



Inclusion, Opportunity and Choice

# Every Young Person is a Citizen

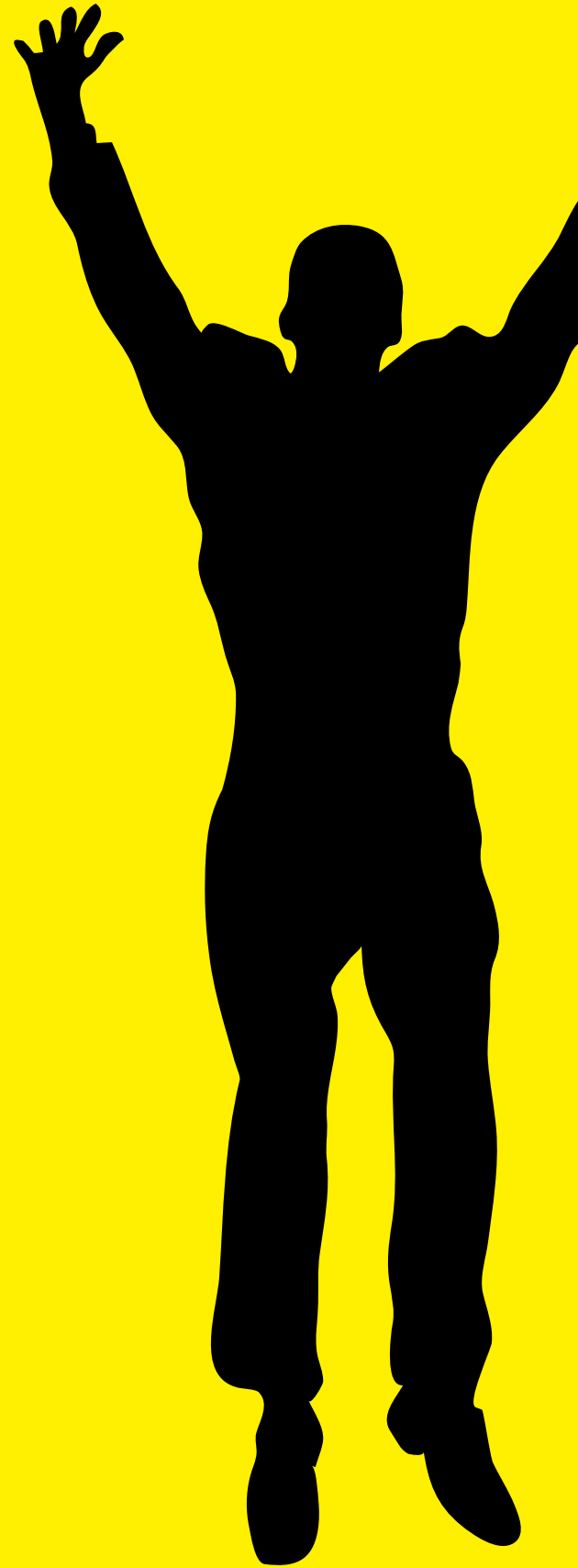
**MOONEE VALLEY CITY COUNCIL  
YOUTH ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY (YES) 2009–2013**

Youth Services

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# Mayor's message



On behalf of Moonee Valley City Council, it gives me pleasure to launch the Moonee Valley Youth Engagement Strategy 2009-2013.

The development of, and support for, young people in Moonee Valley is a priority for Council. Moonee Valley City Council is continuously working on innovative ways of helping young people build their own lives, and contribute to the lives of others.

This Youth Engagement Strategy 2009-2013 builds upon the many programs and activities already developed by Council, targeting local young people. The aim of this Strategy is to ensure local young people are included in decision making and community life, and are provided with opportunities and choice. The Strategy has a focus on partnership and collaboration between Council, young people and the community to support young people's participation.

I am proud to say that this strategy is based on extensive research and important input from many young people, who live, work, study or visit the City of Moonee Valley. We have used what they have told us to develop our Vision for the future. Over the next four years all of Council's work with young people will be shaped by the idea of 'Inclusion, Opportunity and Choice – Every young person is a citizen'. We are committed to working with young people and the community to make this vision a reality.

Every young person has the right to actively participate in all aspects in our community. Participation and inclusion of young people will help achieve a cohesive and healthy community for all Moonee Valley's citizens.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "S. Cornish". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cr Shirley Cornish  
Mayor  
Moonee Valley City Council

# Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline a new Youth Engagement Strategy (YES) for the years 2009-2013. The Strategy consolidates and builds upon Council's many excellent current initiatives and activities involving young people who live, work, study or visit the City of Moonee Valley. Central to YES is the simple but important message of **Inclusion, Opportunity and Choice**. The Strategy has a strong focus on partnership and collaboration between Council, young people and community based organisations to ensure that all young people are included in every aspect of our community.

For purposes of the Youth Engagement Strategy, young people are defined as people 12 to 25 years of age.

This document outlines the Vision which will shape our work and summarises the actions that will be implemented over the next four years to achieve our Vision and our goals.

Many people and organisations have been involved in the creation of this Strategy. A list of contributors is provided in the Acknowledgements section at the end of the document. It is important to recognise the participation of the young people, service providers and professionals working with young people who were consulted as part of developing this Strategy. A Consultation Report providing a more thorough analysis of the consultation results has been released as part of this Strategy and is available from Council.

# Section 1: Policy and Demographic Context



## Federal Government Policy Context

We have drawn on the Federal Government's recently adopted *Social Inclusion Principles for Australia* to guide this Strategy. The Federal Government's three adopted principles to drive their social inclusion agenda are:

- Reducing disadvantage – Making sure people in need benefit from access to good health, education and other services;
- Increasing social, civil and economic participation – Helping everyone get the skills and support they need to connect with community, even during hard times;
- A greater voice, combined with greater responsibility – Governments and other organisations giving people a say in which services they need and how they work, and people taking responsibility to make the best of the opportunities available.

## State Government Policy Context

The *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* is a formal recognition of human rights protecting people from injustice and allowing everyone to participate in, and contribute

to, society. It has been adopted as the set of guiding principles for decision making, planning and communication by all government entities in Victoria, including local government. The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities protects those rights referred to as civil and political rights. These can be grouped under the four key principles of Freedom, Respect, Equality and Dignity.

In 2009 the State Government released *A Fairer Victoria 2009 – Standing Together through Tough Times* which identifies four priority actions affecting young people:

- Getting the best start;
- Improving education and helping people into work;
- Improving health and wellbeing – including a focus on prevention and early intervention, and the social, environmental and economic factors that impact on people's health; and
- Developing liveable communities.

This Strategy also acknowledges the State Government's Action Agenda for Young People, *Future Directions*, released in 2006. *Future Directions* defines the Victorian Government's goals as increasing 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 and active lifestyles in the cultural contexts of their choice; and
- Live in a secure environment and choose safe behaviours.

Also of relevance to Council's planning processes was the State Government's *Vulnerable Youth Framework discussion* paper which advocates the development of policies to ensure that young people who require intensive support are able to access and navigate local service systems. The paper places emphasis on five focus areas and actions for change:

- Prevention and early identification of vulnerability;
- Engagement in education, training, and employment;
- Local planning for youth services;
- Tailored responses to particular groups; and
- Effective services, capable people.

# Section 1: Policy and Demographic Context

## Moonee Valley City Council Policy Context

Moonee Valley City Council was responsive to these Federal and State aspirations when it launched its vision entitled *MV2020*:

*"In 2020, Moonee Valley will be an engaged and connected City where individuals and communities work together to support and improve the well-being and sustainability of its people, places and environments."*

MV2020 highlights five aims:

- Creating and sustaining healthy, safe and active communities;
- Accessing quality infrastructure and services;
- Caring for our environments;
- Fostering local character; and
- Working together for prosperity.

Council implements its vision through four-year Council Plans. The 2009-2013 Council Plan sets out six Key Strategic Objectives:

- A creative City with connected communities – A City that values the diversity and social inclusion of its community by facilitating the wellbeing of its citizens through providing access to a range of quality services and facilities and encouraging participation in community life;
- A dynamic, responsive organisation – A City providing strong leadership, supported by good governance and responsive to the needs of an engaged community;

- A healthy environment and a sustainable City – A City providing the community with a high quality natural and built environment while ensuring and maximising community participation in, and awareness of, environmental initiatives and activities;
- A City providing smart and accessible transport that connects people – A City that provides an integrated approach to transport planning;
- A City for investment and growth – A City with a strong business sector to assist in creating local employment and future prosperity; and
- A well-planned and managed City – A City that provides the infrastructure, facilities and design that meets the needs of the community.

Other key Strategies that have influenced YES include the Community Wellbeing Strategy and the Diversity, Access and Social Inclusion Strategy. These two strategies identify a number of key actions for the health and wellbeing and the inclusion of all young people. YES has incorporated relevant strategies and actions from these two strategies where appropriate.



### **The Community Wellbeing Strategy 2008–2013** identifies

the following health and wellbeing priorities for Council:

- Diversity and social inclusion;
- Mental health and well being;
- Community Safety;
- Transport and Accessibility;
- Housing;
- Physical Health; and
- Problem gambling.

### **Diversity, Access and Social Inclusion Strategy (DASIS) 2009–2013** is based on a human rights framework and is guided by the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities. DASIS identifies the following priority areas for Council to ensure the inclusion of all Moonee Valley's citizens:

to ensure the inclusion of all Moonee Valley's citizens:

- Leadership and advocacy
- Organisational culture
- Community engagement and partnerships
- Access and inclusion
- Celebrations

Other Moonee Valley City Council strategies and plans also intersect with this Strategy including:

- Cultural Plan (2009-2014)
- Recreation Plan (2007)
- BMX and Stake Park Strategy (2009)
- Economic Development Strategy (2008)
- Library Strategy (2008-2010)
- Open Space Strategy (2009)
- Environmental Sustainability Strategy (2007-2012)
- Integrated Transport Strategy (2008)
- Community Engagement Framework
- Draft Housing Strategy (2009)
- Draft Community Facilities Plan (2009)
- Activity Centre Structure Plans
- Draft Road Safety Plan (2009-2014)
- Early Years Plan (currently being developed)



# Section 1: Policy and Demographic Context

YES aims to be responsive to priorities of all levels of Government. The table summarises the key goals which have shaped the development of our Vision and key strategic objectives.

Federal Government	State Government	Moonee Valley City Council
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing disadvantage</li> <li>• Increasing participation</li> <li>• A greater voice combined with greater responsibility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution</li> <li>• Transition</li> <li>• Access to services</li> <li>• Choosing healthy behaviours</li> <li>• Diversity</li> <li>• Safe environments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A creative City with connected communities</li> <li>• A healthy environment and a sustainable City</li> <li>• A City providing smart and accessible transport that connects people</li> <li>• A City for investment and growth</li> <li>• A well-planned and managed City</li> <li>• A dynamic, responsive organisation</li> </ul>

# A Snapshot of Young People in Moonee Valley

## Age and Population Distribution

According to the 2006 Census Moonee Valley's youth population (aged 12-25 years inclusive) was 18,373, 18% of the City's total population. Moonee Valley's current youth population is approximately 19,600.

## Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Moonee Valley is a culturally and linguistically diverse municipality – 26.2% of residents were born overseas. The majority of this 26.2% were born in non English speaking countries. Overall, 22% of Moonee Valley's population were born in non English speaking countries. From the 2006 Census the most common birthplaces of young people born overseas were China, Vietnam, India and Somalia.

## Education, Employment and Income

In 2006, there were 6,199 secondary school students living in Moonee Valley. The majority (43.7%) were attending Government schools; 35.9% Catholic schools and 20.3% were at other non-government schools.

In 2006, 78.1% of 20-24 year olds had completed Year 12 compared to 74.6% of 20-24 year olds across metropolitan Melbourne.

The unemployment rate for 15-24 year olds in Moonee Valley was 9.9% (which was double the rate of 4.2% for the rest of the City's population). Youth unemployment rates were highest in Flemington/ Travancore and Ascot Vale.

Across Moonee Valley 6.1% of 15-24 year olds were both not looking for work and not enrolled in any education or training.

In 2006, 13.9% of 15-24 year olds in Moonee Valley were engaged in voluntary work.

One-third of households in Moonee Valley did not have access to the internet. The suburbs least likely to have access to the internet were Airport West, Avondale Heights and Niddrie/Essendon West.

## Families

The majority of young people aged 15-24 years were dependent on their parent/s or carer/s (44.3%). 23% were classified as non-dependent children in their households.

*The above data was sourced from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing (Australian Bureau of Statistics).*



# Section 2: Community Consultations

## Consultations with young people

From February to April 2009 Moonee Valley City Council Youth Services undertook survey-based consultations with young people living and/or studying across Moonee Valley. Surveys were completed by 478 young people. It was the largest ever consultation seeking to capture young people's opinions undertaken within the City of Moonee Valley. An online survey method was used for the first time, addition to surveys distributed through local secondary schools, local libraries and face-to-face consultations at events.

The following themes were identified through the consultations with young people:

- Young people value community strengths such as cultural diversity, people supporting and respecting each other, and opportunities to socialise and meet new people;
- Feelings of being safe or unsafe contribute to whether young people either like or dislike living in Moonee Valley;

- Young people want opportunities to be involved and help out in their community;
- To make Moonee Valley a better place for young people Council should provide opportunities for young people to have a say and provide more support services.

To highlight some of the views expressed, selections of young people's comments are included below. There are also quotes from young people throughout the strategy. The full consultation report is available from Youth Services.

## Comments from young people about what they like about where they live:

"That people you don't know smile to you in the street."  
(Young woman, 14, Essendon, Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School)

"I enjoy living in this neighbourhood because of the fauna and flora around me, the safety provided along with caring and thoughtful neighbours and responsive leaders make me feel like a huge part of a compassionate community." (Young man, 14, Maribyrnong, Rosehill Secondary College)

"If more older people weren't as stereotypical to young teenagers being a little bit different when they see them. If an adult saw a couple of boys they would probably just stare and look angrily at them."  
(Young man, 12, Pascoe Vale South, St. Bernard's College)

"I really enjoy the many cultures that make up Airport West. I like how people get involved in the community and tend to help one another."  
(Young woman, 16, Airport West, Essendon Keilor College)

"I think they could do this by becoming more youth friendly. I think they should perhaps change their image slightly so they don't appear big and corporationny, but friendlier and happier. I think that they should interact with the teenagers more."  
(Young man, 15, Moonee Ponds, St. Bernard's College)

"A brighter neighbourhood with more smiles which can turn a bad and miserable place into the greatest place in the world."  
(Young man, 13, Avondale Heights, St. Bernard's College)

"I would like to see more opportunities for communities to get together like festivals and carnivals and music things."  
(Young woman, 15, Keilor, Rosehill Secondary College)

"Open up a little place where kids can go and give their own opinion and even another place for kids to go where they can get help with their problems."  
(Young man, 13, East Keilor, St. Bernard's College)

"Try to find out problems we face and help them as best the Council can."  
(Young man, 14, Maribyrnong, Buckley Park College)



## Consultations with service providers and agencies

Nineteen local service providers and agencies were involved in consultations as part of the development of this Youth Engagement Strategy. Three consultation workshops were held in March 2009, and a further online survey was provided for those unable to attend the workshops.

Service providers and agencies shared their insights with Council Officers on a range of issues relevant to young people in Moonee Valley and the challenges faced by local organisations in their work with young people.

The key theme to emerge from these consultations relates to Council's role, and particularly the expectations held by local service providers. We have drawn on these expectations from the community to develop and clarify our strategic direction with young people and role within the community.

Service providers were clear that Council has a responsibility not only to work in partnership with community organisations and service providers but should also build and strengthen partnerships within the community, particularly with local employers.

Service providers also expressed the view that Council has an important role to play in building the capacity of local organisations working with young people, for example providing free training, opportunities for organisations to network on a regular basis and providing up-to-date information on issues pertinent to young people.

Organisations consulted also believed that Council has a responsibility to be a leader in the community, including:

- Advocating to the community and to Federal and State Government regarding inclusion of young people and issues that adversely impact on young people (for example housing, mental health funding, public transport);

- Promoting positive messages to the community about young people's contributions to the community to address the often negative portrayals of young people;
- Creating spaces for young people and youth related programs, including support of local organisations to provide accessible services (eg. creating co-located hubs);
- Consulting with young people and service providers in order to remain responsive to local needs and issues; and
- Promoting the development of young people's capacity to advocate for their needs at a local government level.

Those consulted shared their expectation that Council remains a key local provider of services for young people, particularly in relation to education and employment initiatives, work with Moonee Valley's culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and the provision of programs based at youth friendly community facilities, mental health services, and counselling services.

# Section 2: Community Consultations

## Consultations with secondary schools

Council Officers also held extensive consultations with local secondary schools. These consultations with school staff about Council's role revealed the following hopes and expectations. Council should continue or preferably strengthen its efforts in the following areas:

- Foster communication between Council and schools, especially in promoting awareness about current opportunities and how to access them;
- Strive for strong, personalised relationships to build partnerships of mutual benefit to schools and Council;
- Play a strong role in providing students with a wide variety of opportunities to participate in the wider community – eg. work experience and volunteering;
- Help to link schools with resources, organisations, and opportunities which have the potential to enhance learning for young people;
- Assist schools to fill gaps where schools may not have the expertise, time or resources to meet crucial needs of students – particularly in regard to counselling and youth worker support.



# Section 3: A Vision for Moonee Valley City Council 2009-2013

# Key Strategic Objectives

Our strategic framework is based on the overarching vision of:  
Inclusion, Opportunity and Choice – Every Young Person is a Citizen.

Over the next four years, our focus will be on the following broad strategic objectives for:

- 1. Civic Engagement – Enabling Participation**  
Supporting young people to be heard in our community.
- 2. Community Participation – Providing Opportunity**  
Creating ways for young people to be actively involved in the community. Celebrating young people's participation and achievements in the community.
- 3. Health and Wellbeing – Strengthening Capacity and Building Ability**  
Being emotionally and physically healthy. Ensuring that young people can get support when they need it.
- 4. Education and Employment – Creating Futures**  
Supporting young people to achieve their goals.
- 5. Network and Service Co-ordination – Inspiring Collaboration and Partnership**  
Working together with schools, health services, sporting clubs, youth organisations and across Council to achieve our goals.

## How Council will deliver on these Key Strategic Objectives

To deliver on each key strategic objective, Council will undertake one or more of six strategic roles in the community:

### Provide –

Deliver youth programs, services and initiatives across the municipality

### Advocate –

Advocate for and with young people to Federal and State Government

### Partner –

Work in partnership with community based organisations and the business sector on youth issues

### Co-ordinate –

Take a lead in the community to promote opportunities and choices for young people

### Plan –

Undertake research and policy development regarding the needs of local young people and service providers

### Fund –

Fund external organisations to implement initiatives of benefit to local young people.

If this strategy is successful, by 2013 there will be:

1. Civic Engagement – Enabling Participation
  - a. *Increased numbers of young people participating in community decision-making*
  - b. *Improved capacity of Council to include young people in decision-making processes*
2. Community Participation – Providing Opportunity
  - a. *Increased social connectedness*
  - b. *Improved sense of belonging and identity*
3. Health and Wellbeing – Strengthening Capacity and Building Ability
  - a. *Increased access to support, health and community services*

b. *Social, built and natural environments which are inclusive of young people*

4. Education and Employment – Creating Futures

a. *Expanded and diversified education and employment opportunities for young people throughout Moonee Valley*

b. *Increased support for individuals to optimise their educational journey*

5. Network and Service Co-ordination – Inspiring Collaboration and Partnership

a. *Eliminated service gaps*

b. *Increased sense of shared vision and goals across the municipality*

The background of the page is a black field with a complex, abstract pattern of bright yellow geometric shapes. These shapes include various triangles, chevrons, and zig-zag lines, creating a dynamic and modern visual texture. The pattern is most prominent on the right side and bottom of the page, framing the white text.

# Section 4: Key Strategic Objectives

"I think that the youth are sometimes forgotten, and more often than not don't get a say at all! I am a big fan of human rights and environmental concerns, and I think the youth of society should have more of a say."  
(Young man, 14, Moonee Ponds, Buckley Park College)

# Objective 1.

## Civic Engagement: Enabling participation

Supporting young people to be heard in our community.

### Purpose

Providing young people with the opportunity to have a say in community planning and decision-making is a key element to the inclusion of all young people in our City. Providing all young people with a voice requires a strong commitment from Council.

In the consultations with young people, many said that they don't currently get a chance to have a say. They want Council to provide opportunities to participate. This Key Strategic Objective is an acknowledgement from Council that young people are citizens in the present, and have valuable and insightful contributions to make now and into the future.

Involvement in civic decision-making creates the opportunity for young people to gain a wide perspective on community issues, and provides them with ownership over action and change. Young people also have the opportunity to build on skills in the areas of advocacy, leadership, communication, problem-solving and conflict resolution.

There is no "one-size-fits-all" approach – a variety of strategies is required to ensure that all young people are included, regardless of ability or background. To enhance participation, support must be available and opportunities must be meaningful and relevant. Consultation and engagement methods implemented by Council must also be tailored to suit young people's lives and interests.

This Key Strategic Objective is more than just young people having their say. It is about the broadest sense of citizenship – providing young people with the chance to engage with other young people and the broader community to participate in identifying, and being involved in community driven solutions.



## Goals

- a. Increase the number of young people participating in community decision-making

### Measured by:

- An increase in the proportion of young people who feel that they have the opportunity to have a say in local decision-making

- b. Improve the capacity of Council to include young people in decision-making processes

### Measured by:

- An increase in the number of young people who have been involved in Council strategy consultations

## Key Strategic Actions

### Provide

Continue to implement current civic engagement and youth leadership initiatives such as the GURU Squared project in Flemington and Ascot Vale and Moonee Valley Youth Voice (Youth Advisory Committee).

Expand youth consultation and engagement opportunities, in particular to ensure access to all young people.

Council to develop a consultation communications checklist that is inclusive of young people.

Seek opportunities to promote young people's civic engagement in the local media and in Council publications.

## Advocate

Advocate for the inclusion of young people in civic decision-making.

Inform and inspire Council, young people, service providers, schools, the community generally and other key stakeholders about young people's participation and active citizenship.

## Partner

Council departments to consult and engage with young people in the development of future plans and strategies in line with Council's endorsed Community Engagement Framework.

Work with local community organisations to ensure that young people are actively involved in decision-making as part of the Flemington Neighbourhood Renewal Project.

## Plan

Explore further online consultation and engagement initiatives targeting young people as part of the redevelopment of Council's website.

"I think having surveys where today's youth generation can have a say is very important. It's a way of us expressing how we really feel, what we believe, what we notice and how we want our community to be."

(Young woman, 13, Strathmore, St. Columba's College)

# Objective 2.

## Community Participation: Providing opportunity

Creating ways for young people to be actively involved in the community.  
Celebrating young people's participation and achievements in the community.

### Purpose

Young people already actively participate in organised sporting clubs, informal recreational pursuits, arts and cultural activities and volunteering. Participating in the community gives young people a sense of purpose and belonging, and connections with peers, school and the broader community, strengthening individual and community resilience.

In the consultations young people indicated that they value and seek opportunities to participate. Young people are often excluded from connecting and participating due to their socio-economic status, personal competencies and abilities, or where they live.

In this Key Strategic Objective these barriers are acknowledged. Moonee Valley Youth Services will be seeking to provide, advocate, and plan for a range of place-based programs centred on community facilities, clubs and events. These programs will be inclusive and ensure that all young people have the opportunity to participate in activities of interest to them.

The consultations also identified the need to broaden young people's opportunities, particularly in arts and culture, and the need to more effectively promote activities and opportunities to young people across Moonee Valley.



## Goals

- a. Increase young people's social connectedness

### Measured by:

- An increase in the proportion of young people who volunteer in the community
- An increase in the proportion of young people involved in community groups or activities
- An increase in the proportion of young people who had participated in a community event
- An increase in the proportion of young people who were able to get places easily when needed

- b. Improve young people's sense of belonging and identity

### Measured by:

- An increase in the proportion of young people who feel safe in public places
- An increase in the proportion of young people who feel like they belong in their local community

"Creating more clubs for young people like me, that include interesting activities. There should be organisations where different teens can meet up and socialise with different people and share interests."  
(Young woman, 14, Maribyrnong, Buckley Park College)



## Key Strategic Actions

### Provide

Continue to provide youth music and cultural events through the Freeza program and during National Youth Week, including the Youth Week Festival and the Flingfest film festival.

Continue to involve young people in already established Moonee Valley Youth Services' committees and volunteer programs, such as Loop and the Music Reference Group.

Provide a range of place-based programs across the municipalities based on need and interest to broaden young people's choices and opportunities.

Implement recommendations from Council's Skate and BMX Strategy.

Increase young people's participation in the annual Moonee Valley Festival.

Continue to seek opportunities to promote positive messages regarding young people's participation in the local media and in Council publications.

Implement a range of initiatives to increase young people's engagement with local libraries.

Celebrate young people's participation and contribution in the local community.

### Advocate

Advocate to the State Government for improved public transport that is safe, accessible and affordable for young people, particularly in the north-west of the municipality.

Advocate for the design and management of community facilities to be inclusive of young people.

### Partner

Continue to work with community stakeholders to promote and increase young women's opportunities to participate in sport and recreation.

Work in collaboration with local sporting clubs to promote and support the inclusion of young people who experience barriers to participation, including young people with disabilities and culturally and linguistically diverse young people.

Council to support and promote opportunities for young people to volunteer within Council, including formalising processes and training.

Work with local community organisations to promote and link young people to external volunteering opportunities.

Work with local community organisations to provide community and social participation opportunities to young people with a disability.

Work with local community organisations to broaden opportunities for young people to participate in arts and cultural activities.

### Plan

Develop a Moonee Valley Youth Services marketing strategy to promote services, programs and initiatives to young people.

Develop youth specific actions as part of the Library Strategy to be developed in 2010.

Council to seek funds to develop a Youth Arts Strategy which establishes a rich partnership with local young people and also provides opportunities for training, education and employment opportunities.

### Fund

Support organisations to apply for youth related programs and initiatives through Council's Community Grants program.

"The health of young people is not only important in its own right, or for their sake; it is crucial in assessing overall state and future of Australian society. The young reflect best the tenor and tempo of the times by virtue of growing up in them. Because their stages of biological and social development, they are most vulnerable to social risks and failings. Many of the attitudes and behaviours – even the illnesses – that largely determine adult health have their origins in childhood, adolescence and early adulthood. The health of young people shapes the future health of the whole population and, in a broader sense, the health of society." (Eckersley, 2008 in Never better – or getting worse? The health and wellbeing of young Australians)

## Objective 3.

### Health and Wellbeing: Strengthening capacity and building ability

Being emotionally and physically healthy. Ensuring that young people can get support when they need it.

#### Purpose

Health and wellbeing are vital to ensure that people can participate in every aspect of life. In this Key Strategic Objective Council is seeking to focus on health promotion, preventative initiatives and early intervention strategies.

Health inequalities do exist in our community and they have an effect on people's quality of life. Addressing these requires the implementation of place-based approaches within the community. The transition from adolescence to adulthood is an additional challenge, requiring strategies that target all young people. Work within this Key Strategic Objective will also be targeted at various levels of the community.

Council will work in collaboration with the community to make Moonee Valley a healthier place to live, addressing the social, economic and physical structures which impact negatively on young people's health and wellbeing. Council is committed to working with, and supporting young people with education and information to promote healthy choices.

Targeted support and education for young people can include providing relevant health information, mental health and counselling services, along with building peer support, communication and conflict-resolution skills. Additionally, advocacy for young people and working closely with service providers can be beneficial to ensure that services are "youth friendly", that is, appropriate, accessible and attractive to young people.

#### Goals

- a. Increase young people's access to support, health and community services

##### Measured by:

- Mapping of local services on an annual basis

- b. Create social, built and natural environments which are inclusive of young people

##### Measured by:

- An increase in the proportion of young people who report that there are enough 'youth-friendly' places and spaces in the community

"They can help kids with problems by having groups talk about people's issues and how we can help them." (Young man, 13, Moonee Ponds, St. Bernard's College)

"I think that Council should offer free services to younger people with mental problems, health and bullying issues." (Young man, 15, Essendon, Buckley Park College)

"Provide some form of extra support where you can remain anonymous." (Young man, 14, Essendon, Buckley Park College)

"I'd like to see Council taking a really significant role towards tackling depression and mental illness. Far too often, these diseases are swept under the rug or ignored because they don't show up physically or people are ashamed to admit them." (Young man, 25, Strathmore)

## Key Strategic Actions

### Provide

Continue to provide support to individuals through case management and youth specific counselling.

Continue to provide information and referral support to young people, families, schools and local service providers.

Involve young people in the development of health promotion initiatives and social marketing campaigns to promote healthy environments and healthy lifestyles.

Provide accessible and youth-friendly information about health and mental health issues and services to young people through Moonee Valley Youth Services' website, programs and services.

Implement programs and initiatives which seek to promote local safety such as the driver education program L2P.

Develop and implement strategies that address drug and alcohol issues in Moonee Valley.

### Advocate

Advocate for

- youth-friendly service delivery;
- increased youth specific mental health services and resources in Moonee Valley;
- young people's health and wellbeing to be on the local agenda;
- affordable housing for young people and families in Moonee Valley;
- the design and development of urban spaces and places which create safe and healthy environments and are inclusive of the needs of young people.

### Partner

Work in partnership with local secondary schools to implement school based health and wellbeing programs focusing on prevention.

Work in partnership with local secondary schools to implement initiatives seeking to increase young people's digital literacy and address cyber safety issues.

Strengthen partnerships with service providers and community organisations to address the specific health and wellbeing needs of young people.

Work with local sporting clubs to address binge drinking.

### Plan

Develop and maintain a Moonee Valley Youth Demographic and Health Profile to promote youth health needs and to inform local service provision and collaboration.

"Moonee Valley Council can make the suburb a better place by creating more safe venues for teenagers to hang out."  
(Young woman, 14, Essendon, Buckley Park College)

## Objective 4. Education and Employment: Creating Futures

Supporting young people to achieve their goals.

### Purpose

Local data reveals that many young people in Moonee Valley are disengaged from education and employment. Disengagement is often due to multiple factors, sometimes inter-related, such as family issues, language and cultural factors, financial issues, lack of networks and role models, learning difficulties, bullying, health issues and homelessness. Disengagement from education and employment can lead to outcomes such as low levels of literacy and numeracy, long term unemployment and social isolation.

Council is aware that education and employment outcomes vary across the city and therefore require tailored approaches to particular population groups. Young people may require individual support including encouragement for early school leavers

to return to school and assistance to navigate pathway options, alternative learning settings, programs and opportunities, and support to enable successful transitions, for example from primary to secondary school and from school to work.

As the largest employer in the City, Moonee Valley City Council has a particular responsibility to assist young people, particularly those who are disengaged, with this support and these opportunities. Council will work in partnership with local secondary schools, the business sector and peak bodies to broaden young people's experiences and opportunities in various industries.

### Goals

- a. Expand and diversify education and employment opportunities throughout Moonee Valley

#### Measured by:

- A decrease in the proportion of young people who are not in education or training
- A decrease in the proportion of young people without access to the Internet

- b. Support every individual to optimise their educational journey

#### Measured by:

- A decrease in the proportion of young people who are not in education or training.

"Australia's prosperity and economic competitiveness over the long-term depends significantly on the skills of its workforce and the social obligations that exist across the generations. Unless Australia ensures that more of its young people are actively engaged in learning, experience the rewards of a stimulating education, and are able to put their skills to good use, Australia will fall behind. Still around 200,000 teenagers in any one year are not engaged in full-time learning or full-time work. The findings in this report of the extent of social and economic disadvantage hindering participation in learning and work are sobering. Federal and state governments speak of an 'education revolution'. It's time this idea was given real substance."

(Jack Dusseldorp, Chair, Dusseldorp Skills Forum in Lamb and Mason, How are Young People Faring 2008, Australian Youth Foundation)

## Key Strategic Actions

### Provide

Continue to provide diverse education and employment programs and services to support young people's individual employment and education goals.

Address the digital divide within the municipality through providing Internet access programs in Flemington, Ascot Vale and Niddrie.

Seek funding to expand and extend the Sustainable Employment and Economic Development (SEED) project to the rest of the municipality.

Implement targeted initiatives to young people who are disengaged from education and/or employment or at-risk of disengagement.

Council to provide work experience opportunities for young people.

Implement a range of initiatives in local libraries to support young people's lifelong learning.

Promote external education and employment initiatives to young people.

### Advocate

Advocate to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and local secondary schools for alternative education and employment opportunities and pathways.

Council to advocate for additional apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities for young people.

### Partner

Work in partnership with the local LLEN and secondary schools to implement programs and initiatives seeking to support the education and employment pathways of local young people.

Work in partnership with secondary schools, local businesses and the general community to provide mentoring opportunities for young people.

Work in partnership with secondary schools to support young people's transition from primary to secondary school.

Seek opportunities to develop strategies with the local community and organisations to increase employment for the long-term unemployed, migrants and young people.

### Co-ordinate

Facilitate partnerships and links between young people, local secondary schools, local businesses and industry.

"Promote more youth activities to people who would not normally go looking for them. encourage local schools to also help with promotion and set up things like youth groups which can be involved in the community"  
(Young woman, 17, Strathmore, Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School)

"Make getting help with [issues] not a hassle or embarrassing."  
(Young woman, 15, Avondale Heights, Buckley Park College)

## Objective 5. Network and Service Co-ordination: Inspiring collaboration and partnership

Working together with schools, health services, sporting clubs, youth organisations and across Council to achieve our goals.

### Purpose

Networking and service collaboration are integral to providing cohesive and fluent service delivery to young people. A coordinated and collaborative approach is needed to ensure young people can access a range of individual services and connections.

Moonee Valley Youth Services has great strength in providing opportunities for young people to access structured and unstructured activities and programs by working in collaboration and in partnership within Council and with external service providers.

This Strategy intends to see an increase in the proactive role that Council will play in the future to bring young people, community members, service providers and key organisations together.

Moonee Valley Youth Services can assist young people to access services and opportunities. We can also assist other organisations, program and peak bodies to contact, and engage with, young people. It is clear that Council plays a critical role in this context. Council see that without the support and dedication of the external services this outcome cannot be achieved.

### Goals

- a. Eliminate service gaps
- b. Develop shared vision and goals across the municipality

#### Measured by:

- Mapping of local services on an annual basis
- Proportion of community grants applicants with a focus on young people



## Key Strategic Actions

### Provide

Continue to co-ordinate the Moonee Valley Workers with Young People Network.

Expand opportunities for local forums concerning the needs of local young people.

Improve methods of communication with secondary schools, local service providers and community groups.

### Advocate

Advocate on behalf of local service providers and secondary schools to State and Federal Government, where relevant, regarding their needs in working with young people.

Work with all relevant local organisations and the local community to promote Council's Strategic Plan vision.

Work with local service providers, secondary schools, community groups and other relevant organisations to advocate the needs of local young people.

### Co-ordinate

Play an external leadership role to build capacity in local services and secondary schools.

Work with local service providers and the Office for Youth to implement recommendations as part of the State Government's introduction of the *Vulnerable Youth Framework*.

### Partner

Partner with funding, corporate, local and national bodies to achieve our goals.

Participate on committees and representative bodies such as the Maribyrnong Et Moonee Valley Local Learning and Employment Network Committee of Management, School Focused Youth Service Local Advisory Group and the Western Region Youth Affairs Network.

Support other existing local networks such as the Student Wellbeing Network.

Work in partnership with service providers to submit joint funding proposals for specific needs or to fill gaps in service provision.

Continue to seek and support opportunities for the co-location of support, health, legal, educational, employment and homelessness services.

### Plan

Undertake service profiling and mapping to identify gaps in service provision.

Work with local service providers and the Office for Youth to explore implications and options as part of the State Government's introduction of the *Vulnerable Youth Framework*.

Provide up-to-date information about Federal and State government changes to local service providers regarding young people.

Develop and maintain a *Moonee Valley Youth Demographic and Health Profile* to promote youth health needs and to inform local service provision and collaboration.

Explore the establishment of co-located support, health, legal, educational, employment and homelessness services.

# Section 5: Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

To achieve the goals outlined in YES Council commits, and looks forward to working in partnership with all the organisations and networks that play a key local role in service co-operation and advocacy for young people in Moonee Valley, such as:

- Secondary schools, Victoria Police, Dousta Galla Community Health Service, and numerous other specific service providers and agencies;
- The Maribyrnong & Moonee Valley Local Learning and Employment Network, School Focused Youth Service (Melbourne and Moonee Valley), Latitude (youth housing), Flemington Neighbourhood Renewal Project, Ascot Vale Network, and the Western Region Youth Affairs Network.

This Strategy covers the period from July 2009 to June 2013. Throughout the life of this Strategy:

1. Detailed action plans will be developed annually to operationalise the Strategy.
2. Careful, inclusive and systematic review of initiatives, partnerships and programs will ensure optimal processes and outcomes are being achieved; and
3. Continual learning and improvement will be undertaken to keep the Strategy up-to-date with latest trends, research, consultation and policy.

Based on our annual priorities for the next four years (see below), we have identified the years of focus for each of the key strategic actions contained in YES (see pages 29-35). The 2009-2010 Action Plan will be confirmed immediately following the formal adoption of the Strategy by Council – and is already being formulated to support this document.

Following June 2013 Council will review this Strategy and evaluate Council's achievements, then enter into a new period of strategic planning.

Table: Annual Priorities for the Next Four Years

2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
<i>Continuing delivery, branding and strategic planning, achieving outcomes immediately.</i>	<i>Expansion, network building, and strategic roll out on all objectives.</i>	<i>Full service mix to ensure all strategic goals are being addressed.</i>	<i>Delivery, confirmation, and renewal</i>
The intent of this initial year will be to deliver on all existing projects and funding; commence research and planning of the wider strategic ambitions described in this document; and to define a services mix that will best support the re-brand of the service under the partnerships and inclusion banner.	The second year will see an increased level of leadership by Moonee Valley Youth Services in advocacy, community networking, and expanded service provision.  The intent of year two is to ensure that the whole of Council and its partners are motivated by the vision that <b>every young person is a citizen.</b>	By year 3 the team should be both established and confident to achieve the goals outlined in this document.  The belief is that, with a consolidated platform created by years one and two, and the strategic collaborations and partnerships built through the process, Moonee Valley Youth Services will be well placed to deliver on Council's goals.	As the strategic progression culminates, this year will see emphasis given to filling gaps, measuring success and planning for the new cycle.  It is hoped that, by this stage, Council will have achieved success in all ambitions of provision, advocacy, coordination, partnering, planning and funding.

# Four year action plan

## Key Strategic Objective 1 – Civic Engagement

Key Strategic Actions	Year one 2009/10	Year two 2010/2011	Year three 2011/2012	Year four 2012/2013
Continue to implement current civic engagement and youth leadership initiatives such as the GURU Squared project in Flemington and Ascot Vale and Moonee Valley Youth Voice				
Expand youth consultation and engagement opportunities, in particular to ensure access to all young people				
Council to develop a consultation communications checklist that is inclusive of young people				
Seek opportunities to promote young people's civic engagement in the local media and in Council publications				
Advocate for the inclusion of young people in civic decision-making				
Inform and inspire Council, young people, service providers, schools, the community generally and other key stakeholders about young people's participation and active citizenship				
Council departments to consult and engage with young people in the development of future plans and strategies in line with Council's endorsed Community Engagement Framework				
Work with local community organisations to ensure that young people are actively involved in decision-making as part of the Flemington Neighbourhood Renewal Project.				
Explore further online consultation and engagement initiatives targeting young people as part of the redevelopment of Council's website.				

## Key Strategic Objective 2 – Community Participation

Key Strategic Actions	Year one 2009/10	Year two 2010/2011	Year three 2011/2012	Year four 2012/2013
Continue to provide youth music and cultural events through the Freeza program and during National Youth Week, including the Youth Week Festival and the Flingfest film festival				
Continue to involve young people in already established Youth Services' committees and volunteer programs, such as Loop and the Music Reference Group				
Provide a range of place-based programs across the municipalities based on need and interest to broaden young people's choices and opportunities				
Implement recommendations from Council's Skate and BMX Strategy				
Increase young people's participation in the annual Moonee Valley Festival				
Continue to seek opportunities to promote positive messages regarding young people's participation in the local media and in Council publications				
Implement a range of initiatives to increase young people's engagement with local libraries				
Celebrate young people's participation and contribution in the local community				
Advocate to the State Government for improved public transport that is safe, accessible and affordable for young people, particularly in the north-west of the municipality				
Advocate for the design and management of community facilities to be inclusive of young people				

## Key Strategic Objective 2 – Community Participation

Key Strategic Actions	Year one 2009/10	Year two 2010/2011	Year three 2011/2012	Year four 2012/2013
Continue to work with community stakeholders to promote and increase young women's opportunities to participate in sport and recreation				
Work in collaboration with local sporting clubs to promote and support the inclusion of young people who experience barriers to participation, including young people with disabilities and culturally and linguistically diverse young people				
Council to support and promote opportunities for young people to volunteer within Council, including formalising processes and training				
Work with local community organisations to promote and link young people to external volunteering opportunities				
Work with local community organisations to provide community and social participation opportunities to young people with a disability				
Work with local community organisations to broaden opportunities for young people to participate in arts and cultural activities				
Develop a Youth Services marketing strategy to promote services, programs and initiatives to young people				
Develop youth specific actions as part of the Library Strategy to be developed in 2010				
Council to seek funds to develop a Youth Arts Strategy which establishes a rich partnership with local young people and also provides opportunities for training, education and employment opportunities				
Support organisations to apply for youth related programs and initiatives through Council's Community Grants program				

## Key Strategic Objective 3 – Health and wellbeing

Key Strategic Actions	Year one 2009/10	Year two 2010/2011	Year three 2011/2012	Year four 2012/2013
Continue to provide support to individuals through case management and youth specific counselling				
Continue to provide information and referral support to young people, families, schools and local service providers				
Involve young people in the development of health promotion initiatives and social marketing campaigns to promote healthy environments and healthy lifestyles				
Provide accessible and youth-friendly information about health and mental health issues and services to young people through the re-developed Moonee Valley Youth Services' website				



## Key Strategic Objective 3 – Health and wellbeing

Key Strategic Actions	Year one 2009/10	Year two 2010/2011	Year three 2011/2012	Year four 2012/2013
Implement programs and initiatives which seek to promote local safety such as the driver education program L2P				
Develop and implement strategies that address drug and alcohol issues in Moonee Valley				
Advocate for youth-friendly service delivery				
Advocate for increased youth specific mental health services and resources in Moonee Valley				
Advocate for young people's health and wellbeing to be on the local agenda				
Advocate for affordable housing for young people and families in Moonee Valley				
Advocate for the design and development of urban spaces and places which create safe and healthy environments and are inclusive of the needs of young people				



## Key Strategic Objective 3 – Health and wellbeing

Key Strategic Actions	Year one 2009/10	Year two 2010/2011	Year three 2011/2012	Year four 2012/2013
Work in partnership with local secondary schools to implement school based health and wellbeing programs focusing on prevention				
Work in partnership with local secondary schools to implement initiatives seeking to increase young people's digital literacy and address cyber safety issues				
Strengthen partnerships with service providers and community organisations to address the specific health and wellbeing needs of young people				
Work with local sporting clubs to address binge drinking				
Develop and maintain a Moonee Valley Youth Demographic and Health Profile to promote youth health needs and to inform local service provision and collaboration				



## Key Strategic Objective 4 – Education and employment

Key Strategic Actions	Year one 2009/10	Year two 2010/2011	Year three 2011/2012	Year four 2012/2013
Continue to provide diverse education and employment programs and services to support young people's individual employment and education goals				
Address the digital divide within the municipality through providing Internet access programs in Flemington, Ascot Vale and Niddrie				
Seek funding to expand and extend the Sustainable Employment and Economic Development (SEED) project to the rest of the municipality				
Implement targeted initiatives to young people who are disengaged from education and/or employment or at-risk of disengagement				
Council to provide work experience opportunities for young people				
Implement a range of initiatives in local libraries to support young people's lifelong learning				



## Key Strategic Objective 4 – Education and employment

Key Strategic Actions	Year one 2009/10	Year two 2010/2011	Year three 2011/2012	Year four 2012/2013
Promote external education and employment initiatives to young people				
Advocate to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and local secondary schools for alternative education and employment opportunities and pathways				
Council to advocate for additional apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities for young people				
Work in partnership with the local LLEN and secondary schools to implement programs and initiatives seeking to support the education and employment pathways of local young people				
Work in partnership with secondary schools, local businesses and the general community to provide mentoring opportunities for young people				
Work in partnership with secondary schools to support young people's transition from primary to secondary school				
Seek opportunities to develop strategies with the local community and organisations to increase employment for the long-term unemployment, migrants and young people				
Facilitate partnerships and links between young people, local secondary schools, local businesses and industry				



## Key Strategic Objective 5 – Network and service co-ordination

Key Strategic Actions	Year one 2009/10	Year two 2010/2011	Year three 2011/2012	Year four 2012/2013
Continue to co-ordinate the Moonee Valley Workers with Young People Network				
Expand opportunities for local forums concerning the needs of local young people				
Improve methods of communication with secondary schools, local service providers and community groups				
Advocate on behalf of local service providers and secondary schools to State and Federal Government, where relevant, regarding their needs in working with young people				
Work with all relevant local organisations and the local community to promote Council's Strategic Plan vision				
Work with local service providers, secondary schools, community groups and other relevant organisations to advocate the needs of local young people				
Play an external leadership role to build capacity in local services and secondary schools				
Work with local service providers and the Office for Youth to implement recommendations as part of the State Government's introduction of the Vulnerable Youth Framework				
Partner with funding, corporate, local and national bodies to achieve our goals				
Participate on committees and representative bodies such as the M&MV LLEN Committee of Management, SFYS Local Advisory Group and the Western Region Youth Affairs Network				

"Improved coordination across service providers is also critical in supporting and promoting the health and wellbeing of young people. Ensuring strong coordination across the planning, development and delivery of support is important in developing a youth services system." (Youth Affairs Council of Victoria and the Victorian Council of Social Services, 2006 in Who's Carrying the Can? A report into youth services gaps in Victoria)

## Key Strategic Objective 5 – Network and service co-ordination

Key Strategic Actions	Year one 2009/10	Year two 2010/2011	Year three 2011/2012	Year four 2012/2013
Support other existing local networks such as the Student Wellbeing Network				
Work in partnership with service providers to submit joint funding proposals for specific needs or to fill gaps in service provision				
Continue to seek and support opportunities for the co-location of support, health, legal, educational, employment and homelessness services				
Undertake service profiling and mapping to identify gaps in service provision				
Work with local service providers and the Office for Youth to explore implications and options as part of the State Government's introduction of the Vulnerable Youth Framework				
Provide up-to-date information about Federal and State government changes to local service providers regarding young people				
Develop and maintain a Moonee Valley Youth Demographic and Health Profile to promote youth health needs and to inform local service provision and collaboration				
Explore the establishment of co-located support, health, legal, educational, employment and homelessness services				

# Section 6:

# Acknowledgements

Moonee Valley City Council would like to acknowledge the following organisations, service providers, agencies and secondary schools that contributed to the development of the Moonee Valley City Council Youth Engagement Strategy 2009-2013:

- Ascot Vale Special School
- Banksia In-patient Unit, Royal Children's Hospital
- Buckley Park College
- Centre for Multicultural Youth
- Centrelink
- DAS West Youth Outreach Team (drug and alcohol service)
- Debney Park Secondary College
- Dignity Financial Counselling Service
- Doutta Galla Community Health Service
- Headspace Western
- Jesuit Social Services
- JobCo, Personal Helpers and Mentors Program
- Latitude (youth housing)
- Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School
- Maribyrnong & Moonee Valley Local Learning and Employment Network
- Melbourne Citymission
- Moonee Ponds Central School
- Rosehill Secondary College
- St. Bernard's College
- St. Columba's College
- Strathmore Secondary College
- Victoria Police
- WCIG (employment service)
- Western Local Community Partnerships (education/employment)
- Wingate Avenue Community Centre
- Wombat Housing and Support Services
- Women's Health West
- YMCA Ascot Vale Leisure Centre
- Young Carers Victoria
- Youth Mentoring Assistance Program
- Youth Projects Inc.

Moonee Valley City Council would like also like to acknowledge the participation of over 500 local young people who contributed their voices to the development of this strategy.

The Moonee Valley Council also recognises the support and professional contribution to YES made by consulting company, The Change Agent Network Pty Ltd.





<b>عربي</b>	Arabic	9280 0738	<b>Ελληνικά</b>	Greek	9280 0741	<b>Español</b>	Spanish	9280 0744
<b>中文</b>	Cantonese	9280 0739	<b>Italiano</b>	Italian	9280 0742	<b>Türkçe</b>	Turkish	9280 0745
<b>Hrvatski</b>	Croatian	9280 0740	<b>Somali</b>	Somali	9280 0743	<b>Việt-ngữ</b>	Vietnamese	9280 0746

All other languages 9280 0747

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