



*youth strategy*  
**2023-2025**





## > OUR VISION

is that young people feel a sense of belonging to the place that they live, are empowered to engage in opportunities and are supported by a connected and caring community.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Shire of Ashburton acknowledges all native title holders throughout the Shire.

We pay respect to the Elders, past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal Australians living within the Shire of Ashburton.

## THANK YOU TO CONTRIBUTORS

The Shire of Ashburton thanks all of the young people who contributed to this Youth Strategy by sharing their thoughts and ideas at workshops, via surveys and through postcards. A special thanks goes to Kira, Luca and Jayda who helped us craft the survey and reach young people in their Towns.

We also want to thank all of the services and organisations who gave their time so freely in meetings and workshops. A special thanks goes to Pannawonica School for hosting us to run workshops with parents and students, Swans for working with us to run a session at the Youth Centre and Tom Price Youth Support Association for allowing us to come in a chat with young people during drop-in hours.



# CONTENTS

<b>Acknowledgement of Country</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Thank you to contributors</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Why we developed a Youth Strategy</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Consultation</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Delivering the Strategy</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Enablers and threats</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>The Strategy</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Five Youth Focus Areas</b>	<b>13</b>
1. Spaces and activities	13
2. Health and wellbeing	16
3. Career pathways and development	19
4. Youth empowerment	22
5. Youth representation and identity	25
<b>More information</b>	<b>27</b>



THIS STRATEGY WAS DEVELOPED WITH THE YOUTH COUNCIL OF WA  
AND THROUGH CONSULTATION WITH LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS,  
SCHOOLS, ORGANISATIONS AND STAKEHOLDERS

**RioTinto**



This strategy was developed  
with funding from the Rio Tinto  
and Chevron Wheatstone Project  
Partnerships



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Shire of Ashburton is excited to deliver a revised version of our youth strategy: **Youth Strategy 2023 - 2025**. This Strategy provides a three-year strategic road map for how the Shire will collaborate with key stakeholders in Onslow, Pannawonica, Paraburdoo, and Tom Price to ensure our young people are **empowered to engage in opportunities** and are supported by a connected and caring community.

To inform this Strategy, we **engaged** with a **range of stakeholders** over several months. We spoke with:

- 165 young people aged 12 to 25
- 62 parents and caregivers
- 20 organisations and key stakeholders
- Shire staff
- Broader community

The Strategy development involved a review of each Town's current youth provision, and the roles of service providers in conjunction with the Shire.

Some of the actions outlined in the Strategy relate to young people throughout the Shire, others are Town specific. Some of the young people's experiences in the Shire were universal, whilst others were unique to the Town that they lived in.

The key findings have been grouped into **five youth focus areas**, with goals and actions outlined under each:

- 1 Spaces and activities
- 2 Health and wellbeing
- 3 Career pathways and development
- 4 Youth empowerment
- 5 Representation and identity

Delivering strong outcomes for young people will require **working in partnership** and the Strategy outlines key stakeholders that should be involved in each action.



## WHY WE DEVELOPED A YOUTH STRATEGY

A Youth Strategy is an important document for a local government authority. It provides an opportunity to **assess the current needs and goals** of young members of the community. It also enables us to define the role of the Shire and identify where **opportunities** exist to collaborate with others to progress those goals.

This Strategy is a **tool** to be used by the **Shire, funding partners and community organisations** to direct actions that need to be taken over the next three years to make progress for young people on things that are important to them.

The Strategy is **aligned** with a number of the focus areas and goals of the Shire's **Strategic Community Plan 2022 – 2023** and many of the Strategy actions will contribute to the achievement of Shire-wide community aspirations.

### Snapshot of young people

There are approximately **836<sup>1</sup>** young people **living in the Shire of Ashburton**. Young people make up 11.3% of the Shire's population which is lower than average across regional WA (13.3%).

Town	Aged 12 to 17	Aged 18 to 24
All of Shire	358 (4.8%)	478 (6.5%)
Onslow	21 (2.5%)	34 (4.1%)
Pannawonica	19 (2.8%)	32 (4.8%)
Paraburdoo	89 (6.8%)	88 (6.7%)
Tom Price	203 (7.0%)	153 (5.3%)
Mining areas (Shire remainder)	28 (1.7%)	167 (10.4%)

**17%** OF YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER

**14%** OF YOUNG PEOPLE IDENTIFY AS LGBTQIA+<sup>2</sup>

**11%** ARE DISENGAGED FROM STUDY OR WORK

**10%** IDENTIFY AS (CULTURALLY OR LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE

**10%** IDENTIFY AS NEURODIVERGENT

**10%** HAVE MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

**2% TO 8%** HAVE A DISABILITY<sup>3</sup>





## CONSULTATION

### How we talked with the community

**Community consultation** to develop the *Youth Strategy 2023 – 2025* was delivered between September and December 2022 and included:

- A print and online survey for young people
- An online survey for parents and caregivers
- Two youth workshops in Pannawonica and one in Onslow
- Talking to young people at a drop-in session in Tom Price
- One parent/caregiver workshop in Pannawonica
- A postcard campaign for the community to share their 'big ideas'
- One on one conversations with organisations and services
- One staff workshop
- Three key stakeholder solution-focused roundtables

Information about development of the Strategy, including the **opportunity to participate**, was delivered to the community through the Shire's website and Facebook pages, direct engagement with local schools and key stakeholders in each Town, social media promotion in local community Facebook groups, and promotion by key employers, namely Rio Tinto and Chevron.

### Who we talked with

To develop the Strategy, we talked with approximately **165 young people**. This included 125 through surveys, 40 at workshops, drop-ins, and one on one conversations. The survey data showed that:

- **87%** aged 12 to 17 and 13% aged 18 to 25
- **46%** female, 52% male and 2% non-binary or other
- **24%** Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- **14%** LGBTIQ+
- **10%** from CALD backgrounds
- **10%** identified as neurodivergent
- **10%** identified as living with a mental health difficulty
- **5%** young carers or young parents
- **2%** identified as living with a disability
- **79%** went to school
- **36%** worked
- **13%** used groups or services in their Town
- **9%** volunteered
- **6%** went to TAFE/university in the Shire

We also talked with:

- 62 parents and caregivers
- 20 organisations that work with young people

<sup>1</sup> This data is taken from the 2021 Census

<sup>2</sup> The next points are all self-reported from the youth survey

<sup>3</sup> Self-reported data from the survey suggests these figures are as low as 2%, however CCYP's work on young people with disability would place this figure closer to 8%.





### How we developed the Strategy

To develop the Strategy we **analysed the data** from all stakeholder groups and reviewed this alongside the **desktop research** of existing youth trends, systemic local issues, and the current provision for young people in each of the Towns.

The **timeline** of the process is outlined below.

June to Sept 2022	Sept to Dec 2022	Feb to Mar 2023	Jan to Mar 2023	April 2023	May 2023
Planning & desktop research	Community consultation	Findings presented to Elected Members	<i>Youth Strategy 2023-2025</i> developed	<i>Youth Strategy 2023-2025</i> endorsed	<i>Youth Strategy 2023-2025</i> published

TO DEVELOP THE STRATEGY, WE TALKED WITH

165  
YOUNG PEOPLE

46% FEMALE

52% MALE

2% NON-BINARY  
OR OTHER

# DELIVERING THE STRATEGY

Outlined below are the key elements that need to be implemented to **ensure the successful delivery** of the Strategy.

## Staffing

To maximise the delivering of the Strategy, a **full-time Youth Development Officer** will be employed to work across all four Towns. Their role will be to:

- Focus on **building relationships** between all services and organisations that relate to young people
- **Consult** and engage with young people to inform planning and program development
- Be a **consistent knowledge base** of current opportunities for young people and support best practice in the youth space
- **Upskill** other staff, organisations, and community members

## Operational Plans

- An **annual operational or implementation plan** will be developed for each Town
- These plans will outline how the actions in the Strategy will be implemented
- The plans will be responsive to issues and trends as they occur
- The **five principles** should be used when developing the plans
- These will be reviewed through the Shire's IPL framework

## Youth Activation Groups (YAG)

- **Collaboration and partnerships** are critical to the delivery of the Strategy
- The Shire should establish and run quarterly youth-focused **Youth Activation Groups (YAGs)** in each Town open to all service providers
- The YAG meetings should include **upskilling opportunities**
- Progress on the Youth Strategy should be a standing agenda item
- Each YAG will develop a **stakeholder map** with clear definitions of who is responsible for what

## Internal meeting(s)

- The Shire should hold at least one **annual Youth Strategy focused meeting** with all internal stakeholders to check progress and plan strategically



---

## Annual Report

- A strong **accountability measure** and strategy to centre this as a community owned Strategy is an annual Strategy progress report
- The annual report will be a **short (one-page), youth friendly** document which is distributed throughout the community

---

## Funding partnerships

- Each Town has unique **partnerships** with critical funders
  - This Strategy and sections of the Background Paper (where appropriate) will form the **foundation of youth-focused resourcing** conversations with funders
- 



# ENABLERS AND THREATS

**Enablers** are factors which are out of scope for this Strategy, but nevertheless will have a **positive influence** on the successful delivery of the actions.

**Threats** are factors which are out of scope of this Strategy to address, which need the focus of the Shire and key partners, or they will **impede** the successful delivery of the actions.

## Enablers

### Funding

The Shire's Towns are all relatively well-resourced and/or have access to funding for projects and initiatives. This is due to the heavy investment of key companies in each area.

### Safety

The Shire's Towns are all small, with most residents working for a handful of organisations and relatively low crime rates.

### Passion and knowledge

There are strong individuals in many of the Towns, who have actively chosen to live there long-term. They have deep knowledge of young people in their Town and are invested in driving positive outcomes.

## Threats

### Skills shortage

There is a skills shortage across WA, which is most acute in the regions. It is difficult to attract the skilled professionals needed for young people's wellbeing, as well as staff to run community initiatives.

### Housing

Even where staff can be sourced for roles, all Towns currently have limited to no accommodation for people coming to live and work.

### Childcare

There is a lack of childcare options and limited willingness to use childcare by parents/caregivers. Young people aged 12 to 18 are informally 'babysitting' younger siblings outside of school hours which impacts on their ability to engage in youth activities.

### Population size

The population size in each of the Towns is very small, which limits the number of regular opportunities able to be provided to young people due to lack of a critical mass.



# THE STRATEGY

## Our vision for young people

Three key themes were identified through all of our consultation with young people and stakeholders. These themes have shaped **our vision** for young people in the Shire over the next three years.

### 1 Sense of belonging

Young people's sense of belonging was impacted by

- The transient nature of families and workers
- The coming and going of people in their lives, both friends and supportive adults.

### 2 Participation and engagement

- Young people in every Town told us they were bored and that there wasn't enough to do or places to hang out.
- Staff and organisations put on events/activities but often reported poor youth attendance.

### 3 Collaboration

- There were some great organisations, groups, projects, and initiatives for young people
- They were often disjointed from each other, and unable to service young people's needs holistically



'OUR VISION' IS THAT YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL A SENSE OF BELONGING TO THE PLACES THAT THEY LIVE, ARE EMPOWERED TO ENGAGE IN OPPORTUNITIES AND ARE SUPPORTED BY A CONNECTED AND CARING COMMUNITY.

## Principles

There are **five key principles** which underpin this Strategy. These principles should be used when making **decisions and developing operational plans**.

### Place-based and local

- Each Town in the Shire has unique strengths, challenges, and opportunities
- This Strategy will ensure that each Town has a **bespoke response** to young people that live there and that actions are locally embedded

### Community development approach

- This Strategy supports a **community development** approach
- Young people, parent/caregivers, community groups, organisations and the broader community should be **empowered** with the knowledge, skills, and capacity to identify and make the changes needed to improve the lives of young people

## Equity of opportunity

- It can be more difficult to engage with some young people because of factors such as transience, disadvantage, or remote living
- This Strategy will put additional measures in place to reach those young people and **support inclusion**

## Evidence based

- This Strategy is supported by an extensive **Background Paper**
- This document should be used, alongside best practice evidence over the next three years to ensure that decisions are **based on evidence**

## Accountable

- This Strategy has **roles and responsibilities** assigned, recommended progress checks and communication strategies-built in.

## Role of the Shire

The Shire has **five critical roles** to play in the delivery of the Youth Strategy. These roles are clearly outlined in the Strategy, alongside who should be involved each action.

**PROVIDER** > Delivers the initiative, activity, service, or facility

**FACILITATOR** > Connects the right people together

**PARTNER** > Collaborates or is part of making something happen

**ADVOCATE** > Talks about or promotes an issue to people who need to listen

**FUNDER** > Provides money or resources to support





# THE FIVE YOUTH FOCUS AREAS



## 1

### SPACES AND ACTIVITIES

#### Our goals

##### 1.1

Young people have safe places and accessible spaces that they can spend time with their peers

##### 1.2

Young people are offered, and supported to participate in a diverse range of activities and events

#### What we heard

Young people require **safe and consistent spaces and places** to spend time with peers in structured and unstructured activities. Each of the Towns have a dedicated youth space, but the Pannawonica Youth Club is only open sporadically due to reliance on volunteers. Young people and their parents/caregivers reported that there are **not enough places for young people to hang out**, especially indoors during hot weather. **Community facilities and infrastructure**, such as libraries, pools, recreational centres, community centres, and gyms, are **currently underutilised by the youth population** and could be leveraged to provide more opportunities for young people to spend time together and build their sense of belonging and connection to the Towns.

Young people and stakeholders emphasised the need for a **greater diversity of activities**, as boredom was a significant issue. While sporting activities were relatively well addressed in Tom Price and Paraburdoo, there was a **lack of structured programming** specific to teenagers in all four towns. Programs in Onslow and Pannawonica struggled to sustain offerings due to a lack of critical mass of young people and insufficient resources. The **three main reasons for low attendance** at activities and events were that young people wanted activities just for them without younger children, insufficient youth input in the planning stage, and teenagers being used as informal babysitters for younger siblings, which impacted participation.



THERE ISN'T MANY ACTIVITIES TO DO AROUND TOWN WHEN BORED/HANGING OUT WITH FRIENDS." – YOUNG PERSON



THERE ARE TOO MANY FAMILIES WHERE BOTH PARENTS WORK DIRECTLY ON THE MINE SITE AND THE KIDS ARE LEFT TO THEIR OWN DEVICES WHILE THE PARENTS ARE BOTH AT WORK, DURING DAY AND NIGHT SHIFT." – PARENT

# 1 SPACES AND ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

## Key data and info

- The youth population in Pannawonica has doubled since the last census
- **48%** of young people and **59%** of parents/caregivers reported not having enough places for young people to hang out as an issue
- **74%** of parents/caregivers said that the Shire should do something about the lack of places for young people to hang out
- **78%** of young people reported boredom as an issue

## Our actions

1.1 Young people have safe and accessible places and spaces that they can spend time with their peers											
Action	Ons	Panna	Para	TP	Shire role	Other stakeholders	23	24	25	What success looks like	
<b>1.1.1</b> Work collaboratively to identifying a funding package that will enable the employment of a fulltime youth worker to staff the Pannawonica Youth Space		✓			Facilitator Partner	Funding partners	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth worker is employed and supported</li> <li>• Pannawonica Youth Space is open consistent hours</li> <li>• Youth worker supports young mentors to build sustainability</li> </ul>	
<b>1.1.2</b> Develop policies and procedures that enable young people to independently access identified existing community facilities (i.e. gym, recreation centres, community centres)	✓	✓	✓	✓	Provider	Funding partners	✓	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A pilot program is run in at least one Town</li> <li>• Policies/ procedures to improve access are co-designed with young people</li> <li>• Young people report greater access to community facilities</li> </ul>	
<b>1.1.3</b> Expand youth-friendly, accessible spaces within Shire facilities and places	✓	✓	✓	✓	Provider		✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community spaces such as libraries and recreation places have increased use by young people</li> </ul>	



## 1.2 Young people are offered, and supported to participate in a diverse range of activities and events

Action	Ons	Panna	Para	TP	Shire role	Other stakeholders	23	24	25	What success looks like
<b>1.2.1</b> Work cohesively to develop youth programs inclusive of arts, culture, and life skills development			✓	✓	Partner	TPYSA Community orgs	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A collaborative and consistent calendar of activities and events is offered for young people</li> <li>Annual youth survey indicates an increased access to arts, culture, and life skills opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>1.2.2</b> Develop and promote 'youth zones' and youth activities at Shire and community events	✓	✓	✓	✓	Provider Facilitator	Community orgs	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased representation of young people at Shire and community events</li> </ul>
<b>1.2.3</b> Identify opportunities that support community members to initiate and run youth activities	✓	✓	✓	✓	Provider Facilitator Partner	Community orgs Parents Specialist providers		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in youth activities, run by community members</li> <li>Community members are skilled to facilitate activities for young people</li> </ul>
<b>1.2.4</b> Develop an awareness campaign that increases the understanding of parents/caregivers of the need to support their children to engage in youth initiatives	✓	✓	✓	✓	Facilitator	Community orgs Schools Parents			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providers report increased parental engagement with initiatives and events</li> </ul>

## 2

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING

### Our goals

#### 2.1

Young people have increased access to health and wellbeing support

#### 2.2

Community organisations, groups and individuals have increased skills and capacity to respond to young people's health and wellbeing needs

#### 2.3

Health and wellbeing information is available and accessed by young people and those that support them

### What we heard

**Mental health** issues were a **significant area of concern** for young people in the Shire. There was a comparatively **low self-reported rates** of young people currently experiencing mental health challenges, with the exception of Onslow which was higher than the Shire average. A lack of language and stigma around mental health may have contributed to a low self-identification rate. There has been a recent focus on **building community conversations** around mental health in Onslow. **Headspace Pilbara** currently provides mental health services in three of the Towns. There is still a need for **culturally appropriate mental health services** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, as well as increased **mental health**

**awareness and education** for everyone in the community to better support young people's wellbeing.

There are examples of community-led programs providing good support for young people's health, but it was identified that there is a need for **ongoing advocacy for better access to health services** for young people. There is also a need to increase the knowledge and understanding of community services and groups so that they can sign post young people towards these. Low-level anti-social behaviour and **bullying** are an issue in Tom Price and Paraburdoo, and collaborative action needs to be taken on these topics to ensure young people feel safe.



PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES SO IT'S NOT HARD FOR OUR KIDS TO COMMUNICATE." - PARENT



THERE HAVE BEEN A LOT OF GREAT OPPORTUNITIES THAT THE SCHOOL, THE SCHOOL P&C AND OTHER AGENCIES HAVE BROUGHT TO TOWN, BUT THERE IS LACK OF INTEREST BY PARENTS (LOW ATTENDANCE OF THESE TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS)" - PARENT



## Our actions

2.1 Young people have increased access to health and wellbeing support										
Action	Ons	Panna	Para	TP	Shire role	Other stakeholders	23	24	25	What success looks like
<b>2.1.1</b> Continue to support and advocate for youth mental health services (including culturally appropriate services) to be accessible in each Town	✓	✓	✓	✓	Facilitator Advocate	Mental health orgs Community orgs ACCOs Schools	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Services that visit report that they are well promoted by the Shire</li> <li>Culturally appropriate mental health support for Aboriginal young people increases</li> </ul>
<b>2.1.2</b> Advocate for initiatives that attract youth health professionals to the Town and/or provide greater access in alternate ways (i.e. telehealth, web-based)	✓	✓	✓	✓	Facilitator Advocate	Community orgs Health orgs	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shire regularly utilises advocacy avenues and relationships</li> <li>Young people/parents have better understanding of alternate access to health and wellbeing services</li> </ul>



## 2 HEALTH AND WELLBEING CONTINUED

2.2 Community organisations, groups and individuals have increased skills and capacity to respond to young people's health and wellbeing needs											
	Action	Ons	Panna	Para	TP	Shire role	Other stakeholders	23	24	25	What success looks like
2.2.1	Develop and support initiatives (i.e. campaigns, workshops, resources) that build youth mental health awareness, knowledge, and skills across the community	✓	✓	✓	✓	Provider Partner Facilitator	Mental health orgs Health orgs Community orgs Parents		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Parents and other community members have increased mental health literacy</li><li>There is an increase in community-led youth health and wellbeing initiatives</li></ul>
2.2.2	Support organisations to deliver initiatives that address bullying between young people			✓	✓	Partner Advocate	Schools Police Youth orgs Parents	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Young people report a reduction in bullying</li></ul>
2.3 Health and wellbeing information is available and accessed by young people and those that support them											
	Action	Ons	Panna	Para	TP	Shire role	Other stakeholders	23	24	25	What success looks like
2.3.1	Improve communications that direct young people, parents, and community organisations to health support services	✓	✓	✓	✓	Provider Facilitator	Schools Youth orgs Mental health orgs	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Young people report an increase in knowledge of health services</li><li>The community have an increased understanding of youth health and wellbeing supports</li></ul>





# 3

## CAREER PATHWAYS AND DEVELOPMENT

### Our goals

#### 3.1

Young people have an increased exposure to, awareness of, and access to employment and career opportunities and pathways

#### 3.2

Young people disengaged from education, training and employment have opportunities to participate in tailored and supportive alternatives

### What we heard

The Shire has three schools for high school-aged young people. Tom Price Senior High School (SHS) is the only dedicated high school in the area, and most young people from Paraburdoo catch the school bus to Tom Price SHS. Onslow School and Pannawonica School cater to students from kindergarten through to Year 12. **School or study stress was a top five issue** for young people, with this the highest for Aboriginal young people. Stakeholders reported that many young people in the towns are behind their peers academically due to transiency, low parental support, and staff turnover. There is a need for housing for non-teaching staff in schools to run at full capacity, meet non-academic needs, and run essential programs. There is a cohort of **young people disengaged from education** in and around both Tom Price and Onslow, with a significant proportion of this group being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

There are **limited pathways** for young people in the Towns once they reach late high school and tertiary levels of study, especially in Onslow and Pannawonica. Parents' primary concern was the lack of opportunities for their children, which may have been part of the decline in young people living in Onslow over the last five years. Young people's future career goals included becoming health professionals, teachers, and entrepreneurs, with many **wanting to stay in the Towns** for a while or return after further study or travel. Young people are not exposed to many employment pathways beyond the mining, oil, and gas companies in their town. There seems to be a significant gap in young people, parents, and providers knowing what programs support skills, study, and career development. In 2019, the WA State Government introduced Diversify WA, which presents an important opportunity for young people living in regional areas and towns highly dependent on the mining, oil, and gas industry.



NOT MANY JOB EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR 16/17 YEAR OLDS"

- YOUNG PERSON



PUSH FOR HOUSING IN TOWN FOR NON-TEACHING STAFF IN SCHOOLS SO THEY CAN RUN AT FULL CAPACITY AND STUDENTS' NON-ACADEMIC NEEDS CAN BE MET. ESSENTIAL PROGRAMS ARE NOT BEING RUN DUE TO LACK OF STAFF."

- PARENT

### 3 CAREER PATHWAYS AND DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED

#### Our actions

3.1 Young people have an increased exposure to, awareness of, and access to employment and career opportunities and pathways											
Action	Ons	Panna	Para	TP	Shire role	Other stakeholders	23	24	25	What success looks like	
<b>3.1.1</b> Advocate for a broader range of skill development and RTO programs to be available for young people	✓	✓	✓	✓	Advocate	Schools RTOs TAFE/unis	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in number of training providers available</li> <li>• Increased number of TAFE courses available in Towns</li> </ul>	
<b>3.1.2</b> Facilitate skill development programs and workshops to improve career and employability skills	✓	✓	✓	✓	Facilitator Partners	Local businesses Career development orgs		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop hosted in each Town once per semester</li> <li>• Positive feedback and engagement with workshops</li> </ul>	
<b>3.1.3</b> Design and implement a program for delivering innovation and enterprise skills for young people	✓				Facilitator Fund	Youth orgs Entrepreneurs & innovation orgs	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project is co-designed with young people and local businesses</li> <li>• Model engages local businesses and real entrepreneurs as mentors</li> </ul>	
<b>3.1.4</b> Develop and maintain an online directory with development opportunities for young people in the Shire, with a specific focus on opportunities focused on careers, study, leadership, and entrepreneurship	✓	✓	✓	✓	Facilitator	RTOs TAFE/unis		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people have increased awareness of opportunities outside of the region</li> <li>• Service providers, educators and parents/caregivers actively using the directory</li> </ul>	



<b>3.1.5</b>	Develop a fund which supports young people to participate in career, leadership, and personal development opportunities outside of the Shire	✓	✓	✓	✓	Deliver Facilitator Fund	Funding partners		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fund established</li> <li>• Young people share their knowledge, skills, and experience in the Towns</li> </ul>
<b>3.1.6</b>	Collectively develop recruitment practices that support and prioritise current or previous young residents to work in the Shire	✓	✓	✓	✓	Deliver Partner	Key employers and businesses		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment practices are revised to value and prioritise resident experience</li> <li>• More young residents are employed within the Shire</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Young people disengaged from education, training and employment have opportunities to participate in tailored and supportive alternatives

Action	Ons	Panna	Para	TP	Shire role	Other stakeholders	23	24	25	What success looks like	
<b>3.2.1</b>	Advocate for the exploration of an alternative education model for disengaged young people in each Town, including the utilisation of Youth Centres as bases for alternative education	✓			✓	Facilitator Advocate	School DoE Youth orgs		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All stakeholders aligned and supporting the service</li></ul>
<b>3.2.2</b>	Explore the development of a culturally appropriate mentoring program to support Aboriginal young people to explore career and education pathways	✓	✓	✓	✓	Partner Funder	Schools Waalitj Foundation ACCOs	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aboriginal mentors engaged/ employed in the program</li></ul>

## 4

# YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

## Our goals

### 4.1

Young people have the skills, and are provided opportunities to be involved in initiatives and community decisions that impact them

### 4.2

Young people are informed and aware of youth events, activities, and opportunities

## What we heard

The Shire's Community Engagement Policy recognises the **importance of involving all community members in decision-making and policy development**. The Shire's 2018 *Youth Engagement Strategy* showed that young people often feel unheard and unimportant. Engagement with young people in the Towns revealed most had **little experience of being asked for their opinions** and being involved meaningfully. The Shire should identify and support young people to engage in **micro and/or project specific opportunities** to learn and practice planning and decision-making skills. Examples might include being involved in designing a community mural, helping Shire staff design recruitment questions for youth-facing staff, voting on youth holiday activity plans for teens, or working within a budget to buy items for a youth space. There are also larger projects which young people should be involved in co-designing, such as the youth access to community facilities project (1.1.2) and new

facilities development. The majority of young people said they preferred online surveys and in-person workshops to voice their ideas and contribute.

It is important to engage with young people annually to measure progress of involving them in Shire plans and decisions and to build arrangements with schools and organisations that connect with marginalised young people and support their involvement. It was identified that there needs to be significant work done in **developing the skills and capacity** of Shire staff and community members in engaging young people meaningfully.

There were **gaps in the engagement** for this Strategy, namely young people aged 18 to 25. Whilst we did hear from a good proportion of Aboriginal young people through the survey, there is a need to do some deeper level engagement work.



**MAKE THE TOWN MORE ACCESSIBLE TO ALL AND HAVE THE PEOPLE HAVE THEIR SAY IN THE MATTER."** - YOUNG PERSON

## Key data and info

- **23%** of young people were interested in, and **58%** were unsure/maybe interested in having a voice in the community on things that matter to them
- **68%** of parents thought involving young people in planning and decision-making was the role of the Shire



## Our actions

4.1 Young people have the skills, and are provided opportunities to be involved in youth initiatives and community decisions that impact them										
Action	Ons	Panna	Para	TP	Shire role	Other stakeholders	23	24	25	What success looks like
4.1.1 Develop the skills and capacity of Shire staff and community organisations and groups to better involve young people in plans and decisions	✓	✓	✓	✓	Provider Facilitator	Youth orgs Community orgs Schools	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community members report increased skills and confidence in identifying opportunities and ability to involve young people in decision making</li> <li>Youth representation in Shire engagement processes increases</li> </ul>
4.1.2 Identify micro and project-based opportunities for supported youth involvement and co-design in youth initiatives	✓	✓	✓	✓	Provider	Youth orgs Community orgs Schools ACCOs		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young people contribute to the design and delivery of youth initiatives</li> <li>Young people report via the annual youth survey that they feel more capable to contribute and have more opportunities to be involved in decisions</li> </ul>



## 4 YOUTH EMPOWERMENT CONTINUED

4.1.3	Recruit at least two annual Shire Youth Ambassadors who engage with their peers and advise on projects and key youth issues	✓	✓	✓	✓	Provider Partner	Schools Youth orgs ACCOS	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth Ambassadors identified and working in collaboration with the Youth Activation Groups across Shire</li> </ul>
4.1.4	Actively engage key employers and ACCOS within the Shire in the Strategy roll out to ensure the needs of Aboriginal young people and young people aged 18 to 25 considered and included	✓	✓	✓	✓	Facilitator Partners	ACCOS Waalitj	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACCOS are involved in the Town's Youth Activation Groups</li> <li>Key employers are involved in the Town's Youth Activation Groups</li> </ul>
4.1.5	Engage with young people annually to assess Strategy progress	✓	✓	✓	✓	Deliver Partner	Schools Youth orgs ACCOS	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baseline data is established</li> <li>Progress on Strategy actions can be measured</li> </ul>

### 4.2 Young people are informed and aware of youth events, activities, and opportunities

Action	Ons	Panna	Para	TP	Shire role	Other stakeholders	23	24	25	What success looks like
4.2.1 Media/ Communications and Communities team are trained in relevant and up to date engagement strategies and social trends for young people	✓	✓	✓	✓	Deliver	Social media & marketing training orgs	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training undertaken on an annual basis (at minimum)</li> <li>CDOs and Shire staff are connected to young people in their communities through personal interactions, social media, and other youth focused platforms</li> </ul>



## 5

# YOUTH REPRESENTATION AND IDENTITY

## Our goals

### 5.1

Young people are seen, heard, respected, and represented in their communities

### 5.2

Young people experience opportunities to connect to country and each other

## What we heard

Many young people in the Shire do not feel a **sense of belonging** to their Town. This is partly due to the lack of diversity and social opportunities, as well as negative perceptions of young people held by some adults in the community, especially in Pannawonica. There is sometimes a lack of visibility and understanding of young people's needs and culture. Young people from **minority identities** and groups, such as LGBTIQ+ young people, CALD young people and those with disability can especially struggle to explore their identity and find connection due to the small populations and relative isolation of each of the Towns.

A marketing campaign could be developed to promote a positive and more holistic view of young people, involving young people themselves in co-designing an identity for young people in their Town, and engaging them in activities that promote a sense of belonging. There are also opportunities to **connect all young people to the land and culture** of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Young people valued some of the natural spaces in their Town, such as the beach. Parents in Pannawonica expressed a desire for more programs and camps within the region that leverage the incredible natural landscape and on country experiences.



PEOPLE IN TOWN DON'T LIKE US BECAUSE THEY THINK THAT WE ARE TROUBLE MAKERS BUT WE'RE JUST KIDS." - YOUNG PERSON



I REALLY ENJOY BEING ABLE TO EXPLORE THE LAND." - YOUNG PERSON

## Key data and info

- In Pannawonica, young people were least likely to agree with the statement 'young people are respected and feel part of the community in my Town'
- In both Pannawonica and Onslow, most teenagers had few peers their age to socialise with
- There were no obvious programs or supports for the LGBTIQ+ community, or the CALD community

## 5 YOUTH REPRESENTATION AND IDENTITY CONTINUED

### Our actions

5.1 Young people are seen, heard, respected, and represented in their communities											
	Action	Ons	Panna	Para	TP	Shire role	Other stakeholders	23	24	25	What success looks like
5.1.1	Facilitate opportunities for young people, especially those from minority demographics, to connect and access formal, peer lead and mentoring support	✓	✓	✓	✓	Facilitator Partner	Youth orgs Community orgs Other Pilbara LGAs and orgs	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Young people from minority identities have improved access to support</li><li>• Young people report improved relationships with their peers</li></ul>
5.1.2	Engage young people from each Town to design a piece of merchandise or artwork that celebrates a shared vision and identity of young people in their Town	✓	✓	✓	✓	Provider Facilitator	Local artists and creatives		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All young people given the opportunity to share ideas</li><li>• Youth identity piece for each Town developed</li></ul>
5.1.3	Design and deliver a marketing campaign to elevate the brand and perceptions of young people in the Shire	✓	✓	✓	✓	Provider		✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Youth create and have ownership of the campaign</li><li>• Community perceptions of young people improve</li></ul>
5.2 Young people experience opportunities to connect to country and each other											
	Action	Ons	Panna	Para	TP	Shire role	Other stakeholders	23	24	25	What success looks like
5.2.1	Explore the development of initiatives (i.e., sport, holiday programs, festivals) that celebrates and exposes young people to the unique identity and experiences of each Town	✓	✓	✓	✓	Deliver Partner	Community orgs Schools Funding partners	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Activities in each Town have a unique focus to connect young to that community</li></ul>



## MORE INFORMATION

To discuss the Youth Strategy 2023-2025 or provide feedback, please contact the Shire of Ashburton:

- Phone **(08) 9188 4444**
- email **[soa@ashburton.wa.gov.au](mailto:soa@ashburton.wa.gov.au)**
- **PO Box 567**  
**Tom Price WA 6751**





**shire of Ashburton**  
opportunity to community

Lot 246, Poinciana Street, Tom Price WA 6751

PO Box 567, Tom Price WA 6751

**Ph:** (08) 9188 4444

**E:** [soa@ashburton.wa.gov.au](mailto:soa@ashburton.wa.gov.au)

**[www.ashburton.wa.gov.au](http://www.ashburton.wa.gov.au)**

