



TWEED YOUTH STRATEGY

Community Engagement Report

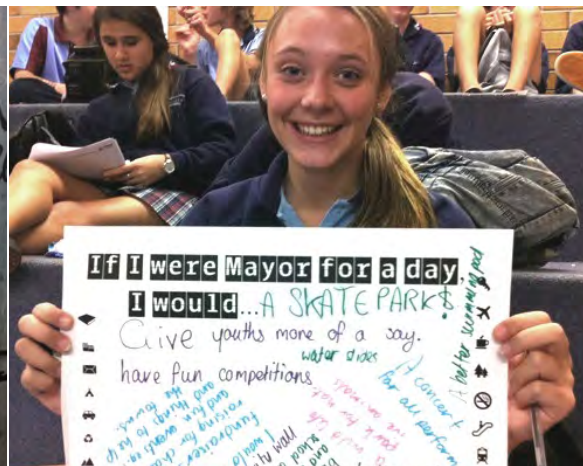


TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	BACKGROUND	2
2	ENGAGEMENT COMPLETED	3
3	SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES	4
4	WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE SAID.....	6
4.1	SCHOOL WORKSHOPS	6
4.2	WORKSHOPS WITH AT-RISK YOUNG PEOPLE	7
4.3	VOX POPS.....	8
4.4	YOUTH SURVEY	8
4.5	SPEAK OUT WEBSITE	11
4.6	SPEAK OUT FACEBOOK PAGE	11
5	WHAT SERVICES SAID	12
6	WHAT PARENTS + CARERS SAID	14
6.1	BANORA POINT SENIORS.....	15
7	YOUTH FORUM.....	16
7.1	BACKGROUND.....	16
7.2	IDENTIFIED ISSUES AND ACTIONS	16

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1	POSTCARDS	19
APPENDIX 2	SCHOOL WORKSHOP OUTLINE	21
APPENDIX 3	IF I WAS MAYOR FOR A DAY	22
APPENDIX 4	SCHOOL WORKSHOP NOTES	28
APPENDIX 5	ST JOSEPH YOUTH SERVICES WORKSHOP	34
APPENDIX 6	YOUTH SURVEY OUTCOMES	35
APPENDIX 7	YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK	47
APPENDIX 8	COMMUNITY SERVICES SURVEY	51
APPENDIX 9	PARENTS AND CARERS SURVEY	52

1 BACKGROUND

Tweed Shire is preparing a four-year Youth Strategy and Action Plan, integrated across Council and in partnership with local community services and residents, to address the issues and aspirations of local young people aged 12 to 24 years. The need for this Strategy and Action Plan has arisen from Council's Integrated Planning process and its four-year Delivery Program, which identified the need to:

- Update Young People's Issues Paper (2000) to inform a review of Youth Policy
- Develop a Youth Strategy.

One part of the development of the plan, in line with Tweed Shire's Community Engagement Framework, was to complete extensive community engagement with young people, community services, Council officers, parents and carers.

This report provides the outcomes of the community engagement that was completed to inform the development of the Strategy and Action Plan.



2 ENGAGEMENT COMPLETED

Extensive engagement was completed with the community and other stakeholders between July and September 2012. Completed engagements are summarised below:

Type	Audience	Total participants
3 workshop	Kingscliff, Wollumbin and Murwillumbah High School students	100
2 workshops	Young people at risk – St Josephs Youth Service and Mending Fences	30
Speak Out Website	Tweed's young people	57 registered users 3,137 site visits 1,778 visitors
Youth Survey	Tweed young people aged 12 to 24 years	237 completed
Vox Pops	Filmed interviews with young people at Tweed City and Murwillumbah	25 young people interviewed.
Speak Out postcards	Postcards about Speak Out Campaign distributed to all schools	Young people at all schools received
2 workshops	Tweed Shire Youth Network	20
Parents and Carers Survey	Parents and Carers of Tweed's young people	61 completed
Community Services online survey	Community Services that work with Tweed's young people	23 completed
Speak Out Face Book Page	Interested Tweed young people, residents or services	61 Likes At peak, 8,000 reach.
Interviews	Council Officers	10
Meeting	Banora Point Seniors	10
Youth Forum	Forum to feedback engagement outcomes and to get young people to action plan for the Strategy	40 young people

The postcards that were sent out to inform young people in Tweed about the Speak Out Campaign are shown at Appendix 1.

3 SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

Throughout the engagement process there were key recurring themes across all stakeholder groups. These themes centred on: youth cultural and recreation facilities, safer and cleaner public spaces, more youth-focussed events, transport, drugs and alcohol, employment, education and training, and involving and informing young people better.

The engagement process identified that the Tweed is a great place for young people because of its natural environment, beaches and mountains. Friends, family and natural places are the reasons why young people love the Tweed Shire. While 57% of young people surveyed think Tweed is pretty good or awesome (only 15% said awesome), 43% think that it's OK or terrible. Furthermore, 54% of young people surveyed see no future for themselves in Tweed. There are a number of key issues and opportunities that have been highlighted through engagement. These are:

Safe places to hang out

Young people, parents/carers and services voiced the need for improvements at Tweed Skate Park, Knox Park and other places that young people hang out. There were recurring comments about many public and youth places not being safe, being poorly maintained and not being activated.

More activities, events, programs and festivals

Access to organised activities, events, recreation and programs after hours and on weekends is important. Young people also really wanted to have increased access to creative and cultural programs and events, particularly dance or music based.

A sense of pride in their neighbourhood

Young people talked about wanting to be proud of where they live and that they thought many places and facilities were not maintained well and they did not feel safe there. Some felt that their neighbourhoods looked bad and had poor public amenity.

New and better quality facilities

Facilities and services that keep up with the rate of population growth and meet existing local needs is important. There is a need for more youth centres/spaces, cultural facilities (dance, arts, theatre), BMX tracks and skate parks – that are well designed, activated and safe and linked to other services and places.

Improved transport links

Transport is key to having access to education, employment and recreation opportunities. Improved transport connection between centres and rural/suburban areas are needed.

Adults need to perceive young people differently

Many young people thought that there was a need for a better rapport between young people and people of other ages and in authority, so that they can be seen as a positive part of the community. Many felt like they were all stereotyped as law breaking, or as hanging out in gangs

Safety: in the streets and parks; from violence, drug abuse and homelessness

Safety, including measures to protect against violence, drug abuse and homelessness, was raised consistently. Concern about drugs and alcohol was also a major concern raised by young people, parents/carers and services; young people feel strongly that there is overuse in the Tweed and that it is hard to get away from. There was also clear concern that young people in trouble at home have nowhere to go and could end up homeless, alone and in trouble.

A good education + employment opportunities

A good education and opportunities to develop practical skills, and to gain meaningful employment was highly valued. Opportunities for employment and good quality of life is important so that youth are not inclined to migrate out of the area or become unemployed in the Tweed.

More involvement in local decisions and better access to information

Better engagement between youth and decision-makers as young people feel that they are not listened to or they are told things are going to happen and then they don't. Utilising modes of communication that youth are comfortable with such as social media and face-to-face engagement was highlighted. Young people also need access to information in formats that they are comfortable with. So they know their rights, so they know what opportunities are out there and where to go to for help and advice.

Funding opportunities and service collaboration

As a State border Council, Tweed cannot always access funding, as it is difficult to demonstrate demand and utilisation by local residents for services and facilities. Services can only access NSW funding for clients with a NSW postcode. Lower levels of funding also means that services are competing for limited funds and there is a need for them to work collaboratively to advocate for funding and to deliver targeted services across the area.

4 WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE SAID

Young people were engaged with through a number of mechanisms, and outcomes are detailed in this section. Engagement with local young people identified that many Tweed youth face a diverse range of issues, but there are many common themes: safety in public places, youth spaces and places to hang out, uncertainty about the future in terms of employment, bullying, and drugs and alcohol. There is a great need to tackle these issues and improve the conditions and opportunities for youth, so that young people can grow up happy and proud to identify with Tweed as their home.

4.1 SCHOOL WORKSHOPS

Two intensive workshops were held at Kingscliff and Wollumbin High Schools with young people representing a broad range of age groups and socio-economic backgrounds. A third workshop was held with Murwillumbah High School students. The workshop outline is provided at Appendix 2, and the school workshop notes are provided at Appendix 4.

Key messages from these workshops were:

- Transport should be more accessible, more frequent, and less expensive. Also other alternative transport options such as youth free shuttle bus services
- Youth should be involved in the design and management of a multipurpose facility
- Council and decision-makers should engage and listen to youth's ideas
- Improvements and extensions to skate parks, and other sports facilities
- Develop artistic and creative facilities
- Desire for under 18 music and dance festivals, workshops, lessons and local competitions
- Support for issues such as bullying, drug use, and depression: need a confidential counsellor who is young enough for youth to relate to.

At each of the three high schools, young people were asked to complete an exercise telling us what would happen "If I WAS MAYOR FOR A DAY". A full list of what young people said is provided at Appendix 3. Some of the most interesting responses are shown below:

- "include EVERYONE, make them feel safe & most importantly let them have FUN!"
- "Make a Council billboard that will have information on current events, job opportunities, training days and support groups"
- "Underage night club with gigs/DJs"
- "Give homeless people a place to stay for the night"
- "Give a day to kids where they can just walk into the Mayor's office and say what they think my community NEEDS!"
- "Play music in the street" and music festivals
- "A Graffiti Wall"
- "Upgrade Knox Park/skate park"
- "Better transport".

Young people were eager and willing participants and gave great insight into being a young person in Tweed, local issues and aspirations. They were very aware of their neighbourhoods, local issues and were not unrealistic in the changes that they would make. Appendix 3 provides a list of all the ideas that young people had.

4.2 WORKSHOPS WITH AT-RISK YOUNG PEOPLE

MENDING FENCES

Interviews were held with 14 participants of the Mending Fences Program held at the South Tweed Sports Club. The Mending Fences Program is a program for young people who are disengaged from the school system and who participate in a creative arts program every Wednesday at the South Tweed Sports Club.

The trend as to what these young people most like about Tweed centred on the skate park, the beach and river, being close to shops, recreation, and friends. Friends and family were listed by most interviewees as two of the most important things in their lives right now.

The trend as to what these young people dislike about Tweed centred on the lack of safety in the area: drugs and violence were listed as primary concerns for these youth. The interviewees also wished for better shops and more places to 'hang out.'

When asked how Council might engage youth to make change in Tweed, most listed Facebook as a means of communication, and meeting at places youth currently 'hang out'. Engagement between youth and decision-makers should utilise modes of communication that youth are comfortable with.

ST JOSEPH'S YOUTH SERVICE WORKSHOP

This was a workshop with young people who attend the St Joseph's youth program. These are at-risk young people, some of whom are homeless.

The key issues raised by these young people were:

- Access to transport
- Lack of job opportunities or educational/skills training
- Housing/rental cost.

Ideas for the future included:

- "Subsidised housing"
- "Crisis accommodation"
- "Turn vacant shops into creative spaces"
- "Building relationships with businesses – encouraging businesses to support youth through paid mentorships"
- "Youth driven event or festival for local businesses – opportunity for youth to learn about budgeting, use and develop skills and ideas, workshops about barriers of being young so businesses could understand what it's like to be young"
- "More info about drugs and alcohol...not trying to stop us from doing it but giving us information".

Workshop outcomes at the St Josephs Youth Service are provided at Appendix 5.

4.3 VOX POPS

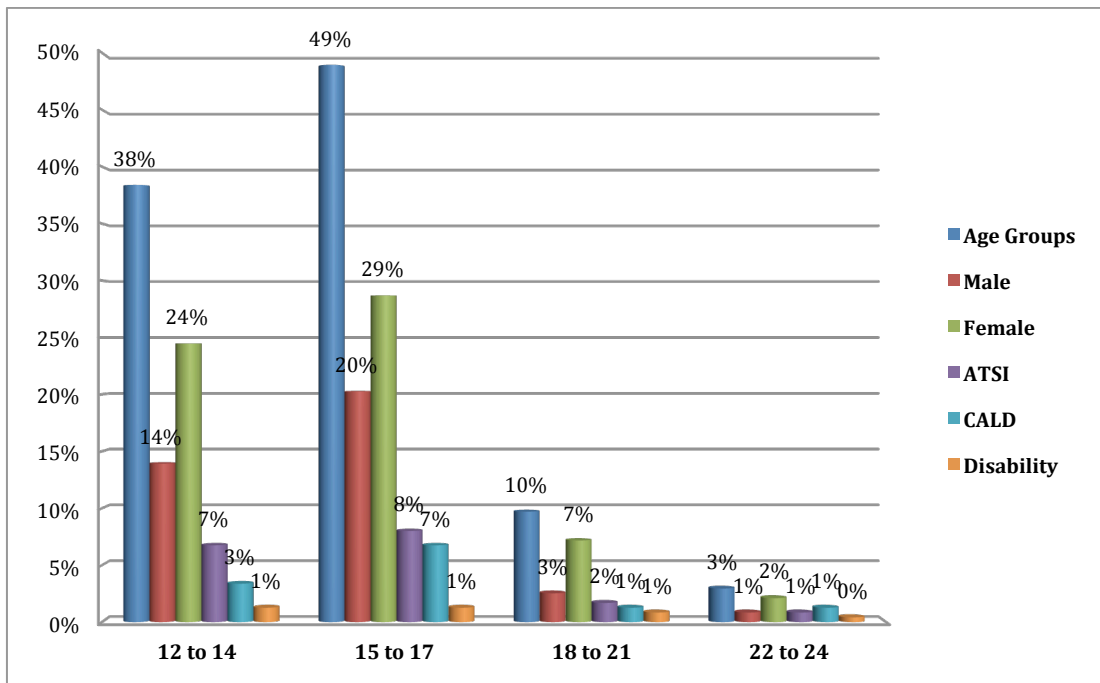
Vox pops can be viewed at the Speak Out Tweed Face Book Page. The key messages from the Vox Pops was:

- Young people do not feel safe in many public places
- They would like better quality skate parks
- They would like more youth spaces to hang out with their friends and participate in programs
- Transport needs to be improved, particularly to the village areas
- Drugs and alcohol are of concern to many young people
- Young people need safe places to go when they are in trouble
- Murwillumbah needs to be cleaned up.

4.4 YOUTH SURVEY

237 young people completed the Youth Survey which was available online and in hard copy. Council staff visited local events also to get young people to complete the survey.

87% of respondents were between 12 and 17 years old. A larger proportion of female responded (62%) compared to males (38%). A significant portion of respondents identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (18%). A smaller percentage of respondents were culturally or linguistically diverse (12%), and only a small percentage had a disability (3%).



31% of respondents were from Murwillumbah and surrounds, 29% from South Tweed and surrounds, 14% from Tweed Heads and surrounds, and the remainder from other suburbs.

Full survey outcomes are provided at Appendix 6.

The majority of respondents aged 12 to 17 lived with their families. Respondents aged 22 to 24 had a mix of living arrangements including: with their family, in a share house, with partners, couch surfing and other arrangements.

Education and employment:

- 90% of 12 to 17 year respondents were attending high school (188)
- 47% of young people aged 12 to 17 were at school full time
- 25% of young people aged 12 to 17 years were unemployed
- 37% of 18 to 24 year respondents were at University or TAFE (11)
- 16% of 18 to 24 year olds were unemployed
- 80% of 18 to 24 year olds were employed either casually, part time or full time.

While 57% of young people surveyed think Tweed is pretty good or awesome (only 15% said awesome), 43 % think that it's OK or terrible. Some selected comments about living in Tweed Shire:

- "You can go for a surf then hop out, get changed and go to the skate park"
- "Because we live in such a varied environment"
- "Laid back lifestyle, facilities, location"
- "There is beautiful land and sporting/artistic opportunities however there is a number of grotty public places"
- "People in the community judge you as most teenagers in the Tweed area are quite aggressive and immature"
- "Being stereotyped as a being a 'teenager' or something else gives less opportunities"
- "There isn't much to do and you can't go anywhere with friends without cops thinking you're a gang"
- "There is not enough places for us to be. So that is why everybody hangs out at Knox Park and skate park"
- "The Tweed has potential to be great, however there is not a lot of pride from people living here – especially youth. With the right improvements I think that Tweed area could be really great"
- "They promise us stuff like fix the skate park or the toilets and yet they don't do it and I wish that they would do it because we get so happy and excited and then they let us down"
- "The youth's voice is not heard or listened to enough"
- "Young people in Tweed feel isolated from the political system."

The most commonly liked things about Tweed were:

- Friends – 104 ranked this 1st or 2nd. 180 ranked in top 5
- The environment,(mountains, beaches) 98 ranked this 1st or 2nd. 177 ranked it in top 5
- Family – 77 ranked this 1st or 2nd, conversely. 158 ranked in top 5.

The most common things youth would like to change were:

- More things to do – 69 ranked this 1st or 2nd
- Better transport – 66 ranked this 1st or 2nd
- More public places to hang out – 54 ranked this 1st or 2nd
- Less drugs or alcohol – 64 ranked this 1st or 2nd.

Transport:

- Respondents from Murwillumbah and surrounds, Burringbar and surrounds, South Tweed and surrounds and Tweed Heads and surrounds ranked the need for better transport the most highly.

Respondents ranked the following the most highly valued:

- Family relationships, 112 ranked this as 1st or 2nd ranking
- Friends – 68 ranked this as 1st or 2nd ranking
- Being independent – 51 ranked this as 1st or 2nd ranking
- Education – 40 ranked this as 1st or 2nd ranking.

63% participate in a sport, and 43% in are involved in a cultural activity (art, drama, dance, music).

Where youth go for advice/support if need help with a personal problem:

- Over 60% said friends; parents or carer; relative/family friend
- Over 20% said teacher; internet
- Only 12% said youth support services, and only 14% said school counsellor.

The matters that mainly concerned young people were:

- Bullying/emotional abuse – 64 ranked this as 1st or 2nd
- Personal safety – 57 ranked this as 1st or 2nd
- Alcohol – 58 ranked this as 1st or 2nd
- Body image – 52 ranked this as 1st or 2nd.

75% of young people who completed the survey think there is enough information available on issues that concern them. For those who answered that there isn't enough information available, many stated that they would like more information on drugs/alcohol awareness, and counselling and for stress/emotional issues/depression/abuse

Common favourite places to visit or hang out:

- Tweed City
- Beaches
- Parks and skateparks
- Shops
- Friend's house
- Movies/Theatres.

Reasons why young people like these areas:

- Fun
- Things to do
- Relaxed
- Safe.

Representative examples of **big ideas for making Tweed Shire a better place for young people:**

- "More live music and events and festivals that under 18s can attend "
- "Places or events for teens under 18, which are alcohol and drug free"

- Amend the nature of police presence in the area: “more policemen in the streets, but they have to be understanding of drunk teens...they need to drive them home and make sure that they get home safely”; “more police presence on foot rather than vehicles”

How Tweed Shire Council should get young people involved in local decisions:

- Over 60% said Facebook; through schools
- Over 25% said regular youth forums; a youth council; talk to us where we hang out; youth website.

54% of young people do not see a future for themselves in Tweed Shire. 46% of young people do. In Murwillumbah and surrounds and Tweed Heads and surrounds this was more pronounced with 60% of young people not seeing a future in Tweed.

4.5 SPEAK OUT WEBSITE

The Speak Out website was designed to inform and engage with local young people from project inception to completion. The website included:

- Engagement and project information
- Mobile uploads
- Videos for comment
- Forums
- Surveys.

The site proved popular for visitors with over 1,778 site visitors. Only 57 people (3%), however registered. 30 out of the 57 people who registered were under 18, and almost evenly divided between males and females; 83% of the page view sources were from Facebook.

4.6 SPEAK OUT FACEBOOK PAGE

The Speak Out Facebook Page was designed to inform young people about the Speak Out Campaign and promote project outcomes. At its peak, the Page reached 8,000 people in one week. This was when the Vox Pops videos were uploaded and proved very popular. So far, the Page has 61 Likes and as new activities are posted it receives more Likes.

5 WHAT SERVICES SAID

YOUTH SERVICES WORKSHOP

A workshop was held with youth services, who are part of the Youth Interagency, to identify issues relating to young people in the Tweed.

The workshop identified that young people of Tweed are diverse, and are in many ways defined by where they live – whether that be an urban, rural, coastal or village area. Tweed has beautiful natural areas and beaches, but many of its youth are disconnected and isolated in suburbia or rural areas with minimal or no transport options. Programs and activities should have a strong outreach focus in order to provide for youth living in isolated areas. Effective dissemination of information on these programs and activities should also be a priority.

The young people of Tweed face a range of issues, and many handle these problems with strength and resilience. There is a great deal of homegrown talent among Tweed as isolation has forced many youth to be self-sufficient and innovative. However, there is also a need for programs that harness the strengths of residents in order to foster skill development. Indigenous youth have a strong craving to learn about their culture and history. Helping Indigenous youth reconnect to their heritage could fulfil this craving, and also strengthen community ties.

The emergence of groups of young people hanging out together in 'groups' as a way of connecting to other people has in many ways eventuated from a lack of safety, support and activities in their local community, and/or the breakdown of their family at home. Many youth are frustrated or angry about where they live, and a common mentality is to want to migrate out of the area as soon as they can.

Programs and services for youth need to be community building and sustainable. Funding for local infrastructure should be integrated, collaborative and reliable. Programs might also be put in place that reconnects youth with their elders. Young people should be provided for as the population of Tweed continues to increase over the next twenty years.

A full outline of what services said at the Youth Interagency workshop is provided at Appendix 7.

YOUTH SERVICES SURVEY

An online survey was distributed to local community services and 29 services completed the survey. Full outcomes of the survey are provided at Appendix 8.

23 community services completed the survey. 20% of the community services respondents were office-based only, 6.7% provided outreach services only, but most of the services (86.7%) provided both office-based and outreach services.

Key outcomes from the survey were:

- It is primarily Tweed's natural environment that makes it a good place for young people
- Drugs, alcohol and isolation due to poor public transport are the main issues for young people
- A Youth Centre is the most-needed facility for young people

Some comments that sum up the views of services were:

- "A Youth Centre which is a 'youth refuge' and 'a one stop shop for youth'"
- "More evening entertainment and options on weekends."

6 WHAT PARENTS + CARERS SAID

A survey was prepared for parents and carers and distributed online and through Council services. 61 local parents and/or carers completed the survey. Full outcomes of the survey are provided at Appendix 9.

The message from parents/carers was quite similar to that of local young people, but with a particular focus on the need for better employment opportunities, safety and concern about drugs and alcohol.

The survey respondents were mostly mothers (62%) and fathers (20%). Most have a youth living with them full-time (72%). Almost all of those surveyed speak only English at home (98%), and only a very small portion identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (2%). The largest portion of those surveyed live in Murwillumbah and the surrounding villages (26%). The rest of the respondents were spread throughout other areas.

Key outcomes of the survey are:

- Similarly to the community services surveyed, parents and carers believe that it is primarily Tweed's natural environment that makes it a good place for young people
- Not enough local employment is the main issue for young people
- A place to hang out safely is the most-needed facility for young people.

Some comments that sum up the views of parents and carers are:

- "There is a need for places where youth can go and hang out in a safe, alcohol and drug free environment on the weekends that is not costly and transport is available"
- "The older teens and young adults desperately need things to do & I think this is where more cultural facilities relating to dance / music / venues with bands playing etc. are much needed"
- "This town DESPERATELY needs an indoor sports stadium [sports facility/centre]!" as well as "Sports beyond the mainstream, give these kids an indoor sports venue, foster healthy sport and exercise options"
- "Young people need access to a broader range of activities and safe stimulating constructive environments. Young people are generally far more intelligent creative and motivated than society gives them credit for"
- "This is a diverse area and the talent of some of our young people in creative, musical and sporting endeavours is outstanding. We need to support these young people in the pursuit of these interests in any way we can"
- "Job networks have GOT to help ALL the Tweeds young"
- "Young people need more of a say.... [they] don't know they can or don't write in to the newspaper to have a voice that is recognised. They need to be approached in other ways...Perhaps keeping them in the loop through the Facebook page"
- "Develop and lead a culture of activity based around sport, family, arts and entertainment"

6.1 BANORA POINT SENIORS

A meeting was held with Banora Point Seniors to talk about their views on young people.

One suggestion from the group was that there needs to be more organised activities as well as outdoor and indoor places for youth to 'hang out.' Youth centres should encourage users to have leadership and autonomy over the space.

Many young people, adults and elderly residents are upset by the violence, drug use and intimidation occurring in Tweed. Efforts should be made to build trust and respect between people of different generations in order to tackle these issues.

7 YOUTH FORUM

7.1 BACKGROUND

A forum with 40 young people from Tweed Shire High Schools attended a workshop to hear the outcomes of the engagement process for the Tweed Youth Strategy and to develop some actions to address four key issues:

- Improvements to Knox Park
- Transport
- Safety and feeling proud of the Tweed
- Involving young people in decisions that affect them.

The following notes show the outcomes of the forum.

7.2 IDENTIFIED ISSUES AND ACTIONS

1. **KNOX PARK IMPROVEMENTS**

Issues

- Skate park is hidden and it feels unsafe
- There are no lights
- It's not clean
- Too much drugs and drinking in rotunda near the gym
- It's not activated, it feels empty
- The pond is dirty and full of lilies
- There are no BBQ facilities or picnic tables
- There are no bins or bubblers
- The toilets are horrible and no one wants to use them
- No one wants to go there but the parkies
- Netball is not being managed properly and no one is playing anymore.
- It should be a really great park that brings our community together.

Actions

- Relocate the skate park in direct view of the new community centre across the park in front of the tennis courts
- Provide power outlets so that events and music can be held here
- Make it a youth plaza type facility – like Geelong Youth Plaza or Redland Youth Plaza. With tiered seating built in that can be used for jumping or seating for events
- Clear out under the fig trees, but keep the figs to use as part of an adventure playground, with ropes courses and elevated platforms like at New Farm Park in Brisbane
- Provide a clear walking link from the pond to the other side of the park, through the new playground
- Light the park up
- Have better pedestrian and cycle links across the park
- Make it the focal point of the town and a place that has more regular events and markets. Young people could help organise
- Clean up the pond and get rid of the dirty birds. Provide picnic tables and bbqs around the pond to make this a family and gathering area

- Get young people to design and build the park furniture - this will make it more creative and attractive but also prevent vandalism
- Have a competition to change the name of the park and to give it a fresh start
- Provide free Wi-Fi outside the community centre. This is cheap but will attract people to the park and activate the park making it safer
- Provide some crisis housing somewhere for all the kids who need somewhere safe to stay
- Get ride of the rotunda across from the gym
- Have a Youth or Community Reclaim the Park event
- Young people must be part of the planning process. We want to be there when you consult with the adults
- Advertise the process through schools.

2. TRANSPORT

Issues/Challenges

- Lots of isolated areas in the Tweed that don't have access to transport
- Transport is expensive
- People rely on others to get around
- It takes a long time to travel to some places
- Some bus stops are not safe and they need to be patrolled or more visible
- There are really long gaps between some bus stops
- Need to build trust between communities for car sharing
- There are some differences in the train lines (track sizes).

Actions

- Get the train running again
- Provide a youth transport service like YAXI or YOWI
- Make bus stops safer and more visible
- Transport that goes across the border
- Provide information about the Youth Transport Service in shops, community centres and at schools
- Start a Ferry Service down the Tweed River.

3. SAFETY AND FEELING PROUD OF THE TWEED

Issues/Challenges

- Transport isn't safe (and in lots of places there is no transport)
- Too much alcohol and drugs in public and at schools
- The area is dirty, it looks vandalised and feels unhygienic in some places
- Some young people are bored and frustrated.

Actions

Transport

- Share the buses and use the buses we have better. Ask bus services what they would need to offer more services – got to be economical
- Subsidise a pilot program
- Promote the bus schedule better.

Alcohol/drugs

- Limit the number of bottle shops allowed and increase the price of alcohol
- More access to non-judgemental help for young people with drinking and drug issues. Better information about drugs and alcohol
- Drugs out of schools and parks.

Vandalism/dirty areas

- Make parks look better so people are proud of them and will look after them
- Involve young people in the design of their spaces (indoor/outdoor) – this will make them proud and they won't vandalise
- Provide a graffiti wall, or identify some places for legal graffiti
- Enliven parks with activities and programs to get them more activated and safer
- Fix broken and run down facilities
- Redesign Knox Park.

Boredom/frustration

- Better information to young people through SRC at schools, in shops and community spaces and a better promote youth newspaper
- Include a billboard at Sunnyside for young people
- More activities, programs and events including young people
- More physically demanding play areas for older kids
- A graffiti wall
- More safe spaces for young people to hang out
- Change stereotypical views of young people.

4. INVOLVING YOUNG PEOPLE IN DECISIONS THAT AFFECT THEM

Issues/Challenges

- The word YOUTH is alienating and has a negative connotation
- Lack of opportunities can make young people lazy
- More schools should be involved in engagement not just a few
- Bad stereotype of young people – that is “they don't know what they want”. They are “troublemakers”. There are stigmas around certain areas – racial, social and economic
- Sometimes young people might act immaturely or be outrageous in their ideas.

Actions

- Develop an Ambassador program where a young person from each school (or year of school) is the information source for the young people at their school. Provide training and mentorship and reward for participation
- Just let young people have a say. The more you offer, the more we will get involved. But we need to see we have been heard
- Help young people to learn the skills to help themselves
- Have young people on committees at Council
- More youth forums. But have them on a night where any young person can come and make it fun with music and other activities
- Involve young people on the boards of community groups (eg. The Surf Life Savers).



If you live in the Tweed and you're aged between 12 and 24 years, here's your chance to **Speak Out**. Share what you like, what you don't, what you'll need and what you won't. Big ideas for Tweed? Bring it on.

Win an iPad! Post your own ideas, music, videos, images, or surprise us!

SPEAK OUT

VISIT www.yoursaytweed/speakout
FB www.facebook.com/speakouttweed
EMAIL speakouttweed@gmail.com



Get yourself on film and share your ideas for Tweed on **Friday 13 July 2012**

Tweed City Shopping Centre, 9am-1pm

Murwillumbah - Sunnyside Mall, 2pm to 3.30pm

Murwillumbah - Skatebowl, 3.30-5pm



Appendix 2 School workshop outline

1. Introduction
Introduce project, its aims and objectives Importance of speaking up and having a voice. Let the students know that there will be a forum in November where we will take all of the ideas that we have collected through the consultation and then present it back to them. They will have another chance to give us their feedback on it.
2. Demographic activity The aim of this is to get a good sense of who are the young people of Tweed. We want them to tell us all the different groups/ subcultures (ie: metal, skaters, etc). We will take these responses, write them down and post them up. The aim of this is to get the group to start contributing ideas, and also to give us a better idea of the diversity of young people that make up Tweed Shire.
3. Examples of Community Projects Redland Youth Plaza, Growing Up Boulder, Midnight Basketball, Driving for Employment
4. Inspiration Here we will show a few examples (YouTube clips) of the power of youth voice and the power of youth to make change. (Ex: Collie Crew and also a youth media/youth reporters clip)
5. Ice breaker "If Tweed Heads" was a person, what kind of person would he or she be? Group responses to get creative juices flowing
6. Super Quick Speed Dating The point of this is to get the kids used to the speed-dating format and also to explore who is in the room, while emphasising that everyone's voice matters. We will get the young people to write their names on a piece of cardboard/Q card. Each student will post their name on the wall (2 rows spanning width of wall). Each student will then stand by their name and face a partner. The student closest to wall is equipped with post it notes and a texta.
7. Speed Dating Exercise Young people take turns being journalists, asking each other (and recording) questions on key priority areas while getting a good understanding of this demographic--their current challenges, hopes, and priority areas. The areas will include Environment, Social, Health, Employment, Technology, Infrastructure, etc. Students will move around rather quickly (say max 3-4 mins per station x 12 stations x 2).
8. Discussion about the process. What did you learn? What insights did you get? Were there any similar themes? (10mins)
9. If I were Mayor for a day, I would..." Students are asked to pick favourite idea and write it onto a piece of A3 paper in bright colours. Photograph of each student holding their response.

Appendix 3 If I was Mayor for a Day

1. WOLLUMBIN HIGH SCHOOL

If I were Mayor for a day I would...

- Listen to the Youth and CARE for each OPINION & Question, include EVERYONE, make them feel safe & most importantly let them have FUN! LISTEN, CARE, SUPPORT!
- Free Transportation for youth
- I would change the world
- I would let young people know how important that they need to work for their life
- A place for anyone to go and workout, top of the line equipment – all for free
- Build a wave pool for people who are less fortunate and can't make it to the beach
- Change the law so kids could do everything they want and make a better skate park
- I would make it safer for teenagers and get kids on the street to do activities to get them off the streets
- Make the environment safer
- More security in town
- No drinking alcohol and drugs at the skate park
- More jobs in Tweed
- Let young one's get a job
- Put bins around town
- Go out onto the streets and find out what the citizens of the town think about it and what could be fixed
- Create an "ideas box" at the Council building that members of the community can say things that they want to see improved in the town, so everyone has a say
- Have a cleanup Murwillumbah day where you can go and volunteer to keep streets clean
- Make a Youth Group for 12-18 years with different activities
- Collect the leftover food from the shops and organise a feast for homeless people from the donated food
- Talk to the homeless people and hear their story
- Make a Council billboard that will have information on current events, job opportunities, training days and support groups
- Create more groups within the town of common like people who can make a difference together
- Create more youth groups and opportunities for young people in the town
- Listen to what the younger generation want and need
- Open the train line
- Underage night club with gigs/DJ
- Put a centre in the Tweed Shire for the homeless that would support food and beds for them
- Make a big shopping centre in Murwillumbah
- I would have a parade and be giving out money and gifts
- Give homeless people a place to stay for the night
- Make a day everyone has to wear Rainbow and be happy
- A day where nobody is allowed to smoke for a whole day
- Make a day where children have to go outside and meet new people
- Give a day to kids where they can just walk into Mayor's office and say what they think my community NEEDS!
- Have a "smiley day" where everybody has to give their smile – you never know you might brighten up their day

- Send police out chasing all of the “drugos”
- Make a day where everyone has to do a deed for someone they don't know
- Try to make Murwillumbah a safer place
- Build more shops with better products
- Listen to the community more!
- Have homes for kids to go
- More places to hang out!
- Make a clean environment
- Everything Pretty!!!
- Stop poverty
- Build a place for the homeless
- Donate money to the less fortunate
- Love not hate!!:)

2. KINGSCLIFF HIGH SCHOOL

If I were Mayor for a day I would...

- Build an Arts Centre close to Tweed.
- Buses every 10 minutes.
- Graffiti Day.
- Put on a Festival.
- Build a skate park.
- Every shop is free for a day.
- Music festivals.
- Soap in the school bathrooms.
- Make a place like Brisbane Entertainment Centre to hold concerts.
- Hold a dance crew battle.
- Play music in the street.
- Hand out free things such as clothing, food, flyers etc.
- Arts Centre.
- Free food.
- Rap battles.
- Woodland area for doofs.
- Beach parties.
- DJ's at the beach.
- Give children a day off for CAPA at a community hall or the school it self – just no work, and donate to the homeless and local vet clinics and all the muso's in the Tweed Valley.
- Make a fun day at the beach.
- A Graffiti Wall.
- Music/dance/art studio for kids like free learning and just like fun stuff.
- More home ground festivals and performances and an all night skate park and community centre there – party venue.
- A Safety House for Kids.
- Clean the public toilets.
- Build a skate park.
- Get public transport and facilities to be repaired and cleaned.
- Hold an all-ages, all genre music festival in Kingscliff.
- Increase security in “dodgy” places such as Tweed Skate Park.
- Put in more seats and barbeque areas.
- Build a massive theme park.
- Put in better public transport e.g. trains.
- Build a convention centre.
- Make a monthly camp out for students.
- Extend the Cabarita Beach skate park.
- Put skate park and hangout area in Kingy.
- Make an annual under 18 concert.
- Fix fitness equipment in Kingy.
- Put a cinema in Casuarina.
- Bring back the Cabarita Youth Centre.
- Make a youth centre based on gaming and have gaming comps.
- Make Kingscliff a free Wi-Fi town.
- Implement faster better internet.
- A Fair with bands, rides and food.

- A concert in the Tweed Shire for young people that includes dance, drama, singing and bands.
- A place where young kids can express their ideas with their community.
- Buses that only kids can use that are cheaper and have an actual price unlike normal buses.
- A place where young people can get good at the things they love.
- Create better/more transport for young people.
- A train would be great (maybe unrealistic).
- Create cafes/hangout for youth to listen to music.
- Music festivals.
- Performing centres (for local dance schools).
- Places for creative arts (spaces for music, dance, textiles) – free.
- More publicity for youth projects.
- A better swimming pool.
- A concert for all performers.
- Better public toilets.
- A film centre.
- Recycling bins in school.
- Give youth more of a say.
- Have fun competitions.
- A wild park for native animals.
- I would have fundraisers raising for charities and fun events e.g. fairs and things to help the towns.
- Before and after school activities.

If I was Mayor for a Day – Murwillumbah High School

22 August 2012 Tweed Shire Council Re: Youth Strategy workshop with Murwillumbah High School students

“If I were Mayor for a day I would...”

- More bins with narrow holes so Ibis can't pull rubbish out Ø Remove rotunda (Knox Park).
- Get a train from Murwillumbah.
- More “ride” festivals (more Mur'bah shows).
- I would offer more choice in the public, I would ask the people their opinion, not just generalise from a random “sample of people”.
- I would clean up the back roads leading to Stokers Siding because it's past point where it should have been fixed.
- The graffiti along Terranora Road, and a bus stop near 223 Terranora Road as students can't get off and have to walk a fair distance along a main road where there is no footpath.
- Quicker police times, there always busy and their response time is terrible.
- More opportunity to get involved in decisions made in Tweed.
- More facilities for teenagers around Murwillumbah area.
- Internet service in Bray Park.
- Homeless Centres.
- Stop wasting money on making new Centrelinks when we already have one.
- Fix Knox Park – leave Rotunda.
- Train service/buses.
- Hold a festival to celebrate diversity of the Tweed.
- Encourage a cleaner, greener lifestyle.
- Invest in more public transport.
- More support for socio-economically disadvantaged people – drug rehab centres, education programs.
- Not allow too many bottle shops.
- More activities for youth, drama workshops etc (recreational activities).
- Support for greater mobile reception/access to internet for more rural areas.
- Deny McDonald's to come into Mur'bah – will ruin local business.
- Clean up the rotunda, its gives a really poor impression of Murwillumbah.
- If you provide more facilities/things for youth, perhaps will result in reduced underage drinking and youth crime. Support education programs in schools, encourage academic achievement.
- There is a real problem with generations repeating themselves – not in a positive sense.
- Get rid of the bureaucracy of council process – an alien thought I know but you can always hope.
- Fix train-line – remake it – TRAIN.
- Localised buses to e.g. Riva Vue, Loo Hills – out of town areas.
- Car parking – free parking.
- Homeless – community?
- Festivals.
- Centrelink payments.
- Groups for young people.
- Cleaning for public toilets – Knox Park, Budd Park etc.
- Knox Park.
- Get all kids to school/stop “waggers”.
- Get rid of the Banana Festival.

- More music festivals.
- Bus to Stokers Siding.
- Lower age for part-time employment.
- Clean up the street and toilets.
- Give Murwillumbah High lockers.
- Upgrade Knox Park/skate park.
- Clean up the streets and fix public toilets.
- Do up the shops on King Street.
- Have a group out of school for people with a disability and mental illness.
- Put on a train to Burringbar.
- Organise a girls groups for outside school.
- Get Burringbar Primary up and running.
- Burringbar MB Track.
- Different variety of shops in Mur'bah.
- Buses out to Nunderi on weekends.
- More variety of dance.
- Re-tar James Lane.
- Knox Park done up and skate park upgraded - More plants and trees – Huge crystal clear pond.
- Play equipment at the hockey fields.
- Make the roadwork people fix all the roads and fill in all the pot holes.
- More places for teens to hang.
- Cheaper milkshakes.
- Safer parks – Knox Park, Skate Park.
- I would move if I could.

Appendix 4 School workshop notes

1. WOLLUMBIN HIGH SCHOOL

More street lights, more police patrol and security camera's, too dark, scared of 'drugs'

Transport

- Want train services
- Transport is hard to access
- Buses - cheaper, run more often, night buses
- Not generally aware of youth opportunities, not well advertised, only find out about things through TV
- Getting around is impossible for kids in rural areas.

Facilities they would like to design:

A place with:

- Stylish graffiti
- Diner by day, party place by night
- Introducing new artists every month
- Food and non-alcoholic drinks
- Kids involved in design and management of youth led multipurpose facility
- Movies and beds (sleep over place).

Perception

- Stereotypes about young people are not correct
- The media is also to blame for perpetuating it.

Feel council not listening to them (brought up strongly at all sessions)

- School is the only time council/community listens.

What they want?

- More groups for young people and activities
- Sporting carnivals
- Art courses
- Movie nights
- Music centre
- Cooking classes
- Volunteer work and training opportunities
- Community shelters and youth groups
- Midnight lasertag
- Surfing comps
- Programs to influence kids to stay in school
- Free wi-fi
- Big play house with different activities
- Youth clubs for between 12 and 18
- Stop littering national parks
- Actual youth reps/liaison contacts with council- formal position with accreditation on CV, perhaps even paid but willing to volunteer also (including for disadvantaged kids).

Issues

- Drugs and alcohol - need to be addressed as a conversation - not lecturing and saying not to do it ... R-risk a great program
- Rape
- Lack of employment
- Scared of not being able to support their future
- Too many parents rely on the doll
- Some kids don't see the benefit in education
- Need better role models
- Care about trees and clean rivers, national parks and environment
- Feel their ideas often get shut down.

2. KINGSCLIFF HIGH SCHOOL

Strengths of community

- Friendly, clean environment and everyone knows each other and works well together
- Community looks out for you.

Hanging Out

- Things to do
- Nothing at all to do in Pottsville and Kingy
- The Cabarita Skatepark is 'kinda good'
- Lots of rubbish in Banora
- Places to hang - the beach, Cabarita, football fields, Epic skate and parks
- Want a basketball hoop and skatepark at Wilson's Park in Sextons hill
- A wave pool
- Parks in Finghal and Kingscliff could be improved
- Broken fitness equipment in Kingscliff beach
- Better footpaths for skating
- Sand pumping jetty has to go
- **Everybody wants a beachfront skatepark at Kingy**
- Extend Cabarita Skatepark
- Kids at the session LOVED the Redlands Project at Redlands.
- Improved BBQ areas (really dirty, make them nicer for families)
- Move Water guru from road
- Want music festivals and parties, skate comps.

Ideas for potential new hang outs if made more available to youth:

- Creative arts centre in Tweed
- Harbour Twin Towns
- Cabarita Footy Club
- Pottsville Oval for support groups and art facilities
- Casuarina Sports Field
- Empty building near Centaur Primary
- Creek open space
- Blocks of land in Salt and Cotton Beach
- Sportsfield where the markets are held at Pottsville
- Need more security at Tweed skatepark
- Nothing happens in Tumbulgum, build a park.

Has council done anything you are happy about/upset about?

- Annoyed that there is no recycling at their school
- No proper netball courts/basketball courts in Pottsville Waters
- Events for 3 years olds and 18 year olds but nothing in between
- Only place for youth in Kingy is 7/11
- Seat benches are ruined, need more seats in Kingy
- Happy about youth group in Kingy
- Unhappy about lack of bins
- Upset that council hasn't put in a skatepark
- Really upset that council cut down a cubby house

- Upset that they removed the Coolangatta skatepark
- Feel they are never consulted anything
- Need places to hang in Pottsville
- Happy that council did up Jack Evans Boat Harbour
- Like to use the PCYC boxing and basketball activities
- Most kids don't know of any youth led activities but loved the idea.

Qualities of a good hang out

Open space, nice grass, bubblers, sitting areas, shade, no adults interrupting, safe, food, hygienic, close to home, fun activities, no drugo's, somewhere to sleep, able to play music, a place to be loud, inclusive.

Entertainment & Activities

- Idea: Inflatables and kids beach party
- More entertainment for young people with no adults. Gigs but they have to be good bands.
- More Netball Courts
- Youth Gaming Centre
- Youth centre open to Musicians
- Creative Arts Centre
- School Safety program
- Fitness programs for kids
- Music festival in Kingy like in Cabarita
- Surfing, body boarding, lifesaving comps
- Water slides and better swimming pool
- Art Music studios
- Arts Centre closer to Tweed
- **Youth run festival**
- Live music venue
- Under 18 concerts
- Volunteer work with homeless and poor
- Places where drug users can go
- Gaming comps
- Would like better facilities at some of the youth facilities.

All loved the idea of the opportunity to organise their own event with some support and a budget - youth festival etc, and gain some new skills and experience

Design your ideal hang out?

- A skatepark next to 7/11 on the beach in Kingscliff between the bowlo and caravan park - not to close to either as they complain about the noise
- It would be colourful
- Only teenagers allowed
- Legal Graffiti Wall - changing
- Buildings for art studios and graffiti
- Performance centre for dance concerts - kids very into dance
- Hygienic Facilities - a big issue
- Half way house
- Ball Pit

- Place to hire for parties
- Creative art space
- One girls idea was to hold a multicultural fair/festival.

Activities they love

- Dance music and skating- the big three things that kept coming up
- Basketball, motorbike riding, dancing, cheerleading
- More dance workshops
- Would like DJ workshops, skate workshops, singing lessons, skating instructors, skate comps with music, boxing tournaments
- More activities at the youth centres and better facilities
- Youth centre - would like less religion at the youth centre, more gaming and free food. Don't like to be forced to do anything in particular
- Better gaming facilities.

Issues affecting young people

- Weed
- Fighting
- Underage sex
- Rape
- Drugs and alcohol
- Bullying (online and off) in Kingscliff High is a big problem (offline bullying)
- Divorce
- Depression
- Boredom.

Ideas: more peer to peer support for dealing with depression and other issues - want to speak to people closer to their own age about it.

Lack of confidentiality with counsellor - things are always reported to parents/teachers

Do you hear about things happening in your area? Where and how would you like to hear about it? How do you want to communicate with council?

- Very keen to hear directly from council youth worker at assembly, regular updates, otherwise they never hear about it and teachers don't pass it on
- Facebook or surveys popular
- **Website all in one place online**
- But people won't 'friend' anything uncool on fb
- Flyers/posters
- Noticeboards
- School newsletters.

Safety

- More policing
- Speeding is an issue
- Wild dogs are an issue.

Jobs

- What looking for- friendly environment and decent money, not boring, requires skill
- Some would like jobs but can't get them
- Not a huge issue for this school but huge issue for kids at St Josephs.

Transport

- Cabs specifically for young people or teens
- Better pathways and footpaths
- Safer buses and afterhours buses
- Youth pick up services
- Weekend buses to Fingal
- Events should have associated transport
- Pick up areas for kids so parents can find them easier.

Mayor for a day ideas (selected)

- Film contest
- Fundraisers to help the community
- Hang out for youth to listen to music
- A concert in Tweed Shire for young people
- Special buses only for kids that are cheaper
- A place where kids can express their ideas with their communities
- A place where kids can get good at the things they love
- Make Kingscliff a free wi-fi town
- Annual under 18 concert
- Bring back the Cabarita Youth Centre
- Make a monthly camp out for students
- Clean the public toilets and repair facilities
- A safety house for kids
- Give kids a day off for CAPA
- Hold a dance crew battle (comp).

Appendix 5 St Joseph Youth Services Workshop

Issues

- High rental prices
- TICA rental black list
- Crappy jobs
- Too competitive to get jobs
- Can't get license, don't have access to cars (therefore jobs, or education etc)
- Unsafe roads (pottholes)
- Lack of opportunity for quality employment,
- Difficult to improve skills and education - busy worrying about basic necessities - housing, income,
- No pathways to fulfilling jobs. Recommendation would be mentors, fairer opportunities, more education and better paid apprenticeships opportunities for disadvantaged.

They want

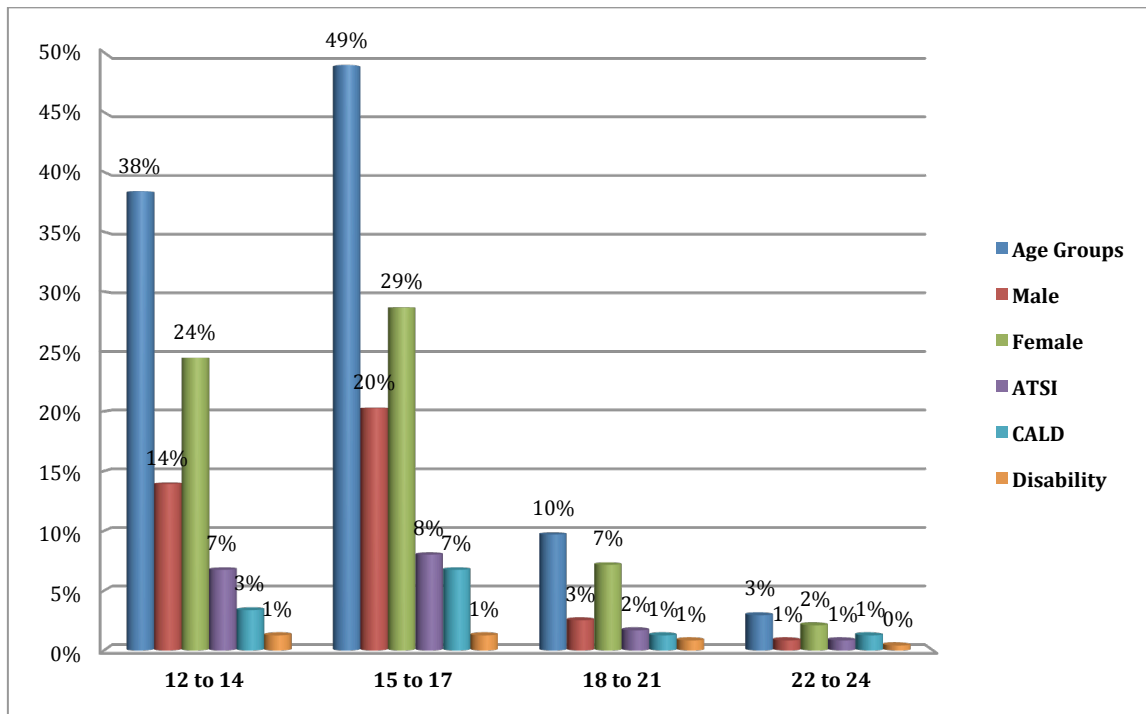
- Subsidised Housing
- Crisis accommodation
- Turn vacant shop front into creative spaces
- Would like a live music venue like the shed
- Building relationships with businesses - encouraging businesses to support youth through paid mentorships. Educate businesses to be more responsible to their communities.
- Keen on youth driven event or festival for local businesses. Opportunity for youth to learn about budgeting, use and develop skills and ideas, workshops about barriers of being young so businesses could understand what it is like to be young. At the festival youth would share real life stories with older generations. Paid roles and some volunteer roles able to use subcommittees
- More support for their ideas
- Better paid traineeships
- Support/mentoring not bullying
- More youth housing and crisis housing
- Cooler ways to engage and have your say
- Don't paint all young people with same brush
- More positive stories about youth by youth - cadet journalists
- More info about drugs and alcohol - tips ie recovery position, one friend stays sober etc - not trying stop us from doing it but giving us information
- More youth allowance for kids under 20 earn and learn - Centrelink penalises kids who earn, no incentive.

Confidence and Awareness

- Need more awareness of their own rights as young people (eg the bus driver must let you on - knowing that they legally have to)
- Young people need ways to feel safe in their own skin
- Community perception adjustment required - young people are great, not trouble makers
- More awareness of opportunities that are out there
- Hard to say no to peer pressure
- Suicide, mental health, safety, violence bullying, walking home at night, young people being confident to speak out.

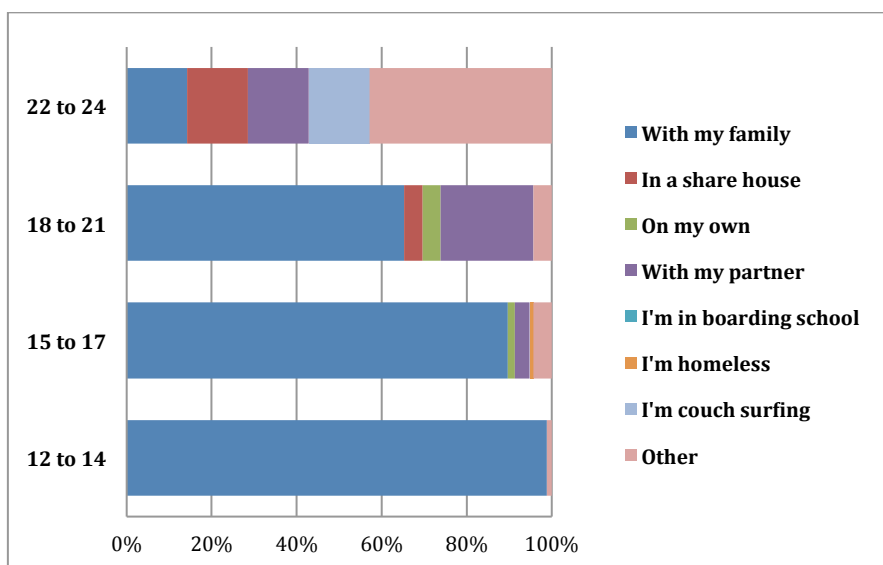
Appendix 6 Youth survey outcomes

DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS



- 87% of respondents were between 12 and 17 years (207 respondents)
- 62% were female and 38% male
- 18% Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander
- 12% Culturally or linguistically diverse background,
- 3% have a disability

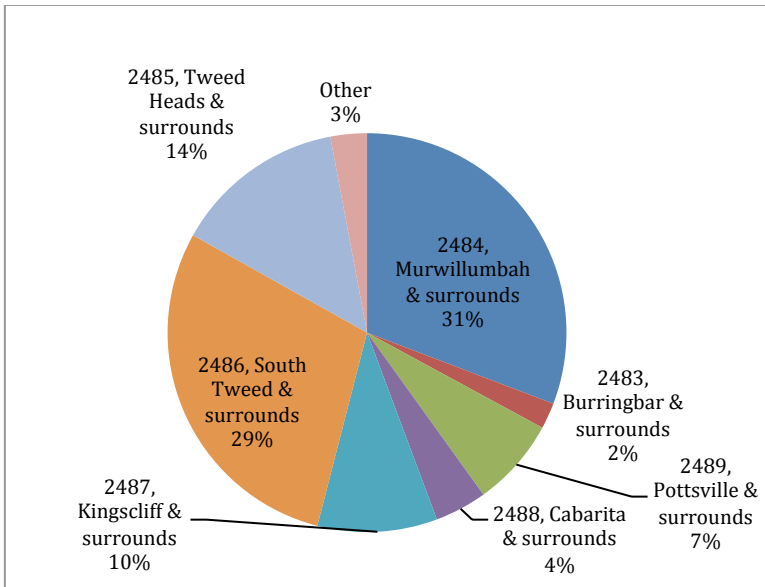
WHERE RESPONDENTS LIVE, BY AGE



- The majority of respondents aged 12 to 17 live with their families.

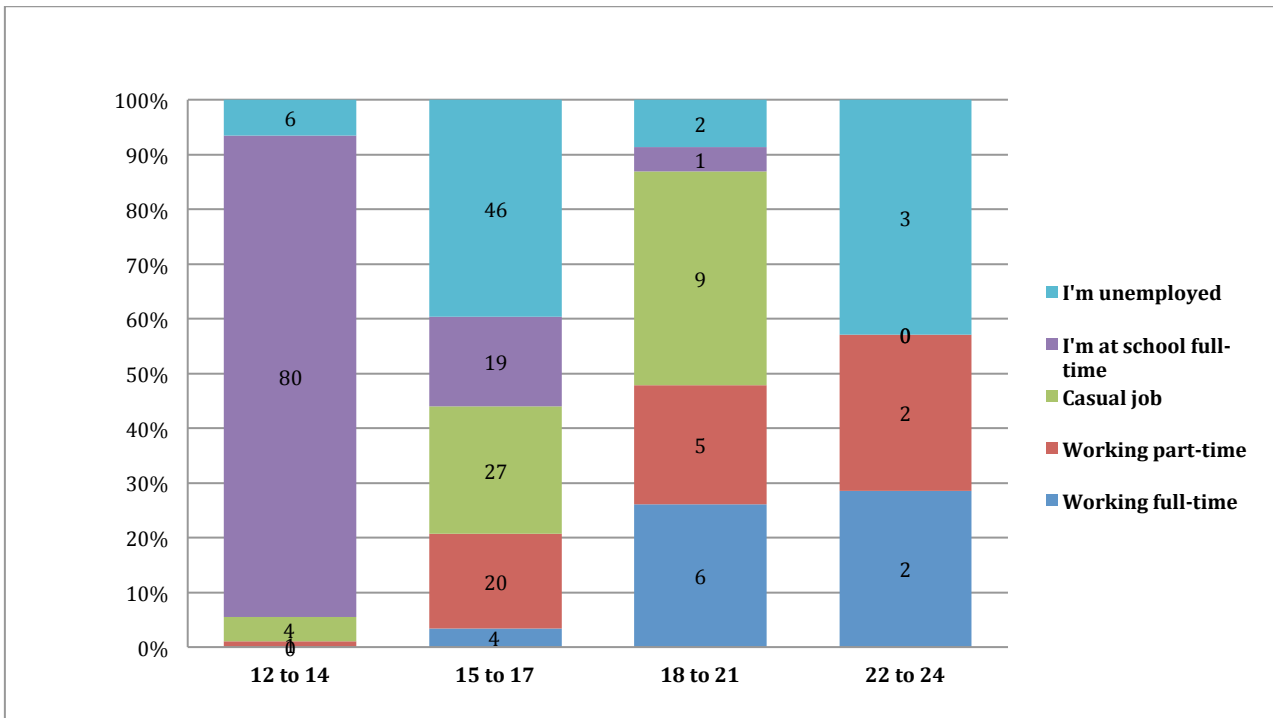
- For respondents aged 22 to 24 there was a mix of living arrangements including family, share house, partners, couch surfing and other arrangements.

SUBURBS RESPONDENTS LIVE IN



- 31% are from Murwillumbah and surrounds, 29% from South Tweed and surrounds, 14% from Tweed Heads and surrounds and the remainder from other suburbs.

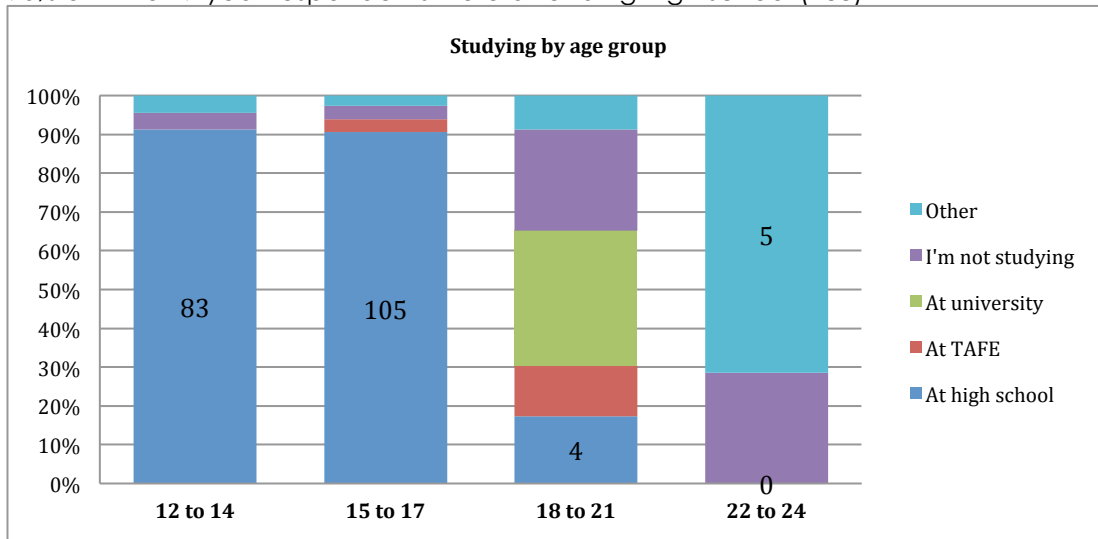
CURRENTLY WORKING BY AGE GROUP



- 47% of young people aged 12 to 17 were at school full time
- 25% of young people aged 12 to 17 years were unemployed.
- 16% of 18 to 24 year olds were unemployed.
- 80% of 18 to 24 year olds were employed either casually, part time or full time.

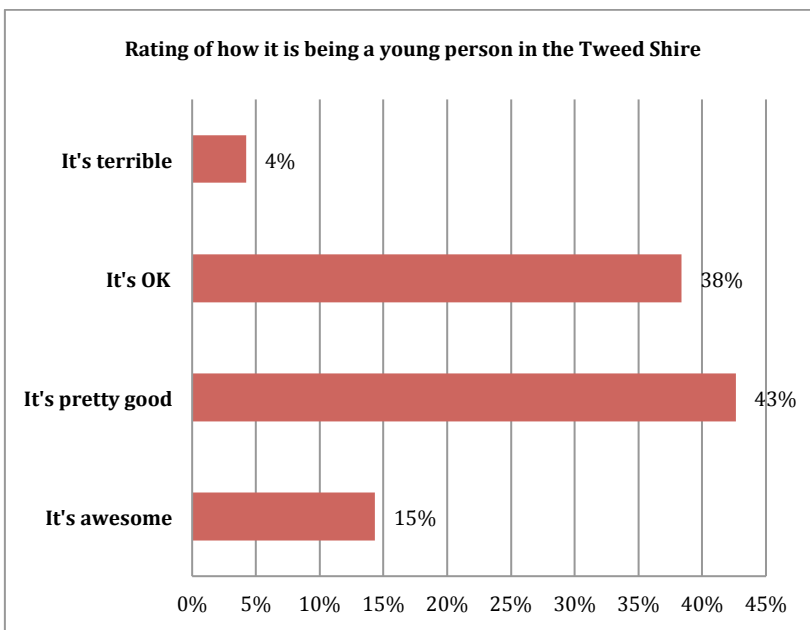
STUDYING BY AGE GROUP

- 90% of 12 to 17 year respondents were attending high school (188)



- 37% of 18 to 24 year respondents were at University of TAFE (11)

Q1. How do you rate being a young person in the Tweed?



When asked how they rated being a young person in Tweed Shire,

- 15% (36) said "awesome",
- 42% (101) "pretty good",
- 39% (93) "ok", and
- 4% (10) "terrible"

Select reasons why people said it's awesome:

- You can go for a surf then hop out, get changed and go to the skate park. Local movie theatres, beaches , youth centres and a lot of good people.
- Because I like going to the beach with my friends.

- I think that living in the Tweed is pretty good because the community is really friendly and the facilities are brilliant eg. Art Gallery, pool, library.
- Because we live in such a varied environment. We have the lush rain forests around the Murwillumbah area and Uki. Then we have the pristine coast of Coolangatta 25 minutes away. Also we are not far from anything really. We have huge shopping centers half an hour away.
- I love the environment and the culture of our area, particularly in Murwillumbah. However I think that the Tweed area is a bit dodgy and I never feel safe especially at night.

Select reasons why people said it's pretty good:

- Laid back lifestyle, facilities, location.
- I see many great aspects, the environment, the culture, sporting facilities but I also see negative aspects like the lack of jobs for young people, the abuse of drugs and alcohol in close proximity to the public and some activities being unavailable.
- There is beautiful land and sporting/artistic opportunities however there is a number of grotty public places.
- People in the community judge you as most teenagers in the Tweed area are quite aggressive and immature. But the beaches, my family and friends are great.
- Because there is a few fun youth facilities such as the shops and movies etc. but there is a lot of graffiti and "dirty" places around and in Tweed.
- There is beautiful land and sporting/artistic opportunities however there is a number of grotty public places
- Nice area. Dodgy people.
- Most of the things in Tweed is alright. It's only the people that throw rubbish around and why some of the kids smash glasses and break everything.
- My friends and family is great here. I love my school and my education is good. I have a job where I got promoted to a higher rank position. Some of the people in Tweed are quite aggressive and ruin a lot of opportunities for us people who do the right thing.

Select reasons why people said it's ok:

- Because there isn't much to do and you can't go anywhere with friends without cops thinking you're a gang.
- A lot of bad influences and the people in it make it hard to be around.
- It's ok, but there is not enough places for us to be. So that is why everybody hangs out at Knox Park and skate park.
- The Tweed has potential to be great, however there is not a lot of pride from people living here – especially youth. With the right improvements I think that Tweed area could be really great.
- They promise us stuff like fix the skate park or the toilets and yet they don't do it and I wish that they would do it because we get so happy and excited and then they let us down.
- I think it could be really good but there doesn't seem to be enough people involved in making it better. The youth's voice is not heard or listened to enough.
- There is basically nothing to do because all the good things have been vandalised by the stoners.
- Because the positives are messed by the negatives. The skateparks are full of drugs, alcohol and violence.

Select reasons why people said it's terrible:

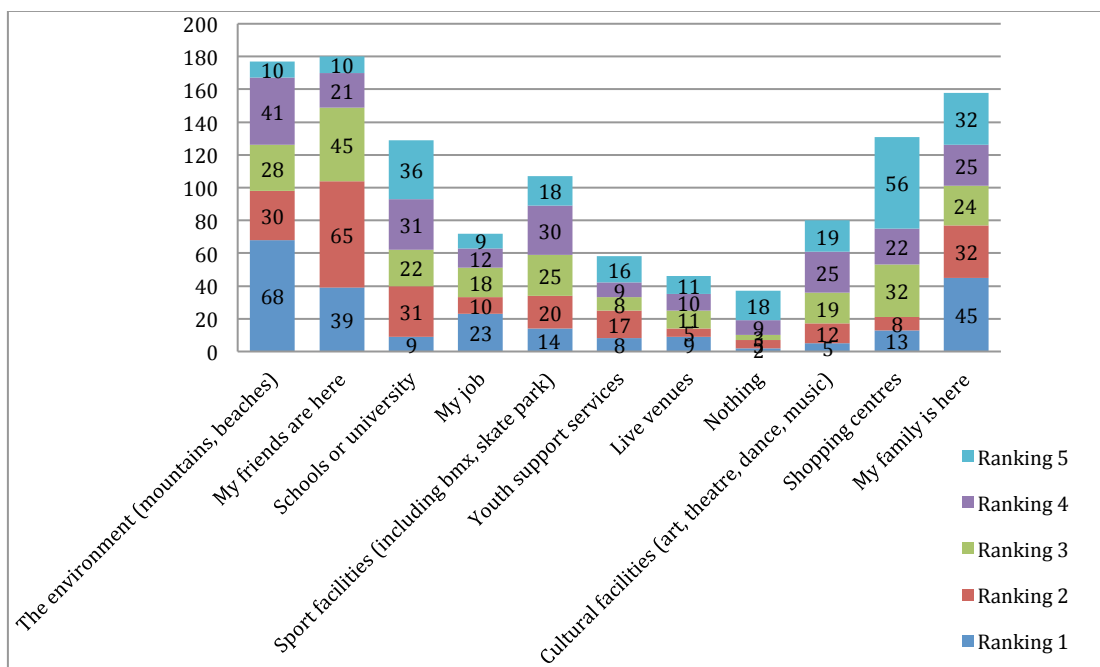
- Being stereotyped as a being a 'teenager' or something else gives less opportunities"

- I really value living in such a beautiful and open area however I believe there is a much room for improvement in terms of catering for young people. We are very isolated and thus, the work ethic in the area is subsequently poorer. Students would be inclined to strive harder at school if they had an understanding of what they were competing against in the HSC. We need to allow young people the opportunity to be involved in programs which are centred in metropolitan areas. Those who endeavour to be involved in such programs should be better recognised for their efforts. Many feel that such achievements are impossible due to financial constraints....I believe that young people in Tweed feel isolated from the political system, however clearly attempts to combat this issue are being instigated such as this 'Speak Out' campaign and the Advisory Council which I understand to be underway.
- There are no activities in the local area for kids that are teenagers, which leads to them relocating to streets to drink & causing trouble. Kids need a safe place that's "cool" to hang out at these kids need to feel like they do mean something & be given respect as well not just being told show respect to elders as society has changed.
- In short: We need more constructive youth facilities, more caring adults to help guide young minds, educational programs that actually cater to the needs of kids individual needs, and to find some way to create a better overall attitude towards Tweed Heads.

Q2. What are the five things you like most about living in Tweed Shire?

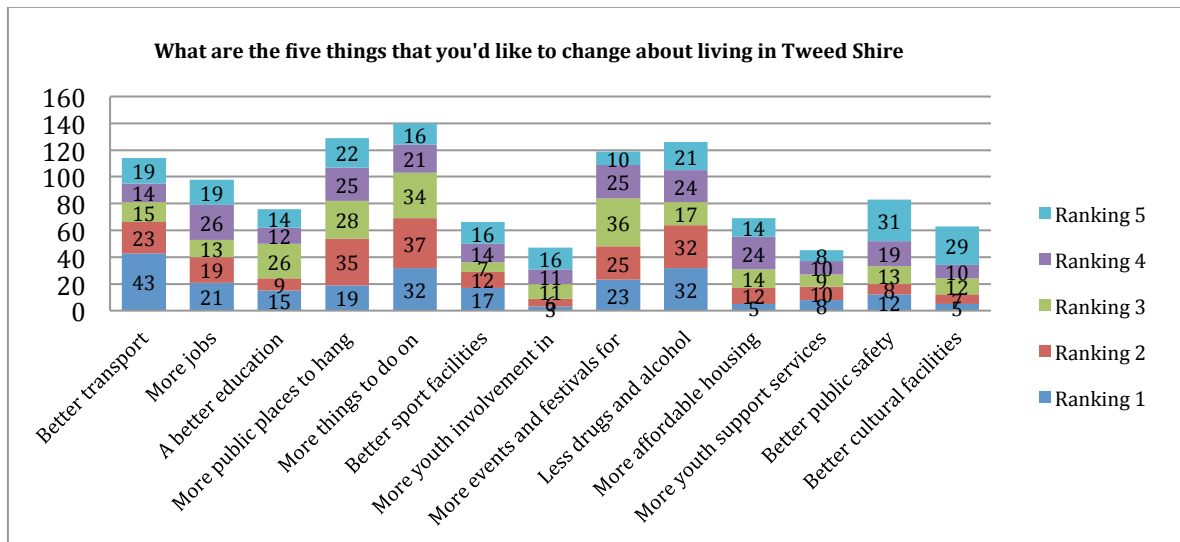
The most commonly liked things about Tweed were:

- Friends – 104 ranked this 1st or 2nd 180 ranked in top 5.
- The environment,(mountains, beaches) 98 ranked this 1st or 2nd. 177 ranked it in top 5
- Family – 77 ranked this 1st or 2nd, conversely. 158 ranked in top 5.



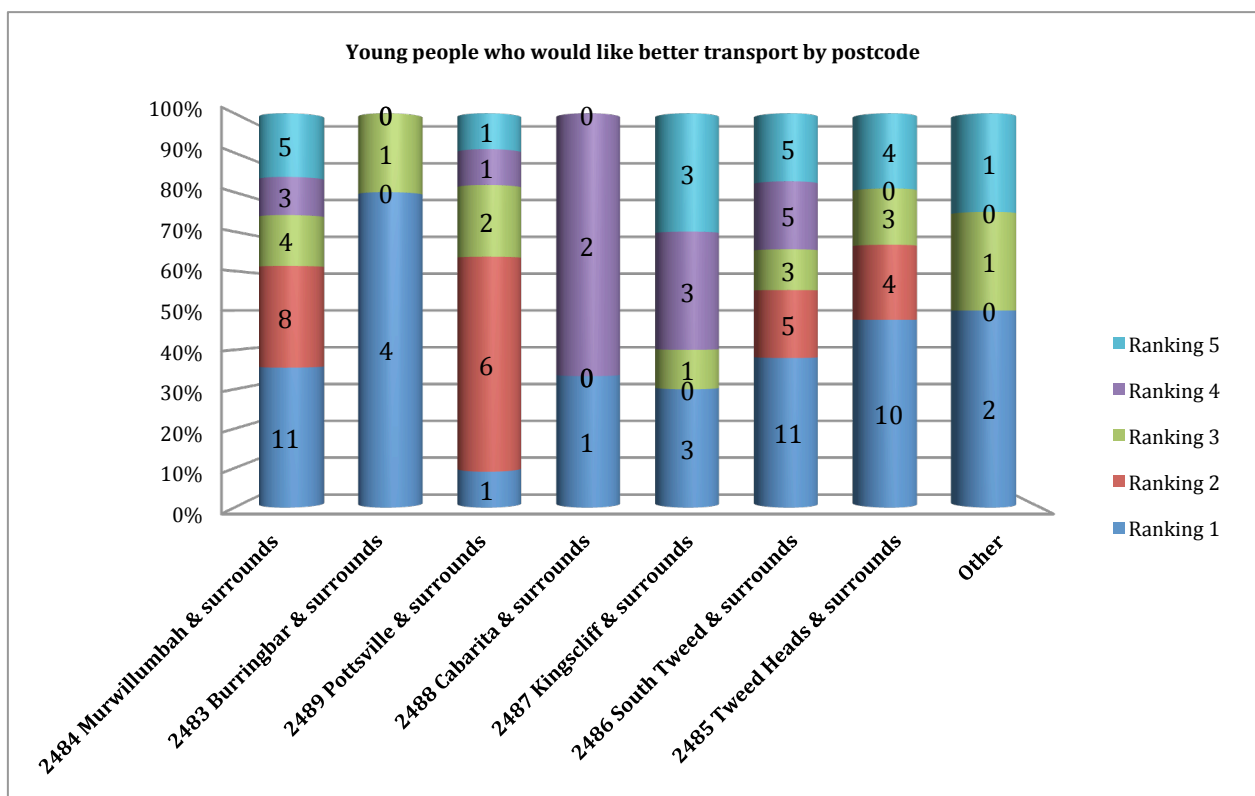
Q3. What are the 5 things you'd like to change about living in the Tweed

- More things to do – 69 ranked this 1st or 2nd
- Better transport – 66 ranked this 1st or 2nd
- More public places to hang out – 54 ranked this 1st or 2nd
- Less drugs or alcohol – 64 ranked this 1st or 2nd



Q3A. Young people who'd like better transport

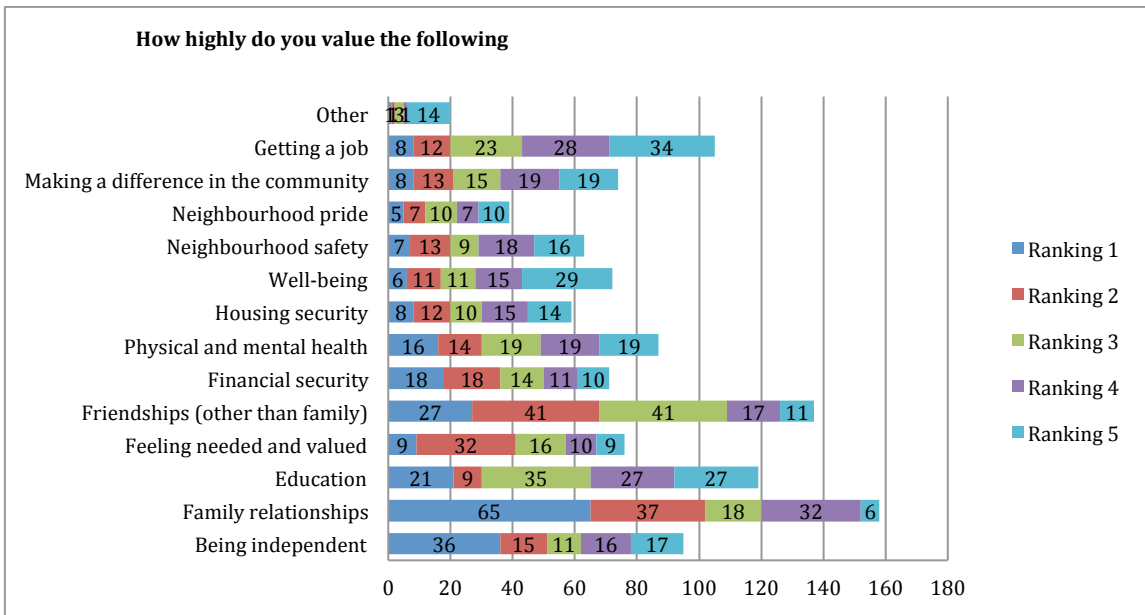
Respondents from Murwillumbah and surrounds, Burringbar and surrounds, South Tweed and surrounds, and Tweed Heads and surrounds ranked the need for better transport the most highly.



Q4. How highly do you value the following?

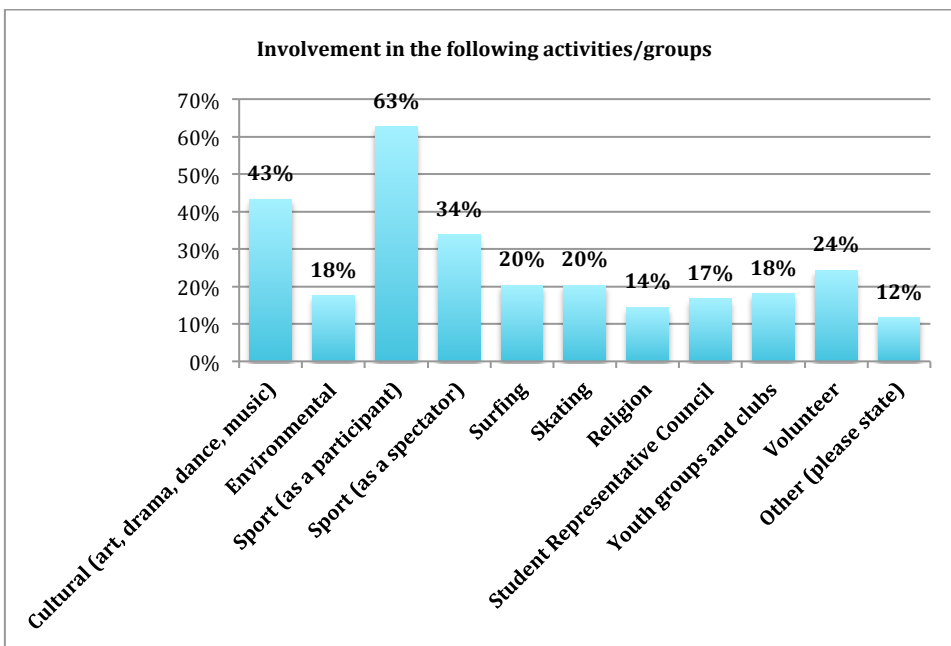
Respondents ranked the following the most highly:

- Family relationships, 102 ranked this as 1st or 2nd ranking.
- Friends – 68 ranked this as 1st or 2nd ranking.
- Being independent – 51 ranked this as 1st or 2nd ranking.
- Education – 30 ranked this as 1st or 2nd ranking.



Q5. Are you involved in any of the following activities/groups?

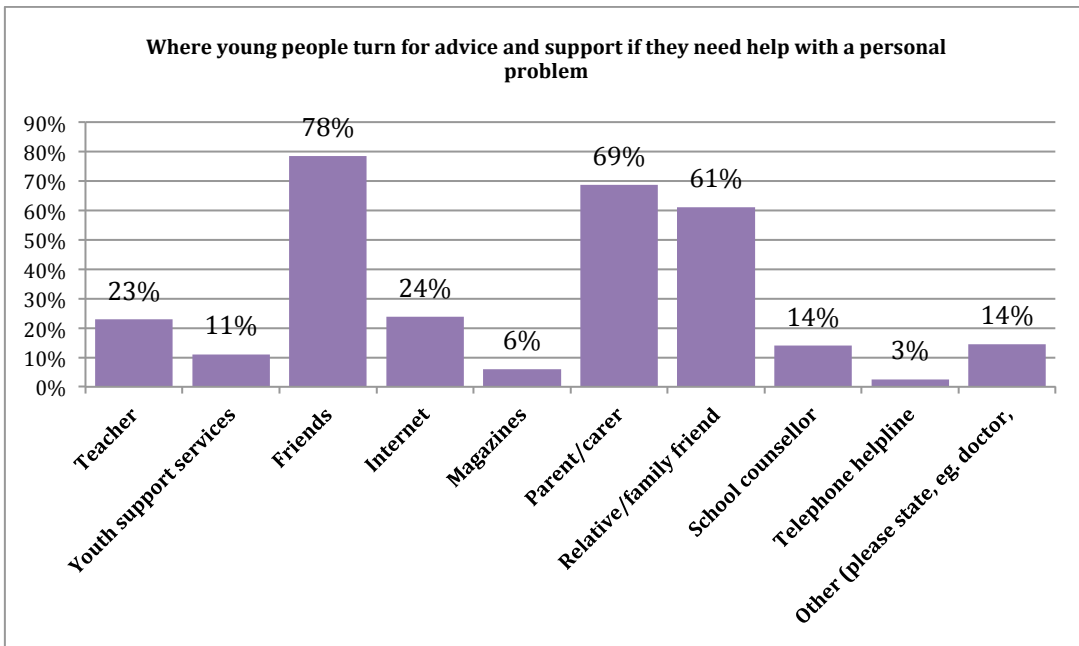
63% participate in a sport, and 43% are involved in a cultural activity (art, drama, dance, music)
Under "other" activities, 5 people said they are involved in Army Cadets



Q6. If you need help with a personal problem, where do you turn for advice and support

Where youth go for advice/support if need help with a personal problem:

- Over 60% said friends; parents or carer; relative/family friend
- Over 20% said teacher; internet
- Only 12% said youth support services, and only 14% said school counsellor
- Under "other" 6 people said Doctor, and 3 people said Church/Church leader



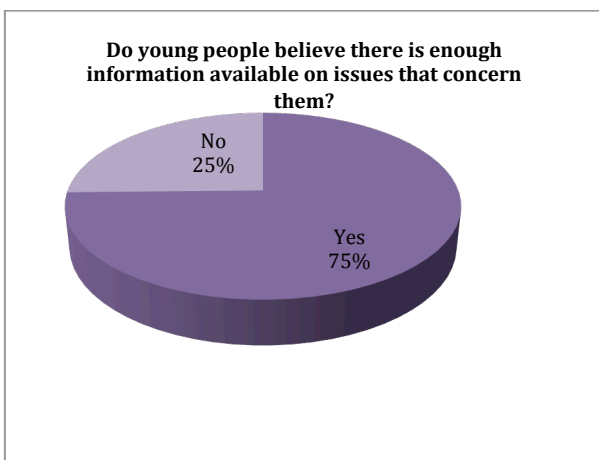
Q7. How concerned are you about the following issues?

The matters that mainly concerned young people were:

- Bullying/emotional abuse – 64 ranked this as 1st or 2nd
- Personal safety – 57 ranked this as 1st of 2nd
- Alcohol – 58 ranked this as 1st or 2nd
- Body image – 52 ranked this as 1st or 2nd

Q8. Is there enough information available on issues that concern you?

75% of young people who completed the survey think there is enough information available on issues that concern them. For those who answered that there isn't enough information available, many stated that they would like more information on drugs/alcohol awareness, and counselling and for stress/emotional issues/depression/abuse.



Q9. List your three favourite places in the Tweed Shire to visit or hang out.

Most common responses:

- Casuarina

- My home
- School
- Beach
- Tweed City – good for shopping and friends
- Coolangatta
- Kingscliff – It's beautiful
- Banora Point
- Tweed Heads
- Movies
- The Jetty/Boys Bay
- Fingal Beach
- Epic Skate
- Murwillumbah Soccer Fields
- TRAC
- Skate Parks
- Pottsville Beach and Creek
- Rainbow Bay
- Jack Evans Boat Harbour – it's been done up and works better
- Byron Bay, Kingscliff, leisure walks around Banora Point
- Terranora Public School Basketball Court
- Murwillumbah Skate Park.

They like these places because:

- They are safe and mostly full of my friends
- Murwillumbah (art gallery, cafes/restaurants, library, etc), Byron Bay (lighthouse, shopping), Fingal (beach).
- I like them the most because you can have a laugh with friends, have a run around and surf and do activities that involve everyone
- Because they are fun and safe
- Shopping Centre: Can buy clothes
- Home, because it is with my family
- It is easy to get to these places
- Easy to get to all these places
- Because I love surfing at the beach and involved in surf life saving. Shopping is fun, movies in entertaining.

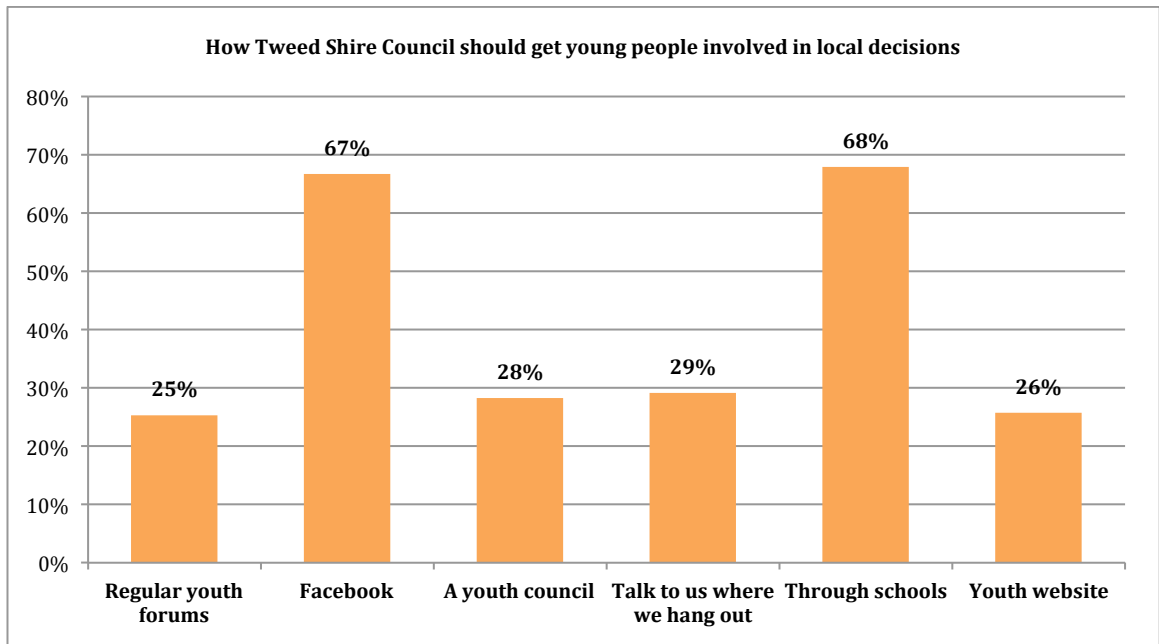
Q10 - Big ideas for making Tweed Shire a better place for young people:

A selection of big ideas

- More live music and events and festivals that under 18s can attend and places or events for under 18s, which are alcohol and drug free
- The place is run down and looks like crap. Money needs to be spent on renovations to everything!!! for example, I don't know why the trees along Minjungbal drive have not been removed and better facilities such as a board walk isn't inserted. This would make the place like a lot more nicer and people would actually go out and use it. I know of heaps of people that go all the way to Robina just to hang because everything is nicer. Better shops better atmosphere less scummy people around and overall more things for youth to do.

- A youth forum and youth council needs to be set up. More schools need to be set up and numbers restricted. Blue light disco's and activities that genuinely interest the youth need to be set up.
- More places which are safe for young people to attend.
- Skate parks need to be improved with half pipes, full pipes, grind rails, bowls and stuff like that even the bmx track needs to be improved.
- Stop kids doing drugs, smoking and drinking, ask permission before building BIG, UGLY, STUPID AND POINTLESS MEDICAL CENTRES.
- Well I think we have to invest more time into our Youth as they will be running this country one day so instilling great values & life long lessons in them would be great as parents don't no days!
- A dream come true would be to set up a Drop in Youth Centre, where counsellors, doctors & youth workers are there working all round. I know it's an expensive thing to run but when you think about it having kids on the streets all hours of the night, people to scared to leave home, kids in MAJOR depression & feeling like no one is there, they are the kids we need to target they need to feel loved, welcomed & like someone cares.
- Activity days eg. link up with local business and run a clinic eg. surfing, soccer, tennis, netball, bmx, skateboarding etc.
- I believe these problems start at home & if the local youth had somewhere were they felt safe, wanted & like they are apart of the world not just some kids that aren't going anywhere would solve a lot of problems.
- A community garden like Nimbin has so our young green thumbs have somewhere to grow things.
- More job opportunities for the youth maybe to be advertised a little better, programs to teach kids how to live a nice healthy life & just to let them no your there & not going to give up on them.
- I think that the places that teens want to hang out in need upgrading
- I think that it would be wonderful to have more youth events and to further establish cultural facilities such as galleries, etc. It would be great to have somewhere young people can study quietly - the libraries in the area are quite outdated and dark.
- I also think that drug and alcohol issues need to be addressed.
- We need to reduce our environmental footprint, by maybe banning plastic bags, like Chillingham did. Also the schools need upgrading, especially the public high schools.
- More community / family events.
- Get a Youth Centre that isn't in a church.

Q11. How do you think Tweed Shire Council should get young people involved in local decisions



How Tweed Shire Council should get young people involved in local decisions:

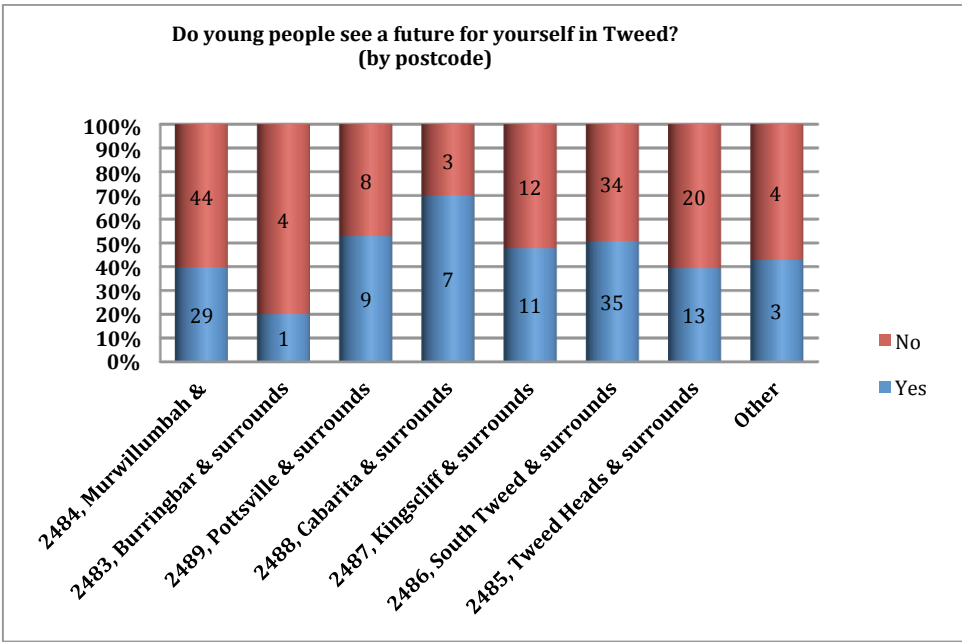
- Over 60% said Facebook; through schools
- Over 25% said regular youth forums; a youth council; talk to us where we hang out; youth website.

Other ideas

- Have group planning days at local youth centres for kids to come and share their thoughts. Parents can come and be more involved
- Coming to the St Josephs Youth Service
- Organise days were you come into schools and give a presentation about the Tweed and hand out brochures
- A newspaper written by young people, for young people?
- Local events for young people would unite the community and could incorporate questionnaires about such issues
- We really need our club house finished at Casuarina Hockey Grounds, maybe the council could use it for youth evenings etc
- Both technology and face-to-face interaction are the best means to communicate.

Q12. Do you see a future for yourself in Tweed?

54% of young people do not see a future for themselves in Tweed Shire. 46% of young people do. In Murwillumbah and surrounds and Tweed Heads and surrounds this was more pronounced with 60% of young people not seeing a future in Tweed.



Tweed Youth Strategy workshop

19 June, 9.00am to 1.00pm

1. Who are the young people of Tweed?

The young people of Tweed are diverse. They are in many ways defined by where they live as the area is so spread out across urban, rural, and coastal villages. The area has beautiful natural areas and beaches but many are disconnected from this in live in suburbia or rural areas with no transport out.

Key characteristic of the many youth communities in Tweed Shire are:

- Defined by where they live – geographically diverse
- Stoners – high cannabis use
- Insulated – stay in local area
- Risk taking – get out and travel to Gold Coast
- “Duff” goes to the rural areas
- Surfers
- Alternative lifestyle
- Carers (for siblings and parents)
- Some are angry and frustrated with their life and where they live
- Many are children of single parents
- Inspirational and aspirational – they are tough and resilient and can get through hard times
- Strong Aboriginal identity, Torres Strait and South Sea identity
- Cliques – geography, culture, surfer, skater etc. Some are territorial eg. The Cabba Boys
- They live in a range of communities – and many have a sense of community and belonging
- Unemployed or underemployed
- Displaced by families so find a community within groups of other young people (in the past have been described as gangs but group considered this was hype)
- Skaters
- Justice seeking
- Independent, innovative, initiative
- Peer focused
- Creative (Hot Chilli Drummers, circus skills)
- Sporty and healthy – footy, surf, skating, baseball, hockey, netball, horse riding
- Church goes (Beach Side Church, Vibe, Elevation)
- Northern Rivers is a region of villages which gives it a unique and eclectic social fabric – each small village has a uniqueness and different style to it. This is evident in young people who have a sense of belonging/pride to their place and a pride in their environment.

2. What are the key issues young people face?

The young people of Tweed face a diverse range of issues, and many deal with them with strength and resilience. The emergence of groups of young people hanging out together in “groups” has in many ways eventuated from a lack of local community where they live, or violence, family breakdown or abuse at home and a need to connect to someone and something. The issues are

based on the understanding of services who work with young people who are at risk or facing some form of disadvantage, or personal issue.

The main issues identified are:

- Some young people have a poor family life and drift towards groups. These groups are more prominent in the coastal area and in suburban areas
- Lots of single parent households/ blended families/grandparent carers
- Lots of home grown creative talent. Many are self sufficient and innovative with their creativity because of their isolation – forced to be
- Numerous Independent schools – Steiner, Water People, Hare Krishna operating outside of youth services
- Youth suicide
- High drug use – particularly cannabis. Strong alternative culture here where it is accepted.
- Many young parents and early sexual activity
- Online gaming – an escape for kids facing difficulties, anxiety and depression but makes it worse. The plus side is online communities for loners
- Dangerous long car trips with friends to parties and fun outside of the area – particularly an issue for going to Gold Coast and for rural young people and for Duff goers
- Bullying (there is a Murwillumbah and Tweed Heads Face book page dedicated to this)
- Lack of transport. Some young people have to travel more than an hour on a non-school bus to and from school. Transport is key to getting access to education, employment and recreation
- There is a need for driving lessons and driver education programs specifically targeted to indigenous youth. There are many Indigenous kids who may have the ability to get a learner driver's license however due to generally coming from low socio economic backgrounds they are hindered in progressing to their Red P plates due to no suitable supervising driver (no license or parents are on their P plates) or no vehicle at all being made available to assist the clients in getting their mandatory hours up
- Violence within homes and neighbourhoods. A fear within some young people of being on their own in public places
- Lack of parental control
- Location of youth family services in Lismore is simply too far
- Mental health issues – including dual diagnosis from drug use.
- Cross border – information not collected on families once they cross borders. Also young people can't access crisis accommodation across the Queensland border. But there is no crisis accommodation for youth or any other age group in Tweed Shire
- Only 16 places for 16 to 21 year olds in medium term housing. There are only seven crisis beds for adolescents on the Gold Coast. Many go to Bryon to the Youth House for accommodation and have to lie about where they are from
- There are no pathways to move out of services
- No support to transition young people who need it from primary to secondary school
- While there are only a small number of schools, making it easy to find and engage with young people from a certain area through their schools, they are really big and Kingscliff High is over crowded
- There are a lack of public places young people feel welcome to congregate. People see young people gathering and feel scared
- Suspending young people isn't working. What are they going to do all day? Some like getting suspended to get out of school and some teachers us this as a way to get them out of their class.

- Indigenous retention rates at school are low
- Young people get out of Tweed Shire at 18 – to look for work and to have a change. While this is good that they are becoming independent it is not good that they feel they have no other option
- Issues with literacy and numeracy
- Border issues for funding programs – Government don't want people from across the border accessing their programs
- There has been a lot of growth in the suburbs but this has not been backed up by sufficient infrastructure and services
- There is not enough one-on-one counseling to refer young people to
- Adolescents fall through the child protection gap
- Young people in the villages have no ownership of where they live
- Many young people don't feel proud of where they live. Mentality of *get out* and get out early – that there is no chance for jobs here
- Youth services do not have the capacity to meet the needs of local young people. This is only going to get worse as the population continues to increase. Can't just keep building family housing and not provide anything for young people. Also creates a divide between the haves and have nots
- Need different ways of learning for those who are disengaged from school.

3. Ideas for programs, services, facilities

The group identified a range of priority areas for future programs/services and facilities and also some ideas for the future. Many will of course depend on available funding and partnership building.

- Classes within schools with specific resources for disengaged young people
- Advocacy for improved educational resources at Tweed Heads and Kingscliff High. Need for another school. Kingscliff is so crowded kids are easily suspended
- Need a creatively focused school for all the creative young people in the area (eg. Newtown Performing Arts School)
- Improve local community pride and connections
- Youth Ministry (eg. Growing Up Boulder)
- More outreach focus – less centre based – take the programs and activities to where young people are. Many in rural and villages are not getting services or programs
- Using existing resources such as elders and connecting them with young people
- Utilising local strengths of residents to work with young people (a huge number of retirees with skills to harness)
- More essential youth specific services
- Youth crisis accommodation. More youth housing. But homeless kids don't want to leave the area – their friends etc
- Programs such as Wollumbin Dreaming are great
- Transition programs to move children from years 6 and 7 up to high school
- Work with universities (Griffith) to provide programs that have aspirational outcomes
- Opportunities to learn real skills. Idea to run a program through Nortec to assist the Indigenous Youth to move forward with getting a driver's license, however there have been some issues in regards to funding the initiative and working around the legalities. Not being able to progress to next stage in the licensing process further disadvantages Indigenous people in employment opportunities where a driver's license is a necessary requirement.

- Kids in Communities is aimed at putting a better image forward of young people through local awards
- Events such as the Banana Festival are becoming more popular
- Mental Health Family Fun Day is very successful
- Indigenous youth have strong craving to learn about their culture and history. They grow up disconnected from it with no way of reconnecting. Very little local cultural, indigenous information out there
- Inspirational youth led anti-suicide projects and other initiatives demonstrating youth leadership – Peer mentoring programs, Tweed Youth Times etc
- Youth services would like increased ability to follow up. No use getting back in touch 3 months later and suggesting they come to a program – kids aren't interested
- Need funds to be able to support poorer kids to do extra curricula activities. Should be better collaboration between businesses, council, community and kids
- Become a Child and Youth Friendly cities (UN)
- All inclusive restorative justice in schools
- Brokerage programs targeting young people for housing, education, life skills, uniforms/fees for sports clubs. This would also give youth workers the opportunity to identify a young person in need and act upon this right away rather than just referring them to a group that they may not attend (for example: Kings Cross Youth at Risk Initiative)
- Programs need to be focused on community capacity building and sustainable, not just one offs
- Education for the youth sector to learn as a sector how to plan in an integrated and collaborative way for funding
- Better database of what's happening in the area for young people and also other community activities, groups and services
- There are pockets of money in schools and these need to be accessed for programs. Some for example have funding for school uniforms but in some cases the services have been paying for this
- Funded programs to support young people to travel and get out of home
- Headspace.

Appendix 8 Community Services Survey

23 community services completed the survey.

20% were office-based

6.7% were outreach services and 86.7% were both.

What makes Tweed Shire a good place for young people?

- The environment (93%)
- Young people have friends here (73.3%)
- Access to schools and university (66.7%)
- Over 40% but less than 50% identified: Sports facilities, Youth support services, Young people's families are here.

What are the main issues affecting young people?

- Drugs and alcohol (60%)
- Lack of transport and night and on weekends (60%)
- Over 30% but less than 50% answered – Not enough local employment and training opportunities, not enough youth services and facilities, family breakdown.

Gaps in terms of facilities for young people?

- Youth Centres (85%)
- Over 50% responded, Adventure playgrounds, Cultural facilities, places to hang out safely
- Over 30% answered, Skate parks, bike paths, mountain bike parks/trails, PCYCs.

Ideas for making Tweed a better place for young people?

- More assistance for activities that improve skills for finding work for the unemployed
- Improve transport services
- Have more safe places for the guys to hangout
- Provision of a youth refuge
- Collaboration between service providers.

Barriers preventing improvements from happening?

- Funding and resources
- Transport and access issues.

Ideas for programs or services required to address local youth issues and aspirations?

- A one stop shop for Youth – employment, assistance, activities, outreach Centrelink
- Exercise equipment in a public place like a park. Youth centres where educational programs can be offered
- A monthly Saturday night underage party
- More regular Battle of the Bands
- More evening entertainment and options on weekends. More music and art development programs
- Increased funding for existing services and programs.

Appendix 9 Parents and carers survey

About the surveyed parent/carer

- Mostly mothers (62%) and fathers (20%) surveyed
- Most have a youth living with them full time (72%)
- 60% have one young person living with them and 21%, two young people, 14%, three young people and 6%, three young people
- Almost all of those surveyed speak only English at home (98%), and only a very small portion identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island (2%)
- Largest portion of those surveyed live in Murwillumbah and the surrounding villages (26%). The rest of responses were spread throughout the other areas.

What makes Tweed Shire a good place for young people?

- The environment (85%)
- Over 30% but less than 50% said Friends and family live here, local sporting clubs.

What are the main issues affecting young people?

- Not enough local employment (72%)
- Not enough youth facilities (53.2%)
- Over 30% but less than 50% responded, Drugs and alcohol, lack of transport at night and on weekends, not enough programs and activities at night and on weekends, family breakdown.

Some comments:

"I understand that Tweed has a very high number of Retirees and Seniors living here, however so much of the facilities in the Tweed cater for this age group and nothing else. There is very little to attract younger people to the area or young families. It is only so long that children can be occupied on the playgrounds Council provides in parks before they outgrow these and then move on to what? Every hundred meters in the Tweed there is a bowls club, golf club etc & it seems that the main things provided are playgrounds for very young children or skate parks which only cater for a few of our young people & mostly male. I drove past the Tweed Heads skate park near Heffron Street the other afternoon & there was no / insufficient lighting, & young people trying to skate there as it got dark for something to do. I was originally attracted to the Tweed at the age of 25 due to houses being cheaper and more affordable than the Gold Coast and we loved the beaches, however after living here for 7 years we've come to realise that there is not a lot to do, we tend to go into Coolangatta often as there is a great mix of walking tracks, the beach, cafes & restaurants open for breakfast, lunch & dinner and bands that play. In Tweed, it's very disjointed and feels like whenever there is something being passed through Council that might provide something more for young people to do - eg. the wakeboarding school recently, its squashed by a minority of very vocal locals who don't want things to change. Unfortunately the Tweed feels like its stagnant and that is why younger people are bored or looking to move on."

"I could say yes to most of the above, bullying, violence, internet shame tactics, these kids are bored, we as parents are expected to keep them busy and out of trouble, but unless kids are into the standard hockey/football/soccer, there's really stuff all for them to do without spending a fortune to have them dance or participate in other activities. The non- mainstream kids have very little, nowhere to hang out and nothing much to look forward to. Busy working parents, or lazy drug addled parents (god knows the valley is full of both) are trying to deal with mind numbed internet zombies."

"For our youth to be independent we need regular bus services. The bus services need to accept that until we know it is there and regular that there might not be full buses all the time but that is part of there service right? Don't they get subsidised by the government to do isolated runs?."

Gaps in terms of facilities for young people?

- Places to hang out safely (80%)
- Over 50% answered, Youth centres, cultural facilities (art, theatre, dance and music)
- Over 30% but less than 50% answered, Adventure playgrounds, bike paths, mountain bike parks/trails, PCYCs.

Ideas for making Tweed a better place for young people?

Youth space:

- Start with the skate park in Murwillumbah. It is the hub of anti-social behaviour and kids that are generally interested in using the facility for its intended purpose are exposed to violence, drug and alcohol use and verbal abuse. Something really needs to be done with Knox Park in general. I have a younger child who would like to go the park and play, but it's not a pleasant place to visit
- There can be a multi story not overpriced café with views outside that can be accessed as a meeting up place and can be used creatively
- Create a venue or place that is safe possibly with mentoring programs that get kids involved with groups or peers that help them have better social skills and ownership of the community.
- Not to base things around bars or alcohol, but I feel there needs to be more cruisy hang out spaces
- I feel there is a need for places where youth can go and hang out in a safe, alcohol and drug free environment on the weekends that is not costly and transport is available. The bus situation is not very good. There is a need for youth clubs with simple areas for activities like ping-pong, games and just somewhere to hang out with others.

Cultural facilities

- From my experience in being in the 'young people' age bracket not so long ago, and from seeing what my sister is up too here, once you hit the ages of 17 upwards you are not that interested in Youth Centres or PCYCs anymore - those type of places are great for younger teens. The older teens and young adults desperately need things to do & I think this is where more cultural facilities relating to dance / music / venues with bands playing etc. are much needed
- Is there a youth theatre group Youth orchestra - talk to Barry Singh
- I think that young people need access to a broader range of activities and safe stimulating constructive environments. Young people are generally far more intelligent creative and motivated than society gives them credit for.

Active/sports initiatives:

- This town DESPERATELY needs and indoor sports stadium [sports facility/centre]!
- Centre of youth...that enlighten[s] their minds to new and different outdoor experiences other than inside on Facebook whilst allowing Facebook and email to spread the word

- The Council to employ an activities officer to organise regular different weekend activities, whether outdoor in Knox Park or whatever, each weekend exploring outdoor activities, sport, skills, animals to touch and care for occasionally etc.
- An adventure playground somewhere along the coast would be great, as my eldest has outgrown kids parks now. Bike paths all over the Tweed would be a fantastic asset - not just for youth!
- People at this age have energy to burn & are looking into healthy lifestyles (as opposed to drinking)
- Sports beyond the mainstream, give these kids an indoor sports venue, foster healthy sport and exercise options.

A voice for youth:

- I feel young people need more of a say.... [they] don't know they can or don't write in to the newspaper to have a voice that is recognised. They need to be approached in other ways...Perhaps keeping them in the loop through the Facebook page.

General ideas:

- Develop and lead a culture of activity based around sport, family, arts and entertainment.
- Job networks have GOT to help ALL the Tweeds young
- I would like to see the Tweed Shire set a high benchmark and find a sustainable way to generate a stimulating environment for young people
- This is a diverse area and the talent of some of our young people in creative, musical and sporting endeavours is outstanding. We need to support these young people in the pursuit of these interests in any way we can.