

The state of Victoria's young people

A report on how Victorian young people aged 12-24 are faring



Prepared by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
and the Department of Planning and Community Development



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Ministerial foreword

The Victorian Government is committed to using evidence to drive planning and programs with and for young people, and to bringing departments and agencies together to focus on enhancing and ensuring the health, safety, wellbeing and learning of young Victorians. These commitments are reflected in our adoption of a whole-of-government outcomes framework for monitoring and measuring young people's wellbeing, and in the broad outcomes for young people in the Future Directions youth policy.

These commitments are reflected also in the production of this report, *The state of Victoria's young people*, by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Department of Planning and Community Development. By systematically evaluating how young people (aged 12–24) are faring against the government outcomes framework and the Future Directions policy goals, the report highlights the areas where additional action is required to improve the current and future wellbeing of young Victorians.

The state of Victoria's young people offers a high-level and comprehensive overview of the wellbeing of young Victorians focusing on the broad domains of health, economic wellbeing, learning, safety and community engagement. The focus is on outcomes for all young Victorians and for young people from four priority populations: Indigenous young people, young people with a disability, young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) and young people affected by chronic disadvantage.

In general, the report tells a very positive story, with young Victorians faring well against many of the measures in all the domains. The report finds that significant progress is being made towards the Future Directions policy goals of being safe and promoting safe behaviour, managing healthy, active and diverse lives, contributing and making a difference, having resources and making connections and achieving potential through informed life choices. This news is welcome and encouraging for all those who are committed to promoting and ensuring the wellbeing of young Victorians.

On the other hand, the report alerts us to some areas of concern, such as obesity and overweight and the mental health issues facing young people. The report shows that not all Victorians are faring as well as broad statewide data suggest and that, despite some improvements, there are marked inequalities in outcomes for Indigenous young people. For some groups, such as young people with a disability and young CALD people, the report highlights a lack of data.

This comprehensive report will allow the Government to focus on areas of identified concern, on those groups of young people who are faring less well and on identified data gaps. With its broad overview of outcomes, the report will also provide a key foundation document for others, outside government, who are working to improve the wellbeing of young people.

Maxine Morand MP
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Lisa Neville MP
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Minister for Senior Victorians
Minister for Community Services



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The state of Victoria's young people was prepared in the Statewide Outcomes for Children Division (in the Victorian Government Department of Education and Early Childhood Development) in collaboration with the Office for Youth (in the Victorian Government Department of Planning and Community Development).

The report was written by Dr Suzanne Hood (principal author) and Katie Lamb (from the Statewide Outcomes for Children Division), with Deborah Elkington, Mark Grant and Helvi Apted (from the Office for Youth).

A data group from the Statewide Outcomes for Children Division coordinated access to data and an inter-departmental steering group provided project guidance.

Michael White and Pam Muth provided overall project direction and Melonie Yurovich provided invaluable help in coordinating the report production process.



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Glossary of common abbreviations used in this report

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
CALD	culturally and linguistically diverse
CIV	Community Indicators Victoria
HNSS	Healthy Neighbourhoods School Survey
NHS	National Health Survey
SES	socioeconomic status
VAED	Victorian Admitted Episodes Dataset
VPHS	Victorian Public Health Survey
WHO	World Health Organisation



Executive summary

The state of Victoria's young people has been produced by the Victorian Government Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Department of Planning and Community Development. The report provides an evidence-based overview of how young Victorians aged 12–24 are faring.

While the majority of young Victorians are faring well, the evidence shows this is not the case for all. The transition from childhood to adulthood has been made more complex in recent years by social, environmental and technological changes and some young people experience difficulties with this transition. Additionally, there are clear inequalities in outcomes for particular groups of young people that may be masked in more positive statewide population data.

The Government is committed to enabling every young Victorian to make a successful transition from childhood into adulthood. It is committed also to improving the wellbeing of all young Victorians, with a particular focus on four groups of young people who commonly experience greater disadvantage and where additional action may be required: Indigenous young people; young people with a disability; young people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background (CALD), (including refugees); and young people affected by chronic disadvantage.

In order to assess how young people are faring, the Government has identified 35 measurable aspects of children and young people's health, learning, development, safety and wellbeing, and has combined these to form an outcomes framework. The Government has also developed five broad policy goals for young people in the Future Directions policy document:

- being safe and promoting safe behaviours
- managing healthy, active and diverse lives
- contributing and making a difference
- having resources and making connections
- achieving potential through informed life choices.

By systematically evaluating how young people are faring against the outcomes framework and the Future Directions policy goals, this report highlights the areas where additional action is required to improve the wellbeing of young people in Victoria, both now and in the future.

Report preview and structure

The report describes the outcomes for all young Victorians and for young people in the identified population groups who commonly experience greater disadvantage. Where data are available, differences in outcome by gender, by rural and metropolitan locations, and between Victoria and Australia are also included.

There are six report chapters comprising a demography section and five themed data sections, as follows:

- Victoria's young people
- physical and emotional health
- economic wellbeing, housing and homelessness
- learning, training, further education and employment
- safety, protection and crime
- community engagement, civic participation and transport.

The themed data chapters are accompanied by case studies that draw on young people's voices to provide insights into 'what works' in programs and services.

Data for the report are drawn from a variety of sources, including the Department of Human Services, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Department of Planning and Community Development, the Department of Infrastructure, the Department of Justice, Victoria Police and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). The Government also commissioned expert papers and tailored analyses from senior academics in areas of identified data gaps.



Key findings

Overall, the evidence suggests that young Victorians are faring very well across the broad domains of health, learning, development, safety and wellbeing. However, the report also highlights a number of areas of concern for young people as a whole, and for young people from the priority population groups. The following summary focuses firstly on outcomes for all young Victorians, and secondly on outcomes for key groups.

Areas where young people are faring well

Physical and emotional health

The notification rate for vaccine preventable diseases (in young Victorians aged 12–24) has declined over recent years. While cancer is an important cause of disease burden, Victoria's cancer diagnosis rate is lower (among young people) than in Australia overall. Substance use and young people's mental health are areas of concern; however, there is some evidence of a decline in substance use among young Victorians. The proportion of young Victorians (aged 18–24) with high to very high levels of psychological distress has declined, as have suicide rates. Most young Victorians rate their health positively, with around 70 per cent of young people rating their health as 'excellent' or 'very good'.

Economic wellbeing, housing and homelessness

The participation of young Victorians in full-time education and employment is high (89 per cent of 15–19 year olds and 78.2 per cent of 20–24 year olds in 2006) and higher than in Australia for 15–19 year olds. The majority of young Victorians are living in comfortable financial circumstances, as measured by poverty, parental employment and experience of financial hardship. Most public housing households with young people are not overcrowded.

Learning, training, further education and employment

Victoria has the second highest percentage of students (nationally) who complete a Year 12 or equivalent qualification and these rates have shown a pattern of steady improvement, together with an increase in the school participation of 15–19 year olds (from 2001 to 2006). Young people's attendance rates at secondary school have been stable at more than 90 per cent. Most young Victorians (in Years 6 and 8) in the Healthy Neighbourhoods School Survey (HNSS) report enjoying school and having high levels of support from their teachers. Young people's access to Vocational Education and Training (VET) has also broadened in recent years.

Safety, protection and crime

Victoria has low levels of crime victimisation compared with other states and territories and survey data suggest that most young Victorians feel safe. Most (91.8 per cent) young people in Years 6 and 8 report feeling safe at school (HNSS) and 96 per cent of young people (aged 18–24) report feeling safe when walking in their local area alone during the day (Community Indicators Victoria (CIV) Survey). While transport accident injuries remain a major cause of death and injury, injuries and deaths from transport accidents have declined. Child protection substantiations have stabilised over recent years. Victoria has the lowest rate of young people under juvenile justice supervision in Australia (2.6 per 1000).

Community engagement, civic participation and transport

Friends and family are immensely important to young Victorians. The majority (83 per cent) of young people (aged 18–24) feel they can definitely get help from their families when needed and 70 per cent report having a lot of friends. Most young Victorians say that they are definitely valued by society (51.1 per cent) or that they are valued some of the time (33.8 per cent) and the proportion of young people who feel definitely valued has increased markedly (from 28 per cent in 2001 to 51.1 per cent in 2006). The majority of young Victorians (91.3 per cent) participate in physical activity, recreation or sport and feel that multiculturalism is a benefit to their area (76 per cent).



Areas where young people are faring less well

Physical and emotional health

An increasing proportion of 12-year-old Victorians are experiencing dental decay. Nearly one-third of young Victorians are overweight or obese and only low proportions meet recommended levels of fruit and vegetable consumption. Levels of physical activity among young people are also lower than recommended. Data on the prevalence of eating disorders is limited. However, a recent Victorian survey found that around 10 per cent of young women (who did not have a diagnosed eating disorder) reported that they experienced at least two symptoms associated with anorexia or bulimia at some point between adolescence and young adulthood. Surveys also suggest that young people's body image quite commonly fails to reflect actual body weight.

While there is some evidence of a decline in young people's substance use, and regular usage of illicit drugs is very low, nearly a quarter of 18–24 year olds are current smokers and trend data suggest there have been increases in the proportion of young people who drink at levels that risk short term harm. It is of considerable concern that 30 per cent of males (aged 22–24) admit to driving while under the influence of alcohol.

Finally, asthma rates are higher in Victoria than in Australia (in young people aged 12–17). Although melanoma incidence in young people is decreasing, many young Victorians may not be taking adequate sun protection action. While the proportion of young people (aged 18–24) experiencing high levels of psychological distress has declined, rates are double in young women (22.5 per cent in 2005). Survey data suggest that depressive symptoms are present in just under a third of young Victorians in Years 6 and 8 (HNSS).

Economic wellbeing, housing and homelessness

Although most young Victorians live in comfortable financial circumstances, a sizeable minority experience poverty, financial hardship or housing problems. In 2006, 11.1 per cent of young Victorians (aged 20–24) were not in education or employment and around 8 per cent of 18–24 year olds reported running out of food and being unable to buy more (CIV Survey). Analysis of data from the ABS Survey of Housing and Income Costs (2003–04) shows that non-dependents (aged 15–24) had higher rates of poverty than other Victorians.

In Victoria, on Census night, there were 4660 homeless young people aged 12–18 years and 2404 homeless young people aged 19–24 years (2001 Census). In 2005–06, 11,350 young people (aged 15–24) accessed Supported Accommodation Assistance Program Services (SAAP).

Learning, training, further education and employment

While school attendance rates are generally high, surveys highlight some areas of concern in relation to connectedness to school among the younger age group. Years 7 to 9 students scored an average of 2.8 (out of a maximum of five) on a measure of connectedness to school. While around two-thirds of students in Years 6 and 8 enjoyed school, and saw school work as important, the remainder were less engaged. Around a half of the students found their schoolwork to be very or quite interesting. Males were less likely than females to say they enjoyed school.

Safety, protection and crime

Most young Victorians feel safe, but young women feel considerably less safe than young men (CIV Survey). This report also highlights the overrepresentation of young people (in comparison with other age groups) among people who report experiencing violence. Young people comprise the majority of victims of reported rape and other sexual offences, and a third of all victims of assault.

Community engagement, civic participation and transport

Less than half of young people (aged 18–24) feel they definitely have a say on issues that are important to them, and young people are significantly less represented (than people aged 25 and over) on decision-making boards and committees. It is also concerning that young people are far less likely (than people aged 25 and over) to rate their area as having characteristics of an active community. Access to safe and affordable transport is critical to young people's access to training, education, work and leisure. However, according to Community Indicators Victoria (CIV) data, around one-third of young Victorians (aged 18–24) report having no public transport in their area and around a quarter report restrictions on their travel. The CIV data do not indicate how often these restrictions arise, nor the impact of these restrictions. While a number of studies suggest that a lack of transport impacts on young people's access to services, and on their participation, further data are required to more fully understand the significance of the reported restriction in travel on young people.



Outcomes for young people from the priority population groups

Young Indigenous people

The report identifies that young Indigenous Victorians are faring less well than their non-Indigenous peers on a range of outcomes, but there are some areas of improvement.

It is encouraging that the proportion of young Indigenous people with positive health ratings has increased nationally (between 2001 and 2006). However, Indigenous young Australians are still less likely (than non-Indigenous young people) to rate their health as excellent to very good. In Victoria, there is evidence to show that Indigenous young people have higher rates of dental decay, of hospitalisation and smoking.

Nationally, Indigenous people are more likely to be living in poverty. In Victoria, Indigenous people are homeless at a rate six times greater than their representation in the general population.

In terms of education, the findings are mixed. Indigenous students tend not to perform as well as other students at Victorian secondary schools. Indigenous students in Years 6 and 8 are more likely (than non-Indigenous students) to have missed one or more days of school and to report rarely or never enjoying school (14.2 per cent compared with 10.4 per cent of other students) (HNSS).

However, increasing numbers of Indigenous students are participating in VET (from 1999 to 2006). Indigenous young people who complete Year 12 are more likely to be engaged in VET, apprenticeships and traineeships and to be employed (than other students) but they are less likely to enrol in university.

It is a matter of continuing concern that Indigenous young people are overrepresented in the youth justice system, although the extent of overrepresentation is less marked than nationally. Young Indigenous people are also overrepresented in the child protection system. However, this is in part a factor of current work to actively identify those who identify as Indigenous. It is encouraging also that there are increases in the proportion of young people who are placed in care in accordance with the Aboriginal Child Placement Principle (ACPP).

Young people with a disability

There are limited indicator data relating to young people with a disability. Australian research shows that school participation rates of young people with a disability are slightly lower than for young people without a disability, and young people with a disability generally achieve less well in literacy and numeracy. However, research suggests that other factors, in addition to disability, influence the achievement of these young people, and in some instances young people with a disability perform better than their peers. National research also finds that young people with a disability are less likely to complete Year 12 or to study beyond Year 12. However, the participation of young Victorians with a disability in VET has doubled from 1999 to 2006.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) analysis of the ABS 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers found that around 8 per cent (20,000) of young people surveyed were permanently unable to work because of their disability. While 40 per cent of young people did not report any restrictions to employment, the remaining young people faced a number of barriers.

Studies in the United States have highlighted that children with disabilities are more likely to be abused. There are no population-based Australian data on this issue. In Victoria, analysis of data from a 2006 Department of Human Services survey of young people in residential care finds that young people with a disability were overrepresented among those in care. Young people with a disability in residential care were more likely to have entered care because of physical abuse or neglect, rather than emotional abuse.



CALD young people

Outcomes data relating to CALD young people are also limited.

Years 6 and 8 students from CALD backgrounds (in the HNSS) were more likely (than other students) to say that the things that they learn will be important in later life and more likely to say they thought their marks were better than others in their class. However, they were less likely to say that they had lots of chances to talk one on one with their teachers and to report that there are opportunities to be involved in deciding things like class activities or rules. The numeracy attainment of CALD students, at Year 7, is comparable with other students, although reading attainment is lower. There have been increases in the proportion of students from a non-English country of birth in VET.

HNSS students speaking a language other than English at home were less likely to meet recommended physical activity levels – and more likely to be overweight or obese than those who only spoke English at home.

Young people experiencing chronic disadvantage

National (and international) evidence points to a strong link between economic disadvantage and poor health and between education, employment and income. For example, young people from poorer socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to do less well at school, and to be involved in the child protection and youth justice systems. Young people with limited financial resources may also have limited access to leisure and recreational opportunities.

Data from the HNSS highlights some associations between socioeconomic disadvantage and poorer outcomes for Victorian young people, as follows:

- Years 6 and 8 students from lower socioeconomic groups in the HNSS had higher rates of overweight and obesity. These students were also more likely to report consuming high-energy foods and drinks.
- Years 6 and 8 students from lower socioeconomic groups were more likely to say they hated school (than those from higher SES groups) and less likely to report that they felt safe at school and that their marks were better than others in their class.

Young people in out-of-home care

Analysis of comparable data for cohorts of Victorian young people in out-of-home care and in the general student population show higher levels of absenteeism in out-of-home care students than in the general population, and lower levels of academic attainment in Years 7–10. Department of Human Services analysis of 2006 data also suggests that young people in residential care are more likely to be at risk of having behavioural and mental health problems than young people in the general population.

Outcomes for young people in metropolitan and rural areas

The health of people living in rural areas of Australia is often poorer than that of people living in major cities and other urban locations. These differences may be attributable to a range of factors including poorer access to health services and higher levels of socioeconomic disadvantage in rural areas.

This report provides evidence to suggest that young people's access to, and use of, health and other services in Victoria is an area of some concern. For example, young people in rural areas are less likely (than urban dwellers) to report visiting a dentist in the past 12 months. Young people in rural areas also report a range of barriers to their access to sexual health and mental health services. Fears of stigma and a lack of anonymity are important contributory factors to this.

Finally, young people in rural areas are particularly dependent on public transport for accessing key services, as well as educational, work and leisure activities. However, nearly half of young people (aged 18–24) in rural Victoria report having no public transport and nearly a third (29 per cent) of Victorian females have experienced restricted travel in the past 12 months. Research suggests that a lack of public transport also affects the opportunities of young people living on the outskirts of Melbourne. The available data do not indicate how often these restrictions arise nor the impact of these restrictions. Further data to better understand the nature and significance of the reported restriction in travel would be useful.



Introduction

The Victoria that today's young people live in is very different in many ways from the Victoria of earlier generations.

For example, Victoria, following national trends, has an increasingly ageing population and the number of young people is declining as a proportion of the total population. In addition, the structure and make-up of Victorian families is also changing as the number of single-parent families and the proportion of single-person households increases.

Many of today's young people in Victoria remain at home longer and are dependent on their families for longer periods. This trend is largely driven by increased participation in post-secondary school education. This means that many young people are reaching significant milestones such as partnering, purchasing houses and childbearing at later ages than previous generations.

While the majority of young Victorians are faring well, for a minority this is not the case and there are clear inequalities in outcomes for some young people. These inequalities are particularly notable for young Indigenous people. Despite great strides forward in technology and engagement in education, there remain many challenges that need to be overcome to ensure all young people are given the opportunities to reach their full potential.

A new approach for a new generation

The Victorian Government is committed to using evidence to drive planning and programs in response to the changing opportunities of Victoria's young people, and has been working on new approaches to ensure that the health, safety, wellbeing and learning of current and future generations of young people in Victoria is enhanced and ensured. The Government is mindful of and recognises the human rights of young people as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations 1989) and in the new Victorian Charter of Human Rights.

The Government is committed to improving the wellbeing of all young Victorians but is also focusing attention on four groups of children and young people: Indigenous children and young people; children and young people with a disability; CALD children and young people (including refugees); and children and young people affected by chronic disadvantage (including those in out-of-home care and those in the youth justice system). The available evidence suggests that these groups of young people are not faring as well as other young people, that they face different or a particular set of problems or that they are likely to require different approaches.

In line with this new approach, the Government has identified that the best way of improving outcomes for young people is through cross-government coordination: bringing departments and agencies together to focus on developing and achieving a shared community vision for Victoria's children and young people.

At the heart of this approach is the idea that the wellbeing of children and young people is the responsibility of the whole community. Government plays an important part through regulation, and through planning and funding services, as well as by providing the economic and social incentives to support children. But this work is ultimately a support for parents, families, communities and for young people themselves, as these are the major influences on young people's life experiences and outcomes.

Young people's voices

The Government recognises that the views of young people are critical to determining how they can best be supported. It is committed to ensuring that young people's voices are channelled into government and communities and the associated policy-making processes.



Monitoring and measuring how children and young people are faring

In order to monitor whether children and young people in Victoria are achieving the best possible outcomes – and to identify areas where more attention and investment is needed – the Victorian Government has identified 35 measurable aspects, (known as outcomes) of children's health, learning, development, safety and wellbeing.

These outcomes comprise an outcomes framework for children and young people aged 0–18, comprising outcomes that relate to the individual child or young person and to the context within which they live – the family, the community and society at large. Each outcome area has a set of associated indicators that can be used to measure progress towards the outcome. The outcomes (and their associated indicators) form the basis for the Victorian Child and Adolescent Monitoring System (VCAMS).

Along with the outcomes framework, the Government has released its youth policy – Future Directions that sets out 40 actions to help young people (aged 12–24) reach their full potential under five broad outcome areas, or policy goals:

- *Being safe and promoting safe behaviours* – young people feel safe in environments that matter to them and are able to negotiate decisions about their own safety.
- *Managing healthy, active and diverse lives* – young people choose healthy lives in communities that are inclusive and welcoming of their diversity.
- *Contributing and making a difference* – young people are valued in their communities for their contributions. Young people have opportunities, and are acknowledged and supported to participate in meaningful ways.
- *Having resources and making connections* – young people are resourced to build and gain access to networks in their communities. Services and resources are easier for young people to access.
- *Achieving potential through informed life choices* – young people are engaged with school, training or employment. They have options for staying connected to learning and are valued for their creative expression.

These five outcomes areas were shaped in consultations carried out by the Office for Youth with more than 1300 young Victorians across the state; they represent the goals or outcomes that young people, their families and their communities have endorsed as priorities. Each of the five Future Directions outcomes is accompanied by a set of lead measures and indicators so that progress towards the achievement of the policy goals can be assessed (Department for Victorian Communities, 2006).

Under the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act (2005)*, the Government established the Children's Services Co-ordination Board to review and report annually on the outcomes of government actions in relation to children aged up to 18 years. In addition, the Youth Affairs Interdepartmental Committee and the Children's Interdepartmental Committee monitor and coordinate action for children and young people across government.

This report on Victoria's young people

In the spirit of increased coordination and cooperation across government, this report has been produced as a Victorian Government collaboration between the Statewide Outcomes for Children Division in the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Office for Youth in the Department of Planning and Community Development.



The Statewide Outcomes for Children Division and the Office for Youth

The Statewide Outcomes for Children Division (now in the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development) was originally in the Office for Children in the Department of Human Services. The Office for Children was established in 2005 to lead action across government and within the community for children aged 0–18. The office was established to assess and improve the safety, health, development, learning and wellbeing of all Victoria's children – particularly those children and young people who are faring poorly, those at risk of harm and those at risk of harming others. The Office for Children moved into the newly created Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in August 2007.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development provides, manages and regulates a range of early childhood services as well as primary and secondary school education for all Victorian public schools as well as liaising and providing support to non-government schools. The Department works with schools and other educational providers to ensure that government services and policies reflect the needs of all young Victorians.

The Office for Youth was established in 2000 to lead the State Government's commitment to working with Victoria's diverse groups of young people, and the communities and organisations in which they are involved. The Office for Youth is concerned with young people aged 12–24.

This report focuses on how young Victorians aged 12–24 are faring against the government outcomes frameworks.

This period of youth (aged 12–24) is a time when young people develop from being dependent children to independent adults through a series of life-stage transitions. The process of transition to adulthood is made more complex by rapid social, environmental and technological changes.

Most young people make these transitions smoothly and the majority fare well as they move from childhood to young adulthood. However, some young people experience more difficulty. Where young people do not cope successfully, this can affect both their current and future wellbeing.

This report draws on available data to provide an evidence-based picture of the *safety, health, learning, development and wellbeing* of young Victorians and the extent to which Future Directions policy goals are being met.

Three types of data are drawn on to provide this assessment:

- *outcomes data* where the evidence allows us to clearly measure progress towards the outcomes framework and Future Directions goals
- *research* that highlights young people's own views and perspectives on how they are faring
- *case studies* presenting evidence about how innovative services and programs are contributing to improvements in young people's wellbeing – including evidence from the perspectives of service providers and young people themselves.

Data scope

The report focuses on what is known about the circumstances of *all* young Victorians and also asks what is known about the circumstances of young people from the four priority population groups:

- Indigenous young people
- young people with a disability
- young people from CALD backgrounds (including refugees)
- young people affected by chronic disadvantage (including those in out-of-home care).

Where data are available, the report also considers differences in outcome by:

- gender
- rural and metropolitan locations
- Victorian and national trends.



Report structure

The report is structured in six sections comprising a demography section and five themed data sections, as follows:

1. *Victoria's young people* – this includes information about the population of young Victorians, including the four priority population groups noted above.
2. *Physical and emotional health* – this describes the health status of young Victorians under the headings of young people's assessment of their health; physical health; staying healthy and healthy lifestyles; and emotional and mental health.
3. *Economic wellbeing, housing and homelessness* – this includes information about the resources that are available to young people, focusing on their financial wellbeing and on housing and homelessness.
4. *Learning, training, further education and employment* – this section focuses on outcomes relating to young people's secondary and post-compulsory education including educational attainment, participation and engagement in schooling. It also describes the pathways that are taken by young people after they leave school.
5. *Safety, protection and crime* – this section focuses on young people's perceptions of community safety, on injuries and deaths, on child abuse and family violence, on bullying, and on young people's involvement in crime (both as victims and perpetrators).
6. *Community engagement, civic participation and transport* – this final section explores young people's engagement in volunteering and other community activities and young people's participation in democratic decision making. Information is also included about young people's engagement in recreational, sporting and leisure activities, together with data about their use of transport.

Each of the five themed data sections includes a list of relevant outcomes from the government outcomes frameworks together with a summary of relevant human rights. Each data section is also accompanied by case studies. A list of all the report figures and tables is included in appendix 1.

Data sources

The report draws on a wide range of data from a variety of sources including data held by the Department of Human Services, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Department of Planning and Community Development, the Department of Infrastructure, the Department of Justice, and Victoria Police. The ABS is a key data source and 2006 Census findings are included in the demography and housing sections of the report.

We were also able to draw on the knowledge and expertise of senior academics in Victorian universities who contributed papers on their subject area.

The National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling was commissioned to provide a tailored analysis of poverty in Victoria included in the economic wellbeing section.

The Centre for Adolescent Health at the Royal Children's Hospital was commissioned to provide an analysis of data from the HNSS. This analysis provides important information on the health and social problems experienced by over 3500 young Victorians (in Years 6 and 8)¹ as well as data relating to the risk and protective factors that influence these problems.

The report also cites data from a number of national and Victorian surveys. Details of these are provided in appendix 2, together with some more information about the HNSS.

¹The majority of these young people were between 11 and 13 years-old.