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This document is a SNAPSHOT

The 2010 Great South Coast Health and Well Being Profile, Glenelg Shire, Southern Grampians Shire and Primary Care Partnership profiles, plans and strategies, the Southern Grampians Glenelg Local Learning Network Environmental Scan and the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan 2010 provide a lot of detail on the economic, social, health and environmental issues of the two municipalities.

Links:

Glenelg and Southern Grampians Primary Care Partnerships
http://www.sggpcp.com/data/index.htm

Glenelg and Southern Grampians Local Learning and Employment Network

Glenelg Shire

Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan and Health and Wellbeing Plan

Southern Grampians Shire
1. Executive Summary

The Snapshot Report for the first stage of the L4YP (Landscapes for Young People) project is a compilation of data which will assist in building an understanding of rural young people’s lives in the Shires of Glenelg and Southern Grampians in Southwest Victoria. L4YP has been funded by the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) in partnership with Glenelg Southern Grampians Local Learning Employment Network (GSGLLEN), the Shires of Glenelg and Southern Grampians, and RMIT University Hamilton. The Snapshot Report is one of the outcomes of this three year youth focused project.

This report is a ‘live’ document. It will be updated and amended over the three years of the L4YP project. The Report provides useful context from a range of perspectives: the young people themselves, data collected from regional agencies and from policies and reports from state and national youth focused organisations. Further information about youth and relevant issues and agencies can be found by following the links provided in this document. There is a plethora of information and the authors have not attempted to reproduce what is readily available and regularly updated elsewhere. Rather, an attempt has been made to collate an overview of what is happening for young people in this region, the broader context and the policy environment. It is a dynamic environment and there are gaps in available information. Consequently, the Snapshot Report is just that – a snapshot into the ‘landscape’ for young people in the Glenelg and Southern Grampians Shires.

In this first report, the voice of young people is clearly heard. This of course is entirely appropriate because the project aims to have young people at its centre. In the lead-up to the L4YP, there has been a call from youth-focused agencies for young people to tell them how things are, and to become involved in planning and shaping their communities. The first full year of L4YP has therefore focused on what the young people have to say. This report acknowledges that those who have participated so far represent only a cross-section of the communities in Southern Grampians and Glenelg. Nevertheless, the views expressed indicate the concerns of young citizens who are thinking beyond their own interests.

The young people who have participated to date demonstrate engagement with their families, school and communities and are keen to learn by doing. They appreciate the opportunity to have contact with role models, especially young leaders who can help them imagine their way...
forward. They respect genuine opportunities to be consulted, and some want to be more involved in their communities, including taking up leadership roles.

The young people we have spoken to also value the opportunity to be together, and want more ways for this to happen. They have a range of ideas about how this might be achieved, including the provision of places where they feel they belong and means of getting there. Some of them are willing to participate in the processes required to effect such changes. In 2010, the two Shires have actively included young people in decision making roles: Glenelg has begun its Youth Advisory Council, and Southern Grampians Shire invited a secondary school student to represent youth on its major Hamilton Structure Plan Steering Committee.

"It's a good experience to let teens communicate!!"  
(Male 16)

While the young L4YP participants acknowledge the limitations of rural life, they value the benefits they derive from living away from the city. They perceive the country as safer, cleaner and providing more opportunities to get away on their own for a while without adults becoming concerned. They value this as a freedom not available to their urban counterparts. They covet access to the big events held in cities, but are glad to avoid the pollution and violence which they associate with city life. At the same time, they must negotiate access to connection – with parents for transport and for time to access to internet and phones - which are key conduits for rural social engagement for young people. Transport and ICT reliability are two key limiting factors to youth engagement in rural Glenelg and Southern Grampians Shires.

The young people whose perspectives appear in this Snapshot Report, have been involved in several forums and at each occasion have undertaken some basic research methods about issues highlighted through L4YP’s consultation process. This research has been included as part of the project’s research results that will be shared with the funding organizations. We will be building on the themes raised this year and including even more young people to build the compendium over the next two years leading up to the project’s final phase in 2012.

The notion of ‘young people’ as an homogeneous group - even if they are linked together as ‘rural’ or ‘regional’ or ‘local’ - is of course erroneous, and even unhelpful. Engaging them in group discussions has been challenging because they are so diverse, but also immensely rewarding in terms of hearing their perspectives. This first Snapshot Report acknowledges that only 150 or so of the 4,500 young people between 12 and 20 years old who live in Southern Grampians and Glenelg, have been actively engaged. Many voices are missing – the older end of the youth age spectrum, those with disabilities, those who are disengaged from education and work, indigenous young people and those who isolated or who are reticent about putting themselves forward. Clearly an aim for next year is to seek out a
broader representation of young people. Nevertheless, the data we have gathered so far from the young people has been illuminating.

The concept for the L4YP project emerged from the two youth networks whose members felt that more needed to be done to create and support opportunities for youth across the two Shires, and to lessen the impact of barriers and impediments that exist in the lives of local young people. In this first Snapshot Report, the voice of the youth networks is not as strong as might have been anticipated given the experience and passion that members demonstrate in their day to day work in the youth sector. More focus will be paid to the youth networks in the next phase of the project. Nevertheless, the concerns of this sector have been made clear.

In contrast to the largely positive views of young people, youth practitioners in Glenelg and Southern Grampians are familiar with the pockets of child and youth disadvantage. In particular, their concerns have led to research on youth disengagement which is underpinning planning for alternative education initiatives in Glenelg Shire and will inform education planning discussions in the Southern Grampians Shire in 2011. Glenelg Shire has the second highest rate of youth disengagement in Victoria. Patterns of absenteeism appear to be a predictor of school disengagement with high levels of absenteeism beginning to occur in the second semester of year 8. Further research is needed to understand the patterns and implications.

The youth network members, comprising representatives from education, health, local government, welfare, housing and police, are justifiably concerned about the impact of disengagement. Nevertheless, they also paid tribute to the energy, initiatives and contribution of young people across the two Shires. They expressed a commitment to support opportunities for young people to reach their fullest potential and to enjoy their lives in their rural communities. They felt that sometimes young people were defined by their family names, the school they belonged to, the town they came from and this could be stifling. At other times though, both young people and youth network members felt there were opportunities both for ‘space’ and for participation in a range of community endeavours.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, education was seen to the biggest focus concerning young people in both Shires. In this, many elements are in play: high levels of disengagement, transport, choice and competition, access to post-secondary education, pathways, thin numbers, pockets of disadvantage, high deferral rates, costs and aspiration. The links between education and wellbeing, life choice, and prosperity are often discussed, yet the area covered by the GSGLEN has one of the lowest participation rates in higher education in Victoria. This issue clearly needs to be a future focus of L4YP and its partner agencies.
The issue of aspiration was raised in the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Nature and Extent of Social Disadvantage released in 2010. A submission to the Inquiry by the GSGLEN referred to ‘family history’ and ‘access to higher education facilities’ which could begin to impact disengagement at quite a young age. Attitudes are ‘generational’ and ‘ingrained’ leading to a lack of family role models. Because young people feel their chance for higher education is limited by circumstance, then there is no point finishing school. Anecdotally, we understand that their attitudes can impact their peers. Research from elsewhere tells us that students who are positively engaged at school are more likely to continue with their education up to and beyond year 12. However, the L4YP research, undertaken as a result of concerns expressed through the youth networks and the GSGLEN, indicate that attitudes and behaviour which may predict disengagement begins much earlier – in primary school and within families.

There are several impediments to participation in further education: transport, cost, choice, aspiration. Hamilton as an education centre (particularly for secondary), attracts students from across the region and beyond, including internationally. The school bus network is one of the largest in Victoria. Yet for students in Portland, Casterton, Hamilton, not to mention the other more isolated townships, to attend university in Warrnambool (not much more than an hour away), public transport is not really an option. Choices for postsecondary education in Portland and Hamilton are more limited, with RMIT in Hamilton offering only one degree (nursing), and transport choices between these centres are even worse.

$20,000 per child per year is the figure most often cited to support a student living away from home to attend university. L4YP research suggests the figure is higher. In any case, last year, 42 ex-Southern Grampians year 12 students left to study away from home. Hamilton region families are finding a combined $840,000 each year to enable these children to participate in university. Planning for education and transport for regional centres such as Portland and Hamilton is a priority. There is a need for more discussion, innovation and flexible delivery in the region.

“Clearly education is the key to the development of rural and regional Victoria. Young people living outside metropolitan centres should have the same opportunities as those in the city. The reverse is untenable.” (Chair, D Drum)

The work of the Portland youth engagement strategy group is progressing with plans to re-connect young people to education. In Hamilton, the Structure Plan exercise has been undertaken by Southern Grampians Shire who also convened a Hamilton Education Cluster for future planning. These groups will assist the community to address some of the issues.

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1 Inquiry into Extent and Nature of Social Disadvantage and Inequity in Rural and Regional Victoria, Parliament of Victoria, 2010, p.144
2 LSAY, Attitudes, Intentions and Participation in Education: Year 12 and Beyond, ACER, Briefing Number 20, August 2010
3 Inquiry into Extent and Nature of Social Disadvantage and Inequity in Rural and Regional Victoria, Parliament of Victoria, 2010 p. xiv
Perhaps one of the strongest trends of the youth demographic in South West Victoria is its decline. The population is aging at a greater rate than ever before. As it does so, both the proportion and the actual number of young people diminish. Leaders in the south west have in the past made it quite clear that young people benefit by going away. Such statements do not consider the implications of this message for those who do not wish to, or cannot, leave. Strategies to attract young professionals to the region - either as new citizens or ‘returnees’ - are being considered. One of the strategies must surely be to ensure the young people who stay, who may become future leaders, or keep important social connections alive, are not treated as ‘failures’ or second class citizens. These concerns were expressed by both young people and youth network members in 2010.

The Snapshot Report for 2010 has attempted to raise the profile of young people in the south west Victoria. What is working well for young people in this region? What can we improve? The problems of distance and of thin markets, as ever, determine our policy and agency response and pose significant challenges to education and health planners and government. There are many examples where the community is failing our young people, and whose life opportunities are severely limited. On the other hand many regional youth are living their lives to the full - in a region with outstanding social, economic (including employment) and environmental opportunities. The task for the L4YP project and the youth sector in general is to build on the knowledge base we currently have and to bring some innovative thinking to develop opportunities for all of the young people in the south west.
2. What is Landscapes for Young People (L4YP)?

2.1 What is this snapshot?

The Snapshot Report, the first for the Landscapes for Young People (L4YP), provides an overview of what we know about young people living in the municipalities of Southern Grampians and Glenelg. Over the three years of L4YP, the Report will provide a comprehensive data and evidence based reference document describing the assets and the issues experienced by young people across both Shires.

The L4YP project, with the financial support of the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development and partner agencies: Southern Grampians and Glenelg Shires and the Glenelg Southern Grampians LLEN, is investigating the many facets of issues and experiences of young people. It is also exploring the community environment – such as the agencies and services – which nurtures and supports them. The Snapshot Report has thus begun the process of assembling the information which, when looked at across the relevant sectors, will provide a more informed view of how life is for rural young people. It seeks to inform future planning, highlight examples of good practice, and point to further information resources which will assist young people, their families and relevant organizations.

2010 marks the first full year of L4YP. The project has many facets including a research element, a focus on engaging young people and training them in research methods, and a project activity and communication element which involves the wider youth sector including networks, agencies and professionals. Broad in scope, the Snapshot Report is intended to draw together data obtained from these different elements and to present them in a format useful to all stakeholders.

The Snapshot Report, in this first iteration, draws heavily on existing data from range of sources including recent parliamentary inquiries, ABS, existing policies and government websites. Rather than reproducing work already available in other places, this document provides numerous signposts for the reader to access for further and regularly updated information in specialist areas. The report also relies on secondary sources such as reports from other regional agencies. In particular, we acknowledge GSGLLEN who kindly allowed the extensive use of data from their 2010 Environmental Scan. A role of the Snapshot Report is to make existing information from a range of sectors more accessible to those with a concern for youth in this region.

Many of the issues raised in this report, have been voiced in various forums over years in Southwest Victoria. These include: the exit of young people from the region, transport and connectivity difficulties, education pathways, perceived increases in disengaged youth. Young people cite a lack of youth ‘space’ and an often repeated lament that there is ‘nothing to do!’ Adults may disagree with this, but the sentiment may express something about how many young people view their lives. Perhaps levels of anxiety and disengagement are a symptom of some
ennui felt by youth. In any case, none of these issues is new. We are now poised at the beginning of the second decade of a new century. It is time that we really begin to take seriously as a whole community, issues impacting on our young people. The Snapshot Report is one way of helping that discussion.

The Snapshot Report will help our understanding of the breadth of issues to consider. It will help us to reflect on good practice and on an analysis of current data to identify further gaps in knowledge and lead to a holistic informed consideration of the landscape for young people.

2.2 Project origins

L4YP began in late 2009 with funding from the Victorian Government’s DPCD Strengthening Victorian Community Fund. The Shires of Glenelg and Southern Grampians as well as the Glenelg Southern Grampians Local Learning Employment Network (GSGLEN) and RMIT have jointly resourced the initiative.

Given changes in youth service delivery, and financial constraints on agencies, there was a need to identify cohesive information which could assist future planning and contribute evidence to the youth sector. In addition, there was a concern about the lack of opportunities for the broader civic engagement of young people – though this could be contested. Indeed, already identified in this project is the wide disparity amongst young people. Many are heavily involved in a range of community activities while others are disconnected at many levels. How can agencies dealing with a wide geographic spread and relatively low numbers of young people, better match service delivery to the needs and aspirations of diverse rural young people?

The Southern Grampians and Glenelg Youth Networks were the project’s proponents. The Youth Networks across both Shires were formed by the workers from the youth sector and provide an invaluable source of support at both a professional and personal level. Regular meetings allow for the sharing of local knowledge and the opportunity to work through issues arising from the challenges they face in trying to provide services to young people who need help. They understood that often they made assumptions about young people without hearing their voices and that evidence needed to be gathered about the issues they faced by the sector as service providers and whether they were meeting the needs the needs of young people.
The youth networks are informal in terms of their governance and reporting but their scope and objectives are framed in terms that reflect a clear intent to work cooperatively to achieve the best possible outcomes for local youth.

**GLYN & SGYN Terms of Reference**

Network to address agreed recommendations/key issues.

Provide a forum for youth related services and other interested parties to discuss and plan specific initiatives and increase the opportunities for collaboration and the reduction of duplication.

Identify, foster and support partnerships between agencies and organisations and the community.

Foster an holistic approach encouraging the sharing of expertise, experience, advice and resources to better service our diverse youth communities. This includes funding opportunities, sharing of calendar of events, bulletins etc.

Support skill development/capacity building of local youth services and foster the development of innovative and sustainable models of best practice.

Provide opportunities to encourage youth and community representation and engagement.

Link with other initiatives and programs at a local, regional, state and national level.

Ensure the network remains inclusive and supportive of all stakeholders.

Advocate for equity of access and availability of services for rural, regional and remote young people living in the Glenelg Shire and surrounds.

Provide expertise, knowledge and input to regional and statewide bodies eg. South West RYAN in order to influence policy development and strategic planning.

2.3 What L4YP set out to do

The L4YP is a three year Project. For the purposes of the project ‘young people’ have been defined as being those aged 12 – 20 years. This target age group reflects the nature of the issues being faced by young people and the age at which they are occurring, and represents the mandated age groups that many agencies work with.
Conversations and questions heard around the table at Youth Network meetings were the origins for the L4YP project. Some of the research questions will echo the ‘gut feelings’ of the workers in the sector that rural young people were not being served well by policies that were city-centric.

- What is unique about the experience of growing up in rural areas?
- Why were ‘our’ young people missing out on education, training and employment opportunities because they didn’t live in a major centre?
- Why were they still leaving if they weren’t missing out?
- What about technology – wasn’t that supposed to be closing the distance in terms of communication and opportunity?
- Why weren’t our young people finishing year twelve?
- Why did the numbers of young people needing our help seem to be on the rise?
- Were they in crisis?
- Was the funding being made available for programs and services hitting the mark in terms of ‘our’ local young people?
- Were young people nationally and across the state experiencing the same kinds of problems and issues that our young people were facing?
- Where was the data that would help us to know how to support our young people better?
- Could the sector work smarter in Glenelg and Southern Grampians in the way services were offered to young people?
- What was missing?

The L4YP project team has identified that a key factor for the success of the project will be the genuine engagement of key agencies working with young people in this region. This includes the Shires for their planning, the health, housing, government, education and community sectors for their mentoring of young people, providing advice, being prepared to share information and to support each other, and to involve each other in ‘joined-up’ ideas for solutions and innovative new approaches. The project steering committee represents key stakeholder groups and the project will gain direction and traction through their support and ability to provide links to the broader community.

In order to find answers for some of these questions we would have to ask the young people themselves. The L4YP project is taking that process one step further and actually engaging young people to do some research themselves. And so a major learning outcome of the L4YP project will be effective processes for youth engagement and capacity building in leadership and communication for youth in the rural communities of South West Victoria.
Young people in each Shire have been invited to participate in a number of project activities over the past 12 months. They have contributed their ideas, concerns and voice to the project activities; learnt research skills such as survey design and interview techniques; and collaborated with the RMIT researchers, local governments and service providers.

We are inviting young people to provide insights and to seek out the opinions of their peers about their aspirations and concerns for their futures. They will explore what is great and what could be better about life in south west Victoria.

The key L4YP project objectives which have been developed are:

- build capacity in young people and the youth sector to engage with community, agencies and organisations
- implement a, ‘whole of community’ approach to identify the issues of concern to young people
- identify barriers to, and opportunities for, improved service delivery
- collect and analyse relevant data
- collaborate with young people and community and professional agencies
- identify recommendations for future actions
- promote the L4YP findings and recommendations

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4 L4YP Project application to DPCD
3. Engaging the youth sector and young people

3.1 Engaging the youth sector: how we did it and what they said

3.1.1 Methods for engaging stakeholders

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) public participation spectrum and Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic) provided the framework to engage stakeholders in the L4YP project. These frameworks are widely used to facilitate community engagement. The IAP2 principles of informing, consulting, involving, collaborating and empowering and YACVic principles of empowerment, purposeful engagement and inclusiveness are reflected in the L4YP project objectives particularly with regard to contributing to the capacity that young people may develop through their involvement with activities or research.

![L4YP STEERING GROUP](image)

Figure 1: L4YP Steering Group structure, engagement frameworks and activities

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5 Effective Engagement: building relationships with community and other stakeholders: Book 1: an introduction to engagement: Victorian Government Department of Sustainability and Environment, 2005 p.10

6 Taking Young People Seriously Handbooks, Youth Affairs Council of Victoria, 2004
3.1.2 Youth Networks
The L4YP project is closely involved with established Youth Networks in both municipalities and held two workshops with network members in December 2009. The purpose of these workshops was to provide the project team with an opportunity to identify and understand more clearly local issues and challenges affecting local young people, from the perspective of experienced practitioners working in the sector.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- create an opportunity for Youth Network members to contribute to L4YP as a community member as well as an agency worker
- to gain a greater sense of the landscape for young people
- aid capacity building in youth services sector through an exchange of knowledge and ideas
- begin work towards identifying strategies for future action.

The issues emerging from the two workshops were:

- the value and contribution of young people to communities
- education, aspirations and deferment from education
- the challenge of leaving home, perceptions of “staying”
- geographic isolation
- sense of belonging
- employment options

The ability of rural young people to exercise their desire to remain in their rural community is closely aligned with the range of available educational and economic opportunities, and youth-appropriate services as well as community decision-making structures which include young people’s participation.

Dominant features of the landscape were felt to be choices, aspirations and barriers to pursuing further education upon completion of secondary school. It was thought that the reality of pursuing further education meant young people leaving home to pursue their choice of tertiary course, and that they felt compelled to do so because staying at home means ‘failing’ or not being good enough. Student deferment rates from university places in order to work for a year to qualify for an independent rate of Youth Allowance was also a key feature. This was regarded as common practice across both Shires and was done to help ease the financial burden placed
on families whose children were relocating to pursue their studies. The implications of this were considered to be that:

"Rural students are at a disadvantage when seeking to access further education when compared to urban students. Compromises are being made by students and families when considering options for further education and these are seen to be affected". 7

Linked to this discussion about education was the issue of geographical location, the nature of rurality itself, the influence of farming and agribusiness on the lives of young people and expectations about their labour contribution to family farms. The question was asked whether being geographically isolated meant that young people felt isolated from others, or whether online social networking, instant messaging and texting meant the some of these feelings would be mitigated.

Another theme that ran through this discussion was the importance that young people place on feeling like they ‘fit in’. In rural communities the lack of anonymity, the school they attend and the sport they play can influence these feelings of belonging. It was felt that those young people who identified strongly with an ‘alternative’ group among their cohort, such as ‘same sex attracted’ or ‘gamer geek’, experienced greater degrees of bullying and harassment from their peers and lacked broader social acceptance.

Discussion in these workshops explored the meaning of ‘community’ and whether or not travelling out of their home community to attend school would contribute to the level of connection young people felt with where they lived. Rural communities have traditionally placed a great emphasis on sport as a way of creating strength and capacity. The point was made that for those young people who didn’t play sport that their options for gaining recognition and feeling a part of their community were somewhat limited. Barriers for young people’s participation in sport were considered to be social and financial.

7 Comment from member of Southern Grampians Youth Network at December 2009 workshop
Workshop participants thought that young people found it hard to break out of the ‘role’ they were assigned within their communities, one which was often determined according to the street or town they lived in, the school they attended and quite often their family name.

Employment options for young people were considered to be another important feature of the landscape in Glenelg and Southern Grampians. Part time work was generally perceived by workshop participants to be available but concern was raised that these positions went to young people who were engaged with school and that young people disengaged from school were at a disadvantage when it came to finding work. The discussion included the limited range of work experience placements that would contribute to job readiness and again there was a lack of programs for those young people not attending school.

The network members attributed a great deal of value to the presence and contribution of young people in both Shires. Young people were valued for their resilience; energy and enthusiasm; passion; loyalty; non-judgmental attitude; innocence; ability to create their own networks and initiative. They should be supported with tolerance to achieve success; responsibility; safety; connectedness; participation; aspirations; wellbeing; and fulfilment.

The Youth Network workshop attendees nominated the following as some key barriers which may affect local young people’s ability to participate in various aspects of rural life:

- Cost of participation in school and community life
- Community perception of young people as being only ‘problems’
- Lack of resources for agencies delivering resources in the youth sector
- Limited funding for community based youth focused projects
- Competitiveness in the local education market could actually be working against best interest of students

On this point, the local youth sector workers have articulated another finding from the Inquiry into Retaining Young People in Rural Towns and Communities (2006):

“Rural areas of Victoria have distinct geographical, social and economic characteristics. These characteristics often mean general policy processes fail to consider issues of distance and low population density, with negative impacts on service delivery and public administration. Greater attention is needed in policy planning and administration, to the specific needs and requirements of rural and regional areas of Victoria.”

8 Inquiry into Retaining Young People in Rural Towns and Communities, Parliament of Victoria, 2006, p.109
Youth Sector Network Recommendations for the L4YP Project

Recurring themes and points of discussion in these workshops revolved around four key areas: the issues which affect young people directly; factors which affect service delivery; and a vision for the future of local young people. The following four themes were identified:

Wellbeing
This is a broad term which means that key needs must be met and risk factors mitigated. Issues such as medical and sexual health; depression and anxiety disorders; risk taking behaviours; binge drinking; drugs; personal and family violence; levels of engagement with school and community. The context for this would be the prevalence or degree to which they occur. Improving community support for young people was seen as an important factor to contribute to improving wellbeing.

Resources
This includes educational, training and employment opportunities; leisure activities; youth focused services; facilities; and professional support.

Access
Improving access to these resources would help ensure the wellbeing of local young people. Establishing partnerships was seen as a way forward.

Stakeholder engagement
Key stakeholders such as state and local governments, education and training providers, service agencies and other members of the Youth Sector Networks to continue to work for increased collaboration to deliver better outcomes for young people.

Summary
For the final stage of the workshop, participants were asked to consider what the next steps of the project could be.

There was a clear message from both workshops that the positive aspects of growing up in rural areas should be celebrated and one way of doing this was through the inclusion of some case studies of local youth initiatives which had strong community support.

The ‘Standing Tall’ mentoring program in Hamilton and the ‘Future Leaders of Industry’ scholarship program in Portland were two examples that were mentioned, and the range of programs brokered in partnership through Brophy’s School Focused Services was also seen as a good example of a local response to a local need.

Working with local young people to identify and action new ideas was regarded as an important next step for the L4YP project. Workshop participants also highlighted the need to hear from young people directly in a way that enabled their voice and ideas to be implemented in direct action. Engagement activities which lead to increased levels of participation were considered highly desirable, with the concept of establishing a ‘Youth Council’ in each Shire receiving a great deal of support in both workshops. The establishment of a Youth Advisory Council has been included as an
outcome in the Glenelg Shire’s Youth Strategy Action Plan which was adopted by council in March 2009. Workshop participants indicated that the project could potentially direct community focus to youth issues, especially around changing risk behaviours like binge drinking and driving practices. By creating a better understanding of the lives of young people in the wider community, levels of wellbeing could be improved, resources could be better directed and youth participation in decision making could be increased.

3.1.3 Youth Network Project June 2010

While the initial workshops with the Youth Networks identified key themes as features of the landscape, regular discussions at monthly network meetings yielded a very specific issue that members felt needed immediate attention from the L4YP project. The numbers of young people who were disengaged from compulsory school based learning seemed to be growing and workers were encountering these young people at an increasingly young age.

"We are working with one young person who is now 14 and who hasn’t been to school since they were in year six – that’s three years of education they have missed out on."

(Glenelg Youth Network Member.)

Key community and youth sector stakeholders were invited to attend an extraordinary meeting of the Glenelg Youth Network on 1 June 2010 to discuss a community response. The need to collect data at a local level was identified as being a priority task by the attendees at this meeting. It was agreed that it would be appropriate for this task to be undertaken as part of the L4YP project. See Chapter 6 for details about this issue and the data that was collected.

3.2 Engaging young people: how we did it and what they said

3.2.1 Issues around engaging young people

A significant challenge for any research team planning to engage young people in a project like L4YP is the unique ethical aspects which need to be considered. The process for gaining approval from a university Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) to undertake projects is exacting. Conditions are often applied about the research themes which can be introduced to ensure that young people are not vulnerable to disclosing sensitive personal information. The research activities should avoid placing
young people at risk of harm and ultimately have some benefit from their participation. Ethical research requires that informed consent is freely given by participants. Doing research with young people means gaining signed permission from young participants as well as a parent or guardian if they are under eighteen. This could be an impediment to including a diverse range of young people in the L4YP project.

Social networking tools such as texting, Facebook, Twitter etc. are able to be used to communicate project activities to young people, but are not being employed as methods of gathering data for this project. These electronic communication tools are not considered to be appropriate methods for data collection for L4YP. This view may change over time to reflect the prevalence and relevance of social networking as an important part of how young people keep in touch, but the L4YP project needs to work within this constraint.

### 3.2.2 Selecting methodologies

Taking all of these ethical considerations and conditions into account, the L4YP project team decided on a number of face to face methods to initiate the engagement of young people. The first was an Autumn Youth Summit which was held in Hamilton in April 2010, the second was a Youth-iversity program held over 4 days in the July school holidays 2010, and the third was a Spring Youth Summit held in Portland in October 2010. These initial project activities provided numerous learning opportunities for the L4YP project team especially about the logistics involved in engaging with young people face to face.

### 3.2.3 Autumn Youth Summit April 2010

The Autumn Youth Summit (AYS), held at RMIT University Hamilton on 14 April 2010, set out to explore the needs and issues of young people from the Glenelg and Southern Grampians Shires. It also sought to position the L4YP project as a prominent feature in the landscape for local young people by providing a positive public forum for youth issues to be examined and discussed. The participation of young people in the AYS allowed their voices to contribute directly to the research being undertaken as part of the project.

All nine secondary schools from all sectors and across the two municipalities were invited to attend the summit which resulted in staff members from five schools accompanied a combined 46 student delegation. Eight additional adults representing a number of stakeholders also attended.

The summit began with a keynote address from Stefan Dimou, a young man representing Left Right Think Tank, a non-partisan and non-profit organization which provides a platform for ideas that allows the development of public policy that is innovative and consultative. Left Right is staffed by a team of volunteer young people committed to creating personal development and educational opportunities for other young people.
An innovative activity was delivered to the summit participants where they personalised a paper ‘avatar’ and used it to indicate a response to a series of questions.

Figure 1: Paper gingerbread avatar

These questions were designed to reflect four key themes which had been identified through the workshops with the Youth Networks earlier in the project: Getting around and staying Connected; Keeping Well; Earn or Learn; and Having Your Say.

Figure 2: AYS Do you have a job?

There were 38 summit participants who indicated that they had an income from paid work and there were 8 non-responses. 28 of these young people had a paid part time job, 8 received an allowance or money for household chores while 2 young people indicated they had their ‘own business’ and earned money babysitting and sweeping driveways respectively.
Figure 3: Who pays for your mobile phone?

This question revealed that 44 of the 46 participants had mobile phones. The responses to this question indicated that a majority of the summit participants contribute to the cost of having a mobile phone. An assumption could be made that money earned from paid work in fact enables these young people to pay for the use of their mobile phone.

Figure 4: AYS Sporting participation

Only five of the summit participants responded that they didn’t take part in a sporting activity. There were a small number of respondents who played more than one sport and this could reflects the seasonal nature of outdoor sports played across the two Shires and the limited number of sports offered at indoor venues.
Figure 5: AYS daily hours online

The amount of time spent online daily by the respondents reflects the national average.

Young people (aged 8–17 years) spent an average of 1¼ hours online each day.

*State Of Australia’s Young People: A Report on the social, economic, health and family lives of young people, Office for Youth, 2010*

The workshop discussion around staying connected served to emphasise the importance that young people place on being able to keep in touch with their friends. Mobile coverage black spots and not having broadband internet at home were identified as issues for some of the participants and also for others among family and friends in the area.

Figure 6: AYS Is getting around a hassle?
This question was phrased in this way intentionally - the L4YP project team wanted to see if the participants would identify transport as an ‘issue’ without being prompted either way. So without being presented with a leading question - a little under half the summit participants still found that getting around was a hassle to some degree. For those who attended the summit, relying on parents to get to jobs, sport and for social reasons often meant negotiating a priority for their request and sometimes they didn’t get a ride to where they wanted to go.

The April summit concluded with the students completing an evaluation form which asked them to consider two key questions.

Question 1: Are there any issues identified today that are of particular interest to you?

![AYS Issues of interest](image)

Figure 7: AYS Issues of interest

The responses to this open-ended question were coded and the issues that rated highest with student participants were transport and socialising. Given the discussion in the ‘Getting Around and Staying Connected’ workshops it would be reasonable to assume that these two issues are linked, with access to transport having an effect on the participants social activities.

Question 2: What outcomes would you like as a result of today’s summit?

![AYS Desired outcomes](image)

Figure 8: AYS Desired outcomes
Action by young people or for young people, and the importance of a youth voice being heard, were deemed to be desirable outcomes with 46% of responses indicating this. Opportunities for social connection for young people were also of great importance with general social activities and places, and the very specific desire for a bowling alley, gaining 22.4% of the responses.

Participant feedback also indicated that a combined school Summit was a valuable opportunity for young people to be heard and to contribute their voices and opinions in a way that will have meaning and impact. 96% of students participating said they would like the Summit to become a regular event, and a number of them expressed an interest in organising another such event later in the year.

The AYS workshops provided the lead researchers with an opportunity for meaningful engagement with young people, stakeholders and community members and allowed an exchange of ideas. The learning and data gathered on the day informed the future direction of the L4YP project. It gave a large group of young people an introduction to participatory research, and set the scene for them to take a more active role in the next Youth Summit and subsequent activities.

A significant outcome of the AYS has been the inclusion of one of the participants on the Hamilton Structure Plan Steering Committee. This is a major planning activity being undertaken by the local council. Having a youth voice in this process has been a real win for the project and a first for the shire of Southern Grampians.

3.2.4 Spring Youth Summit October 2010
The October Spring Youth Summit (SYS) was held in Portland at the Civic Centre and aimed to build on the success of the April Autumn Summit (AYS) and ‘shine the light’ on the lives of young people from the Glenelg and Southern Grampians Shires. Themes emerging from this second summit included how young people experience living in Portland and Hamilton the perceptions they had of themselves - what they thought other people thought about them based on where they lived - and whether they thought they were respected or valued.

All nine secondary schools from all sectors and across the two municipalities were invited to attend the summit which resulted in staff members from five schools accompanied a combined 44 student delegation. Other adult attendees were L4YP project stakeholders, members of the project team and the keynote speaker.

The Summit began with a keynote address from Shane Robertson, a young man who grew up in Warrnambool and who has experience as a young leader in a rural community. He spoke about the need to make choices that were compatible with personal values and yet could still benefit others; the challenges associated with having a passion for something and trying to see that through in the face of opposition or lack of support from your
peers; and the fantastic experiences that opened up for him as a result of his participation both at school and in the community.

The successful “avatar” activity from the AYS was again used to gather information about the participants and also to ask them a range of different questions about employment, their time online, and issues in their community. Summit workshops were presented as three different scenarios around the themes of leadership in schools; young people as paid workers; and the representation of young people in the media. The themes were chosen by the L4YP project team based on the outcomes from the AYS.

There were 29 summit participants who have paid work, 14 who didn’t and there was one non response. The majority responded that they usually work between five to ten hours a week while two indicated that they usually worked more than 20 hours a week.

Figure 9: How many hours do you usually do paid work in a week?

The impact of the legislated changes under the Federal Governments Work Fair policy is being felt by local young people. (See Appendix 8.1)

The General Retail Industry Award 2010 now specifies that “The minimum daily engagement of a casual is three hours.” (Clause 13.4)\(^9\)

In rural communities businesses don’t necessarily have extended operating hours in the retail sector which means that the time between the end of school and the close of business is less than three hours.

Larger retail businesses such as supermarkets and some chain stores are open for long enough after the school day ends to be able to offer three hour shifts to their young employees. In small rural communities these types of businesses are simply not there, so opportunities for young rural people to earn money in the retail sector are limited when compared to regional centres and urban areas.

\(^9\) The General Retail Industry Award 2010  
As one summit participant indicated as something he would like to change:

“Yes to slash the 3 hr minimum working time for students per day, therefore I can work after school.” (Male 15)

Students considered the challenges of having a part time job and discussed the demands on their time from school, sport and family commitments; the trouble finding work as a young person; the inequities faced by young people in the workplace; and the value of work experience and volunteering as a way of gaining experience and developing skills. They placed a great deal of emphasis on the fact that money was a motivating factor and developing workplace friendships was also a benefit.

![How paid work was found](chart1.png)

**Figure 10:** How did you find the paid work you currently have?

Of the 29 students who had work 20 responded that they had found their current job through family or friends. This seems to support the idea that ‘who you know’ can have an outcome on whether or not you are able to find work. This could also be an indicator of further disadvantage for those young people who would like to find work. If their family members are not in the workforce or socially connected, they may not be able to find work as easily as those young people who have family members in employment.

![Is it difficult finding work?](chart2.png)

**Figure 11:** Do you think it is difficult to find paid work?

Of the 10 participants who responded that they thought it was difficult to find work, six of them lived in Heywood, three lived in small towns around Hamilton and one lived in Portland. Four of those who said it was difficult to find work had actually found employment.
Participants at the AYS in Hamilton identified ‘school’ as being a community to which they belonged, to which they felt connected and to which they made a valuable contribution. Participants at the SYS in Portland took this idea of community connection a step further and made direct correlation between leadership roles at school and the responsibility to represent their respective schools in the wider community.

“More communication between schools – better community – happier people – PEACE.”

“More student and community involvement.”

“Community involvement – let them know you’re the leader – support so the school can find ways to help the community and vice versa.”

“I think that as youth we can make our reputation different and today’s session really inspired me in believing in different roles that can be played and the opportunities that can come from these.”

Most students acknowledged that leaders need good support and encouragement from their peers, teachers and families. The level of support received by an individual was considered crucial and this was seen as a make or break factor in effective and genuine student leadership.

Participants in these workshops also felt that the process for electing student leaders needed to be extremely fair and equal and that candidates for positions should represent the student body and demonstrate an understanding of their school.

“Like a federal election – make it a big deal – get excited and have fun with it!”

“Have forums to speak about the issues and concerns – how we can improve on issues and problems the school may face.”

“Opportunity to step up and be a leader in a group environment.”
The summit participants defined their own concept of leadership; the key qualities a leader should possess, and the reasons for taking a leadership role in their community.

Leadership is:
- being a voice for those who don’t have one
- standing up for what you believe in
- looking beyond yourself
- community involvement
- good for the good of others

A Leader is:
- genuine
- passionate
- a dreamer
- positive
- open-minded
- a good listener
- a good communicator
- a role model

The participants considered the way young people are portrayed in the media and how that reflects on how they are perceived in their communities. Their understanding of the term media was quite narrow and they seemed to think it was really just news media. Advertising; television soaps, dramas or comedies; and online websites weren’t really discussed in terms of the way young people were represented. They thought that local media represented local young people in a fairly negative way and that there was a stereotyped image of them as being a bit of a problem:

“Bad representation 4 youth makes elder people scared of youth.”

“Media stereotypes relate to how everyone underestimates youths.”

“Media portray us as bad people on news.”

Participants were asked the question “Where do you think violence is a problem in your community?” and the majority of response indicated that they considered violence to occur in public places. Their thinking that violence was visible could suggest that local young are associated with incidents of violence, which in turn contributes to their perceived negative representation in the media.
It should be noted that the L4YP researchers didn’t ask the SYS participants ‘who’ they thought was involved with perpetrating the violence or who the victims were. They were also not asked to identify what may cause violence. One of the answer choices was that there was ‘no problem’ so the researchers didn’t assume that violence was a problem in their communities. The format of the summit wasn’t the appropriate place to ask about personal experiences of violence.

The number of volunteers in the community is a common measure of community engagement and social connectedness, so the L4YP project team asked the question: ‘Do you have a position as a volunteer?’ We didn’t offer a definition of what a ‘volunteer position’ was, so the respondents had to identify whether any of their current roles or activities would be considered volunteering. Sixteen participants (37%) considered themselves to have a volunteer position while 30% would consider taking on a volunteer position in the future.

So this group of young people were exhibiting a capacity and willingness to volunteer that reflected the current percentage of volunteering rates among adult members of their community.
The SYS workshop group discussions revealed that participants were less certain about the potential for volunteer activities to lead directly to paid work for young people. It was generally acknowledged that volunteer work looked good on a resume and may impress certain people, but possibly not employers.

Figure 14: Do you think spending time online makes friendships stronger?

Given the amount of time young people spend online, the L4YP team decided to ask the SYS participants for their opinion about a couple issues which are linked with their use of the internet.

The responses to the question ‘Do you think spending time online makes friendships stronger?’ indicate that these young people don’t necessarily see that the time they spend on Facebook or similar sites contributes to the quality of their existing friendships. This reflects the previous findings of the AYS where young people expressed the importance of having social opportunities to meet with their friends. So perhaps their time online is about arranging social opportunities rather than considering time online as a social opportunity.

An issue of national concern is the incidence and the effect of cyberbullying for young people. The L4YP team asked the question ‘Who should be responsible for solving the problem of cyberbullying?’ and provided a choice of answers. There was an assumption made by L4YP researchers that the participants would have an understanding of what activities constitute the act of cyberbullying and also that it was an issue. The intent in posing the question in these terms was to try to gain some insight into how the problem could be addressed.
Figure 15: Who should be responsible for solving the problem of cyberbullying?

It's hard to determine from both the question and the responses whether the SYS participants thought Cyberbullying was an issue in their own lives. Also the answer choice of “teachers” was not offered, which may have affected their responses. It would be interesting to find out whether they said that the individual should deal with Cyberbullying because it was something they didn’t want anyone else to find out about.

Participants in the SYS expressed their opinion about taking part in this L4YP project activity in a positive way:

“Today has given me confidence to address other issues, especially ones for my own school.”

“I think it is a great opportunity for students to develop themselves eg: confidence. It also helps prepare students for any leadership roles they may be considering.”

“It’s a good experience to let teens communicate!!”

Both summits have shown that the young people who attended have seen the days as an opportunity to develop some interpersonal skills; meet students from other schools; express their opinions in a way that means they have been heard; see the potential for further ways of contributing to their communities; and consider further involvement with the L4YP project.
3.2.5 Youth-i-versity

The concept of running a ‘Youth-i-versity’ program at RMIT Hamilton over the July 2010 school holidays was devised as a novel way of introducing young people to a research experience. The L4YP team was able to draw on past RMIT Hamilton projects and experiences working with local young people (e.g. the 10MMM project) to offer a research project that would capture the imagination and enthusiasm of young people with an interest in film making. Fourteen young people (aged 12-15) from Southern Grampians Shire ‘enrolled’ at Youth-i-versity in response to advertising in schools, media releases and personal invitations.

Youth-i-versity was a structured four day event aimed to get local young people together to have a look around the town where they live; ask questions and try to find answers; and tell the stories of the people they hear through a survey and mini-documentaries. It sought to capture and then present images and perceptions from young people about what life is like here. This also provided another opportunity for the L4YP project team to gather data relating to the landscape for young people through participant observation, as well as through the survey findings and documentary materials.

Activity 1: What’s in Hamilton for young people?

This activity focused on asking the participants to identify the benefits and features their communities offered to young people. The young people were asked to identify ‘youth friendly’ or youth specific facilities and amenities by reviewing materials in the Southern Grampians Shire ‘new residents’ pack’. These packs are presented to people new to the Shire to introduce them to what’s on offer. With the same purpose in mind they were asked to visit the Shire’s website and review it to try to find the any youth specific content.

These activities were a knowledge gathering exercise to promote some critical assessment of the materials and thinking around it. The young people found very little information they considered to be of interest or relevance for young people. This could have been as a result of there being no material from the Shire targeting young people, or the lack of ability on the part of the young people to assess the material provided critically, or both.

Activity 2: Big ideas round robin

The young people were asked to write five ‘big ideas’ that they would like to see in Hamilton for young people – something that was missing or something that they would like to have to make life better. A list was compiled and prioritised.
The results showed that the idea of a shopping mall was the most popular. The young people were asked why this was desirable and the reasons given included the fact that wanted a mall that had escalators, that it would be a place to just hang out, and that the variety of shops would be better. This led to a discussion about the places that were available to them to meet up with friends or just hang out.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting places</th>
<th>Avoided places</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outside cinema</td>
<td>Safeway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Maccas’</td>
<td>Aldi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends house</td>
<td>Target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chance/random meeting down the street</td>
<td>Chickenfeed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reject shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Smoking areas outside the pub on the main street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Old people in general (over 40)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 17: Youth-i-versity youth meeting places

Activity 3: Research techniques
The L4YP team provided digital cameras to participants so they could ‘tell a story’ about the experiences of growing up in the region.

Three research training sessions were delivered to the young people over the course of the first two days of Youth-i-versity. These covered research concepts, research ethics and survey design. This was to ensure that the young people could approach the making of a documentary with the idea of having a ‘question’ and then presenting the ‘story’.

They spent half a day on planning, scripting and storyboarding in preparation for the filming stage, then most of a day filming around Hamilton, in some cases interviewing people and in other cases providing the front-of-camera material themselves. One group chose to focus their documentary on young people as a ‘species’ and explore their habitat – a David Attenborough-esque approach. Another group chose homelessness
as their theme, while a third chose to ask older people what they thought of ‘today’s youth’.

The L4YP team learned that while these young people were technically proficient with digital video cameras and editing software, they didn’t necessarily see ‘telling a story’ as being a way of presenting factual information or research findings. If this method is to be used in future L4YP activities a clearer ‘brief’ needs to be developed before beginning a digital storytelling exercise.

**Activity 4: Youth -ivity Survey**

Using Survey Monkey, participants developed a survey and then asked young people on the streets of Hamilton to complete it. They were adamant that young people would not answer lengthy surveys and chose to ask questions based on the discussions and activities they had been a part of over the previous day. The survey consisted of ten questions including age, sex and town of residence. The other questions focused on how they felt and what they thought about living in this region. Potential respondents were informed of the purpose and content of the survey via verbal introduction and a written statement (Appendix 8.2)

![Figure 18: Youth-i-versity survey respondents by age and sex](image)

A number of the Youth-i-versity participants found it quite challenging to deliver these surveys face to face and didn’t feel confident in approaching young people they didn’t know. As a consequence the response rate was quite low. However the L4YP team had a chance to observe this process and realised that perhaps part of research training needs to incorporate interview techniques and strategies for approaching people for survey purposes.
Survey question 2: How do you feel about the town where you live?

![Survey Question 2 Graph]

Figure 19: Q2 How do you feel about the town where you live?

The majority of responses to survey Question 2 were positive. Eight rated their town as boring and two wanted out. This didn’t actually ask the survey respondents if they were intending to leave their town, just how they felt about living there. One of the young researchers provided written reflections on the responses to this question.

Survey question 3: Is there stuff for young people to do in your town?

![Survey Question 3 Graph]

Figure 20: Youth-i-versity Q3 Is there stuff for young people to do in your town?

The negative response Question 3 is somewhat at odds with the previous response where only eight indicated that they were bored. It could be that they consider boredom and happiness to be different things and that lack of things to do contribute to boredom rather than unhappiness. They may also have considered things to do to be venue based activities as opposed to their ability to find activities to alleviate their own boredom.
Survey question 6: Should there be a ‘youth place’ in Hamilton?

Figure 21: Youth-i-versity Q6 Should there be a ‘Youth Place’ in Hamilton?
Survey Question 6 was designed by the young researchers at Youth-i-versity to be deliberately non-specific as to the nature of the place. It was overwhelmingly agreed that there should be a youth place, but it was not possible to determine from the answers whether what they really wanted was simply more youth friendly places or a specific place for young people only.

Survey question 8: If you had a bucket of money filled with millions of dollars and you were told you could make, build or buy anything for young people in Hamilton – what would you spend it on?

Figure 22: Youth-i-versity Q8 A bucket of money would buy...
The responses to this question indicate the place based nature of what some young people consider to be missing from their town. It is hard to determine whether they are seeking places to do organised activities because they are bored or whether the actual activity serves the purpose of having a reason to meet up with friends at a particular venue.

The nature of the survey questions devised by the Youth-i-versity participants was quite superficial and the respondents weren’t asked to provide reasons for their answers. The L4YP team needs to find ways to ensure that young people can articulate and differentiate their reasons for wanting, among other things, a bowling alley.
4. Issues and evidence

There are many sources of information providing good evidence and references about the social determinants affecting the lives of young people and the communities in which they live. There are too many to describe in detail so we have provided a summary of the key documents in the table in section 4.2.

4.1 Key issues emerged from our conversations and reading

4.1.1 Earning and Learning
The AYS Summit workshops identified travel time between home and school as being a big negative factor influencing their current education experience. When asked to identify the reasons for their attendance at a particular school, students gave a range of responses from parental views of public school system, to subject availability, to financial reasons. Sibling attendance and friends were other common reasons for students to attend a given school whereas proximity to minimise travel was not really a factor, more of an accepted consequence of obtaining an education.

Demands on time outside of school were mentioned in passing with more of focus on homework being too time consuming, rather than work and sport activities taking too much time. Issues with their current experiences include the pressure exerted to achieve academically, the fact too much emphasis is given to ENTER scores as a measure of school success, the lack of genuine opportunities for students to be ‘heard’ at their respective schools and concerns about taking a GAP year.

When the students at the AYS were asked whether they planned to leave or stay in their home towns when they finished school, only one of the 46 student delegates indicated they were intending to remain in the area. However informal lunch time discussions revealed that some participants felt that expressing their genuine intention to stay in the region would have been socially unacceptable.

“Amazing that nearly everyone wants to move away.”
(Female 14)
41

4.1.2 Getting around and staying connected
AYS Summit workshop participants were asked to identify what helps them stay connected where they live. Their responses indicated a good understanding of factors that contribute to a sense of connection to their community. They identified ‘people’ as being a vital part of belonging and feeling connected. The means of communication were just that – a means to the end of meeting up with their friends face to face. When asked how they stayed connected the responses indicated a huge reliance on ICT.

The students also considered barriers and issues to staying connected, and while mobile black spots and lack of internet access were mentioned, there was an overwhelming consensus from the discussion in all three groups that actually “getting around” was a real issue.

10MMM’s YourSay survey (2008) found that 60% of surveyed young people in Southern Grampians experienced trouble with Internet access. It showed a pattern of uneven broadband access consistent with other rural areas, with those living on farms more likely to experience difficulties in access.

According to the YourSay report, use of technology amongst young people in the Southern Grampians was high, despite patchy access (for example, 43% of those experiencing difficulties said their connection was slow, while 29% said their connection ‘drops out’). Despite this the young people were positive about using ICT and its impact on their lives.

The YourSay study showed the largest group (31.4%) used ICT for keeping in touch with friends. In contrast, 26.6% cited their main reason for ICT use was study, 17% said they had nothing else to do, 11% used ICT for keeping up to date while around 7.5% said that ICT was important for keeping in touch with family.

Reliance on parents for transport to and from sport, social or work activities meant that there was a feeling of lack of independence; an inability to plan spontaneous social occasions; that parents got to determine the importance or priority of a request for a ride; that living out of town and distances travelled could lead to isolation; and that a lack of flexible public transport was an issue for young people in the area. In terms of solutions, there was no one “great idea” but the students felt that raising awareness about the transport issues faced by young people would be a good start.
The importance of family to young people in this region is consistent with other findings. The YourSay Report from the 10MMM project which involved a survey conducted by young people in the Hamilton region showed that ‘family’ was the most important issue in their lives (other categories were: friends, global issues, school, work, earning money, saving money, spending money, owning a car, ICT and travel). In the 10MMM survey, 93% of respondents said family was important with 74% of these saying it was ‘extremely important’. The young people in this survey said that ICT made them more connected with friends.

However, in the same report, 60% of young people responded that ‘people’ had more impact on them than did technology (3%). Nevertheless, 50% of the YourSay respondents also suggested that their use of technology did cause conflict (ranging from ‘a little’ to ‘a lot’).

In light of the reliance of young people on their parents for transport, and their reliance on ICT (a potential source of family conflict) for keeping in touch, young people in this region need to employ sound negotiation skills to keep in touch and maintain social connections.

4.1.3 Keeping Well
Students were asked to think about ‘keeping well’ and how they would define it. They were easily able to identify the mental and physical health aspects of this concept. When asked to consider the things that contribute to being well, physical health factors such as healthy eating and exercise were the most readily nominated. The social and emotional aspects of their lives such as family, friendships and stress levels were considered to be of equal importance.

Students then thought about the negative and positive influences on their well being. Important positive contributing influences included family and peer support and participation in sport and cultural activities. Negative factors included media presentation of unrealistic body image, pressures around balancing school, work and sport commitments, and risk behaviours associated with alcohol and other drugs.

The students did not nominate ‘health’ as an issue in their final AYS evaluation sheets, despite the fact that it is identified as one of the four key measures of disadvantage for rural young people. This could be because the young people in this cohort are all engaged at school, where they are frequently exposed to information regarding health issues and strategies for dealing with them. While access to rural medical services is certainly more difficult than in urban areas, they are more likely to rely on family members to make arrangements so may be unaware of the relative difficulties. This cohort does not represent the most disadvantaged sector of the community, where health issues are more likely to have intruded themselves upon their awareness.

Students were asked to consider the differences between rural and city living in terms of keeping well and their responses indicated that living in the

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country was a mostly positive. The natural environment was cleaner; there was more space; they felt they had more freedom because of higher levels of perceived safety in their community; there was less pressure to follow and adopt ‘fashion’; they were better able to make their own fun than their city counterparts; and they appreciated experiences in the city more because they didn’t go very often. There was a sense that they missed out on events such as concerts; had less access to cultural resources like museums; and they had to wait longer to see new release movies in a cinema, if they were screened locally at all. A general discussion concluded each workshop with the focus being in each case the need for more social ‘places’ for young people which would also make it easier to meet students from other schools.

4.1.4 Having a Say
Participants were asked to identify places where they could make a change and the three areas they nominated were school, workplace and town or neighbourhood. Students were asked how they could effect change. Contacting the media or joining a group were seen as the most influential things they could do. Presenting a petition was seen as a way of expressing young people’s views about something but there was less certainty about who they should be seeking to influence.

Students were asked to identify local opportunities for young people to make a change and most of these involved joining an existing volunteer or service group rather than creating something new. Students also considered things that they would like to change in their local community and their responses focused on improving the quality of existing sports facilities and the need for more social activities, with the idea of a bowling alley being very popular.

Many young users of ICT in the YourSay Report responded that ICT empowered them and strengthened their voice however the higher their use of ICT, the more ‘voice’ they had, according to the survey. High ICT users were most likely to say they had a voice (39.6%), with just over half (53.5%) who were less frequent ICT users, feeling that they had no voice.
4.2 We identified the evidence about these issues from across the nation and in our local community

4.2.1 Evidence from across the nation

The State of Australia’s Young People Report 2009 describes how young people aged 12–24 years in Australia are faring and identifies those who may need additional support to do well.

Table 1: Evidence from across the nation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EARNING AND LEARNING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young People and Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people’s future outcomes are strongly related to their education. The majority of young people are currently in some form of education. For those who have left education, most had achieved Year 12, a Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualification or a university degree. Key groups of young people are at risk of poor educational attainment and performance, particularly young Indigenous Australians, those from low socio economic status (SES) backgrounds and those living in rural and remote areas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, how productive are young people?

Most young people lead very productive lives. They spend many hours of their week undertaking productive activities – paid work, education and/or domestic and care activities. The time young people spend on productive activities differs by age, gender and on the combinations of activities undertaken.

To what extent are young people working, looking for work, or out of the labour force?

Almost half of teenagers and two in three young adults are employed. This can help young people transition into full-time work and helps young people avoid living in a household in poverty. Indigenous young people, those from a low SES background and those who have not completed Year 12 are most at risk of being out of the labour force. Unemployment has increased considerably for young people as a result of the recent global economic crisis and young people both in and out of work are concerned about their future employment prospects. In 2006, 44% of 15-19-year-olds and 69% of 20-24-year-olds were employed (ABS Census, 2006). Only 31% of Indigenous teenagers were employed, compared to nearly 44% of non-Indigenous15–19-year-olds.

## What helps young people move from education into work?

Career advice, work experience and vocational education and training can all play a role in assisting young people to move from education into work. Regardless of sex, location or socio economic status, students reported career advice as useful.

The 2006 Census showed that those who completed school were more likely than early school leavers to get full-time work. In the year after leaving school, early leavers were twice as likely as school completers to be only marginally attached to the labour force (i.e. employed part-time or unemployed/not in the labour force) – 40 per cent and 20 per cent respectively. The May 2007 ABS Education and Work survey showed that completing Year 12 gave young people an advantage in the first year after leaving school, even when they did not proceed to further education.

Vocational education and training (VET) in schools is often recommended as a way of easing the transition from school into the labour force.


## What challenges do young people face when transitioning into the workplace?

The Employing Young Workers project by the Brotherhood of St Laurence set out to explore possible workplace practices that could contribute to the effectiveness of inducting, managing and retaining young workers. There is a general recognition that young people are crucial to the future of business and the economy, but there are problems in attracting young people into certain jobs, and/or keeping young people as employees.

Through interviews and surveys with both employers and young employees, this research was intended to assist employers to consider what they are doing to attract, recruit and manage young workers. The research uncovered:

- the importance of formal induction – for training, orientation, information about responsibilities and entitlements and occupational health and safety; and

- the need for management skills to ensure good communication, rapport development and on the job training.

The authors concluded that employers had a responsibility to provide adequate management skills and workplace practices for young people, somewhat akin to the responsibilities schools and parents had to young people in other areas.

Evidence from across the nation (Continued)

### Youth Compact

The Australian and State and Territory Governments have agreed to a Compact with Young Australians (the Compact) that provides incentives to stay in, or return to, an education or training pathway.

All young people aged 15 - 24 will have an entitlement to a place in school, training or higher education, subject to availability and meeting admission requirements.

All young people who are aged 17 or under must be engaged full time in school, training or employment, or a combination of these, that is, learning or earning.

All Governments have agreed to ensure that at least 90 per cent of all young people attain Year 12 or its equivalent by 2015. (p.8)


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### GETTING AROUND AND STAYING CONNECTED

#### New Technologies

New technology has great social, economic and personal benefits for young people, despite documented costs associated with excessive consumption. The small numbers of young people who do not use technology (these are most likely to be young people from disadvantaged backgrounds), either through choice or lack of access, may become increasingly isolated as the importance of technology continues to grow.

Young people (aged 8–17 years) spent an average of 1.2 hours online each day and watched approximately 2 hours of television each day.

Why are family relationships and friendships important, and how much time do young people spend with family and friends?

Strong friendships and family relationships are critical for young people’s social and emotional development. On average, young people spend 40 hours a week with their family and most report having close relationships. Friends are an important source of support for young people and they highly value their social networks and most young people (94%) report having friends they can confide in and, on average spend 20 hours per week with their friends.

### KEEPING WELL

**Prevalence of alcohol use in 1999**

Experience with alcohol was high amongst secondary students, with use becoming more common as age increased. By the age of 14 around 90% of students had tried alcohol and by the age of 17 over 70% of students had drunk alcohol in the month prior to the survey.

Hazardous drinking was defined as having eight or more drinks in one day for boys and six or more drinks in one day for girls. Of current drinkers aged between 12 and 15 years, 12% of boys and 13% of girls had engaged in hazardous drinking in the previous week. Among 16-17-year-old current drinkers, 38% of boys and girls had drunk at a hazardous level in the preceding week.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Australian secondary students’ use of over-the-counter and illicit substances in 1996</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analgesics were the most commonly used substance (licit or illicit) among secondary students. By the age of 12 over 95% of students had used analgesics in their lifetime. Over two-thirds of secondary students had used analgesics in the four weeks prior the survey and this included 42% of students who had used analgesics in the week prior to the survey. More girls than boys were regular users of analgesics, with around 50% of girls 15 and over having used analgesics in the week prior to the survey compared with around 35% of boys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannabis was the most commonly used illicit substance among secondary students with 36% of all secondary students aged between 12 and 17 years reporting the use of cannabis at some time in their life. Cannabis use increased with age, increasing from 13% of 12-year olds who had ever used cannabis to 55% of 17-year olds. Around 20% of all students had used cannabis in the month prior to the survey, while 12% had used it within the week before the survey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhalants use was more common among younger students than older students. While 26% of all students had ever used inhalants, ever use decreased from 32% of 12-year olds to 15% of 17-year olds. Recent use of inhalants also decreased with age so that while 11% of 12-year olds had used inhalants in the week prior to the survey, only 2% of 17-year olds had used these substances recently.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HAVING A SAY**

Are young people civically engaged?

Educated young people are more likely to be involved in civic activities. Participation in civic activities is not generally high among young people, but some young people are very proactively involved and engaged. Two of the most common civic activities are voting and, in recent years, looking after the environment.

While most young people are enrolled to vote, one in five young people over 18 years are not.

- Only 80% of 18–25-year-olds are enrolled to vote, in comparison with 95% of the eligible population.
- Youth is not the only factor in this comparatively low level of enrolment; disadvantage and marginalisation are relevant as well.
- Young people aged 12–25 years from diverse backgrounds – Indigenous, CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse), low SES, disability, and out-of-home care – are not widely involved in decision-making processes, despite official support.

**CONCLUSION**

Overall, the picture of Australia’s young people is generally positive. They achieve high levels of educational attainment and performance, many young people are employed and they actively contribute to household domestic work and care. Young people also take part in community based activities, they are represented among Australia’s volunteers and some are civically engaged in a range of other areas. As such, young people are highly productive and make a substantial contribution to Australian society.

While this picture illustrates a broadly successful generation of young people, these years can also be enormously challenging, and are often filled with some risk taking. Of particular concern is the number of homeless young people, the prevalence of young people having unwanted and unprotected sex, the prevalence of young people drinking alcohol at risky levels and the high numbers of young people with a mental disorder and/or experiencing psychological distress.

Risk taking and positive outcomes are not equally distributed among young people. Indigenous young people, young people from a low socio economic status background, young people who are neither in work nor study, and young people with a disability are at risk of falling behind the broader population of young people in a range of areas.


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4.2.2 Evidence from across Victoria

Table 2: Evidence from across Victoria
EARNING AND LEARNING

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

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

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

GETTING AROUND AND STAYING CONNECTED

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

Young people in rural areas are particularly dependent on public transport for accessing key services, as well as educational, work and leisure activities. However, nearly half of young people (aged 18–24) in rural Victorian report having no public transport and nearly a third (29 per cent) of Victorian females have experienced restricted travel in the past 12 months.

Evidence from across Victoria (Continued)
## KEEPING WELL

### Overall Health and Well Being

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The State of Victoria’s Young People, DEECD & DPCD (2008)

Safety Protection and Crime

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

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


HAVING A SAY

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

### Key documents and where to find them

#### Table 3: Key documents and where to find them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents and where to find them</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia Youth Summit 2020: <a href="http://www.australia2020.gov.au/youth/#summit">http://www.australia2020.gov.au/youth/#summit</a></td>
<td>In April 2008, the Australian Government held a youth summit which developed an ‘agenda of priorities’ which was communicated to the Australia 2020 Summit. One hundred young delegates considered a range of issues from indigenous, productivity, climate change and health. The delegates developed a communiqué which included ‘future directions for rural industries and rural communities’.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Australian Youth Summit Vision

“Our vision is for a changed perception of rural Australia and its importance to the national economy and society and of all the opportunities in rural cities. All rural Australians will have equitable access to human rights and opportunities in health and education. Rural communities are creative, innovative and are well supported in research and development. Rural Australia will be a cultural melting pot and will be a place of choice for all Australians”.


<p>| How Young People are Faring Report 2010 <a href="http://www.fya.org.au/what-we-do/research/how-young-people-are-faring-2010-2/">http://www.fya.org.au/what-we-do/research/how-young-people-are-faring-2010-2/</a> | A new feature of this year’s report is the use of case studies. Young people who have a sense of where they want to go after leaving school tend to fare better in the transition to work and further study. Moreover, this report shows, those who complete school have a greater sense of control over their lives in comparison to those who drop out early. Persistent challenges remain for certain groups of young people. Those in need of particular attention live in regional and remote areas, come from low socioeconomic status backgrounds and leave school before Year 12. This report urges us to develop new thinking about how we can better open up new pathways to earning and learning both in response to |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents and where to find them</th>
<th>Summary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>recent economic conditions and longer-term shifts in the worlds of work. We need to pay greater attention to those struggling to achieve at an earlier stage in their development; in particular, we need to address the trend towards fewer opportunities for teenagers to get full-time work in a changing labour market.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth.gov.org</td>
<td>Youth.gov.org is the central hub of Federal government information for young people. Current ‘hot’ issues include: A more productive and rewarding life’; The National Strategy on Body Image which aims to tackle negative body image issues and Youth Allowance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somazone</td>
<td>Somazone is a website that was developed by young people for young people. Somazone provides fast, free, anonymous access to quality assured information. A program of the Australian Drug Foundation, Somazone is a valuable resource for young people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Fairer Victoria</td>
<td>A Fairer Victoria is a whole of Government social policy action plan to address disadvantage and promote inclusion and participation. Specific youth focused strategies and initiatives include: Volunteering recruitment campaign; Support for vulnerable students; VET in schools allows students to remain with peers and in a supported learning environment to work toward completing VCE or VCAL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office for Youth</td>
<td>The Office for Youth is responsible for policy advice, research and strategic planning in relation to government policies, programs and service delivery for young Victorians. It is also responsible for providing a range of means by which young people’s opinions can reach and be considered by government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Central</td>
<td>This is the Victorian Government’s online initiative for young people aged 12 to 25. Youth Central is a one-stop-shop for young people wanting information about jobs and careers, workplace rights, services and events in their local area, studying, travel, money and more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents and where to find them</td>
<td>Summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Future Directions: An Action Agenda for Young Victorians  
http://www.youth.vic.gov.au/Web21/ofy/rwpsslbo/GraphicFiles/Future+Directions+07/sfile/DVC_FutureDBweb.pdf | Contains five key operating principles to summarise the approach:  
Young people’s voices are central to youth policy and services  
Institutions that young people rely on should collaborate and take a shared approach  
Young people should be considered in their family and community context  
The diversity of young Victorians must be acknowledged  
Interventions and programs need to be put in place early, because preventative based approaches work best |
| Ministerial Youth Advisory Committee  
http://www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au/Do-itYourself+Democracy/Young+People+Direct/Ministerial+Advisory+Committee/ | The MYAC will provide a direct link between young people and the Minister for Youth Affairs. The Committee will meet with the Minister four times a year to advise him on specific youth-related topics. The committee will also conduct projects and consultations on issues that are important to them and feed back the results to the Minister. The young people on the committee represent Victorian young people’s diversity of experiences, backgrounds and geographic location |
| South West Regional Youth Affairs Network  
http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/rc/disadvantage_and_inequality/submissions/035_20100331_RYAN.pdf | Provide strategic advice to Government on key issues for young people in Victoria; a key means for communication and consultation between the youth sector, young people and the Victorian Government; advocate for the needs of young people in local and regional strategy development, community strengthening activity and government policy; engage young people where appropriate, or consolidate information from youth engagement activity across the region; and promote information sharing and |
| Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan  
http://greatsouthcoast.com.au/Regional_Strategic_Plan/index.html | The first Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan was released in 2010 with the following priority strategies: position for economic growth; improve our connections; sustain our natural assets; strengthen our communities and increase collaboration. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents and where to find them</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ready For Tomorrow - A Blue Print for Regional and Rural Victoria&lt;br&gt;<a href="http://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/about-us/news/regional-victoria-ready-for-tomorrow">http://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/about-us/news/regional-victoria-ready-for-tomorrow</a></td>
<td>The blueprint is a strategic investment to drive a new era of opportunity and prosperity in regional Victoria and builds on the $11.7 billion injected by the Victorian Government over the past decade to transform regional Victoria into the best place to live, work, invest and raise a family. It's about supporting first-class opportunities for young people so they want to live and study in Victoria's regions, and growing the regions through investments that create jobs in local communities while protecting the lifestyles that regional families have come to cherish.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Understanding the communities where young people live

We knew that we needed to understand the communities where young people live and to give a family and community context to their lived experience. To this end, we undertook a profiling exercise, reviewing key documents and performing statistical analyses on relevant data from a range of sources, some secondary and some primary.

5.1 Community Profile – Glenelg\(^\text{11}\)

Glenelg Shire covers an area of 6,200 square kilometres, stretching from Tyrendara to the South Australian border. The main centre is Portland, the largest shipping port between Geelong and Adelaide. Hinterland towns include Branxholme, Cape Bridgwater, Casterton, Condah, Dartmoor, Digby, Heywood, Merino, Nelson and Tyrendara. The Shire population is around 21,000, of whom 9,700 live in Portland. Around 1,900 are aged between 10 and 19.

The main industries are manufacturing, forestry, fishing and aquaculture, agriculture, viticulture, horticulture, retail, health and social services, education and training, tourism, transport, construction and public administration. Transport is by road, air, freight by rail and by sea. As in Southern Grampians, there are growth areas in the green energy sector, and forestry may re-establish itself once a more stable financial model has been established.

Glenelg Shire has 15 primary schools, 4 secondary schools, one special developmental school, a campus of South West TAFE, several ACE providers and is serviced by a similar range of RTOs to Southern Grampians.

There are hospitals at Portland, Heywood and Casterton and bush nursing centres at Heywood and Merino. A range of other health services operate throughout the Shire. Brophy Family and Youth Services operate in Glenelg Shire, and the council has a designated Youth Resources Officer.

Between 1996 and 2006, Glenelg has aged significantly more quickly than has Australia, the median age moving from 34 to 40 in Glenelg while for Australia as a whole it moved from 34 to 37. The median individual income is less than that for Australia, but increased at almost the same rate (59% for Glenelg, 60% for Australia). The median family income is less than the Australian equivalent, but has increased at a faster rate (71% for Glenelg, 58% for Australia). The gap between household incomes in Glenelg and Australia in 2006 was $194 per week, with the national average increasing 5% faster over the 10 year period. However the median family mortgage repayment

\(^{11}\) Southern Grampians Glenelg Local Learning and Employment and Learning Network Environmental Scan 2010 (quoted directly with permission)
in 2006 was only two thirds that of the national figure. Rentals also have maintained a lower median, making Glenelg a cheaper area for housing.

5.2 Community Profile - Southern Grampians Shire

The town centre of Hamilton provides the service centre for the surrounding town of Balmoral, Branxholme, Byaduk, Cavendish, Coleraine, Dunkeld, Glenthompson, Penshurst and Tarrington. The current population of the Shire is approximately 17,000, more than half of whom (9,500) live in Hamilton. Around 1,500 are aged between 10 and 19.

The major industries are agriculture, manufacturing, health care and social services, retail, education and training, tourism, construction, public administration, transport and logistics. Transport is by road and air, with freight rail to Portland. Recent growth areas are mineral sands mining and green energy production. Forestry is in flux after the collapse of three large managed investment services.

Education opportunities include 12 dedicated primary schools, 6 secondary schools (all with a primary component), one special developmental school, a campus of South West TAFE, RMIT University Hamilton, a range of Adult Community Education (ACE) providers and Registered Training Organisations (RTOs).

Health and community services include a hospital in Hamilton, health services in Coleraine and Penshurst and six residential and respite nursing homes. A wide range of health services are operated by the Western District Health Service, which is based in Hamilton at the Frances Hewett Community Centre. Brophy Family and Youth Services deliver targeted youth services throughout the region.

Over the 10 year period between 1996-2006, the population of Southern Grampians Shire has aged, but somewhat ahead of Australia as a whole. Average household sizes have decreased, again at the same pace as Australia, but with a lower starting point. Median individual incomes, though lower than for the nation as a whole, have increased at a slightly faster rate, as have median family and household incomes. Median home loan repayments are less than two thirds the national figure, but increasing. Rents are substantially lower than for Australia, increasing 57% over the 10 year period compared with 64% for the nation.

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12 Ibid page 5
### 5.3 Key population indicators for GSG, GSC & Victoria

- **Dark Purple** = highest of all GSC municipalities  
- **Pale Purple** = lowest of all GSC municipalities

#### Table 4: Key characteristics of people in Southern Grampians, Glenelg, GSC & Victoria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Southern Grampians</th>
<th>Glenelg</th>
<th>Great South Coast</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Estimated Resident Population</td>
<td>17451</td>
<td>20871</td>
<td>126,157</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Child Population (0-14 years)</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Youth Population (15 – 24 years)</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Middle Years (25 – 64 years)</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>53.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Aged Population (65+ years)</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Aboriginal Population</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Number of Disabled persons (Number per 1000 population)</td>
<td>212.2</td>
<td>199.7</td>
<td>205.0</td>
<td>176.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Single parent Family with Children</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Expectancy - Male</td>
<td>79.2</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>80.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Expectancy - Female</td>
<td>84.9</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>83.5</td>
<td>84.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROJECTED POPULATION CHANGE 2006-2026</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Child population (0-14 years)</td>
<td>-10.4</td>
<td>-18.4</td>
<td>-5.6</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Youth Population (15 – 24 years)</td>
<td>-13.8</td>
<td>-23.1</td>
<td>-6.8</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Middle Years (25 – 64 years)</td>
<td>-4.0</td>
<td>-2.4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Aged Population (65+ years)</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>87.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected Total Population Change</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Population who completed year 12 education</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>44.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Population who completed a bachelor or higher education</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Population who completed a vocational education</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Unemployment</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Population employed in Agriculture, Fishing or Forestry</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Income Median household weekly income</td>
<td>792.0</td>
<td>831.0</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>1022.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Household income less than $650 per week</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Housing Low income households experiencing mortgage stress</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Low income households experiencing rental stress</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DISADVANTAGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Disadvantage Population living in areas of highest disadvantage</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Population living in areas of least disadvantage</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Key characteristics of people living in Southern Grampians, Glenelg, GSC & Victoria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Southern Grampians</th>
<th>Glenelg</th>
<th>Great South Coast</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CRIME AND SAFETY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent crime Number per 1,000</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family violence incidents Number per 1,000</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACCESS TO THE INTERNET</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Households with no internet access</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACCESS TO A MOTOR VEHICLE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Households with no motor vehicle</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACCESS TO HOSPITAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions to hospital-total Number per 1,000</td>
<td>414.1</td>
<td>384.9</td>
<td>416.2</td>
<td>412.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Admissions to hospital located within Great South Coast</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>65.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RISK FACTORS TO CHRONIC DISEASE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult males who smoke Number per 1,000</td>
<td>308.6</td>
<td>332.5</td>
<td>313.7</td>
<td>259.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult females who smoke Number per 1,000</td>
<td>245.5</td>
<td>242.5</td>
<td>233.1</td>
<td>181.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults consuming alcohol at harmful levels Number per 1,000</td>
<td>73.2</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>49.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically inactive persons Number per 1,000</td>
<td>336.4</td>
<td>356.8</td>
<td>339.8</td>
<td>321.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obese males Number per 1,000</td>
<td>195.8</td>
<td>204.7</td>
<td>196.5</td>
<td>159.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obese females Number per 1,000</td>
<td>152.1</td>
<td>163.4</td>
<td>156.9</td>
<td>133.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy eating persons Number per 1,000</td>
<td>540.7</td>
<td>504.4</td>
<td>516.2</td>
<td>534.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHRONIC DISEASE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated no. of people with Type 2 diabetes Number per 1,000</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Est no. of males with mental &amp; behavioural problems Number per 1,000</td>
<td>103.1</td>
<td>107.4</td>
<td>104.9</td>
<td>90.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Est no. of females with mental &amp; behavioural problems Number per 1,000</td>
<td>122.9</td>
<td>109.6</td>
<td>115.8</td>
<td>106.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Est no. of people with respiratory system diseases Number per 1,000</td>
<td>300.1</td>
<td>292.2</td>
<td>295.9</td>
<td>290.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Great South Coast Health and Wellbeing Profile 2010
Glenelg has the greatest predicted loss of all GSC municipalities of young people between the years of 2006 and 2026, -23% compared with Victoria’s gain of 11.1%. The proportion of young people completing year 12 is 53% lower than for the State and is lowest for the GSC.

The age composition for the Southern Grampians identifies that the Shire has a greater percentage (5.1% higher) of persons aged 65 and over than the percentage of persons in this aged group for Victoria and (5.5% higher) for Australia.
6. What we know about our young people

6.1 Young people in the region

Proportions of young people aged 10 – 19 in the region are very similar across the two shires, estimated to be 14.1% of both regions in 2011. There are slightly more males than females in this age group in both shires. The fluctuations followed slightly different patterns over the 10 years from 1996 – 2006. Both shires experienced a net loss of 10 – 14 year olds between 1996 and 2006, however Glenelg made a gain of 54 young people in the 15 – 19 year old group whereas Southern Grampians lost 33 in this age group over the 10 years.

Table 5: 10 – 19 year olds by sex Glenelg and Southern Grampians shires 1996 – 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Glenelg</th>
<th>Southern Grampians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>186 134 320</td>
<td>136 126 262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>164 162 326</td>
<td>164 150 296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>166 183 349</td>
<td>162 154 303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>184 154 338</td>
<td>146 191 338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>165 156 321</td>
<td>182 157 317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>865 789 1,654</td>
<td>1,044 904 2,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>170 147 317</td>
<td>130 125 255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>133 137 270</td>
<td>168 156 324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>160 115 275</td>
<td>166 134 299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>116 76 192</td>
<td>159 140 299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>102 86 188</td>
<td>138 125 263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>681 561 1,242</td>
<td>1,054 924 2,178</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2 Schools and enrolments

Both shires have a number of small feeder schools whose enrolment numbers reflect the decrease in the overall numbers of school age children in rural and regional Australia. Both shires show a number of schools with higher than average percentage of Indigenous student enrolments. This is particularly noticeable in Glenelg shire.

Table 6: Schools, enrolments and % indigenous students in Southern Grampians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Enrolments</th>
<th>% Indigenous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Southern Grampians Shire</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baimbridge College</td>
<td>P-12</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>707</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balmoral P-12 Community College</td>
<td>P-12</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bransholme-Wallacedale Community</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cavendish Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleraine Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunkeld Consolidated School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Street Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenthompson (Dunkeld Consol’d)</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Shepherd College</td>
<td>P-12</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray Street Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton North Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton Special Dev’tal School</td>
<td>Special</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penshurst Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Josephs Primary School Coleraine</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Joseph’s Primary School Penshurst</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Mary’s Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarrington Lutheran Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Indep’t</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hamilton and Alexandra College</td>
<td>P-12</td>
<td>Indep’t</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monivae College</td>
<td>P-12</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenvale</td>
<td>P-10</td>
<td>Indep’t</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Southern Grampians Shire</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2138</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7: Schools, enrolments and % indigenous students in Glenelg

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Enrolments</th>
<th>% Indigenous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Saints Parish School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayview College</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Indep’t</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolwarra Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branxholme/Wallacedale Community School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bundarra Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casterton Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casterton Secondary College</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dartmoor Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heywood Consolidated School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heywood District Secondary School</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merino Consolidated School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrawong Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland North Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland Secondary College</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>739</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland Special Developmental School</td>
<td>Special</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland South Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Gov’t</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacred Heart Primary School Casterton</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St John’s Lutheran Primary School</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Indep’t</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Glenelg Shire</strong></td>
<td>**</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3306</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ACARA My School website
6.3 Indigenous young people in education

Numbers of indigenous students in Glenelg Shire are well above state and national averages. Numbers drop off in later years with relatively few young indigenous people completing Year 12 in school. 2009 saw the highest number of Year 12 completions.

Table 8: 2005-2009 Secondary school enrolments for indigenous students - Government Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 8</th>
<th>Year 9</th>
<th>Year 10</th>
<th>Year 11</th>
<th>Year 12</th>
<th>Special</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>38.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DEECD 2010

Young indigenous people are more likely to leave school before completing Year 12 than are non-indigenous. 15% had completed Year 12 or equivalent in 2006, and 16% had completed Year 11 or equivalent. The largest group was Year 10 or equivalent, at 25%. The largest group for young non-indigenous people was 27% who had completed Year 12 or equivalent. This is considerably lower than the national average.

Figure 23: Highest year of school completed - indigenous
The largest group for young non-indigenous people was 27% who had completed Year 12 or equivalent. This is considerably lower than the national average.

![Pie chart showing highest year of school completed - non-indigenous](image)

**Figure 24: Highest year of school completed – non-indigenous**

6.4 How engaged are our young people?

The GSGLLEN Environmental Scan\(^{13}\) conducted in March 2010 highlighted the levels of disengagement across the two shires. Fully engaged school leavers are defined as those who are involved in work and/or non-school study (including university, TAFE and vocational training) on a full-time basis; disengaged school leavers are defined as those who are not involved in any work or study activities at all; and the remaining school leavers are defined as partly engaged.

6.2.1 Disengagement

Glenelg has the second highest proportion of disengaged young people in Victoria for 15-19 year olds. The reasons for this include the lack of accessible transport within the region, particularly for young people who don’t have their own car. Without suitable transport, attendance at the universities and TAFE campuses within and bordering the region becomes difficult or impossible.

\(^{13}\) Environmental Scan 2010 of Glenelg and Southern Grampians Shires (GSG) for GSG Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN) prepared by Mexie Butler, with permission
Table 9: 15-24 year-olds not in paid work or enrolled in education in Glenelg, Southern Grampians, Metro Melbourne and Regional Victoria in 2006.
Source: Victorian Local Governance Association

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Per cent of 15-19 year-olds</th>
<th>Per cent of 20-24 year-olds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenelg</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of disengaged young people.</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Grampians</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of disengaged young people.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Melbourne</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Victoria</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Glenelg, 51.1% of 15-19 year-old school leavers were fully engaged in work or non-school study, compared to 59.0% in Southern Grampians, 65.8% in the Barwon South West Region and the Victorian State average of 71.9%. Furthermore, 31.5% were disengaged, compared to 19.7% in Southern Grampians, 18.4% in the Barwon South West Region and the Victorian State average of 15.4%.

Figure 25: Level of youth engagement in Glenelg and Southern Grampians Shires
Source: Community Indicators Victoria: ABS 2006 Census
Figure 26: Level of youth disengagement in Glenelg and Southern Grampians Shires, Source: Community Indicators Victoria: ABS 2006 Census

The limited choices for further education or training add to this situation. RMIT has the only university campus within the two shires. Its current teaching program for school leavers is a Bachelor of Nursing. While this offers a great start for those interested in that profession, it by no means provides the level of choice required to meet the needs of all the young people in both shires.

Warrnambool has a campus of Deakin University and offers a range of programs including Arts, Business, Management, Communication and Media, Environment, Health and Community Services, Law, Nursing, Psychology, Teaching, Tourism Management and Hospitality. Public transport to Warrnambool is by bus from both Hamilton and Portland. To be at Warrnambool for a 9:00 am start, Portland residents would have to catch a 4:00 am bus. There is no bus which arrives before 9 am at Warrnambool from Hamilton. The one bus per day arrives at Warrnambool at 11:00 am and departs at 4:45 pm.

Youth Connections Program

Brophy Family and Youth Services is the Youth Connections Program provider in Glenelg and Southern Grampians, and has the equivalent of three full time staff.

It is structured to deliver case managed services to young people in two categories. Type 1 Services assist young people at school who are most at risk at disengaging from education. A key outcome of this level of service is the development of a re-engagement plan between the provider and the young person that focuses on maintaining and sustaining engagement and participation in mainstream schooling or other education and training pathways. In Glenelg and Southern Grampians the current agreement is to provide this level of service to 17 young people.

Type 2 Services are targeted to assisting young people who are disengaging or who are severely disengaged. Youth Connections providers must assist two groups of young people in this service type.

- Type 2(a) are young people who are in school and who are at imminent risk of disengaging, or have recently disengaged (within the last 3 months) from school or another education environment.
- Type 2(b) are young people who are severely disengaged from school, education, training or work, family and community.

In Glenelg and Southern Grampians the current agreement is to provide case managed services to 25 Type 2(a) young people and 43 Type 2(b) young people.

The Youth Connections Program in Glenelg and Southern Grampians is currently ‘progressing outcomes’ for 156 young people by engaging them in case managed Type 1 and Type 2 services (November 2010). This figure is well above the number of 85 young people which the provider agreed to manage in the program. This indicates a higher level of disengagement than had been anticipated. It also has implications for the effective operations of the program, especially in the area of outreach services.

6.2.2 School retention and absentees

The figures for student numbers enrolled from Year 7 in 2004 through to student numbers in 2009, when they were due to be completing Year 12, show that the four government schools in the region have a combined apparent retention rates of approximately 50% or slightly better, with some variation between male and female students. This method of gauging retention of rates of students is somewhat crude but it illustrates the point that students are not completing Year 12 at local government schools at near the rate that is expected. The current state apparent retention rate for Victoria is 79.3%.

Figure 27: Apparent retention rates in Government secondary schools in Glenelg and Southern Grampians.

Source: Provided by schools’ CASES 21 report ST21317.

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14 Youth Connections Program Guidelines, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

15 Summary Statistics for Victorian Schools, July 2010, DEECD, Victoria
All State and Territory Governments have agreed to targets of 90% year 12 or equivalent completion by 2015. It is difficult to see how this will be achieved in Glenelg and Southern Grampians shires without a concerted effort to address the current situation.

Total absentee rates were highest in the second semester in Years 8 and 9 across all four schools. These total numbers of absences were used rather than unexplained or explained absences due to variation in consistency between schools in the way they followed up and accounted for student absences.

![Average cohort absence by semester](image)

Figure 28: Average cohort absence by semester - Glenelg and Southern Grampians Government Secondary Schools. Source: Schools CASES 21 report ST21317

Data from the four government schools in Glenelg and Southern Grampians provides destination information about students who have exited these schools. These students may actually be continuing their education elsewhere. This cohort also includes young people who are considered to be early school leavers because they have not continued with school-based or RTO provided learning opportunities.

This Cases report classifies some students as ‘Year 12 Non-Completers’, and therefore early school leavers, if they exit the school before September 30 in a given year, don’t enrol elsewhere, and therefore do not attain their Year 12 qualification. It classifies those students who complete their final year of secondary education in a government school as ‘Year 12’. The On Track reports prepared each year for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) provide information about the destinations of Year 12 completers from students in all school sectors.

Some variation in the amount of detail in the reports occurred between schools, and even between certain years at the same school. This can be

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explained by the simple fact that each school has different individuals who are responsible for entering data and that it may not be the same person from year to year.

This data shows us that approximately 200 young people in Glenelg and Southern Grampians each year are exiting government schools. These students may not be re-entering or re-engaging with full time education to the point that they attain a Year 12 qualification. Of this number approximately 40 students exit each year without providing an indication of their intentions regarding their future education, training or employment.

When an exit destination is recorded as ‘unknown’ it can usually be attributed to the fact that the parent or guardian who completes the exit form does not indicate the student’s intended destination. Administration within the schools will generally follow up to try and determine whether these young people are continuing education or training or whether they have moved into employment, but this process and the level of follow up varies from school to school.

The significance of the number of exiting students whose destination is ‘unknown’ should be viewed with caution. It is not possible to assume that these young people have not transitioned into more education, training or employment. However it does indicate a level of uncertainty about the education and training attainment for these young people.
6.2.3 Destinations on exiting Government schools

The tables and figures below present information about the destination of young people who have left a Government secondary school in the period 2004-2009. Percentages have been obtained by averaging the data about each destination over the six years. This was done to illustrate the trend over time.

Table 10: Destinations for female students exiting government schools in Glenelg and Southern Grampians 2004-09 by rank and percentage Source: Provided by schools’ CASES 21 report ST21083

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girls' destinations</th>
<th>Rank Y9-11</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Rank Y12 NC</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Rank Y12</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government School</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.50</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21.92</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.86</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE/RTO/ACE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.96</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.92</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Government</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.95</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Employment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.28</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21.52</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Training</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.59</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.59</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-T Employment</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.92</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.92</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking Employment</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.86</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Vic School</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traineeship</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.33</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Training Org</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.59</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.79</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployed - Not Adult Community Ed</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Died</td>
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<td>0.67</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Vic TAFE</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Vic Universities</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home-schooling</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The destinations for female students exiting in Years 9-11 show that 26% of these students intend to move from one government school to another. The destination school may be located in the area or elsewhere in the state. Other destinations for this cohort indicate that nearly 50% of these young people intend to continue their education or training elsewhere. 23% of these exiting Year 9-11 students gave no indication of their intended destination and this is the data that raises the prospect that these females will move away from education and training opportunities.
The destinations for female students exiting as Year 12 non-completers show that 23% of these young people indicate they are taking up full time employment while 14% indicate they are taking up part time employment. 37% of these females indicate they will be undertaking training with a provider or entering traineeships. 11% indicate they have exited without securing employment, while 9% gave no indication of their intended destination.
Table 11: Destinations for male students exiting government schools in Glenelg and Southern Grampians 2004-09 by rank and percentage Source: Provided by schools’ CASES21 report ST21083

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys’ destinations</th>
<th>Rank Y9-11</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Rank Y12 NC</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Rank Y12</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.79</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.62</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE/RTO/ACE</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30.09</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Employment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.76</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government School</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.79</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traineeship</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15.93</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Training</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7.62</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Government</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time Employment</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.92</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.73</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking Employment</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Community Ed</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Victorian School</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed - Not</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-schooling</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Vic TAFE</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Vic Universities</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Training Org</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The destinations for male students exiting in Years 9-11 show that 11% of these students intend to move from one government school to another. The destination school may be located in the area or elsewhere in the state. Other destinations for this cohort indicate that 45% of these young people intend to continue their education or training elsewhere. 20% of these exiting Year 9-11 students gave no indication of their intended destination which means there is a question about the successful transition of this group of young males into further learning or employment.

Figure 32: Top 10 destinations for male students exiting government schools in Years 9-11 in Glenelg and Southern Grampians 2004-09 as percentage Source: Provided by schools’ CASES21 report ST21083
The destinations for male students exiting as Year 12 non-completers show that 13% of these young people indicate they are taking up full time employment while 10% indicate they are taking up part time employment. 52% of these males indicate they will be undertaking training with a provider or entering traineeships. 6% indicate they have exited without securing employment, while 11% gave no indication of their intended destination.

Overall, the percentage of students exiting without a known destination is higher among the students leaving in Year 9-11 than those who leave in the final year of their schooling. There are significant differences in the intended destinations between females and males in the Year 12 non-completer category, with 23% of girls indicating they had full time employment as compared to 13% of boys. Just over 50% of the males who left during their final year of school intended to take up vocational training as compared to 37% of the females in the same category.

The nature of the data provided from the CASES 21 report is gathered from the exit forms completed by students as they leave a government school. The destination which is recorded for each student is an indication of intention so whether or not these exiting students achieve their goal or fulfill their intention is entirely another question.

6.3 Destinations of Year 12 completers

On Track Surveys are phone interviews conducted annually to obtain data about the destinations of Year 12 students. Participation in On Track Surveys is voluntary, and the data is affected by this. It should be read as indicative rather than an accurate reflection of total numbers for the region.
Comparing the 2004 and 2009 On Track data, there is a very evident increase in the numbers of young people choosing to defer an offer of a university place. This is in large part caused by the introduction of the Youth Allowance independence requirements. In July 2010, the independence requirement for eligibility increased from one year to two years. The impacts of this on higher and further education rates are yet to be determined; however workers in the education sector in the region are concerned that it may have a negative impact.

### 6.4 University participation

Geographic location can impact on young people’s educational opportunities and aspirations, and their decisions to continue on to tertiary education. Not least among the factors that impact on rural and regional young people is the cost involved in attending a tertiary institution. For most young rural people, this would involve leaving home.

Young people in Glenelg and Southern Grampians shires attend university at lower rates than their metropolitan counterparts and have amongst the lowest university participation rates in Victoria.
6.5 Comparative costs of study

The July 2009 an “Inquiry into geographical differences in the rate in which Victorian students participate in higher education” found that the cost of living away from home to undertake university study for school leavers from rural and regional Victoria was of considerable concern.

Research done for the L4YP project confirms that a student living away from home incurs considerably higher expenses than those who stay with their family, and that living on campus is more expensive than living in shared accommodation. The study found that although there are no savings per se on tuition fees, the cost of living in the city is higher than in the regions, including accommodation, car registration and insurance and power. However, students from rural and regional areas often don’t have any choice but to live away from home if they want to participate in on-campus higher education because either there is not a university campus within commuting distance of home or the campuses that are nearby may not offer the desired courses.

A comparison of costs of living and studying regionally or in the city needs to consider: household expenses (rent, food, utilities, telecommunications, furniture and appliances), transport (buying, registering, running a vehicle, car insurance, public transport costs), personal (clothing and shoes, haircuts, medical costs), other (sports, entertainment, etc). There are wide variations in costs of these items – between regions and cities, within locations and whether you ‘shop around’ – straight comparisons are difficult. Petrol prices increase as you get further from the city whilst the cost of participating in sport is higher in the city.

Public transport is usually more limited in regional areas, so it may be necessary to own a car. A city based student may be able to rely on public transport and costs vary depending on distance between accommodation and university. Car ownership in the city however involves parking costs.

The University of Melbourne’s Wellbeing Services – Student Financial Aid estimates that, for those students living in off-campus accommodation,
about $300 per week is spent on costs other than accommodation (and 
does not include establishment costs such as bond, telephone, furniture 
etc)\textsuperscript{18}.

An estimate of the combined cost of tuition and living expenses is provided 
by the Australian Scholarship group’s University Costs Calculator. The 
calculator provides a general estimate and comparison between costs 
based on living situation (though individual students’ costs may also vary 
according to lifestyle and location). The table below shows the estimates for 
students studying a three year course in nursing in three living situations.

Table 13: Comparative costs of study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Costs</th>
<th>At home</th>
<th>Shared rental</th>
<th>On campus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td>$17,149</td>
<td>$17,149</td>
<td>$17,149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course materials</td>
<td>$3,232</td>
<td>$3,232</td>
<td>$3,232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer &amp; internet</td>
<td>$2,349</td>
<td>$2,349</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment costs</td>
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<td>$4,377</td>
<td>$3,174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$24,175</td>
<td>$63,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groceries &amp; food</td>
<td>$5,777</td>
<td>$17,332</td>
<td>$5,777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$4,126</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public transport</td>
<td>$6,107</td>
<td>$6,107</td>
<td>$3,301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment/other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ancillary</td>
<td>$8,253</td>
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<td>$8,253</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total (three years)</td>
<td>$48,644</td>
<td>$92,877</td>
<td>$109,926</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Australian Scholarships Group, ‘ASG University Costs Calculator,’ ASG, 
(adapted).

The table above shows that the costs of participation in higher education 
are a lot higher for students who live away from the family home.

According to the State Government of Victoria, Department of Human 
Services - Housing, Rental Report\textsuperscript{19}, the annual median rent for the second 
quarter of 2010 for all property types located in inner Melbourne was $400 
per week. Helen Morrison of Lanyon’s Real Estate in Hamilton said student-
quality housing in Hamilton (2 bedroom flat) costs on average $160 per 
week (within a range of $150-$180) whilst a 2 bedroom house would cost 
about $150 per week (within a range of $150-$200). By comparison, Helen’s

\textsuperscript{18} (www.services.unimelb.edu.au/finaid/planning/cost_of_living/summary.html, viewed 22 November 2010)
son, who is studying in Melbourne, by comparison, is looking at a weekly rental of between $700 and $800 for a four bedroom house.

For rural and regional students who are considering study in metropolitan Melbourne, the costs are very high because to live at home is not an option. Rural and regional students may consider studying at a rural or regional university which will save a considerable amount on living costs, especially if the student can continue living at home. However this option is dependent on the rural or regional institution offering the desired course.

“For education is crucial for superior economic and social outcomes. Educational attainment is the most significant predictor of economic prosperity for individuals, families and regions. A graduate can expect to earn $1.5 million more in over their working life than someone with only Year 12 qualifications. Health and wellbeing are positively correlated with educational attainment. Superior social, cultural and civic outcomes flow from better educated populations. Research internationally has demonstrated that regions with high levels of education and strong links between educational institutions, business and industry, and government organisations exhibit higher levels of innovation.”

Source: Inquiry into the Extent and Nature of Disadvantage and Inequity in Rural and Regional Victoria. Submission by Deakin University

6.6 What do we know about young people’s health?

6.6.1 Homelessness

The Australian Institute of Family Studies identifies young people aged 12 – 25 as the largest single group assisted by homelessness services in Victorian (AIFS, 2003). Typical precursors of youth homelessness include family breakdown, domestic violence, sexual abuse and mental health issues. In the region there is a broad range of services which support homeless young people, both with the immediate accommodation issues and with the associated circumstances that have lead to their homelessness.

Salvation Army Social Housing Service

The Salvation Army Social Housing Service (SASHS) in Hamilton offers emergency accommodation, HEF assistance, accommodation placement and/or support, homelessness support, housing information and referral services to homeless people of all ages within the region. Efforts are made to place young people in separate housing from adults, with some places being designated as youth accommodation. Salvation Army workers advised that at the time of interview for the GSGLEN Scan, there were approximately eight young people being accommodated by SASHS.

20 Telephone conversation with Helen Morrison on 10 December 2010
Innovative Health Services for Homeless Youth and Youth at Risk

In Portland there is the Innovative Health Services for Homeless Youth and Youth at Risk (IHSYAYAR) service, operated through Portland District Health. The service has had 101 contacts with young people in the last nine months. Housing referrals are made to the SASHS service in Portland, which is located with Brophy Family and Child Services, and has a worker who focuses specifically on youth accommodation.

6.6.2 Mental health

A range of issues impacts on the mental health and wellbeing of young people in the region. Adapting to the demands of growing into adulthood brings many stresses, as can concerns about study and future employment prospects.

Family issues are a common cause of mental and emotional stress, whether they are simple adolescent adjustments or major issues such as serious financial problems, domestic violence, drug and alcohol problems or sexual abuse. These issues may all contribute to a young person disengaging from school, family, work and other social support networks.

“Income, educational attainment, social and family environments, sport and recreational opportunities, transport and rural isolation, among others, all combine to impact on a person’s health and wellbeing. Behaviour management in a school setting, low teacher-student attachment, alienation from school and early school leaving can be risk factors that predispose a young person to poor mental health outcomes, including the first onset of anxiety, depression, eating disorders, substance abuse, psychosis and deliberate self-harm.”

Youth Issues Report, Southern Grampians and Glenelg Primary Care Partnership (2004)

Headspace

A major initiative in the region has been the introduction of the nationally funded Headspace program. With its headquarters in Warrnambool, the service has a worker attached to Brophy Family and Child Services in Hamilton. The service provides youth workers, psychologists, counsellors, education and employment specialists who can assist young people with a range of issues which may be impacting on their mental health and wellbeing.

Quamby House - Glenelg and Southern Grampians Drug Treatment Service

Quamby is a drug and alcohol treatment service located in Portland and servicing the region. Its philosophy is ‘to provide support and treatment options for clients, their families and/or significant others who present with problems relating to alcohol and other drugs’ (Fitzroy Legal Service, 2010). It provides emergency and supported accommodation services, information and referral, counselling, detox, outpatient and residential withdrawal support and specialist youth services.
Southern Grampians and Glenelg Drug and Alcohol Action Plan 2010-2012

The Drug and Alcohol Action Plan identifies alcohol as the issue of most concern amongst those who were consulted in their process. They identify the following priority issues:

- binge drinking
- underage drinking (including sale of alcohol to minors)
- role of sporting clubs and alcohol (and underage members)
- dominance of alcohol at social and public events

6.6.3 Young people in relationships

At the older end of the L4YP age spectrum, some young people are marrying, living in de facto relationships and having children of their own. Young women marry and enter de facto relationship at an earlier age than young men in both shires, though neither being de facto nor married is common amongst people in the 15 – 19 year old age group. In Glenelg, 22 young women had children, compared with 18 in Southern Grampians.

Table 14: 15 – 19 year olds’ marriages and children in 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Glenelg</th>
<th></th>
<th>Southern Grampians</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married in a registered marriage</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married in a de facto marriage</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not married</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>1,160</td>
<td>531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never had children</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>1,068</td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had 1 child</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had 2 children</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had 3 children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children not stated</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS Time Series Profiles for Glenelg and Southern Grampians

Registered marriage in this age group is less common than for Australia as a whole (0.3% compared with 0.5% of the age group). Having a child between 15 and 19 is more common in Glenelg (3.5%) than the national average (3.1%) and slightly less common in Southern Grampians (3.0%).
Source: Great South Coast Health and Wellbeing Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sth Gramps</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenelg</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great South Coast</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birth rate per 1000 women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sth Gramps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenelg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great South Coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Glenelg shire has a consistently higher birth rate among 15-19 year old women than that of the Southern Grampians and the Great South Coast area and twice as high as Victoria. This is likely to be impacting on these young women’s ability to stay engaged with education, training and/or employment.

6.7 Youth Centrelink payments

In March of 2010, snapshots were taken of youth allowance recipients at the Hamilton and Portland Centrelink offices. These indicate the numbers of young people currently in receipt of Youth Allowance, either because they were looking for work, or because they were enrolled in eligible forms of study and had passed the independence requirements.
Table 9: 2010 Centrelink payment recipients at Hamilton and Portland offices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hamilton Centrelink</th>
<th>Portland Centrelink</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth Allowance - Job Seekers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 18-20 more than 12mths</td>
<td>26 27</td>
<td>25 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 18-20 less than 12mths</td>
<td>12 12</td>
<td>19 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job Seeker Total</strong></td>
<td>79</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth Allowance - Students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 16-17</td>
<td>55 65</td>
<td>58 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 18 - 20</td>
<td>39 52</td>
<td>75 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 21 - 25</td>
<td>18 36</td>
<td>15 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Total</strong></td>
<td>265</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disability Pension</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 16-17</td>
<td>19 7</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 18 - 20</td>
<td>7 20</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 21 - 25</td>
<td>38 29</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disability Pension Total</strong></td>
<td>64</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parenting Payment Single</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 16-17</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 18 - 20</td>
<td>12 9</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 21 - 25</td>
<td>38 42</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parenting Single Total</strong></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parenting Payment Partnered</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 16-17</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 18 - 20</td>
<td>6 8</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 21 - 25</td>
<td>13 21</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parenting Partnered Total</strong></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carers’ Allowance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 21-25</td>
<td>2 3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carers Total</strong></td>
<td>2 3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total payment recipients</strong></td>
<td>480</td>
<td>551</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are larger numbers of young women than young men receiving Youth Allowance in both the job seeker and student categories. The gender difference is more marked at the Hamilton office than at Portland. There are significantly more young people in receipt of Youth Allowance for students than for job seekers, even when confined to the 18-20 age groups.
Some of the eligibility requirements for Youth Allowance have changed during 2010. It seems likely that more young people will delay starting university for two years instead of the one previous ‘gap year’.

There are more young people receiving disability pensions from the Hamilton office than from Portland, with a total of 120 across the two offices. The degree of disability has to be quite serious for a young person to be granted a disability pension. Younger people on disability pensions generally have a disability from birth, and may have previously been receiving a child disability allowance.

There are approximately 150 young people in the region receiving Parenting Payments, and around 40 of these are in the L4YP target age group. This suggests that a substantial number of young people are struggling with the financial aspects of family life while still very young themselves.

People on parenting payments are not actively participating in the work force, and are unlikely to be participating in education or training. With a substantial number of young people in this situation, and with a risk of perpetuating intergenerational welfare dependence, youth services may need to develop a specific focus on strategies to develop and maintain contacts with these young parents, and assist them back into meaningful work, education or training.

6.8 Young people with disabilities

A key issue for the region’s young disabled people is that there is not enough knowledge of the available resources to assist young people with disabilities. Communication and awareness gaps impair the flow of knowledge between disability and other services, reducing the uptake of available resources. Those who work with young disabled people require more professional development in the area of disability.

This issue is emphasised by the lack of an overall strategic approach bringing together all the bodies involved in delivering services to people with disabilities. A start has been made on this through the establishment of National Disabilities Coordinators. The Western Region Division coordinator is Gary Kemidge, who operates out of Ballarat University. Gary has indicated that a primary task in his role is the development of a regional information base.

A concern is that while there are some well established services for people with intellectual disabilities, such as the two Special Developmental Schools and Kyeema and Mulleraterong day program services, there appears to be a lack of focus on and awareness of services for people with physical disabilities. Each shire has a recently formed ‘transition-to-work’ working group addressing issues for young disabled people in the workplace.

Locating specific data pertaining to numbers of people and types of disabilities in the region, particularly for young people, has been very
difficult. The information which follows is a set of projections from initial data collected in 2003.

Table 16: Inferred numbers of people, by extent of disability, in Glenelg

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability</th>
<th>Extent of Core Activity Restriction</th>
<th>No Disability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Profound</td>
<td>Severe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children: 0-14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>76</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working age: 15-64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement age: 65+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>822</td>
<td>782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: VLGA Disability by age 2003 and future projections

In 2010, an estimated 1610 residents of Glenelg - or 8.1% of the population - have disabilities causing profound or severe restriction of communication, mobility and self-care.

For 1880 residents, their disabilities place limits upon employment or educational opportunities. Overall, approximately 25% of the residents of Glenelg have a disability, including over 310 children, 2400 people of working age, and 2120 older residents.
Table 17: Persons with core activity need for assistance by age (years) 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>age 5-9</th>
<th>age 10-14</th>
<th>age 15-24</th>
<th>age 25-34</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southern Grampians</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenelg</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great South Coast</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Great South Coast Health and Wellbeing Profile 2010
7. So what does this all mean?

7.1 It’s not all doom and gloom – local initiatives

There are many ‘good news’ stories in the two shires, including sports clubs, innovative education and community leadership and mentoring projects. We hope to bring more of these ‘good practice’ examples to the fore in future reports.

7.1.1 Youth Education Program (YEP) - Hamilton

Southern Grampians Adult Education (SGAE)\(^{21}\) delivers an alternative learning option for young people not attending mainstream school. The program caters for students aged between 16 and 19 years however in certain circumstances have engaged students as young as 13 years who have no other option for education. The program attracts a range of students studying at various levels with the aim to re-engage back into mainstream school or continuing in an education pathway leading towards either full or part-time employment, traineeships and apprenticeships. SGAE through a partnership with SWTAFE also offers Intermediate and Senior VCAL studies allowing students to further their education and enhance their employment opportunities.

7.1.2 Future Leaders of Industry - Portland

The Future Leaders of Industry (FLOI) Scholarship Program is an Alcoa Victoria initiative which was developed by Portland Aluminium (PA)\(^{22}\) in 2005 and is now delivered in partnership with Glenelg and Southern Grampians LLEN. The program was devised in response to an identified need for retaining and attracting local young people to train, work and live in the area and to be skilled members of the workforce servicing local industry.

FLOI aims to:

- Provide an opportunity for young people to engage in education, employment and training opportunities in the local (regional) community
- Identify opportunities for young people in regard to their schooling and careers in the local (regional) community
- Provide access for young people to participate in education and training opportunities and the opportunity to further develop their employability skills
- To build community capacity


In 2009 FLOI had grown to include eight business partners which support the program by providing key personnel as mentors, delivering components of the workshops to the participants, and providing the funds to offer $500 scholarships to those students who complete the program.

7.1.3 Youth Advisory Council - Glenelg Shire
Glenelg Council adopted the Youth Strategy Action Plan in April 2009. A key objective identified in the Strategy was that Council play an active role in promoting and facilitating positive engagement of young people in community life, democracy and leadership.

To achieve this, a key initiative is the formation of a Youth Advisory Council. The Youth Advisory Council will provide a specific mechanism for communication between Council and our young people.

What the Youth Advisory Council will do:

- Provide advice and submit recommendations to the Council regarding issues surrounding the youth of Glenelg Shire.
- Act as an advisory committee and respond to enquiries from the Council regarding specific youth issues in Glenelg.
- Initiate ideas and visions that address issues of importance to youth.
- Initiate programs to help address these issues.
- Actively involve young people in the design, planning, organisation and delivery of identified projects/programs.
- Liaise with youth and related agencies within the region to address youth issues.
- Liaise with local government at all levels to address youth related issues.
- Actively lobby and advocate on behalf of young people in the Glenelg Shire.

7.1.4 10MMM Project - Southern Grampians Shire
The 10MMM project was an interagency collaboration between RMIT University Hamilton and Western District Health Service made possible in large part by funding from VicHealth and the support of local businesses and agencies. The project aimed to address social and geographical isolation, and skills shortages in rural communities, by offering a range of multi-media training opportunities to local young people. It also sought to give rural young people a ‘voice’ by offering opportunities to conduct research.

Multi Media Mayhem erupted in the 10 towns across the shire of Southern Grampians and culminated in a Film Festival in June 2009. This project has just been nominated as a finalist in the 2010 VicHealth Awards.

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24 http://10mmm.com/
7.1.5 Re-engagement Program – Portland and Heywood

The program will start in Portland in February 2011 and employ two full time teachers, with additional specialist staff to teach specific subjects or to work one on one with individual students. There will be one group of up to six students aged 13 or 14 and the program aims to provide them:

- a course which will have a strong Literacy and Numeracy component as well as Social Studies and Health and Physical Education.
- the opportunity of attending Portland Secondary College to undertake specialist subjects
- with the skills necessary to restart their formal schooling

There will be two groups of thirteen students aged 15 to 17 years and the program aims to enrol all of these students in the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCAL). The program would require these students to attend for a minimum of fifteen hours each week and would be encouraged to undertake work placement or work experience. The program aims to provide them:

- a course which also include English and Mathematics
- a personal development component which could include volunteer work; health and nutrition; fitness; communication skills; and planning and organisation; and challenge type activities
- activities very much linked into the local community.
- work related skills to improve the employability of participants and will be conducted in partnership with the Beacon Foundation. All students will be expected to have part time employment or participate in extended work placements which would occur on Fridays for most students.
- a vocational education and training unit which would be provided by SWTAFE which could lead to further study or employment

7.2 Where to from here for L4YP?

The Snapshots Report has highlighted a number of issues of significance to young people and to the wider community of south west Victoria. It is by no means an exhaustive collection of the relevant data and it is to be hoped that regional stakeholders continue to contribute to the next Report, towards the end of 2011. This first report, when combined with the other activities of L4YP, represents a combined focus on youth in our communities. This is important. Young people are not just the future of this region, but they also have a right to a life rich with the benefits this region can provide whilst they are growing up. This includes more connected education, health, community, recreational, civic and transport systems.

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25 [http://gsllen.org.au/?page_id=207]
The participation of young people whose insights have been incorporated into this report has enriched our perspective of their ‘landscape’. We valued their contribution to the project through their active participating in the summits and other forums. They have made new friends and learned more about their community, and perhaps gained a sense of achievement that the work they have done and the skills learned will make a difference to their future, and the future for other young people in the region. The leadership potential of those involved so far has greatly impressed organizers and we look forward to further connections with this generation of young people.

In many ways, the young people in Glenelg and Southern Grampians shires are mirrored in the findings of research at a state and national level. Much of this is very positive. The L4YP has not asked deeply probing and personal questions about drug use for example – and few of these highly contentious issues have been raised by the young people in our research. On the other hand, in seeking data for this report, it is apparent that available figures do not give a complete story relevant to the local level. There are many gaps in the disengagement data and data related to health and welfare matters. The Snapshots Report acknowledges it is only telling part of the story, much of which will be addressed in the next research phase.

We also acknowledge the ‘missing’ voices. From the data gathered so far, we can see that there are significant gaps:

What is happening with young people with disabilities? We appear to have a higher than state average number of people with disabilities – but this is not necessarily reflected in take-up of support services. Are they declaring their disability, or are they just ‘coping’. We need to hear more from them and from their parents.

Why are our Koori young people not progressing beyond Year 12? How can we develop more accessible education pathways?

How do young people in the more remote communities in the two shires cope with transport barriers? Access to public transport is problematic. Car-pooling on P Plates is an issue for rural young people. Are they able to fully access apprenticeships and TAFE courses appropriate to their interests? Can they get to health and medical services when they need to without having to negotiate with parents?

What are rural sports agencies doing about reducing the alcohol focus that has become a tradition in many clubs? Where are the examples of good leadership in this area?

The willingness of young people and their teachers to join in with the L4YP work, as well as the support of the youth networks and the L4YP Steering Committee has been greatly appreciated in the compilation of this first report. While much has already been achieved, there is a considerable body of work yet to be done.
8. Appendices

8.1 Minimum working shifts articles

**NO FUTURE**

*Petition to argue against minimum shifts*

**The Spectator**

13 April 2010

DREW JOHNSON

A HAMILTON business is taking on the Federal Government with a petition to end a minimum shift requirement in the retail sector.

Lardner Bros bike shop in Hamilton hopes to send the message to Canberra that a minimum of three-hour shifts in the town is unacceptable and crippling chances for young people to get into the workforce. The petition will be sent to the Minister for Employment Julia Gillard’s office in Melbourne before being tabled in parliament later this year. The Government changed the rules from January 1 this year so that employees in the retail sector would be required to work a minimum of three hours each shift, locking students out of after school work. Lardner Bros manager John Barker he had positive feedback about the campaign.

“What we would like is for people who are aware of it to come in and sign it,” he said. “For other businesses who want copies for their shop, I am quite happy to pass it on to them. We had a lot of people come into the shop prior to the petition being here... (saying) what you are doing is a good by making people aware of it.”

Mr Barker said that although a lot of publicity was given to the new retail award, he had not spoken to any Federal Labor representatives about it.

“I suppose it’s just a case with them that maybe if they ignore it, it will go away,” he said.

Employee Jorden Tressider also hopes people will sign it.

“It’s not just (affecting) me, it’s other people as well,” he said.

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry announced they had begun action with other retail industry employer organisations at new industrial tribunal, Fair Work Australia in order to reduce the minimum requirement. The ACCI has asked Fair Work Australia to consider a reduction in the shift requirement from three to two hours and for the right
for flexible workplace practices concerning after school employees. The case will be heard in May.

Federal shadow minister for youth Steven Ciobo will sign the petition at Lardner Bros next week as part of his visit to the south-west accompanied by Liberal candidate for Wannon Dan Tehan and member for Wannon David Hawker. Mr Ciobo said he had very serious concerns about the consequences of this award.

"The consequences of this policy are clearly having an impact on the after school jobs," he said.

Mr Ciobo said the Liberal party would release policy details closer to the election.

"Jobs that existed previously gave them the opportunity to earn a bit of money and learn the discipline of being in the workforce. Those jobs are being sacrificed," he said. "It's important all members of the community let their voice be heard. It pays to let the Government know that Australians do not want to see young Aussies losing the opportunity of after school work because of bureaucratic trade union Labor Party laws."


**Government flattens students**

**The Spectator**

**13 July 2010**

**DREW JOHNSON**

STUDENTS wanting after school work in the south-west will have to reassess their options after the Federal Government knocked back changes to the retail award.

The Federal Government said a big no to a change in the minimum hour requirement last week following months of campaigning from retail associations, employers and employees to get the legislation changed. A petition was introduced in April with more than 1600 signatures demanding change to scrap the three-hour requirement.

A legal challenge through Fair Work Australia by the National Retail Association for a two-hour minimum and a 90-minute after school requirement were both quashed on Friday when the decision was handed down by vice president Watson in Sydney with the three-hour law reflecting "most of the award based transitional instruments".
Vice president Watson also commented that there was evidence that the minimum time period was affecting casuals other than school children. Hamilton’s Lardner Brothers manager John Barker said the decision was not surprising.

“If it was affecting McDonalds or supermarkets or things like that it might have been a different outcome,” he said. “Given the track record of this government so far it really doesn’t surprise me.”

Mr Barker was not looking forward to giving young employee Jorden Tressider the news about the decision when he turned up for work this weekend.

“I will just have to say sorry mate, you want to get out there and have a go but the government have said unless you want to work in a particular industry, you can’t,” he said. “I would like to take it further not just for Jorden but for other kids. It just seems ridiculous to me that they are saying to kids just stay home and play like Play Stations instead of getting out into the world and trying to make a go of it.”

Mr Barker said the Labor Government’s working families slogan was just an advertising campaign. Kevin Rudd’s working families’ thing was just an advertising campaign and it worked.

“I am not a ‘dyed it in the wool’ (political) supporter; I vote for who will do a better job at the time,” he said. “Whether Liberal would have done anything different I don’t know, but it just seems to be another in a long line of muck ups.”

Liberal Candidate for Wannon Dan Tehan said the decision to retain the award showed no attempt by the government to rectify the situation.

“When six Victorian teenagers lost their work after school in February this year due to changes made by the Rudd/Gillard Government, Ms Gillard said she would act to fix the problem,” he said. “Yet no attempt has been made by Ms Gillard to fix the problem. In fact, when the students took their case to Fair Work Australia, Ms Gillard remained silent as union funded barristers sought to intimidate the students.”

Mr Tehan said Fair Work Australia acknowledged the decision would have a detrimental impact on country students. He said vice president Watson, who handed down the decision, said the impact on individuals would have a “significant” impact on employment opportunities.
“Yet Fair Work Australia, encouraged by Julia Gillard’s silence, decided to do nothing,” he said. “When Julia Gillard introduced these new laws, Hamilton student Jorden Tressider lost his chance to work after school. At the time he said ‘Just change it back to how it was, it’s just stupid.’

“For the sake of Jorden and other country kids like him Julia Gillard needs to honour her word and find an arrangement that suits both employer and employee so country students can work after school again. She has betrayed country students seeking work and for this she should stand condemned.”

8.2 Youth-i-versity Survey

**RMIT University Hamilton**

**L4YP**

Your chance to have a say!

Complete this survey and your voice will be heard.

We have been attending Youth-i-versity at RMIT over the holidays and we have come up with this survey that we would like young people to answer.

This survey is part of the much larger Landscapes for Young People in Glenelg and Southern Grampians Shires (L4YP) project conducted by RMIT University Hamilton. This is an ambitious and wide reaching research project which seeks to explore issues and themes of interest and relevance to young people across these two shires.

At the heart of the L4YP project are the aims to increase local youth capacity, provide leadership opportunities and to offer a genuine way for the voices of local young people to be heard in their communities. The success of the L4YP project depends on the involvement of local young people and your active participation will ensure a genuine collaborative approach to the research which gets done and the results and change that could happen as a result of your efforts.

By completing this survey you will be helping to change not only the here and now for local people but contributing to making the future better for other young people.

This is a great chance to shine the light on the reality of living in and around Hamilton... what’s life really like for you?

The Landscapes for Young People Project is being conducted with permission from the RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee.
1. Which town do you live in?
If you live in the middle of nowhere, what is the closest town?
- Hamilton
- Other (please specify)

2. How do you feel about the town where you live?
- I wanna stay here forever
- Mostly liking here
- Mostly OK
- Mostly boring
- Get me out of here
Other (please specify)

3. Is there stuff for young people to do in your town?
- Yes
- No
- not sure

4. If you just answered yes, could you tell us what there is for young people to do in your town.
5. If you think there is nothing or not much for young people to do in your town, what suggestions do you have for something new?

6. Should there be a "Youth Place" in Hamilton?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Don't care

Any other thoughts?

7. If you like the idea of a place in Hamilton that is just for young people, where would it be?
   - Right in the middle of town
   - Some random empty building
   - Somewhere on the edge of town
   - Somewhere close to the main street

It should be here (enter your suggestion)

8. If you had a bucket of money filled with millions of dollars and you were told you could make, build or buy anything for young people in Hamilton - what would you spend it on?


Youth-i-versity

9. How old are you?
- ☐ 12
- ☐ 13
- ☐ 14
- ☐ 15
- ☐ 16
- ☐ 17
- ☐ 18
- ☐ 19
- ☐ 20

10. Gender
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your thoughts and ideas will not only be part of the Landscapes for Young People project, but this will also be passed on to the Southern Grampians Shire so that they know what local young people think about living here.