

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT



WHAT WE HEARD - CAMPAIGN SUMMARY



MORE LOCAL, TIMELY AND
AFFORDABLE YOUTH MENTAL
HEALTH SERVICES IN HOBSONS BAY



BACKGROUND OF CAMPAIGN

Young people in Hobsons Bay and the inner-west of Melbourne are experiencing an ever increasing need for youth mental health support services.

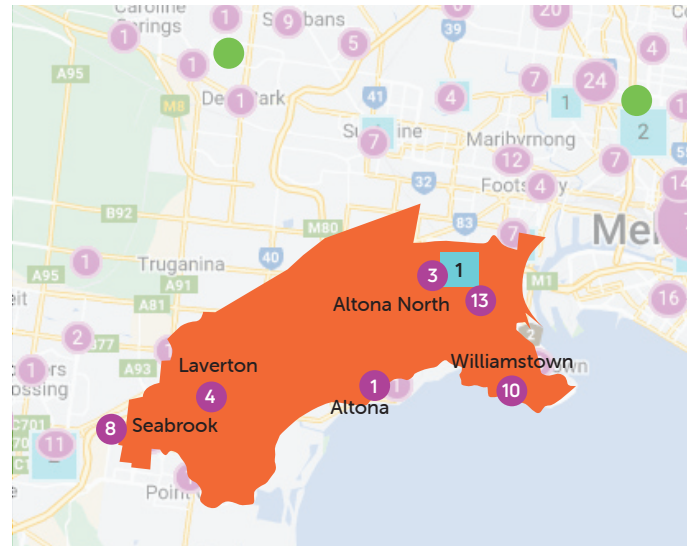
- In 2021, **10% of 15-24 year olds** in Hobsons Bay reported having a long-term mental health condition.¹
- **Young women** in Hobsons Bay aged 15-24 years old were most likely to be hospitalised for psychological distress.²

WE ARE SEEKING LOCAL, TIMELY AND AFFORDABLE YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, INCLUDING:

- A **psychologist-run mental health support service** for high-risk young people such as a headspace service; and
- **Additional funding** for more youth mental health services to reach more young people in Hobsons Bay.

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH DESERT – HOBSONSBAY

In Hobsons Bay there is a 'mental health services desert' with little to no free or low-cost mental health services for young people compared to other Melbourne metropolitan areas. The nearest headspace service is located in Werribee and Sunshine - up to an hour away by public transport with very long wait lists.



- **headspace locations**
- **Psychology services**
- **Child and adolescent mental health service (private - fee paying)**
- **Hobsons Bay area**



COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

From 10 July to 20 August 2023, we asked young people and the community about their experience in accessing youth mental health services in Hobsons Bay and surrounding suburbs, so we could demonstrate the need for more local, timely and affordable services in our community to the state and federal governments.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to provide feedback.

1. ABS 2021 Census
2. Mental Health Profile 2018

WHAT YOU SAID

Community feedback provided important local insights about how young people and the community access youth mental health support services and any barriers that they have encountered.

The following statistics, quotes and analysis is from the survey responses we received which highlight the common themes in the feedback received.

SENTIMENT FROM FEEDBACK

- 80% of respondents said that mental health support for young people is critically important.
- Respondents said there needs to be more local support for young people, many stated they had to travel to the eastern suburbs to get timely access to services.
- Respondents believe there needs to be more free or low-cost mental health services in the west, and wait times are too long.
- Respondents said more specific speciality services are needed, for example, youth, trauma, eating disorders and drug or alcohol. Also that there are not enough practitioners to meet the demand.

KEY THEMES

- Affordability
- Long wait times
- Local support
- More specific speciality service
- More practitioners

CAMPAIGN STATISTICS

3,402

people reached via social media

844

visits to the campaign website

150

pieces of feedback received (in 3 weeks)

70%

of respondents were young people in Hobsons Bay (aged between 12-25 years) or a supporter (teacher/ carer/ parent/ family member/ friend/worker)



Fig 1. Postcard questionnaire



Fig 2. Social media campaign

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



"Hobsons bay is a desert for services for young people. Having support that is local, affordable and youth specific is so important".

"Access Access Access, locally based. All levels, from early intervention/prevention to critical care that is timely".

"Affordable and accessible mental health services for young people in their own community. Wellbeing hubs focussing on the needs of young people".

"Mental health services are not accessible, appointment times are not available".

"...felt very lost initially on where to start really doubting my experience with my child compared to what a new teacher was saying."

"There should be more facilities for people that can not afford it."

"I believe if my family, teachers and wider community had access to resources targeting youth mental health, and I was able to access more mental health services easily, I may have had a different teenage and schooling life."

"We have had to travel over the other side of town for services."

"My partner accessed mental health support as an adult. It could have been cared for much earlier with access to mental health support for young people."

"Seeking support is a minefield, for adults and youth alike. It is soul destroying when you can't get the help you need and you have limited capacity to keep going and persist when seeking support."

"As a teacher and a parent in the area, I know how important access to mental health services is...We were lucky enough to access (appointments) these after an 18 month wait."

"Being that my role is to provide generalist counselling, these young people who are at risk are not immediately gaining the support that they are needing."

"Currently, there is no local headspace within Hobsons Bay, the waitlist of headspace in our neighbouring councils is up to 12 months, and the gap fee for young people to work with a local psychologist is averaged at about \$100 per session, which most young people cannot afford." Youth Counsellor

** Feedback has been edited for brevity and clarity.*

NEXT STEPS

Community feedback will be used to demonstrate to the state and federal governments of the need for more local, timely and affordable youth mental health support services in Hobsons Bay. We will continue to provide the community with updates and information as our advocacy progresses.



SCAN QR
CODE HERE

For further information - Scan the QR code or visit <https://www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/youth-mental-health>