

Regional NSW Youth Action Plan

Empowering youth in regional NSW



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Minister's foreword



Bronnie Taylor

Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Regional Youth
Minister for Women

Regional Youth Action Plan

Regional NSW holds a special place in the hearts of the people of NSW. Our regions provide the food, fibre and energy we rely on. For thousands, our regions are a much loved holiday destination or weekend getaway. Some of us are fortunate enough to call these communities home. They are the home towns we were born in, we learnt our values in, we went to school in and raised families of our own.

Many of our regions are losing the very young people we need to sustain them and the challenges our regional youth face are different to those in urban areas. Skills training or tertiary education is often hours away, connecting to services is more difficult, unemployment is higher, there are fewer mental health services, and there is not always place for young people to connect with friends or feel like they belong.

We have recognised and acknowledged these gaps and I am proud to present the NSW Government's Regional Youth Framework and associated Action Plan which outlines how we will strategically address them. Our Framework identified four priority areas;

Work Ready: Young people have the opportunity to learn, work and achieve in regional NSW

Wellbeing: Young people are mentally and physically healthy, safe and thrive in their communities

Connectivity: Young people have transport and digital connectivity solutions to access training, work, services and recreational activities

Community: Young people are given the opportunities to explore their creativity, collaborate with others, develop a sense of achievement and feel socially and culturally connected to, and included in, their communities

With these pillars at the forefront, our Action Plan will put tangible projects and programs in place to ensure young people have every opportunity to live, work and thrive in regional NSW.

There are programs working to meet these needs but we can and must do better. As our Action Plan develops, it will assess current initiatives to see how we can improve and make a real change to the lives of our regional young people. The Office for Regional Youth will be working across Government agencies and with local organisations to make sure there is a coordinated approach so that no young person is left struggling to navigate their way through the system that was designed to help them.

Building healthier social and economic outcomes for young people in regional NSW is a critical and ongoing task. I will be excited to see where the Action Plan takes us and the possibilities we can create for a brighter future for young people in our regional communities.

Because our regional youth deserve it and our communities need them.

Action Plan

With input from local and regional consultation, we have developed an Action Plan to implement the NSW Regional Youth Framework so that initiatives have specific and tangible outcomes.

A partnership approach will ensure local and regional ownership of initiatives. Partners will include young people, communities, community groups and organisations, local government, service providers, non-government organisations, other NSW agencies and the Australian Government.

The Action Plan includes both state-wide and local actions, with a strong emphasis on consultation with young people during development. Actions will address each priority, ensuring we are working with young people to design evidence-based and innovative solutions.

The Action Plan will be monitored, and its outcomes reported on and fed back into the plan to ensure we are on track to success and able to adapt where needed.

Current NSW Programs and Services

- The NSW Government has a range of initiatives underway to support young people in regional NSW including:
- \$50 million from the Stronger Country Communities Fund for youth programs and infrastructure
- \$61.7 million for eight additional Connected Learning Centres to help young people in regional areas attend TAFE
- \$8 million for five new Country University Centres, with locations announced for Grafton, Griffith, Leeton, Narrabri and Moree to reduce geographical barriers to attending university
- 100,000 fee-free apprenticeships to increase apprenticeship participation
- Additional funding for the Wellbeing Health In-Reach Nurse Coordinators to provide support and referral for young people in schools in three new regional locations of Deniliquin, Lithgow and Murwillumbah
- \$34 million in capital expenditure over two years to establish a pilot program for two senior secondary vocational schools, including one on the North Coast to support young people to build skills and get into a trade.
- Regional Industry Education Partnerships to coordinate employment opportunities between industry and schools
- \$88 million for additional school counsellors, psychologists and student support officers in high schools across NSW
- \$87 million for the Suicide Prevention Framework, where young people and regionally-based people are priority groups.
- \$1.7 billion has been committed to grow local economies outside of Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong through the Regional Growth Fund.
- \$4.2 billion has been committed through the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund for transformative infrastructure in projects in digital connectivity, water security, investment attraction, and rail and road transport.

What young people told us

When young people in regional NSW told us their priorities, four common themes emerged as things they wanted. These themes related to jobs and pathways to employment, physical and mental health, digital and physical connection and, things to do and places to go. Those themes have become the following four pillars of this Framework:



Each pillar is vital to addressing the needs of young people in regional NSW and receives specific focus in this framework. In practice, the pillars are interconnected and work together to achieve our vision of young people learning, working and thriving in regional NSW.

Key pillars

1. Work ready Prepared for regional jobs of the future	2. Wellbeing Mentally and physically healthy	3. Connectivity Able to access services and opportunities easily	4. Community Connected and valued by their community
<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Young people have better access to great education and training opportunities 1.2 Young people have improved skills and knowledge to navigate the pathways into careers 1.3 Young people have clearer options to take them from school to training, work and further education opportunities 1.4 Disadvantaged or at-risk young people are better supported to learn and achieve 1.5 Young people have increased understanding of the workforce 	<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Young people and their families are supported to improve wellbeing 2.2 Increasing young people’s understanding of their health needs and navigate the health system 2.3 Young people have access to culturally and youth-appropriate services 2.4 Increasing the number of young people who can get help, wherever and however they choose to seek it 	<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Young people have increased access to safe private transport 3.2 Young people have increased access to safe public transport to the places they need to go 3.3 Young people are able to access services without traveling long distances 3.4 Young people have the skills to navigate and use information and systems 	<p>Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Young people are provided the opportunity to shape their communities 4.2 Young people have increased access to a variety of youth-appropriate activities 4.3 Young people feel safe in, connected to, and valued by their communities and connected to their culture.

Initiatives



1. Work ready

Young people have the opportunity to learn, work and achieve in regional NSW.

Initiative	Priority	Description	Location	Timeframe	Lead Agency
Arts and Cultural Funding Program: Project Grants	1.3, 4.1, 4.3	Grants that support regional young professional artists to engage in professional creative arts practice, professional development, production, and exhibition of works.	State-wide	Long Term	Create NSW
Regional Creative Leadership Program	1.2	Supports regional young people (18-24 years old) to develop creative leadership capacity. These grants provide opportunities for young leaders to develop new networks and experience professional arts practice that will inform and support their future creative careers. \$10,000 grants over two years for up to 20 creative young leaders in NSW.	State-wide	Medium Term	Create NSW
Communities and Justice Scholarship Program	1.4	Scholarships to young people living in social housing to assist with educational and support related expenses and help students enrolled in education and training to complete their studies.	State-wide	Medium Term	Department of Communities and Justice
Homeless Youth Assistance Program (HYAP)	1.4	Supports young people aged 12-15 years who are experiencing homelessness to reunite with their families or transition to longer term stable accommodation. HYAP seeks to support young people sleeping rough, living in unstable environments, those staying in homelessness shelters, and those who are staying temporarily at the homes of friends, relatives or acquaintances. The Land and Housing Corporation is supporting this initiative by supplying social housing in regional areas. LAHC also supports training and apprenticeships for young people as part of its development programs.	State-wide	Long Term	Department of Communities and Justice
Out-of-Home Care Pathways Scholarship	1.4	Scholarships available to young people who have been in foster or kinship care to assist with undertaking an undergraduate degree. Students attending Western Sydney University.	State-wide	Long Term	Department of Communities and Justice
Premiers Youth Initiative (PYI)	1.4	Targets young people leaving Out of Home Care who are at risk of experiencing homelessness, providing a combination of personal advice, education, employment mentoring, transitional support and accommodation.	State-wide	Medium Term	Department of Communities and Justice

1. Work ready



Young people have the opportunity to learn, work and achieve in regional NSW.

Rent Choice Youth	1.5	Provides private rental assistance and support for young people aged 16-24 for up to 3 years. Available state-wide with the exception of the Department of Communities and Justice's Far West Region. Fair Trading NSW can support the initiatives for regional youth by sharing information on rental tenancy rights and consumer rights, for example obtaining a mobile phone to enable connection and being aware of rights as a consumer in this arrangement.	State-wide	Long Term	Department of Communities and Justice
Teenage Education Payment	1.4	The Payment recognises the crucial role carers play in encouraging and supporting the young people in their care, and the importance of education and training in securing a positive future. The Payment is an annual amount of \$6,000 paid in instalments of \$1,500 at the start of each term to eligible carers to help keep 16 and 17 year olds in education or training.	State-wide	Long Term	Department of Communities and Justice
Youth on Track	1.4	An early intervention scheme which provides case management and behaviour and family interventions to young people who are at risk of long-term involvement in the criminal justice system. Delivered to 10-17 year olds who have had at least one formal contact with police in the Hunter, Mid North Coast, Coffs Clarence, New England, Central West and Riverina. **Also in Blacktown.	Hunter, Mid North Coast, Coffs Clarence, New England, Central West and Riverina	Medium Term	Department of Communities and Justice
Educational Pathways Pilot	1.1, 1.4	Public school secondary students have access to career advice and about finding a suitable pathway into the next stage for their lives. The initiative aims to support students through vocational education study or higher educational pathways. North Coast: Grafton HS, Grafton South HS, Woolgoogla HS, Maclean HS, Mullumbimby HS, Murwillumbah HS, Alstonville HS, Ballina Coast HS, Wollumbin HS. South West Sydney schools: Airds HS, Campbelltown Performing Arts HS, Eaglevale HS, Thomas Reddall HS, Ashcroft HS, James Busby HS.	North Coast Region	Medium Term	Department of Education
Work Experience Program	1.2	Public school secondary students have access to work experience from Year 9. In 2018 36,000 government students participated in work experience. In 2019 36,000 government students participated in work experience.	State-wide	Long Term	Department of Education

1. Work ready



Young people have the opportunity to learn, work and achieve in regional NSW.

Work Place Learning Initiative	1.4	<p>Public school secondary students have access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specialist transition advisors to develop individual transition plans • Work education and work studies syllabus Vocational education and training courses, including mandatory work placement. • School based apprenticeships and traineeships. <p>Work Education delivered in 76 public secondary schools in 2019. 140 participants attended professional learning to deliver work education in 2020. 2019 approximately 45,000 students are studying VET courses. More than 45,000 students completed a work placement for their VET course. 2,500 undertook an School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship (SBAT) in 2019.</p>	State-wide	Long Term	Department of Education
Apprenticeships and Traineeships	1.1	<p>Under the NSW Government Fee Free Apprenticeship Initiative, NSW apprentices that commence their training on or after 1 July 2018 may be eligible for fee free training. For eligible apprentices there will be no requirement to pay the fee. Under the NSW Government Fee Free Traineeship Initiative, NSW trainees that commence their training on or after 1 January 2020 may be eligible for fee free training. For eligible trainees there will be no requirement to pay the fee.</p>	State-wide	Long Term	Training Services NSW
Opportunity Hubs	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4	<p>Opportunity Hubs aim to provide Aboriginal young people with the confidence and knowledge to follow a supported pathway between secondary school and further education and/or employment. To achieve this outcome, Opportunity Hubs are building partnerships between schools, employers, education and training providers and the local community to coordinate and match employment, training and further education opportunities to individual students' aspirations. Non-government Opportunity Hub service providers have been contracted to coordinate and broker links with schools, employers, training providers, support services and Aboriginal communities, to deliver improved outcomes for Aboriginal young people, including increased: Participation and retention at school; Aspiration and expectation of career pathways for Aboriginal students; Post-school enrolment in further education and training; and Placement in sustainable jobs.</p>	Dubbo (Far West Region), Tamworth (New England & Northwest Region), Upper Hunter (Hunter Region)	Long Term	Training Services NSW

1. Work ready



Young people have the opportunity to learn, work and achieve in regional NSW.

Regional Industry Education Partnership (RIEP)	1.1, 1.2	The purpose of RIEP is to provide secondary students with industry-validated career information to help them plan their career pathways while at school.	State-wide	Medium Term	Training Services NSW
Regional VET Pathways (RVP)	1.1	The Government's Regional Vocational Education and Training (VET) Pathways initiative supports 15-19 year olds not in study or in a job to find pathways into education, training and work. The initiative offers services to re-engage young people and help them pursue careers. Program available from Feb 2016 - June 2020 in Richmond, Tweed, Mid North Coast, Capital region, Central West region, New England North West region.	North Coast Region	Long Term	Training Services NSW
The Way Ahead for Aboriginal People (TWAAP) Program	1.4	The Way Ahead for Aboriginal People provides mentoring services for Aboriginal apprentices and trainees who need additional support in the workplace. Mentors are chosen because of their experience and acceptance within Aboriginal communities.	State-wide	Long Term	Training Services NSW
School Student Transport Scheme (SSTS) and the School Drive Subsidy (SDS)	1.1	The School Student Transport Scheme (SSTS) provides eligible school students with free or subsidised travel from home to school. It is a state-wide program. The School Drive Subsidy (SDS) is administered by Transport for NSW and is available to NSW residents in areas where there is no public transport, to drive an eligible student all or part of the way to school. The subsidy is only intended to partly offset the cost of using a private vehicle to drive the eligible student and is not intended to cover all costs. The subsidy is for driving school students to school or to the nearest transport pick up point, by car, motorcycle or boat.	State-wide	Long Term	Transport for NSW
Premier's Priority to deliver a world class Public Service	1.4	Strengthening initiatives targeted at young people with a disability, ensuring 5.6 per cent of government sector roles are held by people with a disability.	State-wide	Long Term	Public Service Commission

2. Wellbeing



Young people have the opportunity to learn, work and achieve in regional NSW.

Initiative	Priority	Description	Location	Timeframe	Lead Agency
Creative Kids Program	2.1, 4.2	Supports opportunities for regional children to participate in creative arts making programs by providing families with \$100 vouchers, which are redeemable at accredited arts providers across Regional NSW.	State-wide	Medium Term	Create NSW
Coonamble Integrated Service Delivery project	2.1, 2.2, 2.4	This project aim is to create new ways for the government, NGOS and community to work together leveraging local governance structures and existing initiatives. The approach is to integrate - make better use of existing resources through coordination and innovative.	Coonamble	Short Term	Department of Communities and Justice
Out of Home Care (OOHC) Joint Protocol	2.4	<p>It is well established that for a variety of reasons, young people living in residential services are at increased risk of coming into contact with the criminal justice system. A partnership between Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), funded service providers and the NSW Police, The Joint Protocol to reduce the contact of young people in residential out-of-home-care with the criminal justice system is currently in place across all residential out-of-home care and Intensive Therapeutic Care (ITC) providers across NSW. The Protocol aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the frequency of police involvement in responding to behaviour by young people living in residential and ITC services, which would be better managed solely within the service. • Promote the principle that criminal charges will not be pursued against a young person if there is an alternative and appropriate means of dealing with the matter. • Promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of young people living in residential and ITC services, by improving relationships, communication and information sharing both at a corporate level and between local police and residential services. • Facilitate a shared commitment by police and residential and ITC services to a collaborative early intervention approach. • Enhance police efforts to divert young people from the criminal justice system by improving the information residential and ITC services provide police about the circumstances of the young person to inform the exercise of their discretion. • Ensure that appropriate responses are provided to young people living in residential and ITC services who are victims. Currently in place across all residential out-of-home care and Intensive Therapeutic Care (ITC) service providers state-wide 	State-wide	Long Term	Department of Communities and Justice

2. Wellbeing



Young people have the opportunity to learn, work and achieve in regional NSW.

Residential Rehab for Young People	2.4	<p>Youth Justice funds a non-government organisation to provide young people with a 12 week intensive residential alcohol and other drug rehabilitation service in two locations in rural NSW. The services provide a stable and secure environment where young people are assisted to address anti-social and risk taking behaviours while strengthening interpersonal skills and targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people 13 to 18 years old (both male and female) who have a history of significant alcohol and other drug (AOD) use that contributes to their offending behaviour • Young people who have a dual diagnosis, as well as young people on medically supervised medications. <p>The rehabs are based in Coffs Harbour and Dubbo.</p>	State-wide	Long Term	Department of Communities and Justice
Targeted Earlier Intervention Program	2.1, 2.2, 2.4	Provides flexible support to children, young people, families and communities, experiencing or at risk of vulnerability.	State-wide	Long Term	Department of Communities and Justice
The Bail Assistance Line	2.4	An after-hours service which NSW Police use to source safe and alternate accommodation for young people unable to return to their previous residence. The program contributes to reducing avoidable remand by finding accommodation for young people who would otherwise be bail refused for accommodation reasons.	State-wide	Long Term	Department of Communities and Justice
Youth Frontiers	2.1	Aims to establish and support mentoring relationships that increase opportunities for young people's active meaningful participation in their communities. Open to young people 12-16 years.	State-wide		Department of Communities and Justice
Wellbeing Health in-Reach Nurse (WHIN) Program	2.1	<p>Wellbeing Health in-Reach Nurse Program (WHIN) which is aimed at improving education, health and social outcomes for young people in regional NSW. The WHIN Coordinator Model Pilot aims to address the unmet health and social needs of school students to ensure that children and young people are safe and achieving to their full potential. It is anticipated that this will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • giving students a sense of belonging to the school community • improving student wellbeing and health seeking behaviour • improving the emotional and physical safety of vulnerable students • improving health and social service pathways for young people and families. 	Cooma, Young (South East & Tablelands), Tumut (Riverina Murray)	Medium Term	NSW Health

2. Wellbeing



Young people have the opportunity to learn, work and achieve in regional NSW.

Youth Action Meetings (YAMs)	2.2	The Youth Action Meetings (YAMs) are an initiative of NSW Police, aligned to their Youth Strategy (Prevention, Intervention, Partnership). The YAM has been developed and implemented to enable a coordinated approach to addressing the needs of young people who are vulnerable and at risk of becoming a victim or offender of crime. The YAM involves key local agencies coming together to identify the risks to - and concerns for - referred young people, to develop appropriate Action Plans, and to put tangible strategies in place to help the identified young people and reduce risks.	Cessnock (Hunter), Campbelltown, Penrith (Western Sydney), Coffs Harbour (North Coast, Mt Druitt (Central Sydney), Wollongong (Illawarra Shoalhaven)	Long Term	NSW Police
Active Kids	2.1, 4.2	The Active Kids program aims to increase participation of school-enrolled children in sport and physical activity by providing parents with vouchers to help cover the cost of registration and membership fees. With 44 per cent of children spending more than two hours a day on sedentary leisure activities, the Active Kids program plays a crucial role in shifting physical activity behaviours of children and instilling healthy lifestyle habits.	State-wide	Medium Term	Office of Sport
Active Kids pilot programs in the Shoalhaven	2.1, 4.2	Delivery of seven targeted Active Kids pilot programs and five partner programs in the 2540 and 2541 postcodes (in and around Nowra), being areas of low socio-economic demographics, high need, and low uptake of Active Kids vouchers. A number of targeted Active Kids interventions have been delivered in vulnerable regional NSW communities to date, particularly through schools focussing on educational outcomes.	Shoalhaven City (Illawarra Shoalhaven)	Short Term	Office of Sport
Active Kids pilot programs in the South East and Tablelands regions of NSW	2.1, 4.2	Delivery of one to two targeted programs in each of the Queanbeyan, Goulburn and the Batemans Bay areas, being locations of low socio-economics, high need and low uptake of Active Kids vouchers. A number of targeted Active Kids interventions have been delivered in vulnerable regional NSW communities to date, particularly through schools focussing on educational outcomes.	Queanbeyan, Goulburn, Batemans Bay, Moruya (South East & Tablelands)	Short Term	Office of Sport
Mental Health First Aid	2.1, 2.2	Provide mental health first aid training to young people and communities in regional NSW affected by the drought, bushfires and high levels of youth suicide. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people and organisations working with youths are better equipped to identify mental health signs and provide initial support. • Young people including those affected by drought and bushfires have increased awareness of mental health risks and signs amongst peers. 	Illawarra Shoalhaven, Mid-North Coast, Western region	Short Term	Training Services NSW

3. Connectivity



Young people have the opportunity to learn, work and achieve in regional NSW.

Initiative	Priority	Description	Location	Timeframe	Lead Agency
Our Local	3.4	Our Local was developed in response to direct feedback from thousands of children and young people across NSW. They expressed the need for a single place online to find local and state-wide opportunities, activities, services and events. Representatives from NSW Government departments provided advice on the project through the Our Local Inter-Departmental Steering Committee. Children and young people co-designed and directed the website, including ongoing consultation with the NSW Youth Advisory Council over the course of the development. Children and young people can search their suburb or council on www.ourlocal.nsw.gov.au to access more than 16,000 listings. There are over 80 categories to choose from, including services, creative arts, sports & recreation, work & volunteer, events and education. Sixty percent of the listings are in regional areas. There are over 900 NSW Government and non-government organisations who work with, by and on behalf of children and young people included on the platform.	State-wide	Long Term	Advocate for Children and Young People
Public Transport Network Service Improvement Program	3.1	Delivering new public transport services in 16 Cities of NSW to better meet customer needs. Cities include: Wagga Wagga, Tweed Heads, Armidale, Grafton, Griffith, Nowra-Bomaderry, Queanbeyan, Armidale, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Albury, Tamworth, Lismore, Orange, Bathurst, Parkes, Dubbo.	Albury, Griffith, Wagga Wagga (Riverina Murray), Armidale, Tamworth (New England & North West), Bathurst, Dubbo, Orange (Central West & Orana), Coffs Harbour, Grafton, Lismore, Port Macquarie, Tweed Heads (North Coast), Nowra-Bomaderry (Illawarra Shoalhaven), Parkes, Queanbeyan (South East & Tablelands)	Long Term	Transport for NSW

4. Community



Young people have the opportunity to learn, work and achieve in regional NSW.

Initiative	Priority	Description	Location	Timeframe	Lead Agency
Child Rights Training	4.1	In 2018, Advocate for Children and Young People (ACYP) became an endorsed provider of NSW Education Standards Authority Registered Professional Development for their Child Rights Training. Throughout the training sessions teachers gain an understanding of the history of child rights movements, the major rights embedded in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child and ways in which these rights have been incorporated into policy and law. This course was designed to encourage participants to apply a child rights framework to their everyday interactions with children and young people to ensure best practice. This training has also been offered to various other Government Departments including the Inspector of Custodial Services, Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA) Staff and Allambie Care Staff. Further work is being done to explore the potential of ACYP's Child Rights Course become an accredited course for other professional services such as Social Workers and Lawyers.	State-wide	Medium Term	Advocate for Children and Young People
Arts and Cultural Funding Program: Organisation Grants	1.4, 2.3, 4.3	Funding for regional organisations that target regional youth participation. These organisations provide opportunities for children and young people to gain creative arts making experiences through engaging with professional artists and arts making.	State-wide	Long Term	Create NSW
NSW Youth Opportunities Program	4.1, 4.2, 4.3	Annual funding program, providing funding for new projects that are youth-led and youth-driven. Funded projects increase young people's connections to the community, build skills and knowledge of young people, recognise the contribution young people make to their local communities.	State-wide	Long Term	Department of Communities and Justice
NSW Youth Week	4.1, 4.2, 4.3	NSW Youth Week - funding available to all Local Councils in NSW, in support of local Youth Week activities that are youth-led and youth-driven (increasing participation and connection in community).	State-wide	Long Term	Department of Communities and Justice

4. Community



Young people have the opportunity to learn, work and achieve in regional NSW.

Universal Screening and Supports in High Schools	4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The model administers a survey to all students to identify those at risk and provide appropriate support packages (Tier 1 - low, medium or high support package costs are included). Screening will occur per annum over the four years of the project. This is a promising new model that has been trialled in Australia and Canada but no robust evaluation has been conducted. Interim findings of 'The Geelong Project' indicate the model is promising (MacKenzie 2018). The model is based on strong evidence that intervening early with young people can positively impact their life trajectory and reduce their reliance on government services. Effective implementation of the model will rely on forming strong partnerships across sectors and having service providers with the capability and capacity to respond to identified needs. The key outcomes being sought are that students remain stably housed and engaged in education. 	Albury (Riverina Murray), Mt Druitt (Central Sydney)	Medium Term	Department of Communities and Justice
COMPACT Program	1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3	The COMPACT Program aims to inspire and empower young people to stand up and stand united as champions for community harmony against the divisive forces of hate, fear and violence. To date, 24 youth engagement projects have been funded through the COMPACT Program, involving close to 60 partner organisations. This include projects delivered in regional areas.	Bathurst (Central West & Orana), Clarence Valley (North Coast), Newcastle (Hunter), Orange (Western Sydney), Wagga Wagga (Riverina Murray)	Medium Term	Multicultural NSW
Guided Tour Program	1.1, 4.2	National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) runs Discovery Programs for high schools throughout regional areas of NSW. NPWS offers NSW syllabus linked outdoor excursions to high school students where they spend time in nature with an NPWS ranger. This provides an opportunity for outdoor education and immersive learning through high quality nature-based activities.	Blue Mountains National Park	Long Term	National Parks & Wildlife

4. Community



Young people have the opportunity to learn, work and achieve in regional NSW.

Child Safe Sport Workshops	4.3	Sport and recreation clubs have a responsibility to protect children from harm and abuse. The Child Safe Sport workshop helps to create awareness on how clubs can create safer environments for children and young people.	State-wide	Long Term	Office of Sport
Duke of Edinburgh International Award	4.1, 4.2, 4.3	The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is a global youth development program. Young Australians aged 14-24 are empowered to explore their full potential regardless of location or circumstance. Regional youth are given the opportunity to explore their full potential. State-wide, including Wilcannia, Mildura, Armidale, Tamworth, Gunnedah, Inverell, Glenn Innes, Nyngan, Dubbo, Trangie, Duneedoo, Mendooran, Kandos, Mudgee, Parkes, Orange, Molong, Bathurst, Canowindra, Griffith, Coleambally, Hay, Narranderra, Wagga Wagga, Tumut, Culcairn, Albury, Young, Yass, Queanbeyan, Goulburn, Moss Vale, Cooma, Jindabyne, Bega, Bermagui	State-wide	Long Term	Office of Sport
Regional Academies of Sport	4.2	There are 11 Regional Academies of Sport across NSW that provide development programs to identified athletes. Once in an academy development program, athletes have access to high level coaching plus a range of sport education and personal development programs. Regional Academies of Sport play an important role in supporting the development of talented young athletes, coaches, and officials across NSW.	Bathurst, Warren (Central West & Orana), Lismore (North Coast), Mingara (Central Coast), Newcastle (Hunter), Tamworth (New England & Northwest) Wagga Wagga (Riverina Murray), Wollongong (Illawarra Shoalhaven)	Long Term	Office of Sport

4. Community



Young people have the opportunity to learn, work and achieve in regional NSW.

Respite and support services	4.2, 4.3	A series of highly successful respite camps at Office of Sport centres was held over the 2019/20 summer holidays, for regional children from drought-affected areas. This model is set to continue, with potential expansion to include bushfire-affected communities, and camps to target at-risk youth identified as less likely to transition to adulthood. The camps provide a collaborative interagency approach to supporting vulnerable youth. The respite camps deliver enormous benefits to regional communities and contribute to a number of Premier's Priorities, particularly when targeting vulnerable youth who may be at risk of harm, homelessness and poor mental health.	State-wide	Short Term	Office of Sport
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NSW State-wide Projects Map

Round 3 of the Stronger Country Communities Fund supports hundreds of projects, both infrastructure and programs, across regional NSW that deliver for local young people and the community and are aligned to the pillars of the NSW Regional Youth Framework.

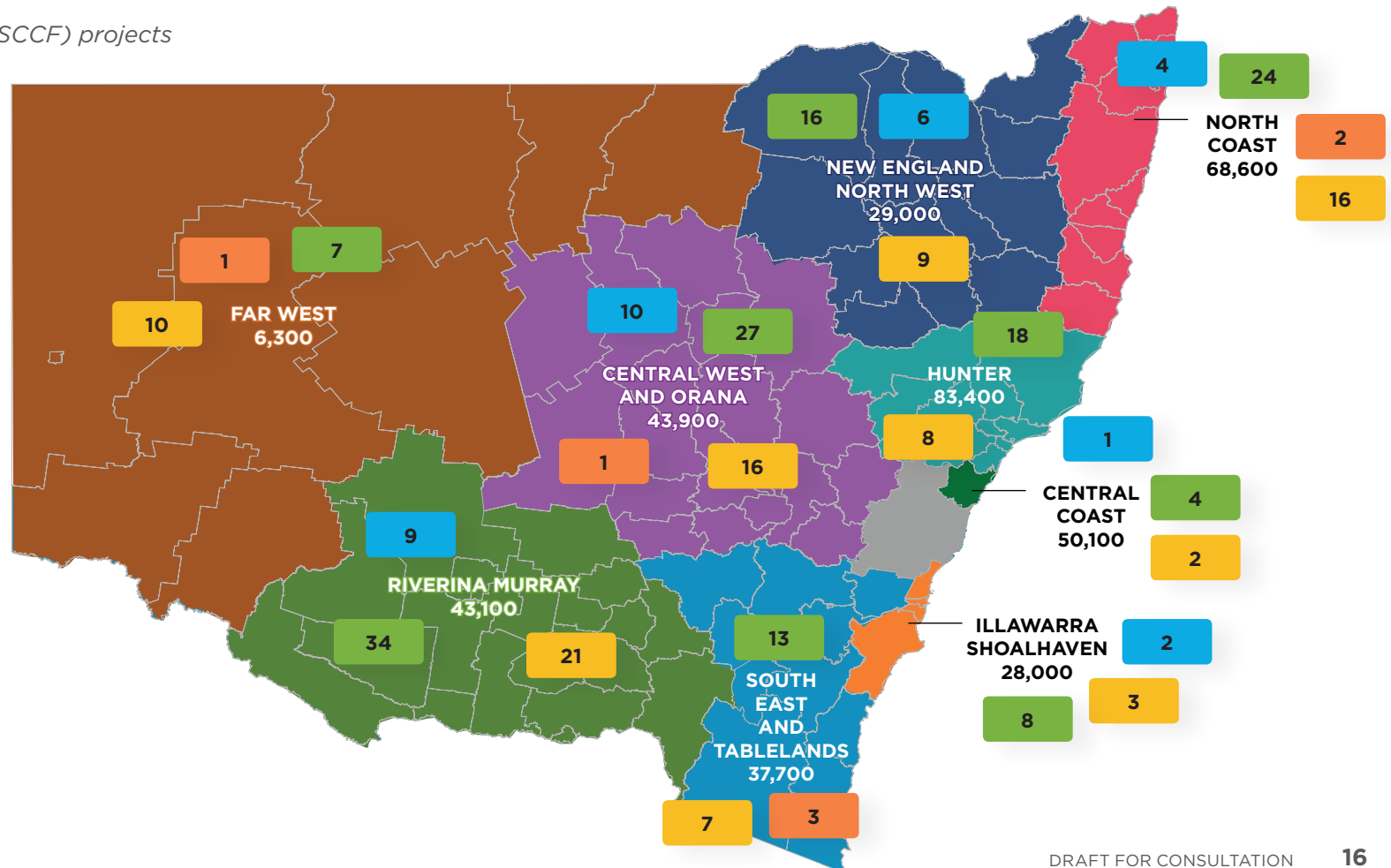
The Fund encourages local governments and community organisations to engage with and deliver projects that reflect the needs and wants of both the general community and specifically local young people.

NSW has an estimated regional population of 2,024,195 (excluding the populations of Greater Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong). Outside Greater Sydney, there are nine regions. The largest number of young people is in the Hunter with 83,400 young people, followed by the North Coast (68,600), Central Coast (50,100) and then Central West and Orana (43,900).

Key

Stronger Country Communities Fund (SCCF) projects

Pillars	Total
1. Work ready	32
2. Wellbeing	151
3. Connectivity	7
4. Community	92
Total Regional Projects:	282



Examples of currently announced Stronger Country Communities Fund initiative (SCCF)



As more projects are announced, the Action Plan will be updated

Pillar	LGA	Project Title	Project Description
Work Ready	Tamworth Regional	Youth Training Café, Viaduct Youth Hub Tamworth	<p>A Youth Training Café will be built within the Viaduct Park Youth Hub and ancillary landscaping works.</p> <p>The Café will be fitted with a commercially compliant kitchen in modified shipping containers to allow young people to participate in training programs. It will be managed by a local job agency and also serve as a retail food and beverage outlet, with profits reinvested into the facility.</p> <p>The Youth Training Café will provide food and beverage training for local youths aged 15-24 who have experienced unemployment and disengagement, opening a pathway to future employment opportunities while also providing a food service outlet for the local community where profits are reinvested into its ongoing operations.</p>
Wellbeing	Warren Shire	Warren Youth Centre and Community Hub	<p>The Warren Youth Centre and Community Hub project is designed to provide a safe, modern facility where young people can socialise and connect and improve their physical and mental wellbeing. The project will help address the challenge of isolation and the frustration of living in a small country community where opportunities are scarce.</p> <p>The program will be targeted at 12-24 year-olds and it will provide access to supervised activities including sports, arts and crafts, pool competitions, movie nights, mentoring, homework assistance (including access to computers), and educational workshops.</p> <p>Currently, youth in Warren do not have facilities to socialise daily. The focus will predominantly be on those who are significantly disadvantaged due to socio-economic factors and the Indigenous Australian population which makes up 17.6% of the community (6 times higher than the national average). The project includes purchasing equipment including: furnishings; computers for a study space; entertainment items including a TV, a gaming console, board games, sporting equipment and a pool table. It will also involve building an outdoor half-court basketball court, upgrading the kitchen including the purchase of whitegoods, dining ware and cooking equipment for cooking classes; and additional equipment required for security and fire safety.</p> <p>The Community Hub will provide a place for young people to meet and participate in activities to help with their social, physical and mental wellbeing. If necessary, the Hub will also provide an opportunity for early intervention for disadvantaged or at-risk youth. The project will help boost levels of engagement from youth in the community, improving the livability of the region.</p>
Connectivity	Shellharbour	Supporting at risk young people progress to licensure & develop low risk driving behaviours	<p>This funding will help Youthsafe to deliver a complementary and customised range of services, resources and opportunities to young 'at risk' participants of the PCYC's Fit For Work programs in Shellharbour. This project will run over a three-year period and will work with at-risk young people to help them get driver's licences and develop low-risk driving behaviours.</p> <p>Each program participant will receive an individualised plan that will look to optimise their progress in achieving significant milestones towards securing their licence.</p> <p>The desired safer outcomes will benefit all communities as it promotes low-risk driving behaviours and transforms young people into responsible drivers.</p>
Community	Leeton Shire	Leeton Regional Skate Park Extension	<p>Leeton Regional Skate Park will be extended to broaden its usability through the provision of greater space, variety and the creation of a facility which caters for all skill levels. In addition to regular, informal use, the skate park accommodates approximately 100 competitors and 500 spectators each year at the annual Riverina Skate Championships.</p> <p>The extension has been designed by professional skate park contractors, in consultation with local skaters and the community, to complement the existing facility.</p> <p>The Skate Park provides a broad range of benefits to local young people including encouraging social interaction and relationship building which positively impacts on mental health and wellbeing. The Skate Park also helps to create a sense of ownership amongst youth and a desire to look after the space, as young people have been proactive in the planning process.</p>

More information

nsw.gov.au

Contact us

Email: regionalyouth@dpc.nsw.gov.au

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