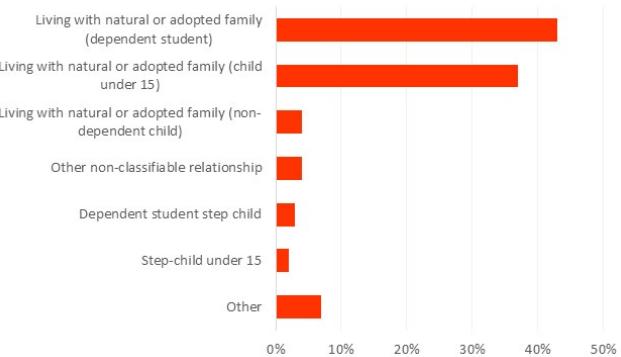
Almost one quarter (23 per cent) of Hobsons Bay's young people live in Altona Meadows. Seventeen per cent live in Williamstown, and 13 per cent live in both Newport and Altona North.

Over the next decade, Altona Meadows will maintain the highest share of the municipality's young people. However, the number living there is starting to fall as families mature. A similar trend is occurring in Seabrook. By 2028,

the largest increases in young people are expected in Altona North and Spotswood-South Kingsville, with an additional 566 and 421 young people respectively. The number of young people in Spotswood-South Kingsville is set to almost double, with an increase of 71 per cent (forecast.id, 2017).

#### Living arrangements

Figure 1 shows that, in Hobsons Bay, the vast majority (80 per cent) of 12 to 18 year olds live with their 'natural or adopted' families as either non-dependent persons, dependent students or children under 15 years of age.



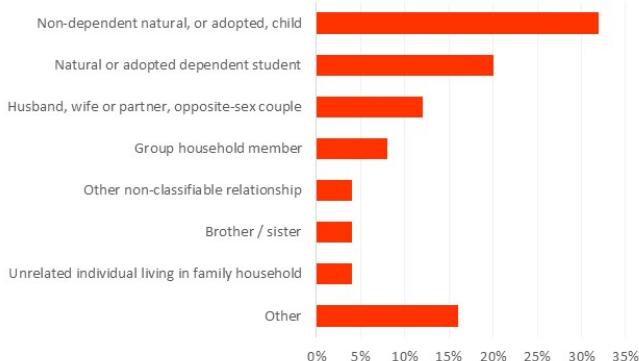
**Figure 1: Living arrangements for 12 to 18 year olds in private dwellings - 2016**

As young people transition into adulthood, their living arrangements also change. Figure 2 shows that the most common living arrangement for 19 to 25 year olds in Hobsons Bay is living with 'natural or adopted' family (as dependent students or non-dependent person), followed by living with married or de facto partner.

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all statistics in this section are sourced from ABS, Census of Population and Housing (2016),

## RESEARCH SUMMARY

### Young people's experiences in Hobsons Bay



**Figure 2: Living arrangements for 19 to 25 year olds in private dwellings - 2016**

Approximately eight per cent of young people aged 19 to 25 in Hobsons Bay live in a group household, while a further 16 per cent live in 'other' type of household.

Young people, particularly those who are preparing to leave home, are particularly vulnerable in the current housing market in Hobsons Bay, with the number of affordable rental properties reducing substantially in recent times.

In addition to dealing with their transition to adulthood, the following groups are likely to be dealing with an additional range of complex needs and life circumstances:

- a total of 3,707 young people aged between 12 to 24 years migrated to Hobsons Bay between 2009 and 2016. Of these, 46 came via humanitarian migration as refugees, 934 arrived via family migration and a further 2,727 young people came via skilled migration (Department of Home Affairs, 2018)
- there are 112 young people in Hobsons Bay who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, an increase of 14 since 2011

- there are an estimated 878 young people aged between 15 to 24 years with a disability living in Hobsons Bay (ABS, 2015, derived). Furthermore, 2016 Census data shows 320 young people have a need of assistance with a core activity, e.g. communication, self-care and mobility
- the number of young women aged 16 to 24 becoming mothers has increased slightly over the last few years. In 2016, there were a total of 292 young mothers aged 16 to 24 years in Hobsons Bay, compared to 263 in 2011

## Education

Most 12 to 18 year olds in Hobsons Bay are participating in education. The 2016 Census data shows that 39 per cent of this age group are attending a government secondary school and a further 36 per cent are attending a catholic or independent school. The remainder are at primary school (7 per cent) or a university, other tertiary institution or TAFE (6 per cent).

Over half of 19 to 25 year olds overall are not engaged in education. This is not surprising as this age group is beyond the age of compulsory education and many are in employment. Thirty-nine per cent of 19 to 25 year olds are attending a university, other tertiary institution or TAFE.

At 2017, Hobsons Bay had six secondary schools (four government and two private), with 424 students undertaking Year 12 at government schools in Hobsons Bay.

Young people in Hobsons Bay have a higher rate of high school completion than Victoria, however a higher proportion of school leavers are still unemployed six months after leaving

## RESEARCH SUMMARY

### Young people's experiences in Hobsons Bay

school (22 per cent) when compared to Victoria (17 per cent) (Department of Education and Training, 2014).

Most Year 12 students in Hobsons Bay go onto further study. In 2018, two-thirds were studying towards a bachelor degree or certificate/diploma. Around a quarter were employed or looking for work. Less than 2 per cent were not engaged in education, employment or training. These proportions have remained relatively steady since 2013.

**Table 2: Destination of Year 12 students who exited school in 2017 in Hobsons Bay (Department of Education, 2018)**

Post-school destination	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
	Proportion (per cent)				
Bachelor degree	54.2	54.3	50.2	54.8	54.2
Certificates/diplomas	17.1	16.2	20.1	20.9	13.6
Apprenticeship/traineeship	5.2	6.4	6.1	5.1	6.5
Employed	17.8	17.1	15.6	14.1	19.1
Looking for work	4.9	4.9	7.6	4.7	5.0
Not in the labour force, employment or training	np	1.1	np	np	1.6

Since 2011, there has been a decline in the number of young people aged 15 to 25 who are employed full time, however part of this is due to an overall decline in population numbers. There has been a 14 per cent rise in part time employment, and an increase of 165 unemployed young people looking for part time work which mirrors national trends.

Of critical concern, is the fact that almost ten per cent (1,052) of young people aged 15 to 25 are not engaged in employment, education or training. Young disengaged persons are at risk of ongoing social and economic vulnerability.

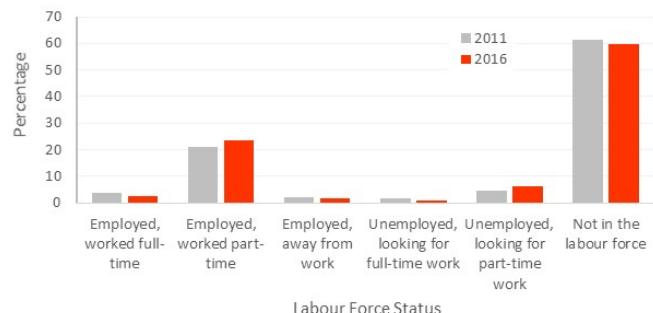
Since 2011, there has been a slight (3 per cent) improvement in engagement rates among 12 to 25 year olds, with 71 per cent of all young people in this age group enrolled in formal education. TAFE enrolments declined by 31 per cent and university enrolments grew by 28 per cent.

### Employment

Retail trade, Accommodation and Food Services are the main employment industries for 15 to 25 year olds in Hobsons Bay, accounting for 40 per cent of employment.

Figure 3 shows that the majority of 15 to 18 year olds in Hobsons Bay are not in the labour force, which is not unexpected as many in this age group are still at secondary school. Those that are employed tend to work part-time.

Failure to complete Year 12 is likely to result in fewer employment opportunities and longer periods of unemployment.



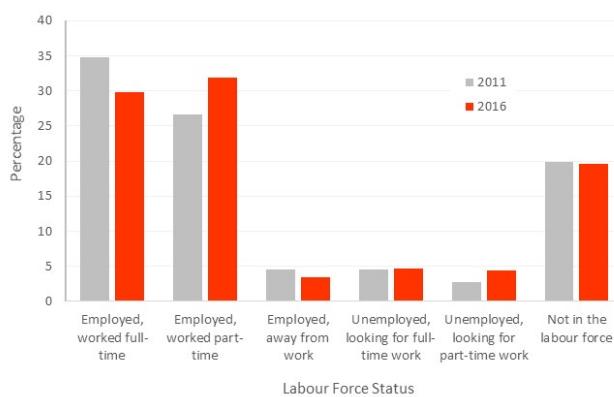
**Figure 3: Hobsons Bay labour force status for people aged 15 to 18 years**

## RESEARCH SUMMARY

### Young people's experiences in Hobsons Bay



The labour force status of 19 to 25 year olds is very different and there were some significant changes between 2011 and 2016. Part-time work (less than 35 hours per week) is now the most common labour force status (32 per cent), marginally ahead of full time work (30 per cent). The increase in part-time work may be due to more young people balancing work and further study, and/or evidence of increased casualisation in the workforce.



**Figure 4: Hobsons Bay labour force status for people aged 19 to 25 years**

Part time work may be appropriate for some young people. However, for those who are making the transition to independent living, the growth in casual employment and part-time jobs raises concern. This is particularly the case in the retail and hospitality sectors, where many young people work. Finding secure work with an income that will allow them to live independently is critical to the successful transition into adulthood.

Almost half of people aged 19 to 25 (46 per cent) have a weekly gross income of \$399 or less, while a further one third receive between \$400 and \$999. This is not surprising given that

part-time work is becoming increasingly common, resulting in a lower income than a similar full time role.

At June 2018, 24 per cent of people aged 20 to 24 received the Youth Allowance. This was slightly higher than the average for metropolitan Melbourne (18 per cent) (Statistical Data for Victorian Communities, 2018).

### Health

The rate of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in young people has risen over the last few years. Young people aged between 12 and 17 years in Hobsons Bay experience STIs at a rate of 331.1 per 100,000 population (2012) which is slightly lower than Victoria (385.3 per 100,000). This has increased from a rate of 190.5 per 100,000 in 2007 in line with state averages (Department of Education and Training, 2014).

On par with Victoria, 15 per cent of young people in the Western Region of Melbourne experience high levels of psychological distress (Department of Education and Training, 2014). However, with a lack of locally based services in Hobsons Bay, accessing treatment is difficult, especially for young people. Waiting lists for Council's Youth Counselling service are also increasing (Hobsons Bay City Council, 2018).

The rate of psychiatric hospitalisations for young people in Hobsons Bay (aged from 10 to 17 years) increased from 7.87 to 9.06 per 1000 population from 2010-11 to 2015-16. This is consistently higher than the rates for the Western Metropolitan Region (5.92 and 6.46) and Victoria (6.82 and 7.85) respectively.

## RESEARCH SUMMARY

### Young people's experiences in Hobsons Bay



Forty-two per cent of young people in the Western Metropolitan Region reported they were recently bullied, and 14.5 per cent said they were bullied on most days. Both these indicators are lower than the Melbourne Metropolitan averages of 45 per cent and 15 per cent respectively (Department of Education and Training, 2014). There is currently no local data for Hobsons Bay.

Young people continue to be overrepresented in road trauma statistics. In 2016, 19 per cent of drivers in Victoria who lost their lives were aged between 18 and 25 years. This age group represents around 10 per cent of Victorian licence holders (TAC, 2018).

Between January 2012 to December 2016, there were 921 casualty accidents in Hobsons Bay (VicRoads, 2018). Young drivers under 25 years of age were involved in 24 per cent (219) of these accidents. In 2016, young people aged between 18 and 25 only accounted for 10 per cent of the Hobsons Bay population (ABS, 2016), indicating they are over represented in road trauma statistics.

### What government policies relate to young people?

#### International

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990) sets out the basic rights of children and the obligations of governments to fulfil those rights. It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989 and ratified by Australia in 1990. The Convention defines a child as 'every human being below the age of eighteen years'.

#### Commonwealth

The Australian Government has a varied role in the lives of young people including university education, employment and income support, but also in less obvious areas like communication and transport.

The Australian Government introduced a **Youth Employment Package** over the 2016-17 year. The program involves three stages (pre-employment training, work experience and wage subsidies) that aim to maximise the chances of people under 25 years of age to gain and maintain employment. One of the main features of the package includes **Youth Jobs PaTH** which supports young people to gain work experience. It also supports employers to host internships and provide them with incentives when they employ a young person.

The **Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan** seeks to establish a national approach for collaborative government work from 2017 until 2022 across eight targeted priority areas, including integrated service delivery, effective suicide prevention, improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and reducing stigma and discrimination.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse investigated how institutions like schools, churches, sports clubs and government organisations have responded to allegations and instances of child sexual abuse. It has made recommendations on how to improve laws, policies and practices. The Royal Commission was established in 2013 and provided its final report to the Australian Government in 2017.

## RESEARCH SUMMARY

### Young people's experiences in Hobsons Bay



#### State

The Victorian Government is responsible for making laws and determining policy in regard to health and education, with the exclusion of universities.

The Victorian Government holds the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* which aims to establish principles for the wellbeing of children under the age of 18 to ensure services for children and families are monitored and the quality is maintained.

The Office for Youth (Department of Health and Human Services) is responsible for advice, research and strategic planning relating to government policies, programs and service delivery for young Victorians and to provide opportunities for their opinions to be considered.

In 2016, the Victorian Government developed a **Youth Policy**, aimed at strengthening its engagement with young people and increasing youth participation in youth focused policy, program and service design, particularly those who are disadvantaged or disengaged.

In April 2016, the Victorian Government released the Government Schools Funding Review ('the Bracks Review'). The review looked at how to break the cycle between a child's socio-economic background and their outcomes at school. The key recommendations are based around six themes: creating a shared goal; fairer funding architecture; improved strategic governance; more empowered regions, schools and principals; information quality and transparency; and better meeting student needs. The review

recommended the Commonwealth Government fully fund the Gonksi Agreement.

In 2015, the state government released **Victoria's 10 Year Mental Health Plan**, which built on the previous Victorian Government's long-term mental health strategy, *Because Mental Health Matters: Victorian Mental Health Reform Strategy 2009-19*. This plan aims to deliver a long term vision to improve mental health services and the wellbeing of Victorians (including young people) with a mental illness.

#### Regional

WynBay Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN) is funded by the Victorian Department of Education and Training. It forms strategic partnerships to improve the education, training and employment outcomes for young people across Hobsons Bay and Wyndham.

#### What is Council's role in relation to young people?

The role of local government is to provide services and infrastructure for the local community and plan for future needs.

Council has a long tradition in providing direct services to young people including a broad range of recreational activities, events, counselling and other support services.

Through its Youth Services team, UP, Council provides counselling for young people. Council funds one full time and one part time (0.6FTE) youth specific counsellor, the only free counselling service operating in the municipality. In 2017-18, Council received 341 requests for counselling. This is consistent with previous years and is based on the capacity of

## RESEARCH SUMMARY

### Young people's experiences in Hobsons Bay



the counselling staff, however the waiting list is increasing. (Hobsons Bay City Council, 2018).

Increasingly, more young people are contacting Council's Youth Counselling Service with significant mental health issues which require specialised and longer term support, including Depression, Anxiety, Eating Disorders and Psychosis, as well as family, social and relationship issues (Hobsons Bay City Council, 2018).

Council's Youth Services, UP, has a formal partnership with Oygen Youth Health (OYH) to provide support via professional development, mental health promotion initiatives and secondary consultation. Their service is complemented by Headspace facilities in Werribee and Sunshine which provide services for young people in Hobsons Bay with mild to moderate mental health issues. The Royal Children's Hospital also provides mental health services for children and young people from birth to 14 years of age.

Despite its important service delivery role, Council is limited in its capacity to address all the factors affecting young people. However, it is ideally placed to advocate for the needs of young people, particularly improvements to service provision in areas of need such as the provision of health services (including mental health services), housing and employment.

Unresolved mental health problems can lead to poorer quality of life, physical ill health, lowered academic attainment, risky behaviours, substance use, and suicide (Raphael, 2000). The lack of locally-based services for young people in Hobsons Bay is likely to exacerbate these health issues and has resulted in

increased pressure being put on the Council's youth counselling service.

**Updated 2018**

### References

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2015) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, Catalogue No. 4430, ABS, Canberra

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census of Population and Housing, compiled and presented in profile.id <https://profile.id.com.au/hobsons-bay> Accessed November 2018

Department of Education and Training (2014). Victorian Child and Adolescent Monitoring System (VCAMS) Indicators, Victorian Government, Melbourne.

Department of Education and Training (2018) On Track 2018 Survey Results (Hobsons Bay), Victorian Government, Melbourne, located at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/research/OnTrack%20LGA%20reports/otlgahobsonsbay.pdf> Accessed November 2018

Department of Home Affairs (2018) Settlement Reports, 09 to 16 inclusive, located at <https://www.data.gov.au/dataset/settlement-reports>. Accessed June 2018

Hobsons Bay City Council (2018), Internal reporting unpublished data

.id – the population experts (2017) Hobsons Bay City Population Forecasts <https://forecast.id.com.au/hobsonsbay> Accessed November 2018

Kessler, R, C et al, 2008, 'Age of onset of mental disorders: A review of recent literature', Author Manuscript, National Institutes of Health Public Access, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1925038/pdf/nihms25081.pdf>

Queensland Health (2001) Social Determinants of Health: The Role of Public Health Services. Brisbane: Queensland Health

Raphael, B (2000) Promoting the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Children and Young People. Discussion Paper: Key Principles and Directions, National Mental Health Working Group, Department of Health and Aged Care

## RESEARCH SUMMARY

### Young people's experiences in Hobsons Bay

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2008) Early Childhood Experiences: Laying the Foundation for Health across a Lifetime

Wyndham and Hobsons Bay Local Learning and Employment Network (2012) Environmental Scan 2012

Statistical Data for Victorian Communities  
(2018) [www.socialstatistics.com.au](http://www.socialstatistics.com.au) accessed June 2018

Transport Accident Commission  
(2018) <http://www.tac.vic.gov.au/road-safety/learning-to-drive/young-driver-statistics>, Accessed 25 June, 2018

VicRoads (2018) CrashStats Database, Located at <https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/safety-and-road-rules/safety-statistics/crash-statistics>, Accessed 25 June, 2018

Wynbay Local Learning and Employment Network (2014)  
Environmental Scan 2014

*Every care has been taken to ensure the information in this document is correct. However Hobsons Bay City Council does not accept any liability to any person or organisation for the information (or the use of the information) in this document. Please note that there is the potential for minor revisions of data in this report. Please check the online version at <www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au> for any amendments.*

For further information contact:  
Hobsons Bay City Council,  
PO Box 21, Altona 3018.  
Telephone (03) 9932 1000, TTY (03) 9398 8504  
Email [customerservice@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au](mailto:customerservice@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au),  
Website: [www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au](http://www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au)

