GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

2015-2019
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Part B: Background Findings and Research

DRAFT 7th September, 2015

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This part of the document houses information on how the strategy was developed the methodology, key findings and results.

1. Methodology - Strategy development

The following steps were designed and implemented to develop the 2015-2019 youth development strategy.

1. Review of Commonwealth and State Government policies, plans and documents

- Relevant documentation from both Commonwealth and State Government agencies were reviewed. This included youth development policy documentation and planning.
- Further information on the policies, plans and documents reviewed can be found in section 2.5.

2. Review of Golden Plains Shire Council strategies and documents

- Council documents and strategies were reviewed to develop understanding of the environmental context for youth and youth engagement in Golden Plains. These documents included Council plans, strategies and funding applications.
- A list of the strategies and documents reviewed can be found in Appendix A.

3. Profile facts and data relating to young people in the municipality of Golden Plains

- Demographic data from various sources (i.e., Australian Bureau of Statistics, Profile id) was collated and analysed to develop a profile of young people living in the Golden Plains Shire. The profile examined population, education, employment and socio-economic data.
- Presented of the demographic data relating to young people in Golden Plains can be found in section 2.1.

4.   Community Consultation

- The community consultation approach involved development and delivery of online surveys, face to face workshops and key informan interviews. Surveys were developed for 4 targeted stakeholder groups: young people; parents; community organisations and education & service providers. The surveys were delivered using Survey Monkey and were conducted between April and May 2015. Promotion of the surveys was done through Council social media pages and distribution of flyers by young people involved in the local FReeZA committee. Surveys were incentivized to encourage greater response rates.
- The surveys aimed to capture the following information: Demographic data; lifestyle factors; how young people are faring; challenges facing young people's development; access to community, services and support, what young people appreciated about the Shire and opportunities to build on.
- The surveying process resulted in the following number of completed responses: Young people (n=139); Parents (n=50); Community organisations (n=31); and Youth service and education providers (n=14).
- Following the collation and analysis of the survey data, two workshops were conducted with young people. One was held at Phoenix College in Ballarat (n=10) to capture residents living in the northern part of the Shire. Another workshop was held in Bannockburn (n=8) with residents living in the southern part of the Shire. The aim of these workshops was to further investigate and analyse the issues uncovered in the youth surveys. Discussions also focused on opportunities that could support the development of young people.

5. Golden Plains-specific knowledge about young people

- In order to gather further, specific information about young people living in Golden Plains, another workshop was conducted with Council staff, representing number Council departments. This workshop aimed to gather Council's insights on the challenges faced by local young people and the role of Council departments in the delivery of this strategy.

- To compliment specific aspects of the data collection, individual consultations were also conducted with representatives from youth service providers (BATForce, Highlands LLEN, Youth Advisory Group) and education providers (primary and secondary schools).

6. Golden Plains Youth Development Strategy 2015-2019

- Draft prepared and distributed to Council and the Advisory group for comment
- Updated from the above and approved to go out for public comment
- Approved by Golden Plains Shire Council

2. Research findings

2.1 Demographic profile

The Region

The Golden Plains Shire (GPS) is a rapidly growing rural municipality. GPS is comprised of 56 small rural townships and settlements which encompass 2,705 square kilometres of land, and is located between Geelong and Ballarat, two of Victoria's largest regional cities as shown in the map below.

Population profile

In 2014, the Shire had a total population of 20,544 residents. The Shire has experienced consistent population growth rate of 3.5% per annum, or an increase of 6,998 new residents, across a 20 year period. [1,2,3,4]

By 2031 the Shire is expected to house 27,765 people, an increase of 7,221 people between 2014 and 2031. Most of this growth anticipated to occur in and around Bannockburn, Batesford, Inverleigh, Teesdale, Smythesdale, Ross Creek and Haddon. [5]

Historically, Golden Plains Shire has been ranked in the top two or three fastest growing council areas in regional Victoria (and generally the top six state-wide) since the late 1990's. The Shire has had three main waves of new arrivals, with the many young families currently moving to the area representing the third wave of population

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1 Golden Plains Shire Council (2013), Golden Plains Shire Council Plan 2013-2017

2 Golden Shire Plains 20th Annual Report 2013-2014

3 2015-2017 Engage! Program funding application

4 Profile ID (2011), Community Profile Golden Plains Shire

5 Golden Plains Shire Recreation Strategy Plan 2014 Summary of Findings and Recreation Strategy

growth.[6,7,8] According to the 2011 ABS Census, families with children under 15 years old made up approximately 43% of all family types in Golden Plains Shire.

Table 1 presents key youth population structure and growth statistics of Golden Plains Shire, as compared to the Victorian average. The Table shows that in 2011, there were 3,173 people aged between 12 and 25 residing in Golden Plains Shire.

Table 1 - Youth population structure & growth

	2011			2006			2006-2011
	Number	%	% (VIC)	Number	%	% (VIC)	Change
Total persons 12-14 years	928	4.9	3.7	845	5.1	4.0	83
Total persons 15-18 years	1,134	6.0	5.1	964	5.9	5.4	170
Total persons 19-25 years	1111	5.9	9.7	924	5.6	9.6	187
Total young people (12-25 years)	**3,173**			**2,733**			**440**

Note. Percentages expressed as a percentage of the total population

Source: ABS Census (2011)

Table 2 shows the population of young people in Golden Plains, broken down by age group and gender. Data shows there are slightly more male young people (52.5%) living in Golden Plains compared to young female young people (47.5%).

Table 2 – Youth population by gender

	Male	Female	Total
Total persons 12-14 years	492	435	927
Total persons 15-18 years	601	532	1133
Total persons 19-25 years	574	539	1113
Total young people (12-25 years)	1667	1506	3173

Source: ABS Census (2011)

6 Golden Plain Shire, 2012-2014 Engage! Program Application for Funding Response to the Assessment Criteria

7 Golden Plains Shire Community Development Strategy 2009-2012

8 Golden Plains Shire Council (2013), Golden Plains Shire Council Plan 2013-2017

Figure 1 below shows the historical and predicted growth of the Shire's youth (by age group) in terms of both total number and percentage, over a 30 year period. Please note that projection data, provided by Profile id, is only available for the 10-14; 15-19; and 20-24 age cohorts.
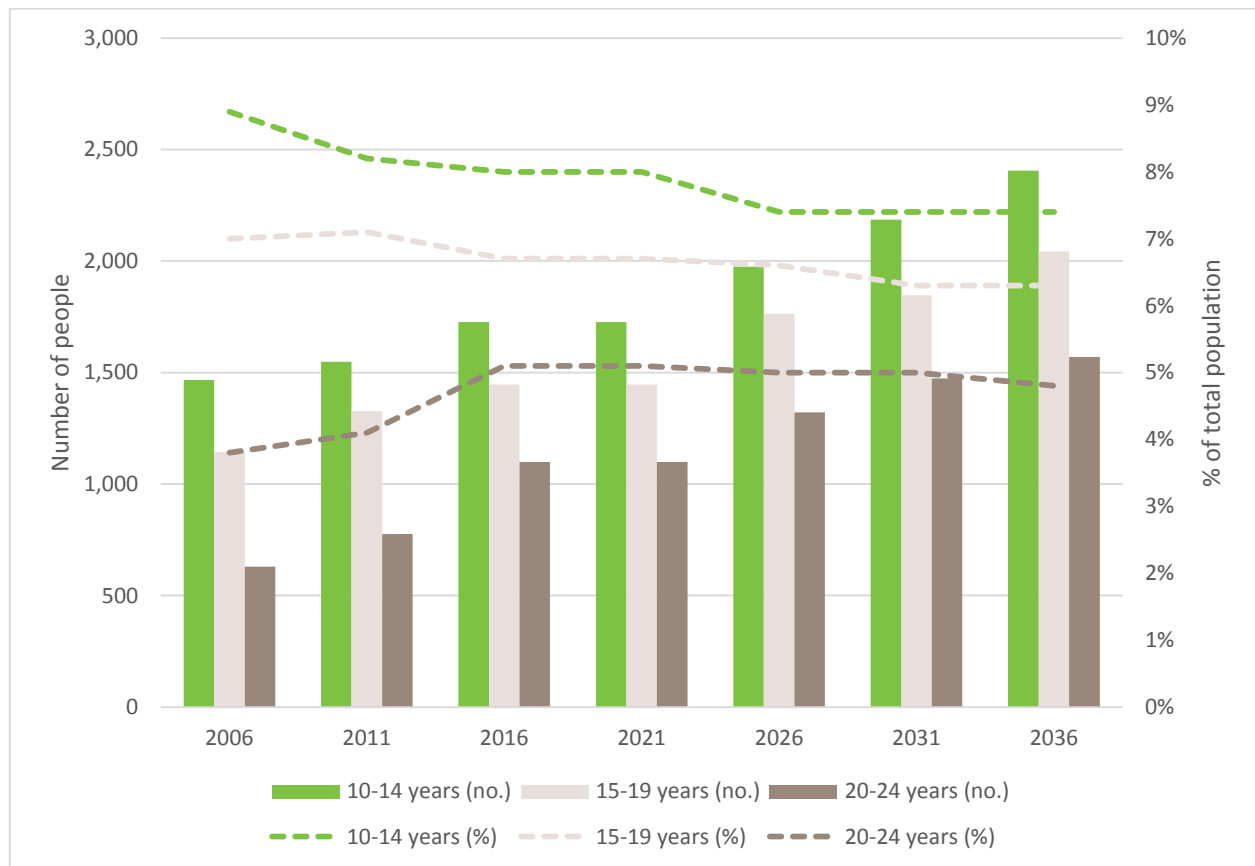
Source: Profile id.

Figure 1 - Historical & Predicted Growth by Age Group

Education and training

Table 3 below presents a breakdown of attendance rates at educational institutions broken into age groups.

Table 3 - Educational Institutions attendance (Young People aged 12-15 years)

Age Group	Primary School			Secondary School			Technical or Further Educational Institution (including TAFE Colleges)			University or other Tertiary Institution		
	GPS		Vic	GPS		Vic	GPS		Vic	GPS		Vic
	#	% of pop	% of pop	#	% of pop	% of pop	#	% of pop	% of pop	#	% of pop	% of pop
Total persons 12-14 years	174	18.8%	16.9%	684	73.7%	74.5%	0	0.0%	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Total persons 15-18 years	0	0.0%	0.0%	805	71.1%	68.9%	60	5.3%	5.8%	28	2.5%	5.8%
Total persons 19-25 years	0	0.0%	0.0%	3	0.3%	0.7%	99	8.9%	9.0%	193	17.4%	27.9%
Total young people (12-25 years)	174	5.5%	3.4%	1492	47.0%	34.3%	159	5.0%	6.3%	221	7.0%	16.2%

Source: ABS Census (2011)

Combined with the lower university attendance rate identified above (2.1% compared to 4.6%), several other key differences were identified within the 20-24 age group which indicate poorer levels of youth engagement and participation in education, training and/or employment within Golden Plains Shire compared to Victoria, as shown in Table 4.

However, contrary to this, less 15-19 year olds living in GPS were classed as being 'not in paid employment or enrolled in education' (4.8%) compared to the state of Victoria (5.8%).

Table 4 - Engagement of 20-24 year olds

Indicator	GPS (%)	Victoria (%)
20-24 year olds who left school before completing year 11	21.3	12
20-24 year old males not in paid employment or enrolled in education'	14	11.5
20-24 year old females not in paid employment or enrolled in education'	19	12.8

Source: Profile id.

Table 5 demonstrates the comparative improvement of the attainment rate, with 76.7% of 19 year olds completing year 12 (or equivalent) in Golden Plains Shire during 2009, 4.5% lower than the state figure (81.2%) and 2% less than non-metro Victoria. While 2010 saw a decline in attainment in Golden Plains Shire (73.8%), South-Western Victoria (78.1%) and Non Metro Victoria (77.6%), the shires rate improved in 2013 to 85%, increasing 4.2% on the previous year.

Table 5 - Year 12 or Equivalent Attainment Rate at Age 19

Region Type / Region / LGA	2009 (%)	2010 (%)	2011 (%)	2012 (%)	2013 (%)	Difference (First and Last Year)
Golden Plains (S)	76.7	73.8	75.4	80.8	85.0	8.3
South-Western Victoria	78.6	78.1	81.8	84.2	84.0	5.3
Non Metro	78.7	77.6	79.8	82.5	81.5	2.8
Total Victoria	81.2	81.6	84.2	86.8	86.9	5.7

Source: DET 2013

Secondary school enrolments

There is currently no secondary school in Golden Plains Shire. Most young people residing in the Shire commute, sometimes up to 3 hours per day, to schools in Ballarat or Geelong. Developing a better understanding of where young Golden Plains residents are attending secondary school is not essential to program delivery but could assist in the promotion of programs .

To capture this information, three approaches were used. Each approach presented its own limitations; therefore results should only be used as a guide.

Method 1: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development survey data

School enrolment data was accessed through the Data Collections and Services department of the Department of Education and Training (DET). DET provided enrolment data for secondary schools in Ballarat and Geelong matching postcodes provided by Golden Plains Shire[9]. The Shire's official postcode list is provided in Appendix B. DET data was gathered through school surveys conducted in February 2015. Table 6 shows 2015 government school enrolments for the highest frequency schools in Ballarat and Geelong based on this data.

Two of the biggest limitations of the DET data are;

1. It does not include detailed non-Government schools data, only bulk enrolments to impossible to see enrolments from Golden Plains

2. Some of the Golden Plains postcodes cover areas outside the Golden Plains Shire. For example post codes 3218, 3351 and 3213 all include areas that are not within the Golden Plains Shire. This means the figure provided of students within a particular postcode includes students from within and without of the Golden Plains Shire making figures somewhat inaccurate.

Table 6 - Government Secondary school enrolments[10]

City	School	Total GPS enrolments in 2015 (Years 7-12)
Ballarat	Ballarat High School	341
	Mount Clear College	330
	Phoenix P-12 Community College	255
Geelong	Matthew Flinders Girls Secondary College	144
	North Geelong Secondary College	140
	Western Heights Secondary College	292
TOTAL		**1,502***

Source: DET government school survey, February 2015

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[9] Postcodes include some towns outside Golden Plains Shire, therefore impacting the reliability of DET data.

[10] Enrolment figures are based on residents information from postcodes listed in Appendix C.

Method 2: Primary school interviews and data

Principals and administration/enrolment staff at 11 primary schools in Golden Plains Shire were interviewed. Interviewees provided anecdotal evidence on where graduating students most frequently enrol in secondary school. The top three responses for Ballarat and Geelong are shown in Table 6.

Primary schools were also requested to provide detailed data for the past 7 years indicating where their young people enrolled in high schools, however not all schools maintained or could provide this data.

Table 6– Most frequent secondary school destination of Golden Plains' residents

City	School	Public / Private
Ballarat	Mount Clear College	Public
	Phoenix P-12 Community College	Public
	Damascus College Ballarat	Private
Geelong	North Geelong Secondary College	Public
	St. Joseph's College - Geelong	Private
	Western Heights College	Public

Appendix C presents the interview results.

Method 3 – Data from secondary schools themselves

Golden Plains Shire Youth development officers contacted over 25 high schools asking for enrolment data from students who reside in the Golden Plains Shire. Only a small proportion of these schools were able to provide their enrolment data. There were also limitations to the enrolment data. For example, students changing or leaving school are not reflected in the enrolment data.

Local economy

Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy in Golden Plains Shire. Other key industries by employment include education & training, retail and construction. ABS data shows that employment self-sufficiency is low in GPS, with only one job for every three residents participating in the labour force. This presents limited employment and work experience opportunities for young people within the Shire.

Employment

Table 7 shows the level of employment amongst young people living in Golden Plains. Data shows that 1227 (38.7%) young people are employed, 167 (5.3%) are unemployed and 782 (24.7%), that are of working age, are not in the labour force (e.g., studying full time).

According to the ABS Census, the unemployment rate[11] for young people (aged 15 to 25) living in Golden Plains was 12% in 2011. This was marginally higher than Victoria's youth unemployment rate (11.4%) during this period.

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11 The unemployment rate for any group is defined as the number of unemployed people expressed as a percentage of the labour force (employed plus unemployed). As a measure of the proportion of the labour force that is under-utilised, its most important use is as an indicator of the performance of the economy

It should also be noted that in 2011, over 80% of people aged over 15 years travel out of the Shire to access employment or education options. [12]

Table 7 – Employment in Golden Plains

	Employed, worked full-time	Employed, worked part-time	Employed, away from work	Unemployed, looking for full-time work	Unemployed, looking for part-time work	Not in the labour force	Not stated	Not applicable	Total
Total persons 12-14 years	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	928	928
Total persons 15-18 years	111	248	35	24	60	625	30	0	1133
Total persons 19-25 years	497	277	59	57	26	157	39	0	1112
Total young people (12-25 years)	608	525	94	81	86	782	69	928	3173

Source: ABS Census (2011)

Socio-economic disadvantage

In 2011, Golden Plains Shire as a whole scored 1,030.1 on the SEIFA Index of Disadvantage. To put this figure into perspective, a higher score on the index means a lower level of disadvantage. Local government areas in Victoria range between 1,098.3 (Nillumbik) and 894.9 (Greater Dandenong). Therefore, GPS shows overall a relatively low level of disadvantage.

Table 8 provides SEIFA scores by township, relative to the state of Victoria. According to this data, Berringa shows the highest level of disadvantage in the Shire.

Table 8 – SEIFA by township

Area	2011 Index
Batesford	1097
Napoleons	1048
Shelford	1047
Ross Creek	1035
Inverleigh	1028
Bannockburn	1027
Teesdale	1019
Garibaldi	1016
Victoria	**1009.6**

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Area	2011 Index
Golden Plains-South	**1007**
Lethbridge	998
Haddon	997
Meredith	986
Enfield	978
Golden Plains-North	**971**
Smythesdale	968
Rokewood	958
Scarsdale	952
Dereel	944
Linton	933
Berringa	912

Source: ABS 2011, Profile id.

It is important to take into account SEFIA does not incorporate all types of disadvantage such as access to services or rural disadvantage. A SEIFA index summarises the characteristics of people and households within a specific area. The score therefore reflects this group of people as a whole not individuals or households. Areas can very diverse and so can have both high and low income households. It is possible for a high income household to reside in a relatively disadvantaged area or vice versa.

2.2 Issues and Opportunities Summary

The project identified 6 priority issues impacting the development of young people in Golden Plains. These priority issues have informed the development of the focus areas and strategies. Table 9 presents a summary of the research findings.

Table 9 – Research findings

Priority issue	Research findings
Transport	▸ Transportation was identified as one of the biggest challenge facing the development of young people growing up in Golden Plains. ▸ Transport is seen by young people as their connection to social networks, employment options and activities – often located in Ballarat or Geelong. ▸ Young people mainly rely on their parents for transportation, which can sometimes place strain on family environments – particularly when both parents are working. ▸ There appears to be a lack of awareness amongst young people of transport options

Priority issue	Research findings
	available to them within the Shire.
	▸ The geographically dispersed population presents challenges for young people accessing activities, programs and services.
Events and activities	▸ Young people have identified the lack of events and activities available in their communities as a major challenge.
	▸ If was identified that young people were not aware of all the events and activities available to them in the Shire.
	▸ Young people are typically accessing activities and events in Ballarat and Geelong, often because this is where their social networks reside and the greater range of 'things to do'.
	▸ Sporting clubs play an important role in social integration and physical development.
	▸ Some stakeholders felt the focus on sport in the Shire is too strong, and should be balanced with other activities such as arts and culture.
Employment	▸ Accessing employment opportunities was identified by young people as a major challenge. There appears to be a lack of employment opportunities available locally, transportation is often a barrier to employment in Geelong or Ballarat.
	▸ Competition is high for local, part time positions.
	▸ Some young people felt they lack the skills and experience required to gain part time employment.
	▸ The lack of longer term employment opportunities in Golden Plains is a major concern of parents and youth service and education providers.
Community involvement	▸ Community organisations, outside sporting clubs, indicated a desire to attract more young people to participate.
	▸ Policies from all tiers of Government focus on increasing youth engagement and the involvement of young people in decision making.
	▸ Young people living in Golden Plains have indicated their ability to influence decision-making and their community involvement is low.
	▸ Young people indicated they saw benefits in their communities but didn't feel overly connected to their community due to their 'lives' being in Geelong or Ballarat where they attended school.
Communication with young people	▸ Communicating with young people is a challenge for Council. This results in some young people being unaware of the activities, events and services provided by Council (and other stakeholders).
Advocacy and partnerships	▸ There is currently no secondary school in Golden Plains. Most Golden Plains residents commute to Geelong and Ballarat for secondary schooling with some young people traveling up to 3 hours per day.
	▸ The planned secondary school in Bannockburn will 'change the discussion' on youth development in Golden Plains. The school will present both challenges (e.g., potentially fragment the community and exacerbate the North/South divide), and opportunities (e.g., development of an education and activities hub, promote community connectedness).
	▸ There appears to be relatively low levels of socioeconomic disadvantage and youth unemployment in Golden Plains Shire.

2.3 Survey and Workshop Results

Young People demographic information

The figures 2-5 below show the demographic information of the young people who completed the survey.
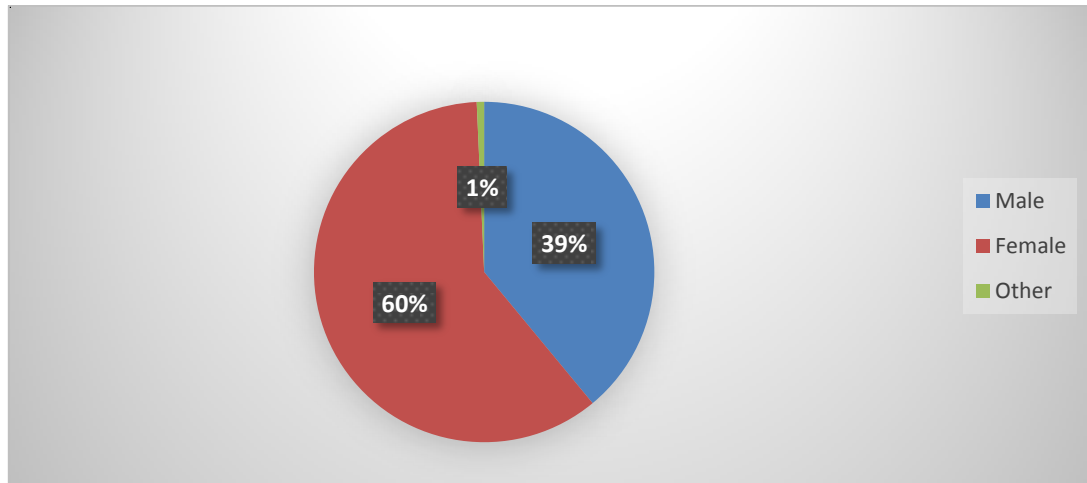

Figure 2- Survey respondents of young people by gender (n=13)

Figure 3 – Respondent age (n=136)
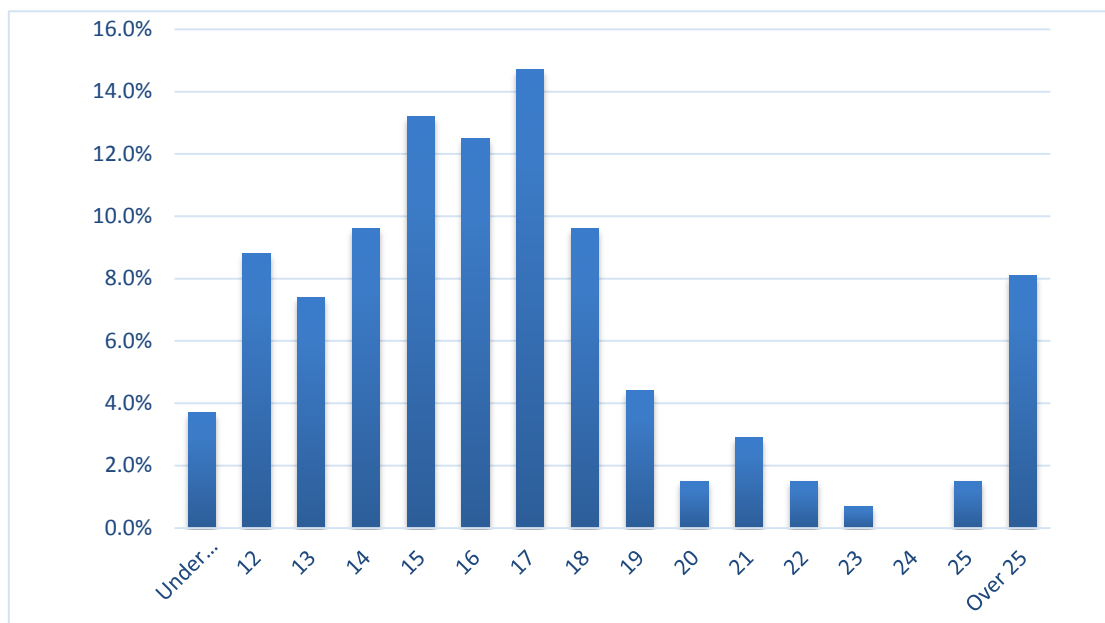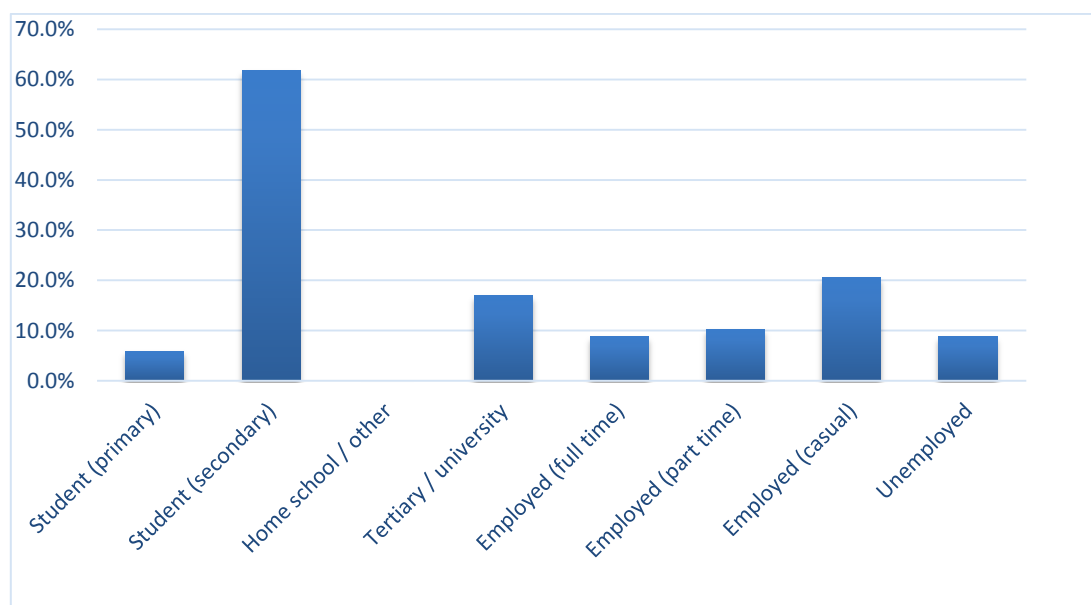

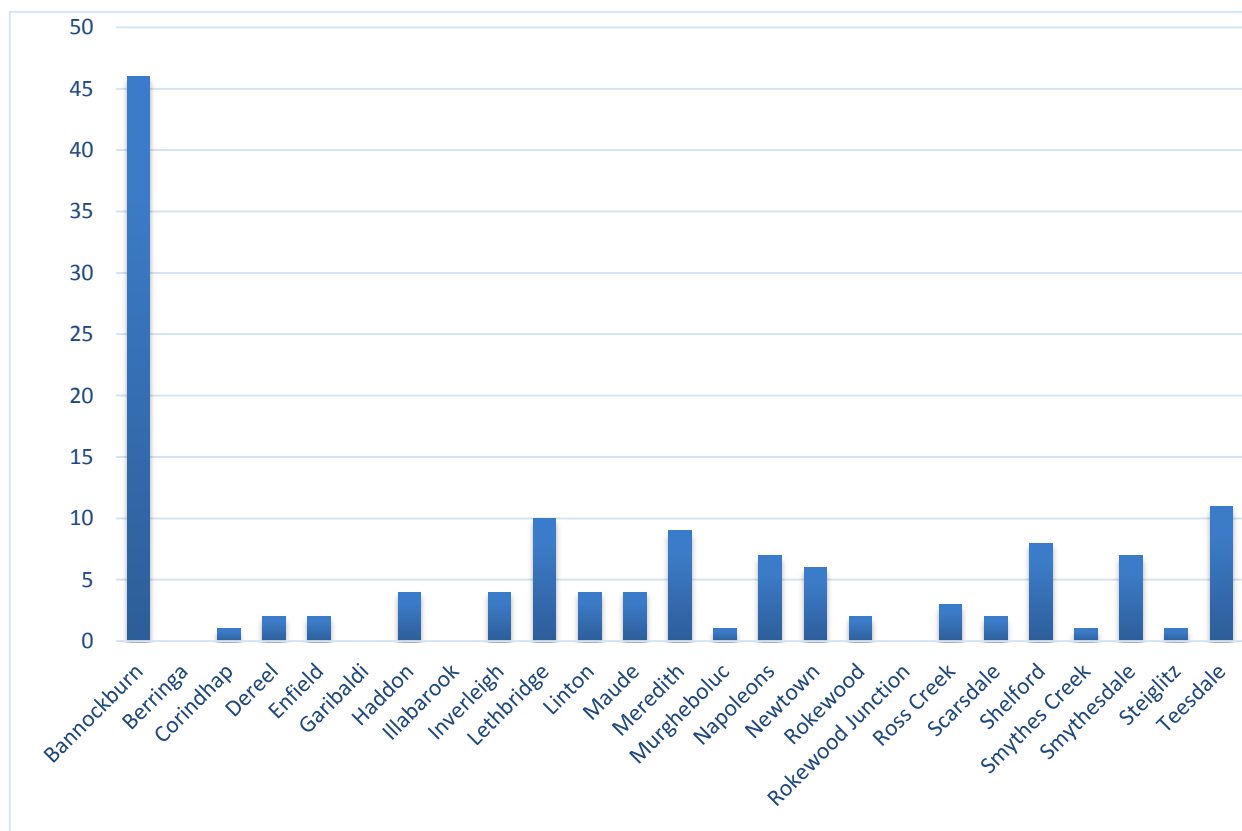**Figure 4– Respondent education/employment status (n=136)**

Figure 5 – Respondent town of residence (n=135)

Young people and their spare time

In Figure 6 below young people were asked to choose up to five things that they did when they were not attending school or employment. More than half of the young people identified spending time on social networking sites closely followed by listening to music and hanging out with their friends.

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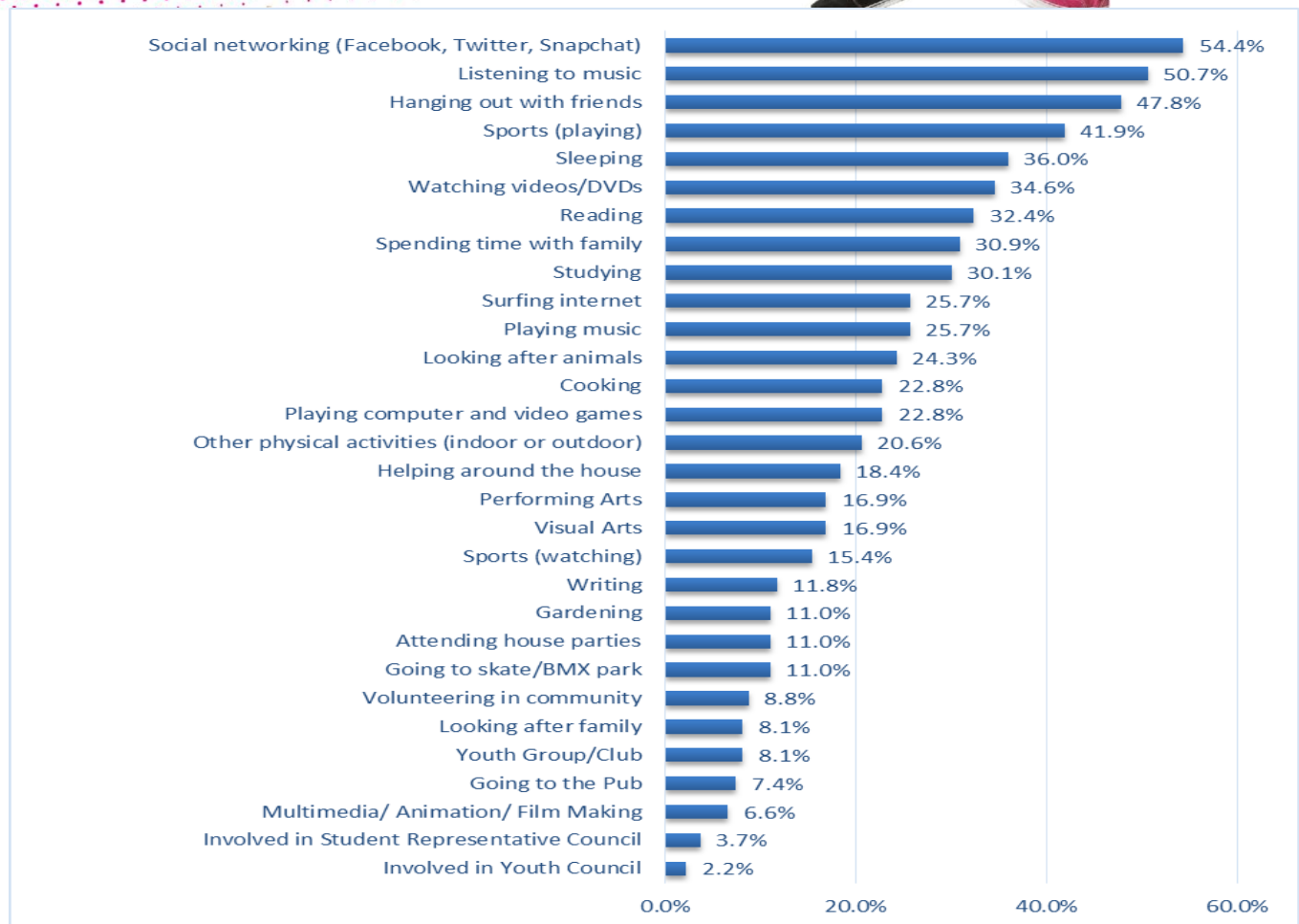
Figure 6 – What young people are doing in their spare time (n=136)

Important issues for young people

Young people were asked to rate what they believed to be the most important thing for young people on a scale from Not Important (0) to Very Important (5). Figure 7 represents the most important issues for young people as identified by young people.
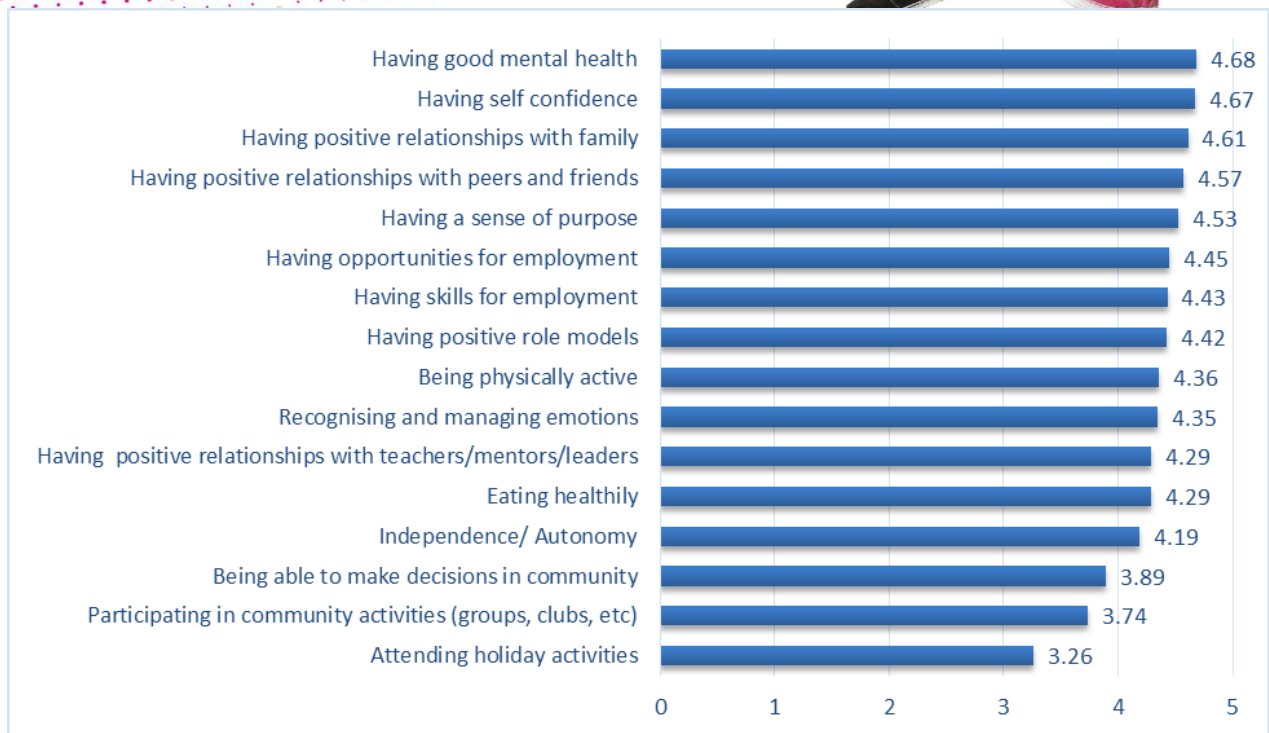
Figure 7– Most important issues for young people as identified by young people

Figure 8 - Respondents top challenges facing young people in Golden Plains

Parents

Parents were also asked to identify the most important issues for young people and also how they felt young people in Golden Plains were faring. Figure 9 and 10 below shows the responses of 42 parents.
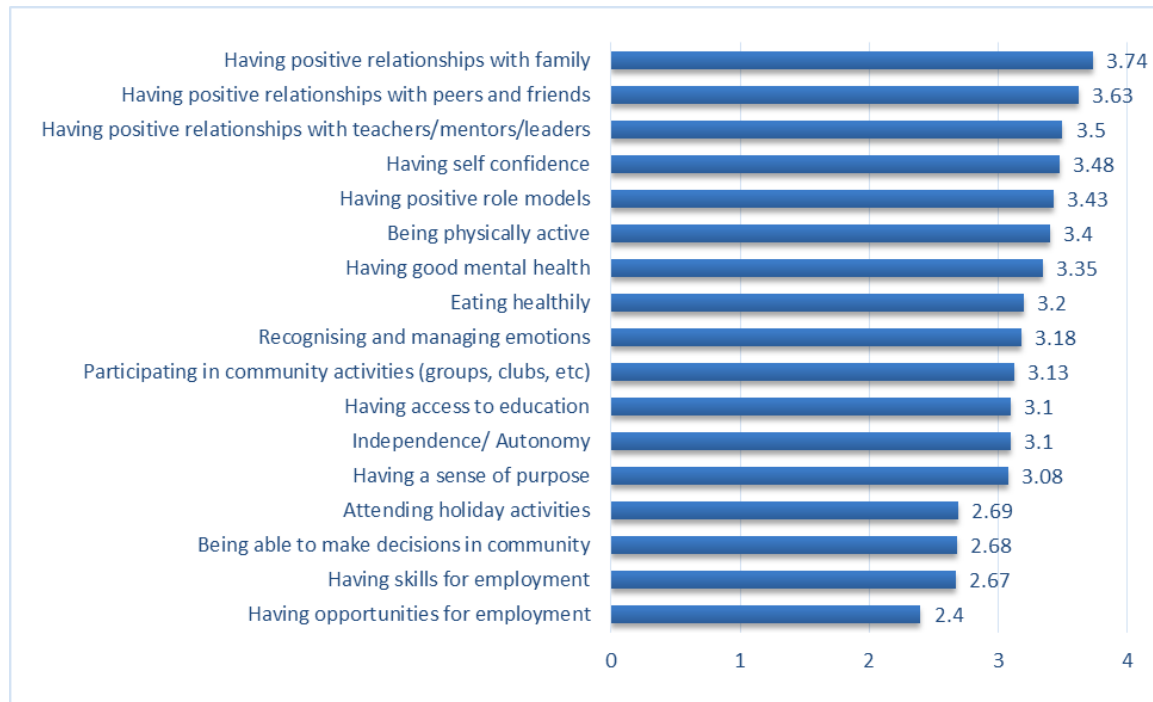
Figure 9 – Most important issues for young people according to Parents (n=42)
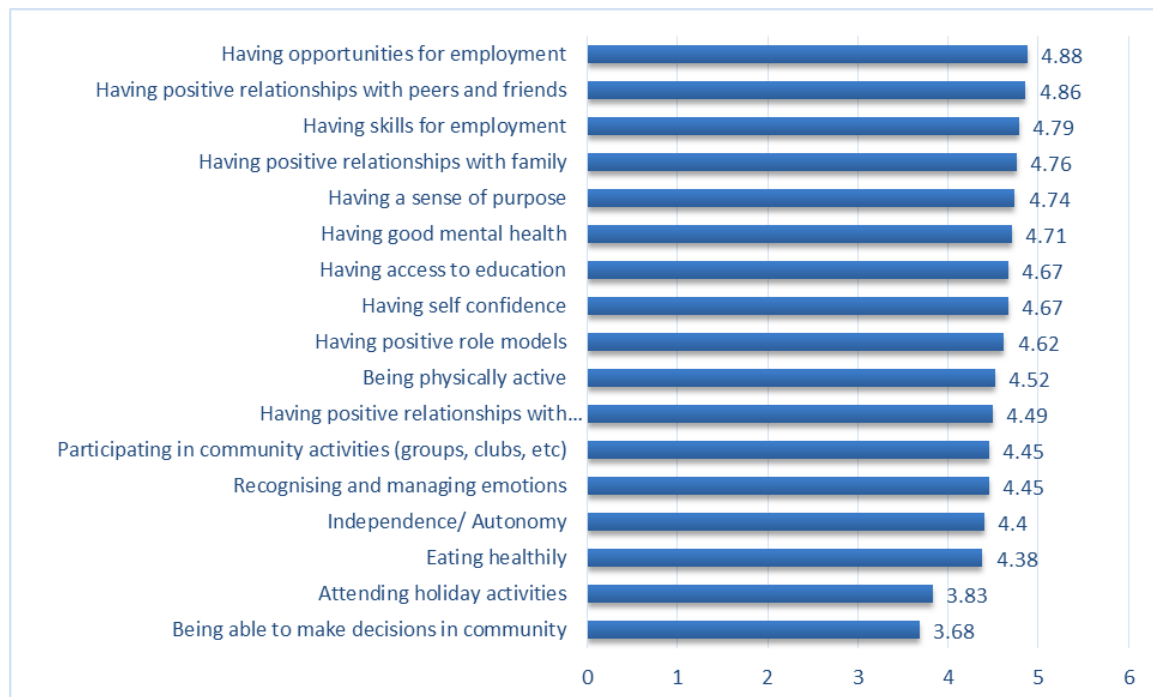
Figure 10 – How parents believe young people in Golden Plains are faring

Community Organisations

Twenty nine representatives from community organisations were also surveyed on what were the most important issues for young people and how the young people were faring. These results are represented below in Figures 11 and 12.

	Value
Having positive relationships with peers and friends	4.9
Having opportunities for employment	4.76
Having skills for employment	4.62
Having good mental health	4.62
Having positive relationships with family	4.59
Having a sense of purpose	4.55
Having positive role models	4.52
Having positive relationships with…	4.52
Independence/ Autonomy	4.52
Having self confidence	4.41
Having access to education	4.39
Being physically active	4.35
Recognising and managing emotions	4.17
Participating in community activities (groups, clubs, etc)	4.14
Eating healthily	4.1
Being able to make decisions in community	3.59
Attending holiday activities	3.38

Figure 11 – What Community Organisations believe are most important for young people (n=29)

Figure 12 - How Community Organisations feel young people are faring (n=27)

Youth Service and Education providers

Youth service and educational providers were also included in the survey and there were fifteen returned and their responses are outlined in Figures 13-16 below.
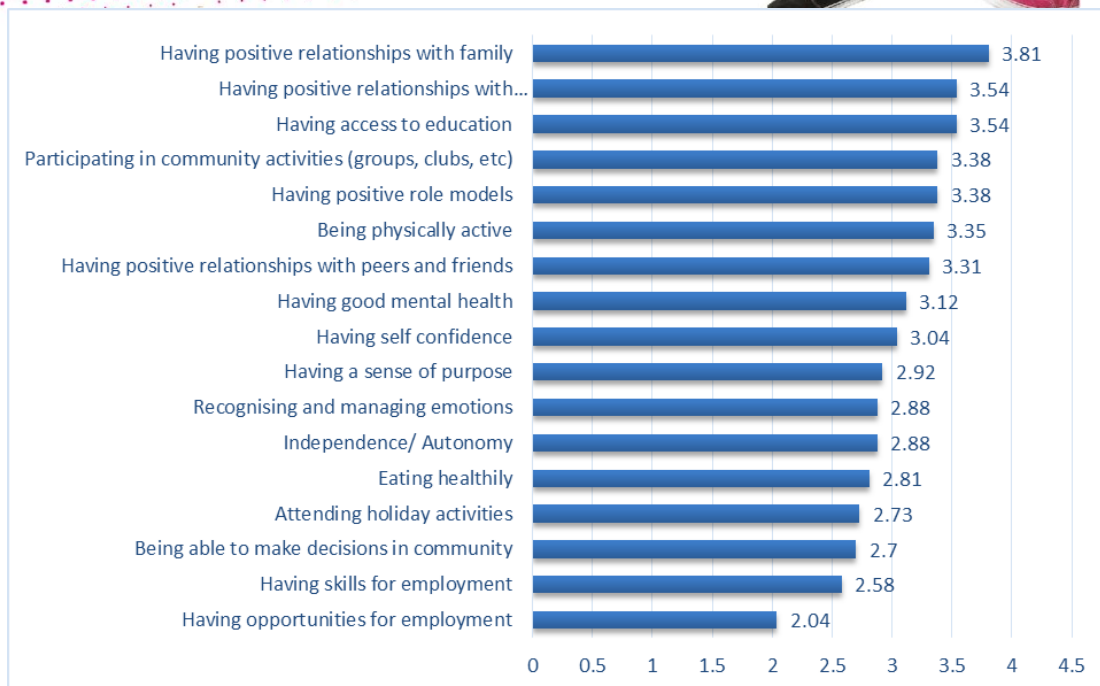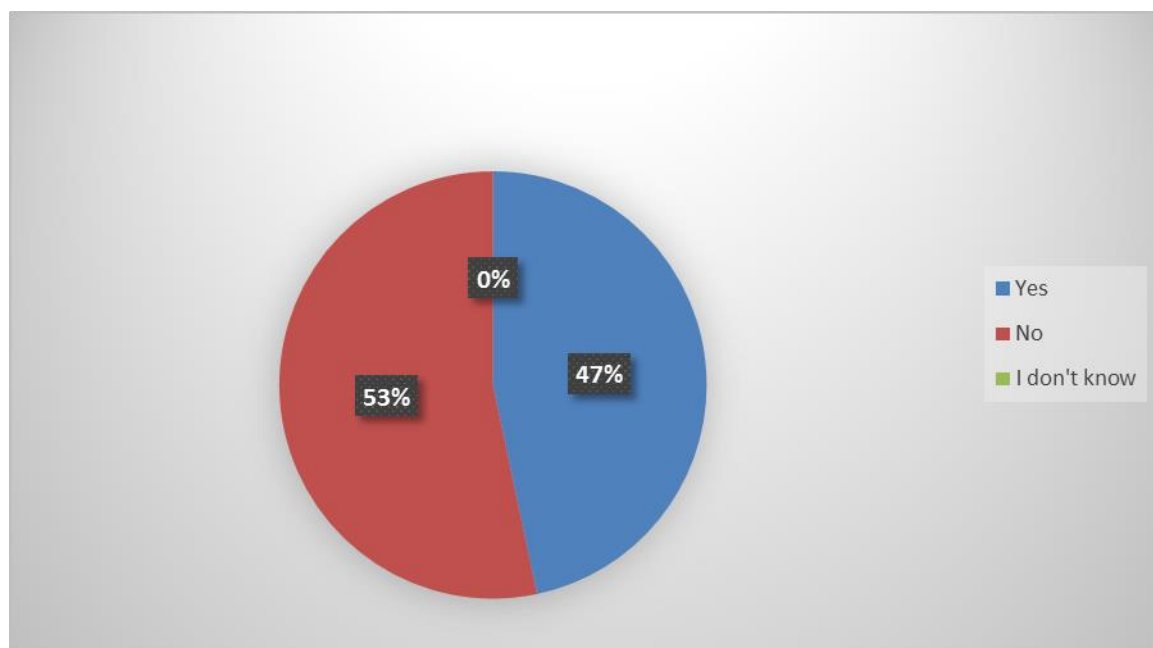
Figure 13 – Agency/service funded to provide services in Golden Plains (n=15)
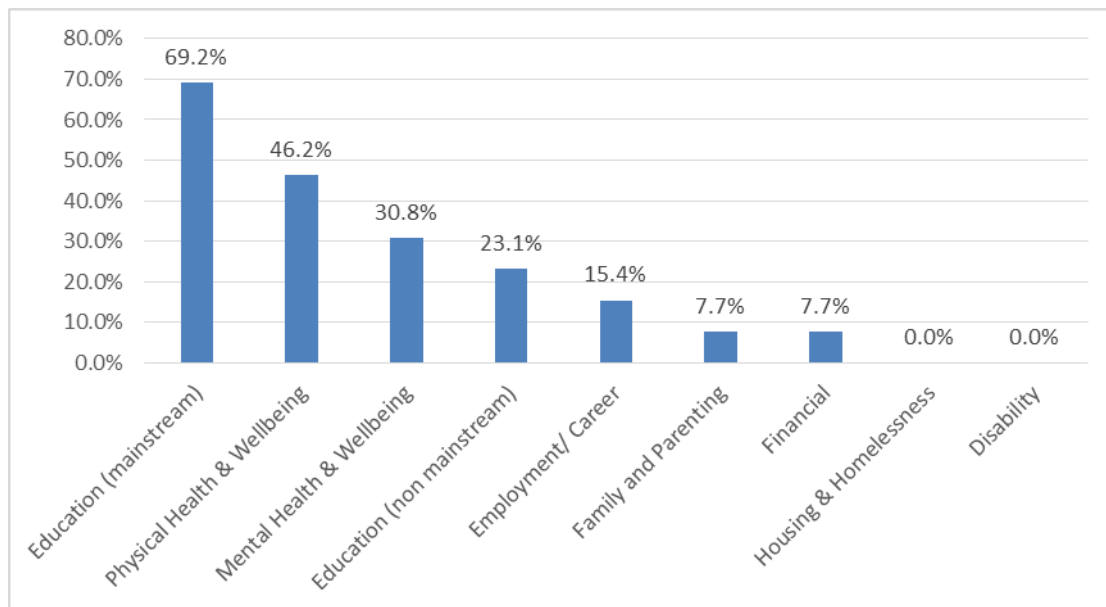
Figure 14 – Type of service or support (n=13)

Bar chart values:
- Education (mainstream): 69.2%
- Physical Health & Wellbeing: 46.2%
- Mental Health & Wellbeing: 30.8%
- Education (non mainstream): 23.1%
- Employment/ Career: 15.4%
- Family and Parenting: 7.7%
- Financial: 7.7%
- Housing & Homelessness: 0.0%
- Disability: 0.0%

Chart items (top to bottom):
- Having good mental health
- Having self confidence
- Having positive relationships with family
- Having positive relationships with peers and friends
- Having a sense of purpose
- Having opportunities for employment
- Having skills for employment
- Having positive role models
- Being physically active
- Recognising and managing emotions
- Having positive relationships with…
- Eating healthily
- Independence/ Autonomy
- Being able to make decisions in community
- Participating in community activities (groups, clubs, etc)
- Attending holiday activities

Figure 15 – What Youth Services & Education Providers believe are most important for young (n=14)

Figure 16 – How Youth Services & Education Providers feel young people are faring (n=14)

2.4 Organisational context

Following is a review of the Golden Plains Shire organisational context. This takes into account relevant Council documents, organisational structure and current youth programs and initiatives.

Council policies and documents

A review of Council policies, plans and strategies is provided in Appendix A.

The review includes the following documents:

▸ Golden Plains Shire 20th Annual Report 2013-2014

▸ Golden Plains Shire Council Plan 2013-2017

▸ Organisational Culture Statement

▸ Golden Plains Shire Youth Development Strategy and Action Plan 2009

▸ Community Development Strategy 2009-2012

▸ Economic Development Strategy 2013-2017

▸ Golden Plains Shire Recreation Strategy Plan 2015-2019

- Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-17
- 2015-2017 Engage! Program Funding Application

Organisational structure

Over the past decade, Golden Plains Shire has engaged over 5,000 young people in their activities and services.[13]

The Golden Plains Shire Youth team adopts a preventative and developmental (as opposed to a service delivery) approach to youth work. This approach views young people within the wider social environment, and aims to mobilise the assets, people and services that already exist in the community to further youth and community development.

The Youth team is positioned within the Community Development group of the Community Services unit. The team consists of a Community Development Team Leader (also responsible for Arts & Culture, Community Development, Community Planning and Community Engagement) and 2 Youth Development Officers. The Youth team have an annual budget for programs of approximately $70,000, of which a large proportion is provided by the Office for Youth.

Funding of youth development

State government funding from the Office for Youth has been the primary funding source of Golden Plains Shire Council's youth development activities. The primary funding programs have been FReeZA and Engage.

2.5 Council's current youth development work

Following is a list of youth programs and initiatives provided by Golden Plains Shire.

Engage! Program

Golden Plains Shire has implemented various youth initiatives through funding received from the state government's Engage! Funding program. Outlined below are some of the key initiatives and programs Council has implemented within its 2012-2014 "Engage!" program:

- Golden Plains Youth Voice 2012-2014
- Transition for Primary to Secondary 2012-2014
- Employment and Career Forums 2012-2014
- Leadership Forums 2012-2014
- Support the involvement of young people in cultural and community activities 2012-2014

In December 2014 it was announced that the Shire had been successful in securing a $120,000 grant over 3 years, through Engage! Office for Youth Funding program. The desired outcome of this program is to "help young people

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to become more actively involved in their local communities and to help them develop a fuller sense of belonging and connectedness to their home towns."[14] Specific activities proposed in this program are outlined in Appendix A.

Golden Plains Youth Voice Committee

Within the GPS Annual Report for 2013-2014 Council highlighted the formation of the first Golden Plains Youth Voice Committee in 2011 as one of the key achievements that had occurred over the preceding 20 year period. This initiative was founded with seven members[15] and as at 2014 Council described this group as consisting "of 10 young people, aged 15-21 years, who discuss local youth issues, represent young people as leaders for their community and develop projects with other young people from across the Golden Plains Shire".[16] Importantly this group provides a platform for young people to be engaged in leadership, skill development and participation in local decision making and community action.

FReeZA

FReeZA is a state wide initiative funded by the Victorian Government's Office for Youth that is an innovative youth development program providing young people with the opportunity to attend affordable and accessible music and cultural events. The initiative is for young people by young people and attracts over 140,000 young people each year to events.[17] Golden Plains Shire's Youth Services run FReeZA events for the Shire, with the first held in 2002 in Bannockburn[18]. Recently (2013-2014), under its Golden Vibes program, Council has held the following FReeZA events (participation numbers are in parentheses):

▶ January to June 2013-School Holiday Movie Day (64); Manga Art Workshop (26); Young and Live (600) [19]

▶ July to December 2013- Dereel Bushfire Recovery Movie Mania (60); Young N Live (2400); Battle of the Bands (110); Live @ Turtle Bend (770); Bannockburn Twilight Fair (600)[20]

▶ January to June 2014- Australia Day Award celebration (100); Twilight Barwon South West Skate League (200); Access All Abilities, Wheelin Around Adaptive Skate Clinic (80); Live and Local- Live Performance at Golden Plains Farmers Market (1200)[21]

▶ July to December 2014- Live at the Golden Plains Farmers Market (1800); FReeZA Push Start Battle of the Bands (140); Live @ TurtleBend (1000); Bannockburn Twilight Festival (500); Creators&Craft (600)[22]

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14 https://www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Golden%20Plains%20Gazette%20December_FINALweb.pdf

15 20th Annual report

16 2015-2017 Engage! Funding Application

17 Youth Central (2015), http://www.freeza.vic.gov.au/ViewPage.action?siteNodeId=1479

18 Golden Plains Shire Annual Report 2013-2014

19 FReeZA 2013-2015 Outcome Report 1 (January 2013- June 2013)

20 FReeZA 2013 – 2015 Outcome Report 2 (July 2013 – December 2013)

21 FReeZA 2013 – 2015 Outcome Report 3 (January 2014 - June 2014)

22 FReeZA 2013 – 2015 Outcome Report 2 (July 2014 – December 2014)

National Youth Week

National Youth Week is held annually and celebrates the achievements of young people. National Youth Week holds events and attracts youth from all over the country who participate and engage both with those in the youth sector and each other under a series of changing themes centred around encouraging participation and engagement, for example: "Get Into It"; "Make a Move"; and "Our Voice. Our Impact". Golden Plains Shire host a number of events annually during National Youth Week.

Golden Youth Awards

One of the event's the Shire's Youth Services[23] hold as part of its National Youth Week activities is the Golden Youth Awards, which recognise young people in sport, arts, community, and health.[24] Beginning in 2013 the awards offer young people the opportunity to be recognised for their diverse range of personal and community contributions they have made to Golden Plains Shire.[25]

Victorian Skate Park Series

The skate park series provides "many developmental opportunities for local young people" and "is the only formal progressive pathway that regularly provides consistent platforms for amateur development". [26]

Barwon South West Skate Park Series

Golden Plains Shire, in conjunction with YMCA Actions Sports Team and Golden Plains FReeZA Youth Development Team organise the twilight Barwon South West Skate Park Series, held at the Bannockburn Skatepark (upgraded in 2014). The event in 2015 was the 2nd annual event and saw a 50% increase in participation from the previous year with over 200 people and 75 competitors in scoot, skate and BMX.[27]

Smythesdale Skate Park Competition

Another skate park competition initiative supported by the YMCA Action Sports Team and the Golden Plains FReeZA Youth Development Team (as well as the Haddon and District Lions Club) was the first twilight Smythesdale Skate Park Competition, held on the 13th March 2015. The event was developed and organised by four local young people. The idea developed from the summer holiday program one-day project which saw 15 young people work with a professional artist to design and paint original street art at the skate park which "created a sense of belonging and ownership for the young people".[28]

Primary to Secondary Transition Project

Council began running the Primary to Secondary transition project in 2006 (also referenced within the 20th Annual Report as a key Council development). The program was created with eight local secondary students and eight local

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23 Golden Plain Shire, 2012-2014 Engage! Program Application for Funding Response to the Assessment Criteria

24https://www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Golden%20Plains%20Gazette%20December_FINALweb.pdf

25 http://www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au/page.aspx?u=1039

26 http://www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au/page.aspx?u=1039

27 http://www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au/page.aspx?u=1039

28 http://www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au/page.aspx?u=1039

university students to assist Grade 6 students' transition from primary to secondary school and was delivered in 10 primary schools.

Youth Art Mentorship

The Art Mentorship program provides opportunities for young people to be 'matched' with an art mentor to create a piece of work to be showcased during Youth Art Month October (YAMO) and was first held in 2007 where it attracted 15 participants.[29]

iVAN

iVAN is a motor vehicle used for youth engagement and events and school holiday activities throughout the Shire.

2.6 Policy environment

The following section reviews the current youth policy environment on a national, state and regional scale.

National

Federal programs and policies, whether delivered via Local and/or State governments, set the national policy direction.

The Foundation for Young Australian's (FYA) key national document Unlimited Potential: a Commitment to Young Australians[30] explores current key issues pertaining to young people within Australia. The document presents a set of four priority areas aimed to generate an intergenerational national conversation about "role and resources needed to enable young people to shape Australia's future". These priority areas aim to increase young Australians engagement through:

1. Equipping young people with new skills to be innovative, creative and enterprising;
2. Developing a strong culture of innovation and entrepreneurship by investing in young Australians;
3. Capitalising on the growth of the Asian economies by encouraging young people to build links with the region; and
4. Supporting young Australians to create change through developing new leaders and building on Australia's culture of contribution and volunteering.

The National Strategy for Young Australians[31] also states as part of their vision for all young people that they need to "engage in community life and influence decisions that affect them", with key extracts from the 'national conversation' including: "Participation, inclusion and having a say on things that affect them is important to young people [and] young people also expressed a desire to be involved in government decision making". The strategy also identifies that young people "want to experience respect in the places they spend time… (that) raised the need for more safe and youth friendly spaces for them" and identified "a lack of positive social experiences outside of school" as an obstacle that prevented community involvement for them.

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[29] https://www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au/page.aspx?u=1171
30 Foundation For Young Australian's (2013) , Unlimited Potential: a Commitment to Young Australians, Foundation For Young Australian's

31 Australian Government (2010),The National Strategy for Young Australians, Australian Government

Mission Australia has conducted an annual youth survey since 2002. It is the largest national online survey which gives young people between the ages of 15-19 the chance to explore issues important to them; their values; where they turn for help; how they participate in community life and how they feel about their future. In 2014 13,600 young people completed the survey and these results inform the agendas of governments, policy makers and the community organisations that service young people.

In recent years, there have also been considerable changes to funding relating to young people. This includes the cessation of Youth Connections funding from 31 December 2014. This has impacted many regional areas where services to support vulnerable and disengaged young people are extremely limited.

State

Over 1 million young people aged between 12 and 25 years old currently live in Victoria. Over 28% of Victoria's young people are living in rural and regional areas. The Victorian Government's vision is that all young Victorians experience healthy, active and fulfilling lives and have the opportunity to achieve their full potential, participate in the workforce and be involved in their community.

Within state policy, the Enterprise Strategy for Young Victorians outlines the importance of supporting young people to start their own enterprises. This policy focuses on creating "a partnership with young people that recognises they have the capability to grow Victoria's social and business enterprises". The document states that "a whole-of community approach is needed to create a culture where young people lead the way in enterprise".

This partnership and community involvement focus is continued in the State Government Youth Statement called Engage Involve Create (2012), where the desired impact is to engage more young people "in employment, education, positive relationships, community decisions and in creating cultural activities, festivals, art, music and enterprise". This impact is achieved when "young people are engaged; young people are involved; and young people can create". By having young people involved, they can "contribute to decision making and the development of policy, programs and initiatives that affect them and their community".

Importantly the Victorian government has outlined it will support youth community participation and involvement in decision making by:

▸ providing mechanisms for them to have a say in policy and program development; and

▸ working in partnership with communities to create opportunities for young people to be engaged and participate.

The Victorian government also provides funding through the Office for Youth to the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic) which is the peak body and leading policy advocate on young people issues in Victoria.

Regional

In 2010, the Victorian Government committed funding of $3.2 million over five years to implement the Youth Action Strategy. The strategy aims to increase the number of young people in rural and regional Victoria who feel connected to their community by strengthening young people's participation in community decision-making. The Youth Action Strategy was re-scoped in August 2012 and renamed the Shape It! Youth Action Strategy. This strategy was aimed at increasing the number of young in rural and regional Victoria who feel connected to their community

and programs being delivered as part of the strategy include: Local Government Youth Inclusion Grants, Change It Up, Shape It! Grants for youth advisory groups, The Exchange website and Rural Youth Services.[32]

The recently elected Victorian Labor Government have also highlighted a number of areas of regional and rural youth policy and strategy as part of their election platform including: health, particularly for young men; access to vocational skills and training; expansion of the Safe Schools program; funding support for regional Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLEN); and youth justice and preventative programs for youth at risk. It can be anticipated that local government will be an important partner in supporting and implementing associated strategies within their own communities including being a conduit for information between service providers and young people.

Local

Locally the Golden Plains Shire Youth Development Unit is well connected to the regional youth agency networks where information sharing, collaboration and professional development occur. A full list of programs and activities provided by Council are listed in the section below.

As outlined earlier there are 11 primary schools and no high school within the Shire that support education of young people. There are no services specifically dedicated to providing services to young people based within the Shire. Instead residents are able to access youth services in Geelong and Ballarat. Youth Services available to young people living in the Golden Plains Shire are available here - https://www.goldenplainsdigital.com.au/directory/youth

The Shire has a large number of community groups that support the positive development of young people. There are too many to list but some include;

- The YMCA in Bannockburn
- The library
- Council's Youth Lounge and IVAN
- A wide range of sporting groups
- Freeza Committee
- Youth Voice

A full list of groups will be available early 2016 here - https://www.goldenplainsdigital.com.au/community-directory

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32 Hobbs (2014) Fact Sheet Program Summary

2.7 Adopting a best practice approach to youth development

Youth development focuses on what is needed for young people to develop the skills and attitudes they need to reach their full potential. It is an approach that builds on young people's strengths, rather than focusing on perceived problems or issues. Youth development is promoted through activities and experiences that help youth develop social, ethical, emotional, physical, and cognitive competencies[33] that in turn support them to make positive choices.

Communities, schools and families all share a responsibility to provide environments that help foster the development of young people. Governments and organisations play an important enabling role. According to the University of Melbourne, Governments and organisations that engage in best practice in youth development are increasingly extending their gaze beyond these particular elements, to recognise the development of the whole person across physical, social, emotional, spiritual and mental dimensions.[34] This whole person approach has been adopted for the current strategy.

A review of best practice literature for youth development has found a number of common elements that should be integrated not only into development of programs and services, but into the culture of governments and organisations.

This review has included the following documents:

▸ Office for Youth (2014) *Youth Development: Applying a Positive Approach,* Government of South Australia.

▸ AusYouth (2001) *Good Practice in Youth Development: A Framework of Principles.*

▸ University of Melbourne *(2011) Generic Youth Development Framework.*

▸ Ministry of Youth Development (2003) *Keepin' It Real*, Government of New Zealand.

These elements of best practice for effective youth development programs are encapsulated in the following table.

Table 10 – Elements of best practice for effective youth development programs

Values	Characteristics	Implications for program delivery
▸ Youth-centred decision making ▸ Building strengths and personal attributes ▸ An inclusive ethos	▸ Encouraging participation and empowerment ▸ Creating a safe environment ▸ Creating positive relationships and mutual respect ▸ Foster personal development ▸ Growing resilience, skills and	▸ Youth involvement in decision making, delivery, monitoring and evaluation ▸ Continuous improvement and reflection factored into to program design ▸ Consistency and coherence in

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[33] http://nasetalliance.org/youthdev/index.htm

[34] http://web.education.unimelb.edu.au/yrc/linked_documents/YDF-Digital_Oct2011.pdf

Values	Characteristics	Implications for program delivery
	attitudes ▸ Appropriateness for age and development phase ▸ Program delivery in a diversity of contexts and places ▸ Program duration and frequency are sufficient to achieve outcomes	program design and delivery ▸ Funding can restrict program reach, consistency, context, duration and frequency ▸ Set goals and celebrate achievements ▸ Build character and identity through experiences, meeting people and respecting ethics and diversity

As noted, best practice for effective youth development has been adopted for the current strategy. This includes integrating the elements of best practice, outlined in Table , into program design. For example, when designing new programs, strong consideration is given to age appropriateness. In line with the whole person approach, this recognises that the development of young people proceeds in stages. Characteristics of the early adolescence (ages 12 to 14) and middle adolescence (ages 15 to 18) are shown in Appendix D.

3. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Council document review

Table 11 – Council documents

Document title	Overview	Implications for young people
Golden Plains Shire 20th Annual Report 2013-2014	This report provides a review of Council's financial performance in the 2013-2014 financial year as well as Council's milestones and accomplishments in the 20 years preceding. Included within the major milestones listed are 11 which are youth focused. Of importance, with the first youth milestone in 2012 (first FReeZA event held) Council noted the "ever increasing proportion of, and focus on, young people".	Council was awarded grants under the Community Grants Program (encompassing $86,445 worth of grants) for many groups which were/are potentially youth affiliated Within the 'selection' of projects outlined that have or will be implemented as part of the external grant received to assist in the delivery of community based projects there is a very strong focus on youth related projects, with the following projects mentioned (project total cost in parentheses): ▸ GPS Youth Connection Project ($90,000) ▸ National Youth Week ($4,000) ▸ Youth Participation and Access ($40,000) ▸ Freeza Project 2013-2014 ($24,500) ▸ Plus sports initiatives/projects including Bannockburn Skate Park ($200,000) ▸ Grants identified for youth related projects and development included: ▸ non recurrent grant(s) for 'youth projects' of $102,000 in 2014 and $67,000 in 2013 ▸ 'youth development' grants not expended at balance date (in the specified manner) of $11,000 in 2013 and $45,000 in 2014 ▸ 'youth development' grants that were revenue in previous years but expended in 2013-2014 of $11,000 for both 2013 and 2014
Golden Plains Shire Council Plan 2013-2017	This document outlines the strategic direction of Golden Plains Shire Council including Council's vision, mission and values, and will guide and inform Council's decision making from 2013 to 2017. This document, which identifies 'youth' as being nested under Community Development group of the Community Services unit, outlines four values (integrity in leadership, equity and access, commitment, community and innovation) and provides guidance around nine key result areas.	▸ The plan aims for all citizens to have fair access to a range of facilities and services" ▸ 'youth' are singled out to be of particular importance and a key strategic indicator is identified as an "Increase in the number of young people engaged in community activities."[35]
Organisational Culture Statement	In line with the Council Plan, Golden Plains Shire's Organisational Culture Statement is based on five cultural principles: Integrity; Equity and Access;	▸ within its mission and other key policy documents the 'equity and access' approach can be seen to positively single youth out as a subsector which

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35 Golden Plains Shire Council (2013), Golden Plains Shire Council Plan 2013-2017

Document title	Overview	Implications for young people
	Innovation; Commitment; and Community.	▶ needs particular attention; ▶ 'innovation' can be linked to a willingness to try new approaches in youth development and policy (which is important as the issues facing youth are constantly changing); and ▶ 'community' – results in a whole of community approach where youth are supported to be active community members
Golden Plains Shire Youth Development Strategy and Action Plan 2009	The Youth Development Strategy and Action Plan 2009 was the result of an extensive review of literature and consultation (including interviews and/or workshops) with young people, service providers, schools, Councillors, Council staff, project's reference group and focus groups conducted over a six month period in 2009. It provides a guide for Council decision making on the following three areas: ▶ Federal and state youth development policies and priorities ▶ How Council can promote and foster the wellbeing of young people ▶ The challenges experienced by young people who live in Golden Plains[36]	▶ Of the 51 actions proposed in this strategy, 11 were completed, 17 were partially completed and 23 were not completed. ▶ One of the more significant outcomes of the previous strategy was the development of a Youth Inclusive Framework. This framework was developed to assist Councillors and Council Departments to include young people in all decision making. As noted, this initiative aligns heavily with youth development policy and should be emphasised in the current strategy.
Community Development Strategy 2009-2012	The strategy outlines a series of community development and planning principles and objectives.	▶ There is no major township in Golden Plains that provides services and community activities for the whole shire which is identified as a "major challenge" ▶ Residents are dragged away from their local communities by Ballarat and Geelong (at either end of the Shire) for services, employment, education and entertainment ▶ The population is growing rapidly, yet many isolated population 'centres' are dispersed
Economic Development Strategy 2013-2017	The Economic Development Strategy aimed to support local business, attract investment and grow the local economy from 2013 to 2017. The strategy focuses on three key areas: connecting the economy; facilitating business and investment; and enhancing liveability.	▶ Issues associated with the increasing number of youth as a key driver behind the initiative of improving transport connections; ▶ K-12 school and education facilities in Bannockburn identified as a major project to advocate state/federal government for investment; ▶ Lack of employment and services in a rapidly growing community identified as a current issue; and ▶ Development of education services identified as a key initiative for enhancing liveability and a priority economic project in the Shire.
Golden Plains Shire Recreation Strategy Plan 2015-2019	This plan presents a summary of the findings and recreation strategy outlining the key directions and priorities for recreation provision within the Shire and the	▶ "Recreation programming for the elderly and youth" was a significant shire-wide recommendation that had not been acted on from the previous 2008

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36 Golden Plains Shire Council (2013), Golden Plains Shire Council Plan 2013-2017

Document title	Overview	Implications for young people
	actions it will take during the period 2015-2019 to implement these directions and priorities.[37] It encompasses a review of relevant literature, analysis of demographic and recreation trends, assessment of the previous recreation program, service and facility provision and an extensive consultation process with key stakeholders to produce four key aims across eight interrelated stages of development.	strategy; ▶ High priority should be given to encouraging greater participation by Golden Plains' residents (and in particular youth) in all forms of recreation activity; and ▶ Interest in some sporting activities that are generally specific to youth has grown for example skate boarding and BMX riding; and school and community soccer.
Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-17	Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan known as 'Healthy People, Healthy Places' sets out the high level policy directions for the future. The document focuses on seven priority areas.	▶ The need to provide programs, in partnership with service providers, which support the community to be physically active; ▶ The plan notes that the Youth Development Strategy is a key strategy for the following "strategic approaches" of what council will implement over a four year period: ▶ "Planning for future infrastructure and service needs" ▶ "Contribute to the health and wellbeing of community through responsive service provision."38 ▶ Growth in the youth population is cited as a driver to improve transport connections, especially regional links to Geelong and Ballarat; and ▶ Improving the provision of secondary education options within Shire is also identified as an action39.
2015-2017 Engage! Program Funding Application	Council's application for funding for 2015-2017 Engage! Program outlines the proposed Inspire the Plains program. The program aims to run initiatives that encourage inclusion and connectedness for young people to their towns and communities.	Specific activities proposed in the application include: ▶ Golden Plains Youth Voice (community engagement) ▶ Volunteering – A valuable contributing member (community engagement) ▶ Youth involvement in development of Council's Youth Development Strategy (community engagement) ▶ Cultural awareness initiative (skills development – leadership) ▶ Training for the future – Short courses (skills development – real life) ▶ Transition from Primary to Secondary program (skills development – community education) ▶ Employment and Career Forum (skills development – community education)

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37 Golden Plains Shire Recreation Strategy Plan 2014 Summary of Findings and Recreation Strategy

38 Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-17

39 Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-17

Document title	Overview	Implications for young people
		▸ Leadership forum (skills development – leadership)
		▸ Health Support Group (social connection)
		▸ Youth Voice Initiated Community Events and Projects (social connection)
		▸ School Holiday Activities (social connection)
		▸ Community Information Sessions (social connection – community involvement)
		▸ Art Mentorships (social connection – skills development

Appendix B: List of Golden Plains Shire postcodes

Table 12 shows the official list of Golden Plains Shire localities and postcodes used to generate school enrolment data from the DEECD database. Note that some postcodes extend beyond the boundaries of the Golden Plains LGA, impacting the specificity of the data.

Table 12 – Golden Plains Shire localities and postcodes

Locality	Postcode	Locality	Postcode
ANAKIE	3213	MOUNT BUTE	3324
BAMGANIE	3333	MOUNT MERCER	3352
BANNOCKBURN	3331	MURGHEBOLUC	3218
BARUNAH PARK	3329	NAPOLEONS	3352
BATESFORD	3213	NEWTOWN	3351
BERRINGA	3351	NINTINGBOOL	3351
BERRYBANK	3323	PIGGOREET	3351
CAMBRIAN HILL	3352	PITFIELD	3351
CAPE CLEAR	3351	PITTONG	3360
CORINDHAP	3352	ROKEWOOD	3330
CRESSY	3322	ROKEWOOD JUNCTION	3351
DEREEL	3352	ROSS CREEK	3351
DURDIDWARRAH	3342	RUSSELLS BRIDGE	3331
DURHAM LEAD	3352	SCARSDALE	3351
ENFIELD	3352	SHE OAKS	3331
GARIBALDI	3352	SHELFORD	3329
GHERINGHAP	3331	SMYTHES CREEK	3351
GRENVILLE	3352	SMYTHESDALE	3351
HADDON	3351	SPRINGDALLAH	3351
HAPPY VALLEY	3360	STAFFORDSHIRE REEF	3351
HESSE	3321	STEIGLITZ	3331
ILLABAROOK	3351	STONEHAVEN	3218
INVERLEIGH	3321	SUTHERLANDS CREEK	3331
LETHBRIDGE	3332	TEESDALE	3328
LINTON	3360	WALLINDUC	3351
MANNIBADAR	3360	WERNETH	3352
MAUDE	3331	WILLOWVALE	3360
MEREDITH	3333	WINGEEL	3321
MORRISONS	3334		

Appendix C: Primary school interviews

Table 13 Primary school interview information

School name	Interviewee	Results[40]	Public / Private	Comments from school contact
Bannockburn Primary School	Mandy Jervees	Clonard College Covenant College North Geelong Secondary College Sacred Heart Girls' College St. Ignatius College St. Joseph's College Western Heights College	Private Private Public Private Private Private Public	▶ Indicated that there has been a rise in private school education in the past couple of years.
Cape Clear Primary School	Tony Dillon	Mt. Clear Secondary College Phoenix P-12 Beaufort Secondary College	Public Public Public	▶ There hasn't been a move to private education. ▶ Beaufort Secondary College is not as popular a choice as the other two schools mentioned.
Haddon Primary School	Lisa Simpson	Ballarat High School Damascus College Phoenix P-12	Public Private Public	▶ Even spread of public and private education in the last few years.
Inverleigh Primary School	Ann Cunningham	Clonard College Kardinia International College Geelong Christian College Matthew Flinders Girls Secondary College North Geelong Secondary College Western Heights College	Private Private Private Private Public Public	▶ North Geelong Secondary College has been a very popular choice in the last couple of years. Mostly because of upgrades to their programs and presence of locals within the school. ▶ Western Heights College popularity has declined as North Geelong Secondary has gained the majority of students.
Lethbridge Primary School	Tina Barnett	North Geelong Secondary College St. Joseph's College Western Heights College	Public Private Public	▶ Slight move towards private education.
Linton Primary School	Ian Forrester	Mt. Clear Secondary College Phoenix P-12	Public Private	▶ Low student numbers, so those are the only two choices their students pursue.
Meredith Primary School	Christian Brown	Damascus College Kardinia International College Mt. Clear Secondary College St. Joseph's College Western Heights College	Private Private Public Private Public	▶ Because of their location, students are able to choose either from Geelong or Ballarat Secondary Schools.
Napoleons Primary School	Trevor Edwards	Damascus College Mt. Clear Secondary College Phoenix P-12	Private Public Public	▶ There has been an even spread of public and private education in the last few years.

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[40] Listed in alphabetical order

School name	Interviewee	Results[40]	Public / Private	Comments from school contact
Shelford Primary School	Richard Wallis	Covenant College Geelong Christian College North Geelong Secondary College	Private Private Public	
Teesdale Primary School	Renee Fatone	Clonard College North Geelong Secondary College Sacred Heart Girls' College St. Joseph's College	Private Public Private Private	▸ There has been a definite preference for private education in recent years.
Woady Yaloak Primary School – Smythesdale Campus	Sharon Nunn	Damascus College Mt. Clear Secondary College Phoenix P-12	Private Public Public	
Woady Yaloak Primary School – Scarsdale Campus	David Young	Mt. Clear Secondary College Phoenix P-12 Ballarat High School	Public Public Public	▸ Ballarat High School not a common as the other two schools mentioned.
Woady Yaloak Primary School – Ross Creek Campus	David Young	Damascus College Mt. Clear Secondary College Phoenix P-12	Private Public Public	
Woady Yaloak Primary School – Snake Valley Campus	David Young	Beaufort Secondary College Mt. Clear Secondary College Phoenix P-12	Public Public Public	

Appendix D: Understanding and working with youth

Table 14 – Early adolescence (Ages 12-14)

Characteristics of Age Group	Implications and Applications
Are concerned about physical development, being liked by friends, social graces, and good grooming (even though they don't like to admit it).	Encourage learning experiences related to understanding oneself and getting along with others. Be willing to talk about physical changes.
Change at different rates, according to highly individual "clocks." Can be painfully self-conscious and critical. Are vulnerable to bouts of low self-esteem.	They need many varied opportunities to achieve and to have their competence recognized by others.
Are self-conscious with many needing help to overcome inferiority complexes.	Concentrate on developing individual skills.
Have intense feelings related to sex. Keen interest in their own bodies, especially sex and sex processes	Prepare opportunities to help youth discuss body development as a natural and normal process. Provide the opportunity for discussion of human sexuality to ease anxiety associated with a developing body.
Experience emotions that are on a roller coaster ride. Change in hormones and changes in thinking contribute to the mood swings.	Accept the feelings that they have. Remember that early adolescents are known for their drama, and their feelings may seem extreme at times.
Desire a sense of independence, yet they want and need their parents' help.	Encourage youth to work with adults and older teens to complete learning experiences and apprenticing.
Like fan clubs. Many have older or adult idols.	Encourage youth to work with or apprentice to older teens and adults
Still depend on parental guidelines	Involve youth in deciding on own group rules. Give them parameters to follow
Are beginning to question authority and values of parents.	Be willing to spend time to discuss values and morals.
Peer pressure mounts, first from same sex, then from opposite sex.	Use peer pressure as a positive influence. Use the group to influence non-participation. Have the group give encouragement to individuals.
Are interested in activities involving boys and girls.	Encourage learning experiences involving boys and girls.
Are interested in sports and active games.	Encourage active, fun-learning experiences.
Are ready for in-depth, longer learning experiences.	Encourage deeper exploration of leadership roles; encourage more detailed recordkeeping of leadership experiences.
Can take responsibility in planning and evaluating their own work.	Allow members to plan activities. Expect follow through. Help them evaluate the outcome. Let members have responsibility for group activity.
Can plan their own social and recreational activities.	Form planning committees to plan parties and other social activities. Give experience in working in groups.
May avoid difficult tasks.	Help youth choose tasks at which they can succeed. Encourage them to participate in all tasks. Assist youth in eliminating their fears. Help them succeed in solving and participating in difficult tasks.
Want to get outside of their own community to explore.	Provide learning experiences outside of the community.
Are getting over the age of fantasy. Beginning to think of what they will do when they grow up, but are often unclear of needs and values.	Relate life skills to career choices.
Gain skills in social relations with peers and adults.	Provide opportunities for interaction with peers and adults. Provide activities that would foster social interaction.

Table 15 – Middle adolescence (Ages 15-18)

Characteristic of Age Group	Group Implications and Applications
Have high social needs and desires.	Put more emphasis on personal development (mental and social) wherever possible.
Want and need a strong voice in planning own programs.	Provide suggestions and several alternatives rather than detailed instructions.
Need freedom from parental control to make decisions.	Make youth aware that in these situations they are making decisions for themselves or a group like themselves.
Want adult leadership roles.	Emphasize guidance and counselling from adult leaders rather than directions. Recommend liberal use of discussion method.
Quite interested in coeducational activities.	Plan coeducational and group-oriented projects or activities.
Strong desire for status in peer group.	Make sure youth are encouraged by peers. Help establish a climate that is conducive to encouragement.
Are restricting areas of interest; patterns of interest becoming more definite.	Projects can have considerably more depth. May need to suggest related areas to give youth a broader outlook.
Reach high levels of abstract thinking and problem solving. Can choose purposes, make plans, carry them out, and evaluate the results.	Put youth into real life problem-solving situations. Allow them to fully discover ideas, make decisions, and evaluate the outcomes.
Have widespread feelings of inferiority and inadequacy.	Counter the feelings of inferiority and inadequacy by encouraging youth and helping them to see their positive worth.
Are beginning to know self as individual. Personal philosophy begins to emerge.	Allow time for youth to explore and express their own philosophies. Use activities that have them search for experiences that will allow them to identify their philosophies.
Are developing community consciousness.	Recommend civic projects that are a service to others.
Are developing a growing concern for the wellbeing and progress of other individuals and groups.	Encourage interest in and discussion of community and world problems in which they express concern.
Need life planning guidance.	Include activities and information regarding life planning.
Are beginning to think of leaving home for college, employment, marriage, etc.	Put emphasis on consumer and financial management.
Many will leave the community for employment, and many who go to college will not return to their present communities after graduation.	Need to introduce youth to other settings through tours and trips to state and interstate conferences.
Are interested in travel and adventure.	For incentives, provide trips, rather than medals and ribbons.

![Golden Plains Shire logo]

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Linton

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