

Commissioner for
Children and Young
People's Regional
Engagement

Hopes & Dreams

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Commissioner
for Children &
Young People

Hopes and Dreams – Commissioner for Children and Young People’s Regional Engagement

Commissioner for Children and Young People

Thank you to all the children and young people who engaged with the activities so readily and shared their experiences, insights and suggestions with me.

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Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

The SA Commissioner for Children and Young People acknowledges the unique contribution of Aboriginal culture and heritage to South Australian society. Although participant details were not recorded specifically in relation to cultural identity or background, a significant number of children and young people who took part in the consultations identified as Aboriginal. For the purposes of this report the term ‘Aboriginal’ encompasses South Australia’s diverse language groups and also recognises people of Torres Strait Islander descent. The use of the term ‘Aboriginal’ in this way is not intended to imply sameness between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, though acknowledging similarities do exist.

Regions of South Australia & Helen's Tour Locations

The Commissioner's Tour Locations

Note: As part of the 2017 Listening Tour the Commissioner visited Mount Gambier, Port Pirie, Port Augusta, Port Lincoln, Fleurieu Peninsula, the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands and the Adelaide Plains. The 2018 Hopes and Dreams tour locations were chosen to build on the regional engagement already undertaken.

	Adelaide Hills		Murray & Mallee
	Barossa, Light & Lower North		Northern Adelaide
	Eastern Adelaide		Southern Adelaide
	Eyre & Western		Western Adelaide
	Far North		Yorke & Mid North
	Fleurieu & Kangaroo Island		
	Limestone Coast		

5
Ceduna

6
Whyalla

3
Yorke

1
Riverland

7
Barossa

8
Mid-Murray

Adelaide Hills

4

2
Murray Bridge

Hopes and Dreams – Commissioner's Message


In 2017 I undertook a Listening Tour of South Australia asking children and young people about the things that matter and what would make life better for them.

The Listening Tour engaged children and young people from across metro Adelaide and six regional centres. The themes that emerged were consistent in terms of what is important to children and young people, what they want to change and what they want me to prioritise. There were, however, some noticeable differences between children and young people in regional/rural South Australia and metropolitan areas, despite the obvious differences in relation to access to internet, fast food outlets and public transport.

Regional children and young people also spoke about the benefits of freedom of movement and easy access to outdoor pursuits.

They told me about the importance of feeling proud of where they lived, feeling good about what was around them and how visitors perceived their town. I heard that they didn't necessarily want to leave their towns when they were older, but many felt there would be more opportunities available to them if they did.

I felt these themes warranted further exploration. Therefore in 2018, I undertook a number of consultations across regional South Australia to understand the hopes and dreams of South Australia's children and young people living in regional areas, and what support they need to realise them.



To have hopes and dreams is to look towards the future positively and to see opportunity in challenges. How hopeful you are has a lot to do with your:

- Connection to others
- Sense of competence and confidence
- Feelings of belonging
- Trust in those around you



Helen Connolly

Commissioner for
Children and Young People

As a community we can support our children and young people to have a sense of hopefulness for the future. We can do this by understanding them, finding out what's going on in their lives and by committing to standing up for them.

I asked the young people who took part in these consultations to not only think about the big dreams they have but also the smaller ones, like winning the grand final or learning to play a new tune on the piano. The responses reflected the here and now, and the distant future. Snippets from these conversations have been incorporated into this report to get a sense of what was said.

The process was intended to be about starting a conversation with children and young people in regional South Australia, getting to know them and letting key people in their communities know what they believe could help them achieve their hopes and dreams.

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink, appearing to read 'Helen Connolly'.

Helen Connolly
Commissioner for Children and Young People

Introduction

The Hopes and Dreams regional engagement project commenced in February 2018. Its aim was to find out what children and young people living in South Australia hope for, and what support they need to help realise their dreams.

After hearing from regional kids about the importance of feeling connected, having opportunities and being hopeful about the future, we decided we needed to learn more. The Commissioner wanted to know what young people would like local decision makers to do in their towns and centres to increase opportunity for all children and young people, and what those changes might look like.

We visited the Riverland, Murray Bridge, Adelaide Hills, the Yorke Peninsula, Ceduna, Barossa Valley, Whyalla and Mid-Murray regions.

We met with (611) children and young people, through (46) sessions held in many different settings. We met with children and young people aged between 0 and 26 years of age, from various cultural backgrounds and of differing abilities and circumstances.

The consultations were fun and engaging, using activities that facilitated discussion. The activities were flexible, allowing for multiple methods of engagement and choice for participants. We adjusted the activities according to the particular needs of a group and the setting they were in.

The Commissioner asked participants to think about their hopes and dreams; what they are, what they wish for when they are 25 and what decision makers should do to help them achieve their goals. The Commissioner told participants that emerging themes will be shared with local leaders and decision makers. Further work will also include discussions with government and non-government organisations to provide more opportunities for the voices of children and young people to help create a state that they want to live in.

This report provides snippets from each of the regions as discussion starters for local communities.

Through this process, it is hoped that we can:

1. Place the interests of regional children and young people front and centre in everyday life and increase their visibility to leaders, decision makers and regulatory frameworks.
2. Strengthen children and young people's participation in society through engaging them directly and amplifying their voices.

What Was Common

There were common themes across regions and ages. Most wanted to have a good home, live with people they cared about and get a good job. But when asked to describe what these things meant to them as individuals, we learnt far more about the aspirations of regional children and young people.

We learnt that many of them are not hopeful about achieving their dreams because the opportunities they believe they need are either not available in the country or they lack the means to access those opportunities. There was a sense that living in regional South Australia had an impact on their hopes and this had an effect on their dreams. Given the relationship between hope and aspiration on motivation and achievement, it is critical that state and regional leaders work on building hope and aspiration in children and young people as a priority. How to do this in ways that are meaningful for each community starts with engaging children and young people in each region.

Across the regions we heard that participants wanted to finish their schooling and get good grades. For many the focus was on getting a high ATAR and going on to do further study. The study options most talked about were often university, TAFE and various training organisations, but there was limited understanding of the differences between these options. Many participants talked about post school study being located outside their community.

Many participants talked about getting their driver's licence and buying a car. We heard that issues with transport locally impacts significantly on their lives, whether getting a job or travelling to the nearest place of study. They were concerned about relying on others to drive, and public transport options were extremely limited. We heard young people talk about how they think this is a clear disadvantage for regional kids.

Job prospects and career choices were a topic of concern across all regions. Whilst many participants had aspirations about specific career types, they were concerned that lack of access to the relevant subjects at school, work experience and further education, as well as competition from city kids would prevent them from realising these dreams.

Participants of all ages and in all regions raised issues around internet access. The main issues were lack of reliable or affordable internet and limited free Wi-Fi locations. These issues were discussed as direct and high impacting barriers to education, online training courses, job seeking and connecting socially with others.

Participants of all ages in all regions wanted more shops in their local area. We heard that having limited choice in relation to retail and fast food was a significant difference between the experiences of growing up in the country versus growing up in the city. Participants said they would like Kmart, Target, McDonalds, KFC and various clothing stores. We heard that travelling significant distances to buy everyday items was a stress in terms of time and cost of transport. They also wanted to enjoy the 'wandering around the shops' experience.

So much of what we heard from regional children and young people could be seen as no different to the experience of children and young people throughout history with regional communities traditionally having had less choice, less material resources and less opportunities.

However, on the upside the current generation of children in our regions are as globally connected as they are locally connected.

They have more than a perception of what is happening outside their community. They can see it in real time and they increasingly have expectations that their communities understand their needs and seek to address them.

As part of a global youth generation, regional young people in South Australia know more than prior generations did about what they can achieve and about what they expect from leaders in their community, including how they want to be treated.

This presents a significant opportunity for community leaders to harness the enthusiasm and support of children and young people to feel connected to their communities, to be excited about its future, and committed to being part of its sustainability.

Young people want their local communities to support them to be:

- Connected
- Creative
- Confident



Recommendations for All Regions

Each community is different and unique and will need to respond to the voices of local children and young people in their own way. These are some common themes that have emerged across all regions visited.

Connected Young People

Being physically and emotionally connected to peers and able to virtually connect is critical for young people. It is an important part of identity formation. Connection is about having spaces and places to meet to share experiences and learn skills. The value of a space where young people feel they have ownership and can direct what is happening and influence decisions was raised across all communities.

Recommendation

Regional communities should look at what space they could make available for young people to 'be' in. This could be part of an existing space. Many libraries are looking at how to have part of their space more youth centric. Other public facilities should also be considered and work with local young people to identify appropriate local places.



Connected Communities

For young people, part of learning to be confident, independent and responsible is linked to a capacity to work and play independently. In the regions, access to transport that is not reliant on parents is a critical transition to young adulthood. For those who are older, this is about obtaining a driving license, but for younger children it is about independently using public transport to move between towns.

Recommendation

There are many examples around the world of creative ways to address regional transport difficulties including using rideshare systems and giving young people support to get a driving licence.

Regional communities should work with young people and service clubs to explore unique solutions for transport issues, utilising the ideas of young people and technology in combination with the time and skills of older generations.

Creative Communities

Children and young people across all regions spoke about the role of sport in their lives. Even for those who didn't play, it provided opportunities to socialise. They are however concerned about the challenges for those who don't play sport and are not included. They spoke about wanting creative passions to be celebrated and supported – in particular art, design, drama, music and dance. They want creative arts to be more valued, more accessible and recognised, and said it should be seen as a career path. They said there should be a way of supporting these activities to be included in communities and to have their skills recognised. They said this was a way for them to feel connected, empowered and supported.

Recommendation

Regional communities could consider opportunities to advocate for arts/creative based programs in partnership with local youth agencies or service clubs, and create a local art prize for young artists in partnership with the regional newspaper exhibiting entries in Council Chambers.

Confident Communities

Regional children and young people want to live in a place they are proud of and to be recognised for the ideas, perspectives, enthusiasm, skills and value they bring.

They want to participate. They want people to listen and they want their ideas considered; to feel validated and that they belong. This builds a sense of optimism and positivity for the future. A confident community is one that involves the voices, opinions and solutions of children and young people as consumers, contributors and partners.

Recommendation

All regional communities should find ways to seek feedback and views directly from young people. This could be in the form of formal meetings like a Youth Advisory Committee but this is not the only strategy. Equally important are less formal meetings convened to discuss a specific issue. Other inclusive ideas they mentioned were having message boards in public places or asking groups that currently work with young people to support them to facilitate conversations about local community issues.

Oh the places we've been!

Visiting communities, listening, experiencing and understanding how location uniquely influences community.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Oh the places we've been!', located in the bottom right corner of the page.





Murray &
Mallee Region



What We Did

The Commissioner for Children and Young People visited Loxton, Barmera, Berri and Glossop and met with 123 children and young people aged between four and 20 years old. We held nine consultation sessions in primary, secondary and special schools, as well as with Girl Guides, FLO students and young people doing it tough.

What Are Your Hopes & Dreams?

Participants in the Riverland had hopes for a wide variety of careers. Some were very specific - wanting to be a digital media programmer, a doctor, owning a photography business, a horse trainer, lawyer, hairdresser and mechanic. Whilst others were more general - wanting to work in environmental science, work for Disability SA, or own their own restaurant. Many felt they would need to move away from the Riverland to achieve their aspirations.

Sport and Travel also featured, with many having goals to play better netball or to start a women's soccer team. Travel destinations of choice varied from wanting to take their future children to Disneyland, to visiting the set of Home and Away in Sydney.

Participants also talked about their wishes in regards to music, arts and other recreational pursuits.

We heard that having the opportunity to learn Japanese, join the Duke of Edinburgh Awards, or continue to play the trumpet were very important aspects for future happiness.

Population: 31,507

Median Age: 44.5

Indigenous population: 3.1%

Age under 18 population: 22.7%

Age 19 – 24 population: 5.7%

Most common industry and occupation: Grape growing and Labourers

Regional Data

Reflections

Conversations unique to the Riverland included young people's relationships with General Practitioners. We heard that getting a regular GP, especially a female GP, was difficult. Young people told us that there is a need for GPs with more expertise in working with young people. We also heard that they wanted more choice of doctors to enable them to see someone different to their parents. We heard that for specialists, young people often had to travel to the city and this was difficult due to lack of affordable and accessible transport options. Young people spoke about their concerns regarding privacy and confidentiality in small communities and the significant impact this had on their sexual health.

Participants also talked about boredom and the need for more things to do for young people and places they can go that don't rely on travelling to major cities. They talked about younger children, and adults having a reasonable number of options but few once you were out of primary school.

Participants in the Riverland also had a real sense of wanting more help for those doing it tough in their community. Some suggested the need for "homeless shelters to expand throughout the town" some wanted decision makers to "help people with disabilities more, financially and by changing the awareness of them" and one participant said they wanted to see "more talk about mental health, especially male mental health".

- Help young people get their L / P plates
- More TAFE or university course options
- Social centre for Youth
- Waterslide and Swimming Pool
- Art Gallery/place for young people to share their art/photos
- More local events / festivals for music and concerts
- Mentors that have the jobs you want to come and talk to you

What needs to change in the Riverland to help you realise your dreams?

Workshop Results



Where to From Here? (In Summary)

Given this region's concerns about mental, sexual and physical health it is important that these issues are explored further. This could benefit from a review of services/resources across the region, including what school based sexual health lessons are being held.

A regional forum on gaps and solutions from the perspectives of young people identified in partnership with the country Public Health Network, Department of Education and non-government service providers, would be a great starting point.

Murray &
Mallee Region



What We Did

The Commissioner for Children and Young People visited Murray Bridge and met with 60 children and young people aged between 0 and 25 years old. We conducted six consultation sessions in primary and secondary schools, a Crèche and a Youth Reference Group.

What Are Your Hopes & Dreams?

Participants in Murray Bridge were varied in their responses regarding aspirations. Some found it difficult to imagine what they might like to do, whilst others talked about wanting to become an interior designer, teacher, lawyer, AFL umpire, childcare worker, chef and a social worker. One wanted to become a mechanic in the Army.

There was a clear sense that future jobs, or further study needed, would require moving out of Murray Bridge. Although Adelaide is not far geographically, participants felt the commute would not be possible. With many stating that they would prefer to move out of the region to pursue their goals. Some, however, said that moving to the city was a concern as they had never lived in the city without the support of their families, with the pressure of living independently spoken about as a major reason against moving from the area to complete studies. This concern seemed to be a factor in considering future plans.

Population: 17,559
Median Age: 40
Indigenous population: 5.5%
Age under 18 population: 22.1%
Age 19 – 24 population: 8.7%
Most common industry and occupation: Meat processing and labourers

Regional Data

Reflections

We heard from participants in Murray Bridge that they wanted to be fit, healthy and happy and that “having friends for life” was important. We also heard that negative influences in the community and the community’s ‘bad’ reputation had an impact on being able to achieve these goals. Participants talked about the impact of substance abuse, unemployment and mental health on young people in their community. Participants talked about these issues being a community problem that affected how hopeful individuals and groups of young people feel about their future.

Participants said there are very few things for young people to do in the region. They talked about local opportunities to dance, progress their musical talents, and learn new things like skydiving and swimming. We heard a lot about how important it is to your overall happiness both now and in the future, to be able to pursue what you love in terms of art, music and drama.

Participants in Murray Bridge were concerned about the large divide between those doing okay and those who are not. They talked about needing more support services for young people, including a local drug and alcohol rehabilitation place and more inclusion for people with a disability.

- A local TAFE with full range of course options
- More work opportunities for people that can't drive to the city
- Short term skills based workshops
- More movies at the cinema
- Do something about drugs
- More things for young people to do

What needs to change in Murray Bridge to help you realise your dreams?

Where to From Here? (In Summary)

Participants spoke about needing more support for those doing it tough, in particular substance abuse issues, mental health concerns and feelings that their community is fractured. Participants want to be part of developing strategies to address these issues and advocating for change. Engaging young people in the region to explore what they think should happen to change perception of the area would be a starting point.

We suggest that local regional development work directly with interested young people to develop a group to design and deliver a solution focussed forum. CCYP is available to support such an initiative.



Workshop
Results

Yorke

Yorke
Peninsula



What We Did

The Commissioner for Children and Young People visited Ardrossan, Maitland, Moonta and Kadina and met with 78 children and young people aged between six and 17 years old. We conducted six consultation sessions in primary and secondary schools, as well as one with a Scouts group and Flexible Learning Options (FLO) students.

Population: 25,202

Median Age: 52.3

Indigenous population: 2.69%

Age under 18 population: 18.81%

Age 19 – 24 population: 4.23%

Most common industry and occupation: Other grain growing and managers

Regional Data

What Are Your Hopes & Dreams?

Participants in the Yorke Peninsula had diverse ideas on what they wanted to do for work in the future. We heard about becoming a teacher, a farmer, an astronaut, a midwife, a marine biologist, comedian, a gemmologist and a tattoo artist, plus many more.

Participants felt the access to further education required for dream careers was an issue, as was transport access to various opportunities. We also heard participants talk about all sorts of places in the world that they wanted to visit, including Morocco, Bora Bora, Japan and the Antarctica to see Penguins.

Participants had aspirations to be in the movies, participate in the Olympics as a professional runner and to be rich so they can help homeless people. Participants also wanted to have fun, be able to draw, be part of a band and do what they love. We heard that there needed to be more access to lessons, tutors and classes that helped develop talents in these areas. We heard that if you want to do things other than play sports or join the Guides or Scouts that there weren't too many other options available. Participants said to be a success you need a teacher, an instrument and space; not just talent.

Reflections

The positive impact of tourism was a particular theme of participants in each town we visited on the Yorke Peninsula. It was interesting to reflect on the influence of tourism on aspirations, particularly in relation to careers and places in the world children and young people would like to visit.

There was significant variation between participants in the smaller towns. Those with less tourism felt they had less access and less choice with regards to further education and career choice. Participants in the larger towns expressed more general optimism with respect to options and choices. They saw transport and education as being the keys to possibility. One participant suggested that if open access was available for any subject, young people could achieve anything they wanted from the Yorke Peninsula.

Many participants talked about wanting more things for kids to do locally, and said that there were many restrictions on choice in relation to sports and recreation. They felt that things were either too far away, mostly in Adelaide, and that travelling there wasn't affordable or possible for some.

Many participants talked about wanting the fun activities available in the city to be made available locally. For example, Bounce, skate parks, a cinema, a motor cross track and an Arcade.

- More activities after school and things to do
- More TAFE courses
- Clubs – chess clubs, technology clubs, gaming clubs, art classes
- A homeless shelter
- More doctors, private specialists and sexual health doctors
- Better hospital – If serious, able to be seen without flying to Adelaide

What needs to change in Yorkes to help you realise your dreams?

Where to From Here? (In Summary)

Participants wanted there to be more equality of opportunity across the peninsula and the benefits of the 'tourist towns' to be spread more evenly. They are concerned that the smaller towns miss out.

A focus on ensuring that all towns have something for young people in terms of holiday programs, clubs and events would be a good starting point.

Workshop Results





Adelaide
Hills



What We Did

The Commissioner for Children and Young People visited Gumeracha and Birdwood and met with 23 children and young people aged between 11 and 18 years old. We conducted two consultation sessions at a primary and high school.

What Are Your Hopes & Dreams?

Participants in the area talked about a variety of career aspirations, including wanting to be an electrician, a vet, a genetic scientist, a dentist, an illustrator and one participant wanted to become a carpenter and build houses for the poor.

Participants talked about the importance of obtaining their driving licence to achieve independence.

Further education at either TAFE or university were seen as very accessible. They did not see the distance to Adelaide as a significant barrier, although some thought it might be good to have a campus that was closer by. They did not speak about moving away from the community to pursue future aspirations.

Although sport featured in many participant's hopes for the future, it was mostly in regards to continuing to play what they were already playing, rather than trying new things or getting access to something they cannot currently do. There were also some high level aspirations such as becoming an Olympic netballer and a Wimbledon tennis player.

Population: 71,892
Median Age: 42
Indigenous population: 0.8%
Age under 18 population: 25%
Age 19 – 24 population: 6.6%
Most common industry and occupation: Hospitals and Professionals

Regional Data

Reflections

Community volunteering was a unique part of the conversations in this region. Participants spoke about joining the CFS, whilst others wanted to help out at the local football club canteen. We also heard that coaching children's sports teams and raising money for the school are things they like to do and see as a part of their future.

The Adelaide Hills young people felt connected to the city. They spoke about regular visits to the city with their families. They also spoke about a high number of tourists and visitors to the region and public transport that facilitated independent access to sporting and cultural events in Adelaide.

Although access to further education did not seem to appear to be seen as a barrier to where they work in the future, future job opportunities were seen as an issue. Participants felt that there were a limited number of options for work in the area if you didn't want to work in health or education, as a tradie or teacher. They did however feel that you could still live in the hills and commute to other areas.

What needs to change in the Adelaide Hills to help you realise your dreams?

- More opportunity for country kids to be recognised in sport
- A local library
- Keep creating new jobs
- Have opportunities for local work experience – in career of choice
- Safer roads and over taking spots



Where to From Here? (In Summary)

Young people in the area expressed an interest in volunteering in their community. We heard that being actively involved with charities and helping out around various causes was something they wanted to do. Participants wanted more information on the opportunities available to them to get involved and had contradictory information on which charities

took on younger age volunteers. A local community volunteer expo could be a way for information to be shared and for accurate information with regards to the age limitations on volunteering to be explained, particularly in the popular animal and environment charities.

Eyre &
Western



Ceduna



What We Did

The Commissioner for Children and Young People visited Ceduna and Koonibba and met 122 children and young people aged between four and 25 years old. We conducted seven consultation sessions in schools, Children and Family Centres, and Youth Hubs.

What Are Your Hopes & Dreams?

Participants in Ceduna and Koonibba talked a lot about education related goals, including getting good grades, having 100% attendance and getting a scholarship to attend school in Adelaide. We heard that finishing Year 12 and going to university was also a goal for many, and they were clear that this would mean moving to Adelaide.

Participants talked about wanting to become a police officer, work in child care, be a scuba diver instructor, marine biologist, hairdresser and anime artist. Participants said that all of the study, training and opportunity for these careers were described as being 'away'.

Participants in Ceduna talked more about wanting to travel around Australia, although some still wanted to travel overseas including Miami, Russia, and America. Participants talked a lot about wanting more to do; trampoline parks, a flying fox, a swimming pool, a skate park and a new playground were all on the wish list. We also heard that there were a lot of sports related aspirations, including wanting to be a football player.

We heard that culture, being on country and being connected to community was very important. For many participants this was more important than pursuing aspirations that took them away from their families and community. We heard that hunting, walking in the bush after school and looking for snakes and lizards were just some of the things they enjoyed.

Population: 3,408

Median Age: 39

Indigenous population: 21.7%

Age under 18 population: 26%

Age 19 – 24 population: 6.8%

Most common industry and occupation: Combined Primary & Secondary education and managers

Regional Data

Reflections

Participants in Ceduna and Koonibba talked a lot about feeling connected in their community, and the importance of knowing a lot of people and knowing where you come from. They were concerned about those doing it tough, including better access to housing for young people who need it.

We also had some unique conversations regarding reputation. We heard that your reputation and what adults think of you has an impact on whether you get a job or not. This was especially in relation to part time work whilst still at school. We heard that 'who you know' matters, and that certain people

get certain jobs, while those from the 'wrong family' miss out. This made it difficult for some young people to be their own person and to prove themselves. Participants talked about this in relation to who your family is and your cultural background.

Participants talked a lot about jobs. We heard that there are not many jobs available locally. We also heard that the jobs that are available are limited in terms of choice and are hard to get. For those participants who were strongly connected to their families and community it was easy to see how the choice of moving away from family to pursue future opportunities was difficult. It also meant that many of the dreams were grounded in what was available locally.

- An art studio for young people
- Youth Shed to be open more / Expand the Youth Hub
- Cheaper flights
- Army Cadets
- Music Festival
- Scouts
- More activities on weekends

What needs to change in Ceduna to help you realise your dreams?



Where to From Here? (In Summary)

Participants in Ceduna and Koonibba wanted their youth spaces to be more accessible. They wanted them to be open longer and to have more options in terms of activities, support and programs available. Both youth spaces provided more than a place for young people to go; they were important in

supporting them to be proud of their identity, and for older participants, as an opportunity to contribute to the community. Expanding their reach would ensure that younger children could also attend. The need for more services and supports for 8-12 year olds was seen as critical.



A Pool would make
Koonibba better.
I'm a girl and
I'm 9 years old
and put a playground
here please.

Workshop
Results

Help the homeless



Eyre &
Western



What We Did

The Commissioner for Children and Young People visited Whyalla, Whyalla Norrie, Whyalla Playford and Whyalla Stuart and met with 94 children and young people aged between four and 26 years old. We conducted eight consultation sessions in primary and secondary schools. We met with FLO students, a Youth Advisory Committee and a drama group.

What Are Your Hopes & Dreams?

Participants in Whyalla had varied career aspirations, whilst some needed encouragement to think beyond good ATARs and getting into university. Others talked about their hopes to become a robotic engineer, a comic book author, to work for NASA, and as a teacher for autistic children. None of these careers were seen to be available in Whyalla, nor was the further study needed for them available nearby. Many of the participants intended to leave Whyalla to pursue their future goals.

There were a few who wanted to travel, visit family in Switzerland, and explore ancient Egypt.

Participants in Whyalla wanted to act and sing, learn languages, and have opportunities to perform in musical theatre. Again participants did not feel any of these things would be possible living in Whyalla.

Population: 21,997

Median Age: 39.5

Indigenous population: 4.2%

Age under 18 population: 24.1%

Age 19 – 24 population: 7.4%

Most common industry and occupation:
Iron smelting and steel manufacturing and technicians and trades workers.

Regional Data

Reflections

Participants in Whyalla expressed concerns for young people in their community. They talked about the lack of further education and employment opportunities but also issues around accessing housing, safe places for them to go at night time, and the need for improvements to the local school curriculum. Participants talked about there being a divide in the community; where you lived impacted on how people saw you, and you only got part time work if you knew someone.

Participants who had professional sporting aspirations did not believe their facilities, trainers or standard of competition provided them with what they needed to improve their skills or enable them to achieve their goals. They felt that if they did not move to the city, or have family who could transport them frequently, they would not be able to pursue these dreams, even if they had the capability.

- Movie theatre / Bounce / Inflatable world
- Music and acting schools
- More wheelchair access
- Playgrounds for little kids and cafes
- More things to do around town for people with ability issues
- More community youth groups
- More mental health services which are free and easily accessed

What needs to change in the Whyalla to help you realise your dreams?

Where to From Here? (In Summary)

Participants talked about wanting more opportunity for part time work to be exposed to different job options prior to going to university. They talked about wanting more work experience, occurring more frequently, for longer, and in different industries and roles. Work experience was described as a way to build skills and confidence, and a chance to be inspired.

The local business community could look at working with high schools to provide a structured work experience program for all kids in Whyalla. This could showcase what is available locally and support the employment opportunities of those without strong family networks.



Barossa



Barossa, Light
& Lower North



What We Did

The Commissioner for Children and Young People visited Nuriootpa, Tanunda and Light Pass and met with 67 children and young people aged between 7 and 20 years old. We conducted five consultation sessions in primary and secondary schools, as well as one with a group of young carers.

What Are Your Hopes & Dreams?

Participants in the Barossa Valley had some really creative aspirations, with some wanting to work for Marvel or Lego, be a full time DJ, an author and work in the film industry. Others wanted to become an analytical scientist, lawyer, farmer, police officer and journalist.

We heard a lot about having little opportunity to pursue your talents locally if you were artistic or creative; particularly in areas such as drawing anime, 3D animation and musical theatre. Participants talked about sports and fitness related goals, although not to the extent of other regions. We heard that young people wanted to continue to play basketball, football and soccer, but they also wanted to do Pilates, kickboxing and gymnastics.

Population: 23,558

Median Age: 44

Indigenous population: 0.9%

Age under 18 population: 23.5%

Age 19 – 24 population: 5.4%

Most common industry and occupation: Wine & other alcoholic beverage manufacturing and labourer

Regional Data

Reflections

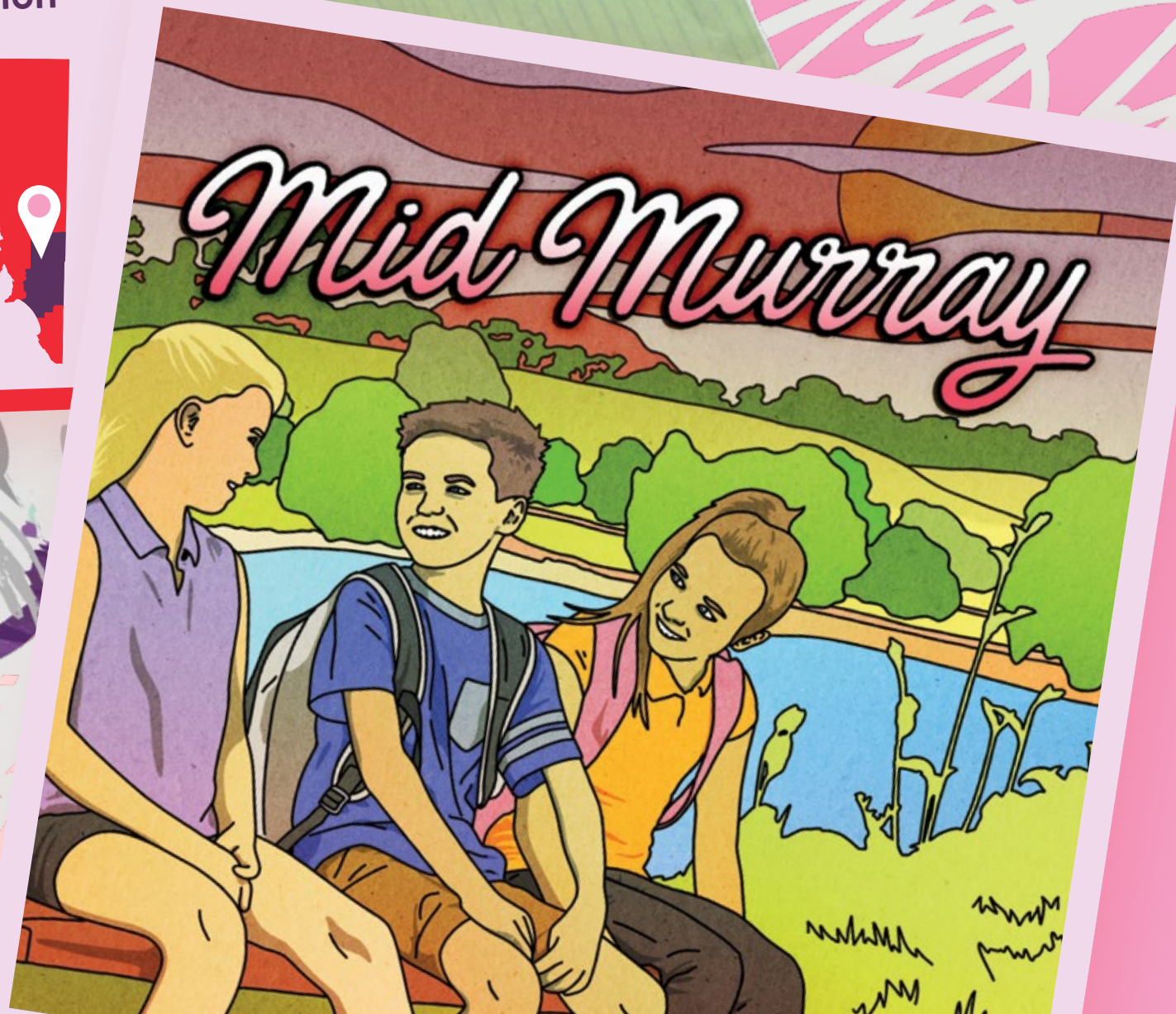
What needs to change in the Barossa Valley to help you realise your dreams? Although there was a sense they would need to leave the Barossa to pursue further education for most careers, many participants also suggested they would come back to live in the Barossa when they were older. We heard that there are plenty of opportunities in the wine industry, tourism, hospitality or farming, but for those interested in other areas options are limited.

We also heard that young people in the Barossa wanted more mentoring, work experience choice, and leadership opportunities. They wanted to be more involved at a younger age in local decision making, and suggested that local politicians should visit schools to hear from children about issues that concern them. Participants wanted more “support for mental health”, and for educating their community to be more accepting of difference. We heard that being included and welcomed impacts not only on how you feel about yourself, but also your ability to hope and dream, and take up the opportunities available to you.

- Basketball Courts
- Bigger library with books
- Safer footpaths and roads
- Cheaper and easier to get a driving licence
- A more accepting community
- Affordability
- Help homeless people
- A real gymnasium

What needs to change in the Barossa to help you realise your dreams?

Murray &
Mallee Region



What We Did

The Commissioner for Children and Young People visited Swan Reach, Cambrai and Mannum and met with 44 children and young people aged between 10 and 17 years old. We conducted three consultation sessions in primary and secondary schools.

What Are Your Hopes & Dreams?

Participants in the mid-Murray region talked about what they would like to acquire: a house, pets, a five seater ute and a private jet. They also talked about wanting to become a professional YouTuber, join the Army, be an architect, builder, teacher, farmer and mechanic.

We also heard about hopes to become a motocross racer and a famous singer. Some participants wanted to travel, this included visiting Paris, New York, Bora Bora, and Canada to see snow. Others wanted to find true love and enjoy life.

Sporting aspirations didn't factor as highly as in other regions, but opportunities to pursue acting, singing and music were features of participants' hopes for their short and long term futures.

Population: 8,642
Median Age: 51
Indigenous population: 2.4%
Age under 18 population: 16.6%
Age 19 – 24 population: 5.1%
Most common industry and occupation: Supermarket and grocery stores and managers

Regional Data

Reflections

There was considerable difference between how the children in the larger towns perceived their opportunities compared to those in the smaller towns. Participants in the larger towns felt they had more access and varied opportunities in terms of further education and employment.

Those participants who were in the smaller, more remote towns, however, felt they had unique opportunities that set them apart. They described their schools as being more creative in their delivery of education, and their community being more supportive of each other.

These young people talked more about wanting to have what the bigger towns or cities have; things like shops, fast food and activity based centres but without losing their uniqueness.

Participants living closer to the river talked about the importance of looking after the environment and want to see locals and tourists care more about this. One young person wanted decision makers to “make the switch to renewable energy to stop destroying the environment” whilst another thought it was important that there was “more cleaning up” done.

What needs to change in the Mid-Murray to help you realise your dreams?

- More play grounds
- A dog park
- More public transport for minimal cost
- A Pedal Prix track
- More sport to stop obesity
- CFS Cadets to start up again
- Cheaper education
- A yabby farm

17-Year old
Male.

Best things about living in Mannum are
the freedom, space and community
closeness.

Worst things about Mannum ~~are~~ ^{is} the
lack of jobs.

Workshop Results

Where to From Here? (In Summary)

Participants shared a passion for protecting the environment, with various suggestions being made about how they could take better care individually and collectively. There are opportunities to broker relationships between local environment and Landcare groups and to develop local action groups, with children and young people helping to develop strategies to improve environmental care in the area.

Pedal Prix
track

more sport
to stop obesity

[illegible]

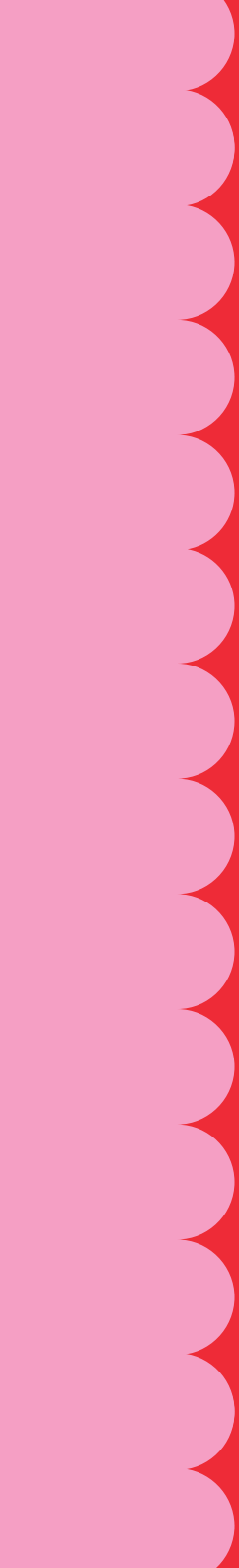
The best thing about living in
country is that you have an
backe yard and you have lots
friends nearly all people are nice
and you can always have friends
near you.

[illegible]

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We would like to thank all of the agency staff, teachers and leaders who coordinated the effort of their participants. In particular, we would like to thank the children and young people who took part in consultation sessions supported by:

AC.care	D'Faces of Youth Arts Inc	Kadina Memorial School	Mission Australia	St Joseph's School, Barmera
Ardrossan Area School	Eyre Futures, South Australia	Konnibba Aboriginal School	Moonta Area School	Sunrise Christian School
Barossa Council Youth Advisory Committee	Faith Lutheran College	Konnibba Youth Shed	Murray Bridge High School	Swan Reach Area School
Birdwood High School	Gabmiddi Manoo Children and Family Centre	Light Pass Primary School	Ngura Yadurrin Children and Family Centre	Tyndale Christian School
Cambrai Primary School	Girl Guides SA	Lutheran School Maitland	Nuriootpa High School	Whyalla City Council Youth Advisor Committee
Carers & Disability Link	Glossop High School	Mannum Community College	Riverland Special School	Whyalla High School
Ceduna Area School	Gumeracha Primary School	Memorial Oval Primary School	Samaritan College	Yorke Youth Services Inc
Ceduna Youth Hub	Headspace	Minya Porlar Creche	Save the Children	
Crossways Lutheran School			Scouts SA	



We'd love to hear from
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queries you might have.

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