

MOYNE AND WARRNAMBOOL YOUTH STRATEGY: CONTEXT AND ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Prepared by Future Tense
26 August 2024

FUTURE TENSE

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Future Tense acknowledges the Eastern Maar and Gunditjmara peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands described in this report. We recognise Traditional Owners' maintenance of culture and their care for and connection to Country, a relationship which has endured for tens of thousands of years and continues today. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging, as well as to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the Moyne and Warrnambool region.

1 SUMMARY

This report compiles findings from investigations undertaken to develop a shared Youth Strategy for Moyne Shire Council and Warrnambool City Council.

A significant number of people were engaged between June and August 2024.

Direct conversations were had with 271 young people and 126 adults in young people's lives across 41 engagement activities.

Online surveys gathered input from 389 young people and 69 adults in young people's lives.

Key findings from this engagement are that:

- Young people love the region
- Hanging out in-person is the most valued type of connection
- Young people are looking for a sense of belonging
- The weight of the world hangs heavy on young people
- Issues around transportation have a huge impact
- Young people are disconnected from opportunities and resources, and
- Programming often misses the mark.

These findings will be considered by the Youth Co-design Panel and used to draft the shared Youth Strategy for Moyne Shire Council and Warrnambool City Council.

2 DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATION

2.1 Overview

Extensive investigations were undertaken to ensure the shared Youth Strategy is informed by and responds to the realities of young peoples' lives. This occurred in two stages: first, a review of relevant local, regional, state and national strategies, plans and research, and second, through significant engagement with young people across the region and key stakeholders who engage with them.

The engagement targets included:

- Service providers
- Council staff
- Adults in young peoples' lives
- First Nations youth
- Multicultural youth
- Disabled youth
- Sports-focused youth
- Creative youth
- The 'young ones' (12–14 years)
- Senior high school students (15–17 years)
- Young adults (18–24 years)
- Higher education students
- Young people out of or struggling to access school
- Queer young people
- Youth at risk of homelessness
- Neurodivergent youth
- Youth struggling with mental health
- Rural and remote youth
- Those in care and custody
- Young parents
- Youth struggling with substance issues
- Gap year crew
- Lower socioeconomic young people
- Unemployed youth
- Gamers (tabletop, RPG, digital, etc), and
- Tradies.

The bulk of the engagement activities took place between 22 July and 18 August 2024.

2.2 What we did

- Held two sessions with the 20-person Youth Co-design Panel (10 from each municipality) to gain insight into their lives and workshop the findings of the other research activities
- Reviewed 33 strategies, plans, reports and submissions from local, regional, state and national governments and peak bodies¹
- Ran an online survey for young people between 22 July and 19 August 2024 which attracted 389 responses²
- Ran an online survey for adults in young people's lives between 22 July and 19 August 2024 which attracted 69 responses³
- Staged 11 public in-person and online sessions in a variety of spaces throughout the region between 1–15 August 2024, reaching 81 young people and 22 adults⁴
- Conducted 10 workshops in schools between 24 July and 8 August 2024, speaking with 120 students and 14 teachers and support staff⁵
- Dropped in on 10 activities, events, sites and forums between 27 June and 4 August 2024, speaking to 98 young people and 53 adults⁶
- Conducted individual consultations with 12 support service providers working with young people,⁷ and
- Held a workshop for each council engaging 26 staff across the organisations.⁸

3 KEY FINDINGS

Please note, these findings incorporate the insights of both young people and adults gained through the engagement activities.

3.1 Young people love the region

A consistent finding across the consultations was that young people deeply appreciate living in the region. The access to nature and the beach were key reasons. While some are excited at the prospect of moving away, many want to stay.

3.2 Hanging out in-person is the most valued type of connection

While online communication is an ever-present part of life, young people almost universally prefer being physically together with their friends, just hanging out in places where they feel comfortable and have permission to just be. Hectic schedules make this hard to realise.

¹ See Appendix A for the complete list of reviewed documents.

² See Appendix D for the complete results of the youth survey.

³ See Appendix E for the complete results of the adults survey.

⁴ See Appendix C for the details of activities.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

3.3 Young people are looking for a sense of belonging

Feeling like an accepted and connected part of a community is empowering. There are many sporting clubs, creative activities, and community organisations that provide this. However, not everyone reported having access to this type of community. There is a strong wish for the community to be more accepting of difference (in all its forms).

3.4 The weight of the world hangs heavy on young people

Cost of living and housing pressures are bearing down really hard on young people. This contributes to many young people either not engaging with the future (living for the moment) or reducing their vision for what it could be (avoiding study or taking risks). The pressure applied by schools and families to have a life plan doesn't help. Poor mental health is an ever-present issue, with access to support services limited.

3.5 Issues around transportation have a huge impact

Getting around is a perennial challenge impacting autonomy. Under 18s are at the mercy of family to get anywhere as public transport options are either inaccessible, infrequent, or perceived to be unsafe. This can lead to potentially dangerous driving behaviour by those over 18, especially late at night.

3.6 Young people are disconnected from opportunities and resources

There are actually a lot of resources and opportunities available across the region, from sporting and social clubs to support services, training and other assets. However, they are often invisible to young people. Discussions across the region highlighted a lot of missed opportunities. The centralisation of services in Warrnambool, while good for some, excludes those who can't get to town.

3.7 Programming often misses the mark

Young people often feel the entertainment programming and recreational assets offered in the region were not targeted to them. The sense was that the region offers a lot for young children and older adults. This was particularly true for music programming. The impact is that young people don't feel like their communities are for them. Many high schoolers expressed a desire for events that were by and for kids their age. Another challenge highlighted was the lack of regularity in events or pathways for continued engagement around new skills.

4 NEXT STEPS

- Work with the Youth Co-design Panel to develop an outline of the shared Strategy, articulating a vision and areas of focus (August)
- Review the Strategy outline with Warrnambool City Council and Moyne Shire Council executives and councillors to get their input and confirm direction (September)
- Share the Strategy outline with engaged stakeholders and seek feedback on the approach (September)
- Develop a completed shared Strategy and individual Action Plans for each council with the Youth Co-design Panel (October)
- Present finalise shared Strategy and individual Action Plans to both councils' executives and councillors (TBC)
- Put the shared Strategy and individual Action Plans out for public exhibition (TBC)
- Take the shared Strategy and individual Action Plans to both councils for adoption (TBC)

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Reviewed documents

Appendix B: Consultation discussion frames

Appendix C: List of consultations

Appendix D: Youth survey results

Appendix E: Adult survey results

Appendix A: Reviewed documents

NATIONAL DOCUMENTS

Mission Australia Youth Survey 2023

Engage! Office for Youth

Homelessness and Overcrowding (article)

Life, Disrupted: Young People, Education and Employment Before and After COVID-19

STATE LEVEL DOCUMENTS

Our Promise, Your Future: Victoria's Youth Strategy 2022–27

Engage! 2022–2024 Program: Grant guidelines

Engage! 2025–2027 Program: Grant guidelines

FReeZA 2022–2024 Program: Grant guidelines

FReeZA 2025–2027 Program: Grant guidelines

Response into the Inquiry into the State Education System in Victoria

FUSE Evaluation Report

Taking Young People Seriously

REGIONAL LEVEL DOCUMENTS

Beyond The Bell Annual Report Card 2022–23

Youth Conversations (Deakin Report into Beyond the Bell)

In Plain Sight – Investing in social equity to drive economic growth

Growing Our Regional Futures Strategy 2021–2023

MOYNE DOCUMENTS

Moyne 2040 Community Vision

2021–2025 Council Plan

Youth Service Priorities 2020–2022

Moyne Youth Engagement Charter

Economic Development Strategy 2019–29

Moyne Aboriginal Engagement and Partnership Plan

Moyne Disability Inclusion and Access Plan 2024–2028

Port Fairy Play and Skate Space (Rationale and Report, 2023)

Moyne Arts and Culture Strategy 2024–2030

WARRNAMBOOL DOCUMENTS

W2040 Plan 2021

Warrnambool City Council Plan 2021–2025

Active Warrnambool Strategy 2019–30 Final Report September 2019

Healthy Warrnambool 2021–25 Plan

Green Warrnambool

Warrnambool Economic Development Strategy

Creative Industries Data Summary

Gender Equity Action Plan 2022–2026

Disability Access and Inclusion Policy 2020

Community Engagement Policy 2021

Appendix B: Consultation discussion frames

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT DISCUSSION FRAME

- Where do you live? (If relevant)
- What do you like to do? (Eg. Particular activities, hanging out with friends, learning new skills, etc)
- What is important to you? (Eg. Climate change, connection to community, opportunities for growth, having exciting things to do, etc)
- What are your biggest challenges? (Eg. Cost of living, access to transport, insecure housing, lack of service, personal mental health challenges, etc.)
- How do you feel about where you live? (Eg. Love it, can't wait to get out, etc)
- What do you wish you had more access to? (Eg. More creative learning opportunities, better health supports, more sports?)
- What are your aspirations for the future?

ADULT DISCUSSION FRAME

- What are the biggest issues facing young people in the region?
- What are the biggest challenges you have engaging with young people?
- What would make the lives of young people in the region better?
- What are your aspirations for the future of the region's young people?

Appendix C: List of consultations

Please note, the counts of individuals are cumulative so individuals are not double-counted.

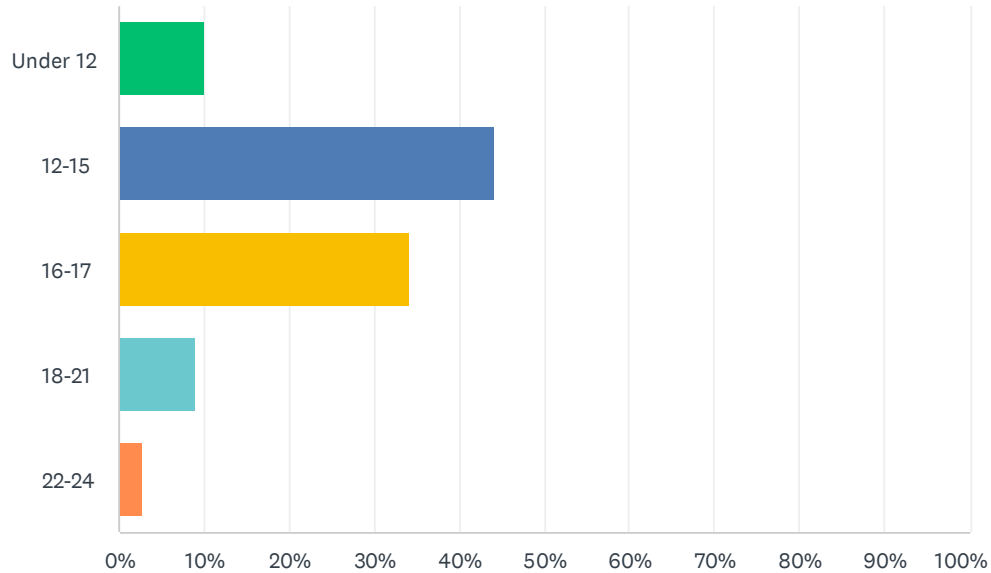
DATE	WHO	YOUTH	ADULTS
24 May 2024	Council stakeholders	0	4
20 June 2024	Project Control Group (PCG)	0	3
27 June 2024	YouthLink forum	3	14
27 June 2024	Brophy Annex	3	2
4 July 2024	Youth Co-design Panel (YCP)	17	0
24 July 2024	Find Your Voice Collection	5	4
24 July 2024	Warrnambool College	15	1
24 July 2024	Warrnambool College	28	2
24 July 2024	Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-op	0	3
24 July 2024	One Day Studios	18	3
25 July 2024	Clontarf program	6	3
25 July 2024	STARS program	4	2
25 July 2024	Koorie Academy of Excellence		1
25 July 2024	Brauer College	25	2
25 July 2024	Brophy		2
25 July 2024	One Day Studios	6	1
25 July 2024	Russell Creek Football Netball Club	5	5
1 August 2024	STARS	6	0
1 August 2024	South West TAFE	16	5
1 August 2024	Mortlake P-12	8	3
1 August 2024	Port Fairy Football Netball Club	42	7
2 August 2024	Brauer College	13	0
2 August 2024	Brauer College	5	0
2 August 2024	Deakin University	14	2
2 August 2024	Civic Green	0	0
3 August 2024	Port Fairy Library	4	2
3 August 2024	RNG Tabletop Gaming	0	1
3 August 2024	Noodledoof	0	4
3 August 2024	Dart and Marlin	0	1
4 August 2024	South West Academy of Sport	7	8
4 August 2024	Deakin University	9	8
5 August 2024	South West Health Care	0	1
5 August 2024	Western Region Alcohol and Drug Centre	0	2
5 August 2024	Brophy	0	1
5 August 2024	Brophy	0	1

5 August 2024	Brophy	0	1
7 August 2024	Moyne internal stakeholders	0	6
7 August 2024	PCG	0	0
8 August 2024	Hawksdale P-12	10	1
8 August 2024	Warrnambool internal stakeholders	0	20
8 August 2024	YCP	2	0

Appendix D: Youth survey results

Q1 How old are you?

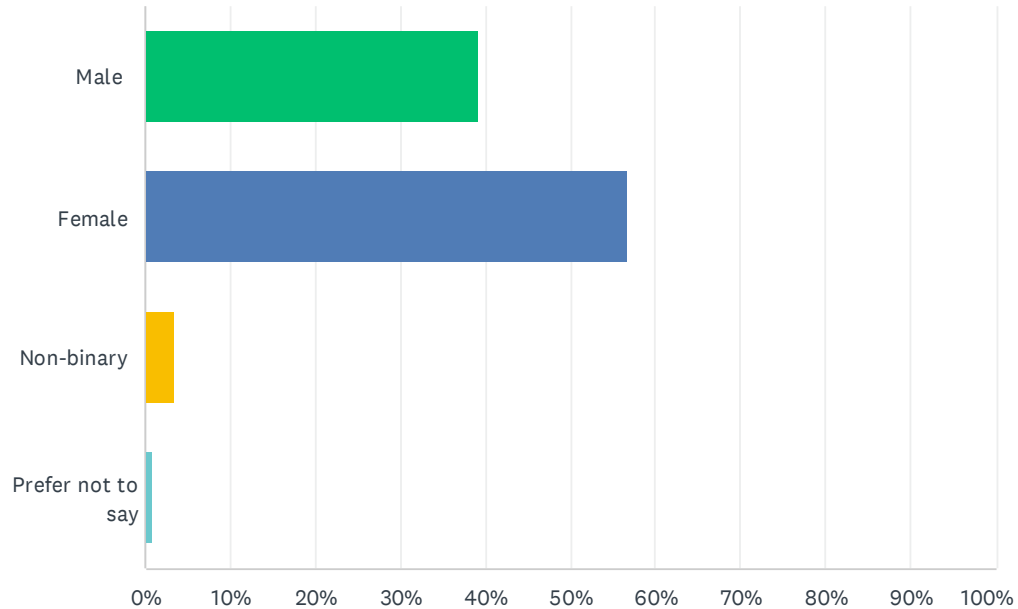
Answered: 388 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 12	10.05%	39
12-15	44.07%	171
16-17	34.02%	132
18-21	9.02%	35
22-24	2.84%	11
TOTAL		388

Q2 What gender do you identify with?

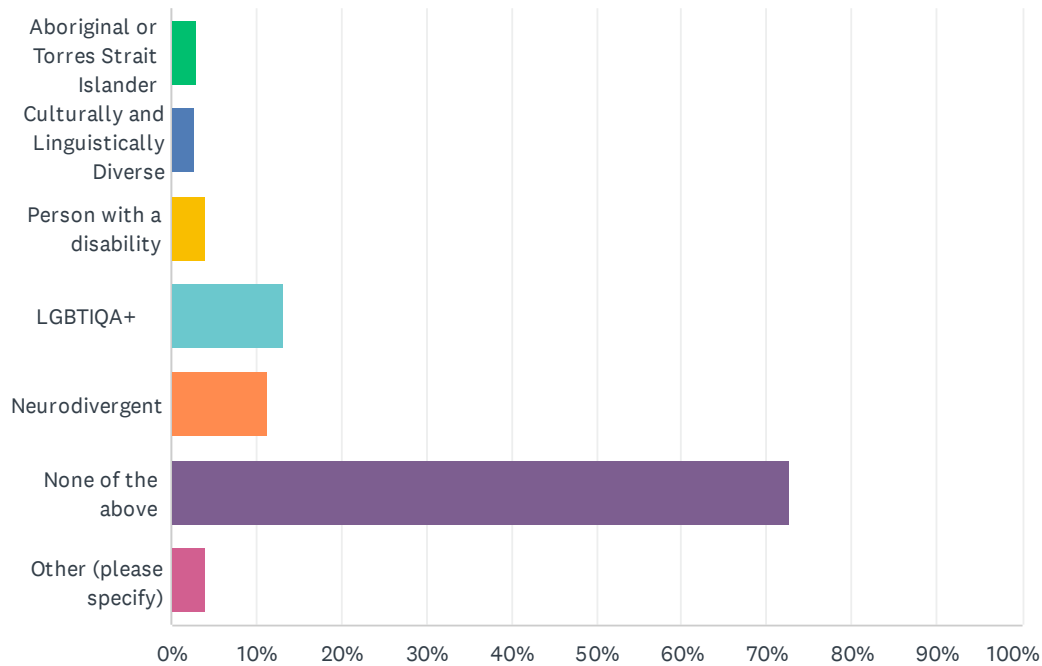
Answered: 388 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	39.18%	152
Female	56.70%	220
Non-binary	3.35%	13
Prefer not to say	0.77%	3
TOTAL		388

Q3 Do you identify as any of the following? (Choose all that apply)

Answered: 363 Skipped: 26



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	3.03%	11
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse	2.75%	10
Person with a disability	4.13%	15
LGBTIQ+	13.22%	48
Neurodivergent	11.29%	41
None of the above	72.73%	264
Other (please specify)	4.13%	15
Total Respondents: 363		

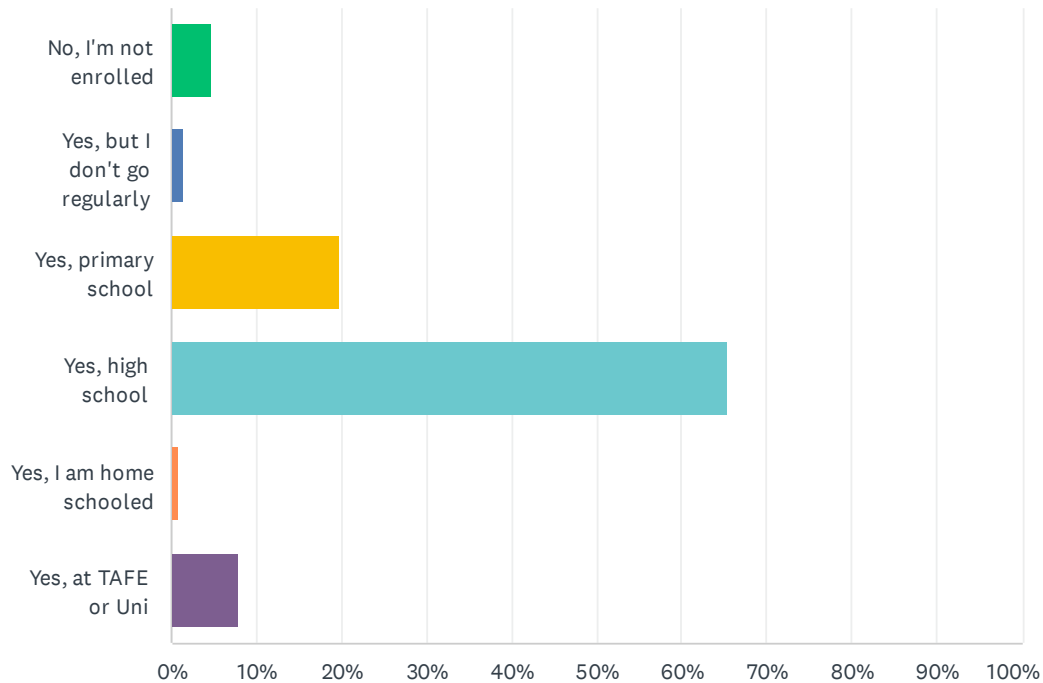
Q4 Where do you live?

Answered: 364 Skipped: 25



Q5 Are you currently studying?

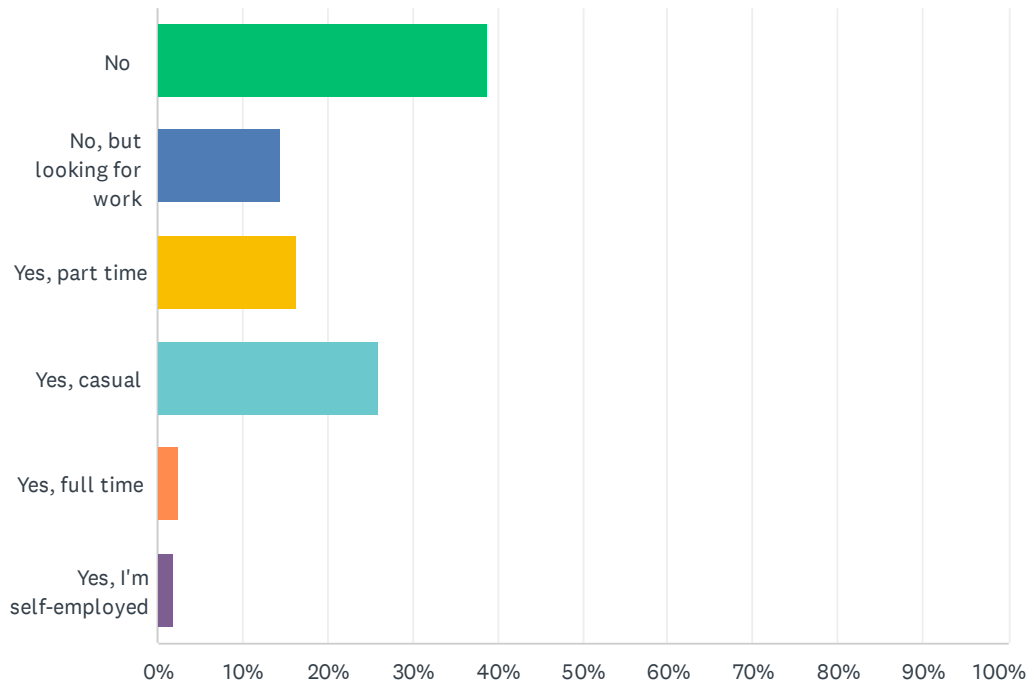
Answered: 385 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No, I'm not enrolled	4.68%	18
Yes, but I don't go regularly	1.56%	6
Yes, primary school	19.74%	76
Yes, high school	65.45%	252
Yes, I am home schooled	0.78%	3
Yes, at TAFE or Uni	7.79%	30
TOTAL		385

Q6 Are you working at the moment?

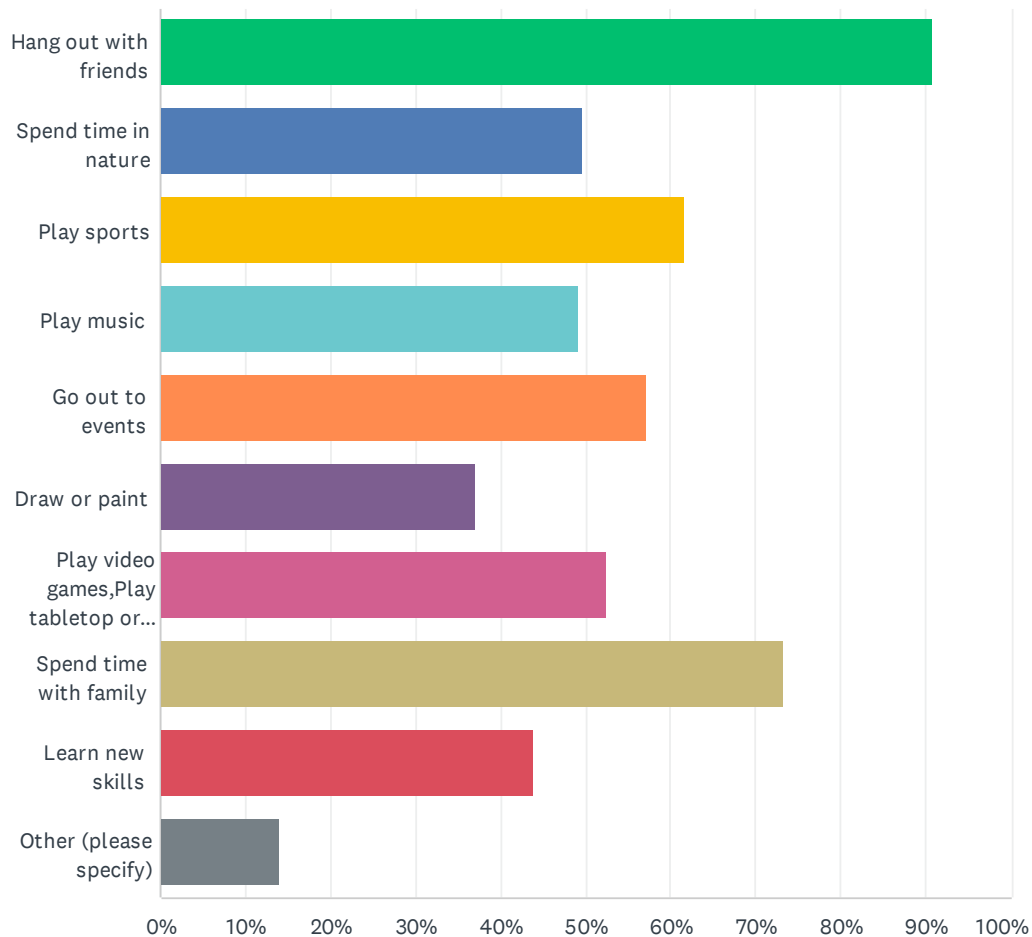
Answered: 386 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No	38.86%	150
No, but looking for work	14.51%	56
Yes, part time	16.32%	63
Yes, casual	25.91%	100
Yes, full time	2.59%	10
Yes, I'm self-employed	1.81%	7
TOTAL		386

Q7 Please select all the options that apply to you - and feel free to add anything that isn't covered here!

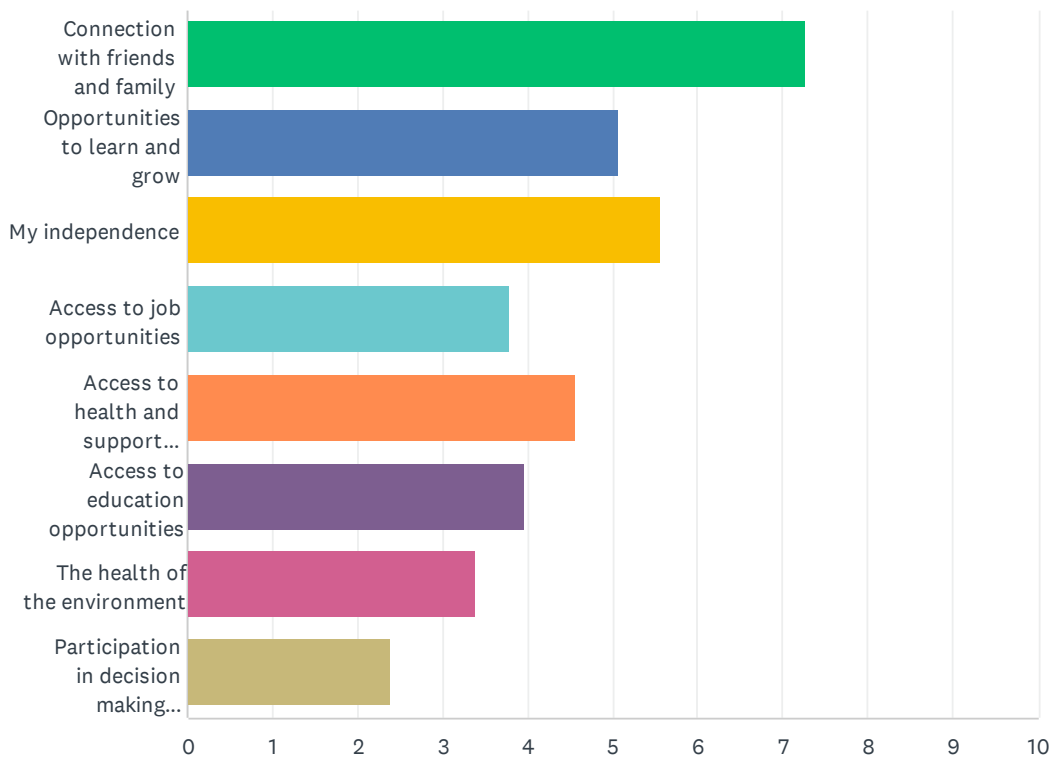
Answered: 375 Skipped: 14



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Hang out with friends	90.93%	341
Spend time in nature	49.60%	186
Play sports	61.60%	231
Play music	49.33%	185
Go out to events	57.07%	214
Draw or paint	37.07%	139
Play video games, Play tabletop or roleplay games	52.53%	197
Spend time with family	73.33%	275
Learn new skills	44.00%	165
Other (please specify)	14.13%	53
Total Respondents: 375		

Q8 Please rank the following things in order of importance, with 1 being the most important and 8 being the least important.

Answered: 336 Skipped: 53



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL	SCORE
Connection with friends and family	63.99% 215	19.05% 64	8.33% 28	2.68% 9	2.38% 8	2.38% 8	0.30% 1	0.89% 3	336	7.27
Opportunities to learn and grow	7.44% 25	19.05% 64	20.83% 70	16.67% 56	14.58% 49	9.82% 33	6.85% 23	4.76% 16	336	5.07
My independence	15.18% 51	23.21% 78	20.24% 68	13.39% 45	11.61% 39	7.44% 25	6.55% 22	2.38% 8	336	5.57
Access to job opportunities	1.49% 5	5.65% 19	12.20% 41	19.94% 67	16.07% 54	15.18% 51	16.67% 56	12.80% 43	336	3.80
Access to health and support services	4.76% 16	16.37% 55	12.20% 41	16.37% 55	20.54% 69	12.20% 41	12.20% 41	5.36% 18	336	4.56
Access to education opportunities	1.49% 5	7.74% 26	11.61% 39	17.26% 58	16.96% 57	24.11% 81	13.10% 44	7.74% 26	336	3.96
The health of the environment	5.36% 18	6.55% 22	7.14% 24	8.63% 29	11.31% 38	15.48% 52	27.08% 91	18.45% 62	336	3.39
Participation in decision making opportunities	0.30% 1	2.38% 8	7.44% 25	5.06% 17	6.55% 22	13.39% 45	17.26% 58	47.62% 160	336	2.38

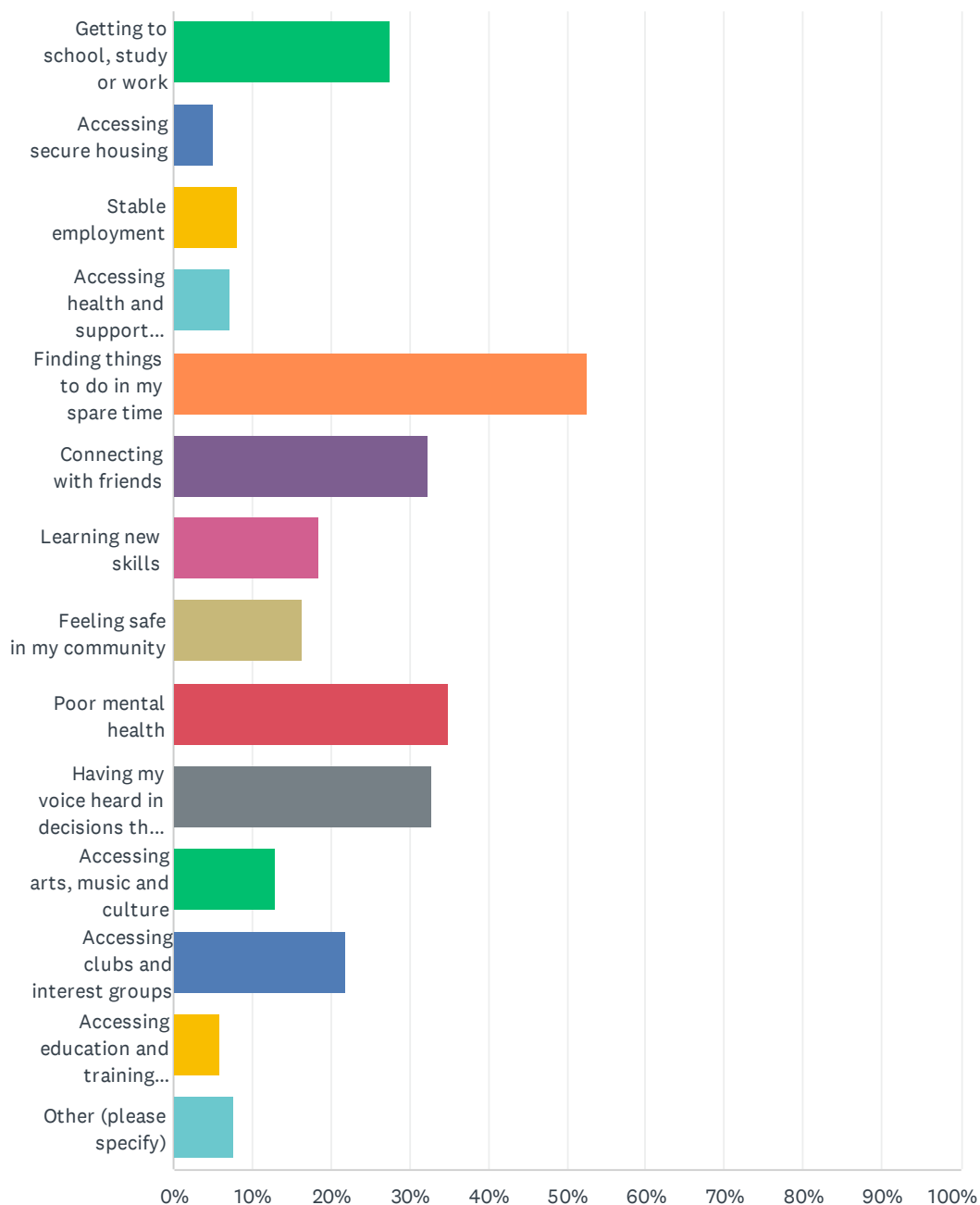
Q9 Please let us know if there are any other things that are really important to you.

Answered: 85 Skipped: 304

Freedom need shops opportunities youth fun school pets art animals us
important meet people sport fish really ride things make
people live think time

Q10 Please let us know if you have challenges with any of the following (select all that apply)

Answered: 232 Skipped: 157



Moyne & Warrnambool Youth Strategy: Youth Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Getting to school, study or work	27.59%	64
Accessing secure housing	5.17%	12
Stable employment	8.19%	19
Accessing health and support services	7.33%	17
Finding things to do in my spare time	52.59%	122
Connecting with friends	32.33%	75
Learning new skills	18.53%	43
Feeling safe in my community	16.38%	38
Poor mental health	34.91%	81
Having my voice heard in decisions that affect me	32.76%	76
Accessing arts, music and culture	12.93%	30
Accessing clubs and interest groups	21.98%	51
Accessing education and training opportunities	6.03%	14
Other (please specify)	7.76%	18
Total Respondents: 232		

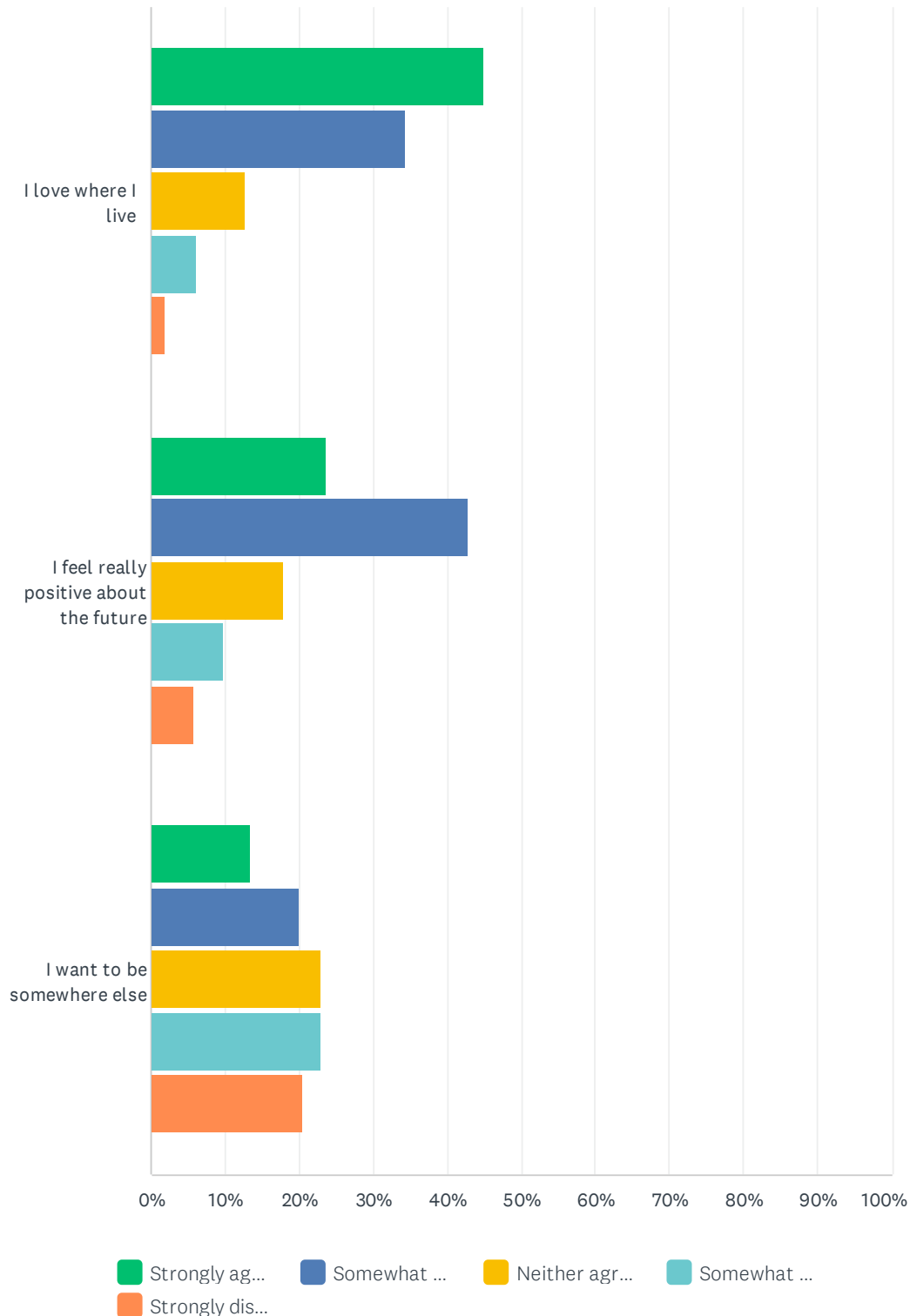
Q11 Are there any other things you wish you had access to?

Answered: 97 Skipped: 292

Koroit Basketball courts public transport areas local music access meet gym
school sports things better travel people jobs really facilities
shops wish access town games

Q12 Please let us know whether you agree or disagree with the following statement about the community in which you live:

Answered: 327 Skipped: 62



Moyne & Warrnambool Youth Strategy: Youth Survey

	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
I love where I live	44.95% 147	34.25% 112	12.84% 42	6.12% 20	1.83% 6	327
I feel really positive about the future	23.69% 77	42.77% 139	17.85% 58	9.85% 32	5.85% 19	325
I want to be somewhere else	13.50% 44	19.94% 65	23.01% 75	23.01% 75	20.55% 67	326

Q13 If you could pick three words to describe your aspirations for the future, they would be ...

Answered: 258 Skipped: 131

Happiness hard work fulfilling independent caring health good inspiring friendships
know loved learning money success Sport adventure fun exciting
happy rich family enjoyable travel bright successful
hopeful healthy succesful happy healthy Study creative University friends
stable

Appendix E: Adult survey results

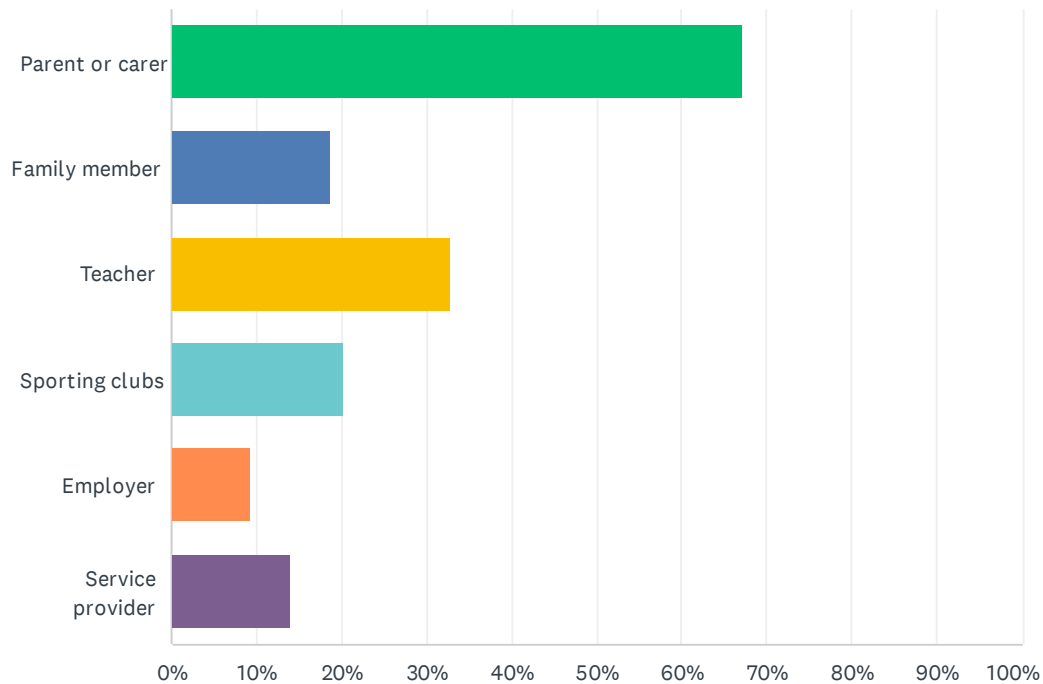
Q1 Where do you live?

Answered: 67 Skipped: 1

Port Fairy Koroit Warrnambool

Q2 How do you engage with young people? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 64 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Parent or carer	67.19%	43
Family member	18.75%	12
Teacher	32.81%	21
Sporting clubs	20.31%	13
Employer	9.38%	6
Service provider	14.06%	9
Total Respondents: 64		

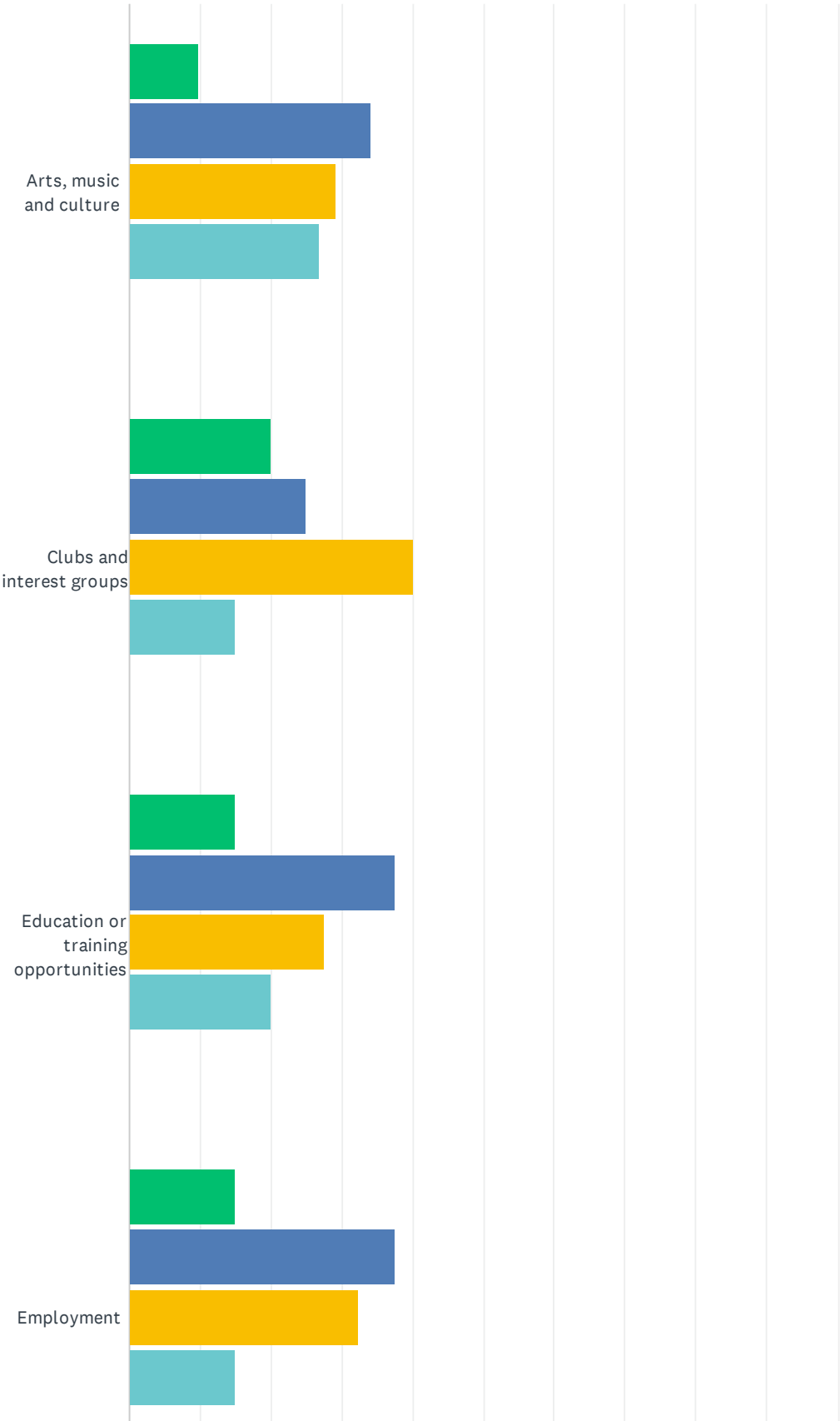
Q3 From your perspective, what are the biggest issues facing young people in the region?

Answered: 37 Skipped: 31

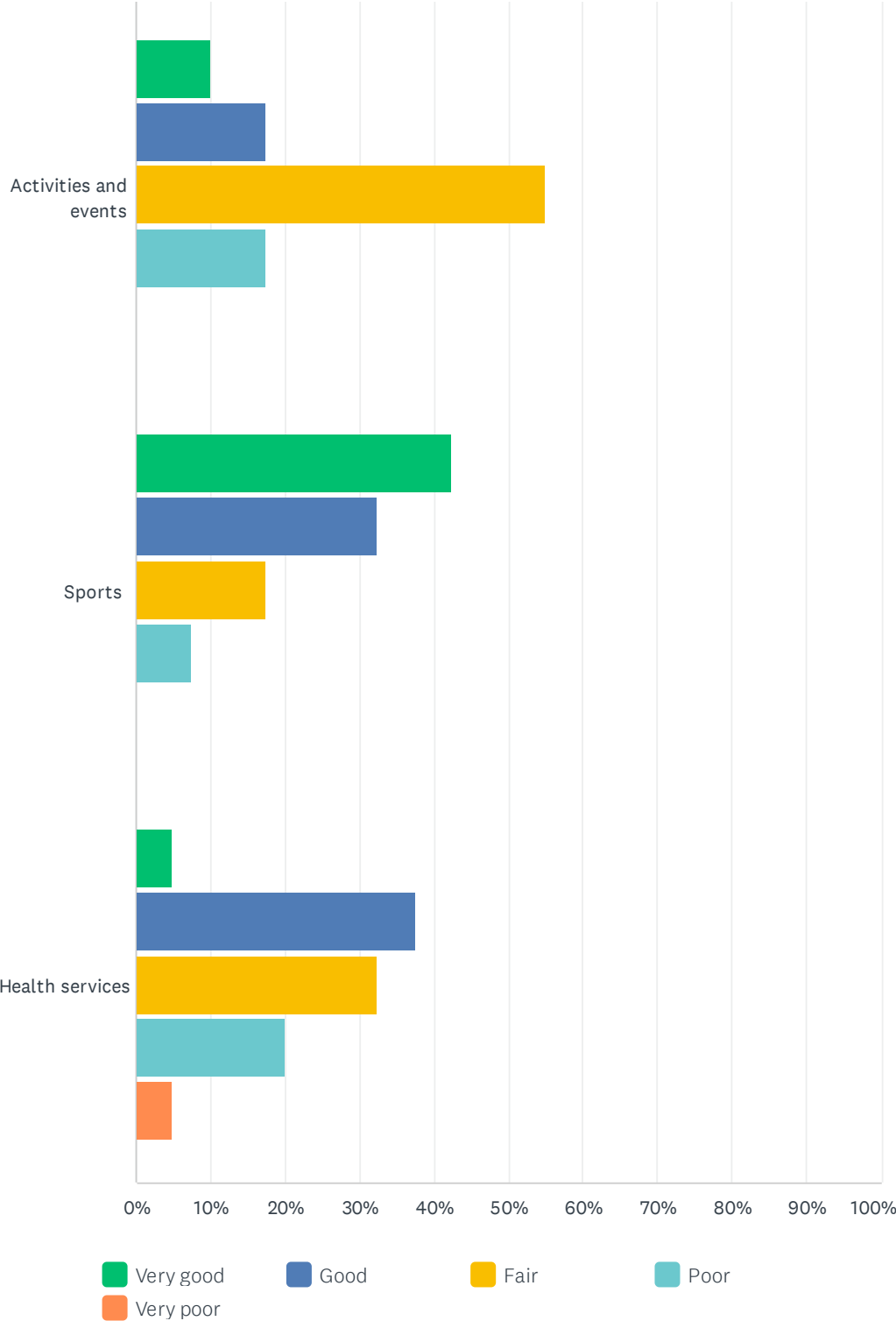
Disengagement young people Social media connection events addiction school
engagement transport activities Lack groups social will sports
Mental health Bullying need

Q4 How would you rate young people's access to the following things:

Answered: 41 Skipped: 27



Moyne & Warrnambool Youth Strategy: Adult Survey



Moyne & Warrnambool Youth Strategy: Adult Survey

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	VERY POOR	TOTAL
Arts, music and culture	9.76% 4	34.15% 14	29.27% 12	26.83% 11	0.00% 0	41
Clubs and interest groups	20.00% 8	25.00% 10	40.00% 16	15.00% 6	0.00% 0	40
Education or training opportunities	15.00% 6	37.50% 15	27.50% 11	20.00% 8	0.00% 0	40
Employment	15.00% 6	37.50% 15	32.50% 13	15.00% 6	0.00% 0	40
Activities and events	10.00% 4	17.50% 7	55.00% 22	17.50% 7	0.00% 0	40
Sports	42.50% 17	32.50% 13	17.50% 7	7.50% 3	0.00% 0	40
Health services	5.00% 2	37.50% 15	32.50% 13	20.00% 8	5.00% 2	40

Q5 From your perspective, what would make the lives of young people in the region better?

Answered: 35 Skipped: 33

young people work students people support around
opportunities mental health youth parents Better
don't school help kids events sports also
needs t access funding activities courses services

Q6 If you could pick three words to describe your aspirations for the future of the region's young people, they would be ...

Answered: 33 Skipped: 35



A word cloud of aspirations for the future of the region's young people. The words are in various shades of blue and are arranged in a horizontal, slightly overlapping manner. The words included are: Connected, Empowered, Healthy, supported, happy, opportunity, engaged, and Independent. The word 'happy' is the largest and most prominent, followed by 'Connected' and 'engaged'.

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