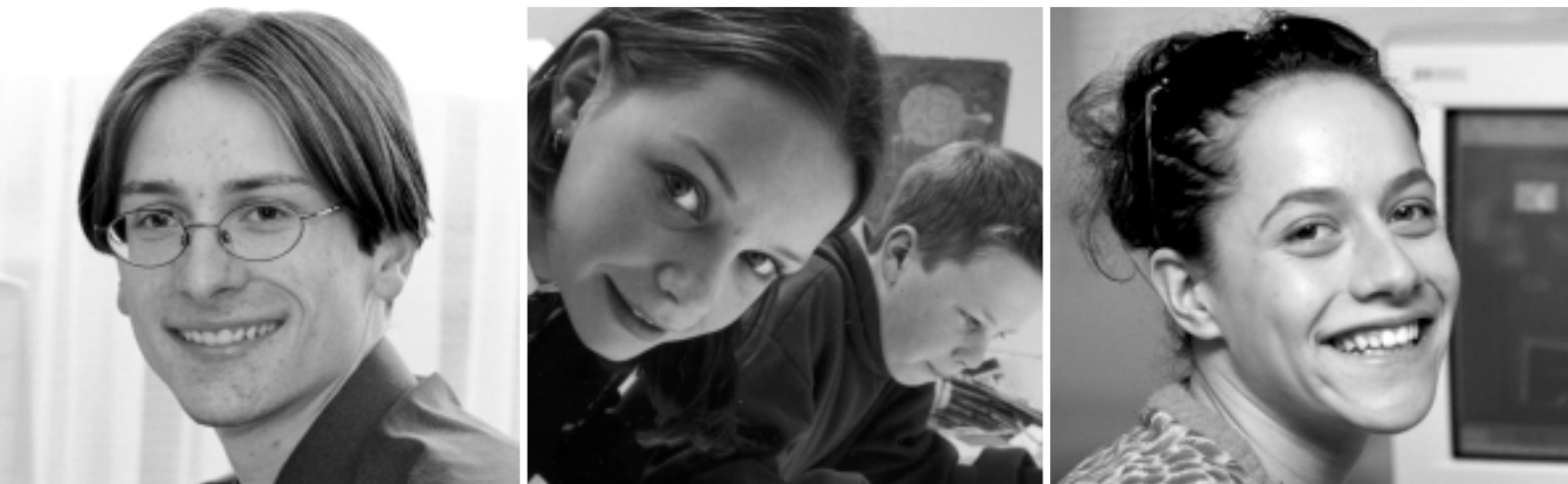


Youth 2001–02



Services for young Victorians aged 12–25 years include:

- policy and strategic advice to the Minister for Youth Affairs and the Government
- targeted programs and services, including the VYDP and FReeZA.

This output group includes services to young people and the provision of policy and strategic advice to the Minister for Youth Affairs. Both the programs and policy advice are designed to maximise opportunities for the development and well-being of all young Victorians.

Key Government objective

- Developing and leading whole-of-government initiatives to ensure effective outcomes for young Victorians.

Key Government outcomes

- Growing and linking all Victoria.
- Building cohesive communities and reducing inequalities.
- Promoting rights and respecting diversity.

Key results

- Developmental work continued on a framework for youth policy and program development, overseen by an interdepartmental committee.

- Fifteen Regional Youth Committees engaged young people in a variety of community-based activities and advised the Government on important issues affecting young people.
- Two youth peak bodies – the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic) and the Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues – provided policy advice and identified issues affecting young people.
- Three Victorian Youth Round Tables were held in 2001–02 in metropolitan and regional locations, providing young people with the opportunity to discuss issues directly with the Minister for Youth Affairs.
- FReeZA attracted over 97,000 young people to drug- and alcohol-free events in metropolitan and regional locations.
- Over 200 National Youth Week events took place across the State during April 2002.

Supplementary youth data appears in Appendix 2 on page 154.



Office for Youth

The Office for Youth has five main roles:

- a policy advisory role to the Minister for Youth Affairs
- a leadership role in coordinating Government policy development, planning and service provision for young people
- an advocacy role in Government with respect to the needs of young people
- participation in relevant state and national committees
- management and delivery of a number of youth programs.

Youth policy coordination

The Office for Youth is committed to promoting the interests of young people and working with young people, youth agencies and other Government departments to ensure that services provided to young people meet their needs.

The Office provides ways for young people to make their views known to the Government and supports the work of youth peak bodies and Regional Youth Committees.

The Office for Youth has seven youth liaison officers who work within the nine Department regions. The youth liaison officers support Regional Youth Committees and work with them to improve the provision of local youth services. Youth liaison officers ensure that local youth policy and service provision issues in metropolitan, rural and regional areas are brought to the attention of the Office and that information relating to Government youth initiatives is disseminated.

- forums, public meetings, conferences and working groups, providing opportunities for community members to hear from experts, share their own views and contribute to the work of the Committees
- development of new services and initiatives supporting young people
- research into youth needs.

Quarterly updates for individual Regional Youth Committees are posted on the Office for Youth website <www.youth.vic.gov.au>.

Framework for youth policy and program development

Work on developing the themes of *Respect: The Government's Vision for Young People* continued. It was overseen by an interdepartmental committee, ensuring that it reflected a whole-of-government approach. This work was informed by the contributions of young people and from people who work in the youth sector. The Government has identified four themes – involvement, learning and working, support and celebration – to focus its future efforts for the youth sector.

Youth peak bodies

The Office has responsibility for funding Victoria's two youth peak bodies – the YACVic and the Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues.

Youth Affairs Council of Victoria

The YACVic develops policy advice for all levels of government on issues affecting young people.

Performance measures: youth policy coordination

Measure	2001 target	2001 actual	Variance %	Comments
Quantity				
Regional Youth Committees	15	15	-	
Ministerial Youth Round Tables	4	4	-	Data relates to the 2001 calendar year.
Quality				
Ministerial satisfaction with policy advice	100%	90%	-10.0	

Regional Youth Committees

Appointed by the Minister for Youth Affairs, members of Regional Youth Committees are drawn from the community and Government sectors and reflect a diversity of knowledge and experience in addressing youth issues.

Victoria has a network of 15 Regional Youth Committees to provide advice to the Government on the issues and service needs of young people in their communities.

Regional Youth Committees promote and support:

- opportunities for young people to express their views and to contribute to the development of advice on youth policies, programs and services

Key organisations and individuals in youth-related sectors participate actively in the YACVic's work. The YACVic aims to heighten community awareness and understanding of youth issues. It ensures that Government programs and policies promote a positive image of young people and recognise the significant role young people have in the community.

Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues

The Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues provides advice to the Government and other youth agencies on the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse young people to ensure that youth policies and programs are inclusive of the needs of these young people.



Victorian Youth Round Tables allow young people to express their views to the Government on issues that affect them

Victorian Youth Round Tables

The Victorian Youth Round Tables provide a forum where young people can express their views. Attended by the Minister for Youth Affairs, the Round Tables aim to include young people in the development of Government programs and policies.

The Round Tables provide a means by which the Government listens to young people about:

- major issues affecting young people living in Victoria
- what programs and services available for young people in the community work well and in what way these can be improved
- what is needed to improve the well-being of young people in Victoria today
- their views on particular aspects of Government policy.

About 200 young people participated in the Round Tables during 2001-02. They represented a cross-section of the community and came from all over Victoria.

Each Round Table had a theme, which in 2001-02 included:

- Youth Perception and Identity in Rural and Regional Victoria (16 November 2001, Bendigo)
- Living in a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Society (11 December 2001, Melbourne)
- Speak Out about Sport (21 June 2002, Glen Waverley).

In 2002, a pilot Youth Round Table action team was established to enhance the level of youth participation and development of the program. The team comprised nine young people from across Victoria. They were selected to provide input to the development and implementation of Round Tables and to run a youth-driven Round Table.

Outcomes of the Round Tables are distributed to key members of the Government, who use the information when planning for programs and services that directly affect young people. Reports are distributed to Round Table participants, schools and youth agencies and are available online.

Commonwealth-State relations

The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) comprises State and Territory, Commonwealth and New Zealand education, employment, training and youth affairs ministers. It was established in 1994 to support coordination of information and strategic policy issues at a national level.

The MCEETYA Youth Taskforce is comprised of senior officers from relevant jurisdictions. It was established to support MCEETYA's work and is convened on a needs basis for particular tasks concerning young people.

In Victoria, the Office for Youth is responsible for coordinating advice on MCEETYA agenda items for the Minister for Youth Affairs. The Director of the Office for Youth is the Victorian member of the MCEETYA Youth Taskforce.

The Office is also represented on the National Youth Affairs Research Scheme steering committee. The scheme, a cooperative arrangement between the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments, meets a widely recognised need for youth-specific research. It operates by contracting researchers to undertake research into specific topics and then publishes the findings as part of the scheme's series of research publications.

A review conducted in 2001 recommended administrative changes to the scheme to address the problems of delays and to improve the quality of research reports and the research topic selection process. The recommendations were submitted to the July 2002 MCEETYA meeting in Auckland for endorsement.

Youth programs

The Office for Youth has responsibility for several programs that engage young people.



Performance measures: services to youth

Measure	2001 target	2001 actual	Variance %	Comments
Quantity				
Schools participating in VYDP	178	176	-1.1	
Total students participating in VYDP	5850	5775	-1.3	
New student intake to VYDP	1150	Not applicable	Not applicable	Growth funding was redirected to other initiatives. As a result, no new schools or students participated in the program.
FReeZA				
Funded agencies – rural and regional	33	34	+3.0	
Funded agencies – metropolitan	27	26	-3.7	
Event attendance	130,000	97,549	-25.0	FReeZA events are managed by funded local government and non-government agencies working with young people in their local area. The Government will continue to support FReeZA providers to encourage young Victorians to access this program.
Hits recorded on youth website	500,000	155,335	-68.9	Target represents website 'hits'. Actual data is the number of page impressions, which is the current measure of usage. Hits record a larger sample of web traffic.

Youth Services Program

In preparation for the transfer of the Youth Services Program from the Department of Human Services to the Office for Youth on 1 July 2002, the Office for Youth consulted the youth sector concerning the redevelopment of the program. The funding for the current suite of services was extended to December 2002.

Victorian Youth Development Program

The VYDP is a hands-on training initiative. It takes students out of the classroom and offers them opportunities to enhance youth leadership, team building, self-confidence and self-discipline. The program also promotes active citizenship and contributes to robust community building.

All participants learn the core components of accredited first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and complete the Duke of Edinburgh's Bronze Award. The VYDP is recognised as a leading model for engaging middle years students and conveying life-skills training.

As part of the VYDP, schools enter a partnership with one of several leading community organisations. There are 13 partnership options available – Australian Air Force cadets, Australian Army Cadet Corps, Australian Red Cross, Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association, Country Fire Authority, Guides Victoria and Scouts Australia, Parks Victoria, St John Ambulance, Surf Life Saving Victoria, Royal Life Saving Society Australia, Victoria Police, Naval Reserve Cadets and the Victorian State Emergency Service. SCOPE (formerly the Spastic Society) also works in conjunction with some service providers listed above.

There were 176 schools participating in the VYDP, including special, community and Koorie schools, that involved approximately 5775 Year 7–12 students in practical and fun learning opportunities.

FReeZA

FReeZA is an initiative that provides grants to local government and community agencies to run affordable, accessible and safe drug- and alcohol-free live music and cultural events in local communities. Using a youth development model, FReeZA events are run by young people for young people. FReeZA events provide opportunities for skill development and training as well as opportunities for employment pathways in music and entertainment-related industries.

The FReeZA program gives young people, particularly in rural and regional Victoria and outer Melbourne suburbs, a chance to organise their own entertainment. Through the FReeZA program, young people develop event-management skills and young musicians and DJs have an opportunity to perform live in their local regions.

Water-based training is one of many programs available through the VYDP



In 2001, there were 60 funded FReeZA agencies, over 480 events, more than 2000 volunteers and a 97,000 plus attendance at FReeZA events. Many FReeZA committees participated in National Youth Week 2002, staging live performances and showcasing young talent across Victoria.

Key achievements

- FReeZA events continue to attract large audiences across the State. The Rural City of Wodonga, an established FReeZA provider, hosted one of the largest single events ever run by a FReeZA committee. The event, an all-ages concert featuring the band Frenzal Rhomb and supported by local young bands, attracted over 1300 young people.
- FReeZA committees continue to stage successful events in small centres. FReeZA events, with average attendances of over 150 young people, have been staged in small and isolated communities such as Rawson, Bruthen, Rainbow, Birchip and Terang. These events frequently draw large crowds of enthusiastic teenagers from many kilometres away.
- FReeZA committees held events for young people as part of the Centenary of Federation celebrations and in acknowledgement of the International Year of Volunteers.

The Push

The Push is an independent, statewide youth music and entertainment skills development organisation funded through the Office for Youth.

The Push continues to provide FReeZA committees and young Victorian musicians with high-quality advice about event management and the music industry.

FReeZA provides safe drug- and alcohol-free events for young people and opportunities for them to be involved in the music and entertainment industry

Push On 2002, the premier all-ages event held at Moonee Valley Racecourse, was the finale of the statewide Battle of the Bands. In 2001-02, more than 36 FReeZA committees from across Victoria participated in staging a Push Start Battle of the Bands event. Eight new and emerging acts were profiled and showcased through this developmental program.

National Youth Week 2002

National Youth Week is a joint initiative supported by the Commonwealth, State/Territory and local governments. It aims to promote the positive contribution that young people make to the community and focuses on providing an opportunity for young people to develop activities and events for themselves.

Young people embraced the theme 'Bring it On' and participated in activities that reflected the diverse interests of Victoria's young people.

Victoria's National Youth Week grants program funded 111 events across Victoria.

One of the key factors in the success of National Youth Week is that it is a partnership initiative, with local agencies and schools adding considerable value to National Youth Week events. This partnership approach, involving youth groups, ethnic groups, local government and FReeZA committees across Victoria, ensured that National Youth Week highlighted the creative and energetic abilities of young people in their communities.



A Commonwealth, State, Territory and Local Government Initiative

Over 210 National Youth Week events took place across Victoria from 7-14 April 2002

Outlook

In 2002-03, the Office for Youth will:

- release the Government's framework for youth policy and program development
- continue consultation with young people so that their views can be heard and responded to
- lead and influence whole-of-government policy and program development for young people
- promote alignment between the Government's priorities for young people and the activities of other key youth sector stakeholders.

