

# Planning for Youth in the Shire of Mundaring

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## Youth Action and Implementation Plan

2008-2011

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**Shire of Mundaring**  
7000 Great Eastern Highway Mundaring WA 6073

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## Introduction

### **Principle Statement**

“The Shire of Mundaring aims to maintain and improve the quality of life of its residents by creating a community in which information, services, facilities, programs, employment, decision making processes and other activities are inclusive, open and available to all residents, including young people, in an effort to provide equal opportunities, rights and responsibilities and the equitable distribution of resources according to need.”

Young people are a valued and important part of any community. They are youthful, energetic, strong and open to new ideas and technology. Young people can challenge the way our community functions - in both positive and negative ways and many times throughout history have provided the impetus for political and social change.

In a healthy community, young people are visible, active, outspoken and loud - they are “Seen and Heard”. They are accepted and supported. They are included in decision making, community activities and events and are provided with the opportunities and facilities they need to develop into healthy, happy adults.

The Shire of Mundaring, through the development and implementation of this plan, seeks to ensure strategies that address the needs of young people in our shire are:

- embedded into plans for 2008-2011
- adequately resourced and
- implemented in a professional manner that includes young people wherever possible.

## Definitions

The following definitions are important in order to understand this document:

<b>Mundaring</b>	The physical place within the geographic boundary of the Shire of Mundaring Local Government, with a focus on the people and all aspects of the built and natural environment. Unless specified it refers to the whole of Mundaring, not the townsite of Mundaring.
<b>Council</b>	The collective body of elected members of the shire (the Shire President and councillors).
<b>Shire</b>	The organisation, comprising councillors and staff, which has responsibility for administering Mundaring in accordance with the Local Government Act.
<b>Community</b>	All people who live in, work in and/or visit Mundaring.
<b>Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC)</b>	The Regional Council, comprising six member local governments: the Shires of Mundaring and Kalamunda; Cities of Swan, Bayswater and Belmont; and Town of Bassendean.
<b>Seen and Heard</b>	Seen and Heard Youth programme funded by the Shire of Mundaring and delivered to the community by Parkerville Children and Youth Care.
<b>PACS</b>	Parent Adolescent Counselling Service

## Geographic Location and Features

The Mundaring shire covers an area of 65,500 hectares, of which approximately 13,500 hectares are developed. The boundary commences 18 kilometres from Perth at Bushby Street, Midvale. The Administrative Centre in Mundaring is situated 32 kilometres from Perth on Great Eastern Highway.

From the flat land of the coastal plain at Midvale, the Shire extends eastwards over the Darling Scarp for a distance of approximately 30 kilometres. The southern boundary runs along the Helena and Darkin Rivers. The shire consists of a number of small townships, which have grown at different points along the now disused eastern railway line and along the Great Eastern Highway.

Development is concentrated mainly in these town sites and surrounding areas and on the slopes of the Darling Scarp through Greenmount, Swan View, Darlington and Boya.

The shire has three major senior schools within its boundaries, these are:

- Eastern Hills Senior High School
- Swan View Senior High School
- Helena College

Swan Christian College, La Salle College and Governor Stirling Senior High School, which are located in the City of Swan, also educate many young people from within this shire.

A feature of the shire is the natural bush environment and open space. The freedom and lifestyles that this environment provides are highly valued by the young people that live here.



Map: Shire of Mundaring

## Links with the Shire of Mundaring Strategic Plan

The “Strategic Directions - A Plan for the Future. January 2007-June 2010” is the Shire of Mundaring’s guiding document. It identifies matters of importance to the community and provides clear direction on how the shire can best address these matters, within clear timeframes and available resources.

### **Vision**

The Shire of Mundaring has as its vision the creation of:  
*A vibrant community that provides opportunities and support for people to enjoy a rich mix of sustainable hills lifestyles.*

### **Purpose**

The Shire of Mundaring has as its purpose:  
*To work within the community to provide leadership and service which sustain and enhance a diverse quality of life.*

### **Key Strategic Objectives**

- Encourage environmentally sustainable development
- Increase business and employment opportunities in the Shire of Mundaring
- Plan and cater for the requirements of groups within the community with particular needs
- Improve communication and engagement with the community
- Plan for and achieve financial sustainability
- Further develop best practice corporate governance
- Implement flexible workforce strategies which attract and retain competent staff and protect staff health and well being.
- Develop an organisational culture focused on meeting community needs

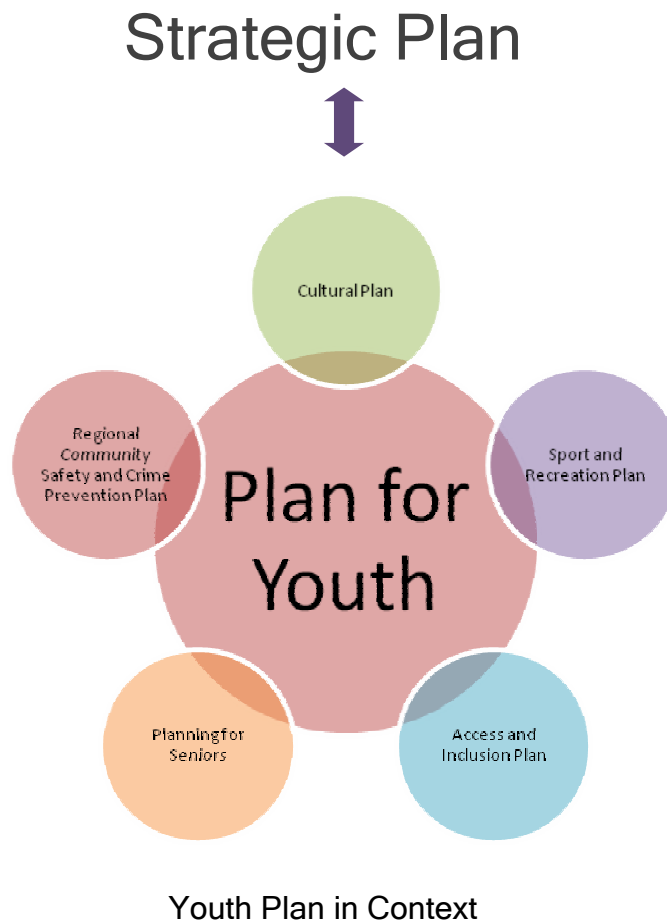
### **Values**

In order to implement the vision and strategic objectives identified in the strategic plan, the shire will be driven by the following values:

*Excellence in customer service*  
*Innovation and continuous improvement*  
*Integrity, respect and team spirit*

## Links with other plans

The shire has other plans which further break down the direction provided by the Strategic Plan. This Planning for Youth document provides specialised information about the unique needs of young people within the community. The information in this plan has been gathered from talking with local young people and service providers as well as reviewing other youth studies, surveys and reports. It sits under the umbrella of the shire's Strategic Plan but is also interrelated with other shire plans. See the diagram below:



This Planning for Youth document will be used by councillors, shire staff and other local service providers to inform decisions and future directions. It will ensure that young people are represented throughout council processes and planning. It will provide clear instructions that ensure young people:

- are given information
- have access to essential resources
- have opportunities to develop their skills
- are listened to, valued and encouraged to participate in decision making processes.

## Young People and Local Government

Over the years, local governments across the country have taken on a greater role in recognising and planning for the requirements of young people. This has been a result of two key influences:

1. The withdrawal of state and federally provided services for young people.
2. The increased expectation from community members that local governments provide appropriate services and facilities for all age groups, with a particular focus on young people, seniors and people with disabilities.

In many ways, local governments are well placed at the community level to monitor available services, identify gaps in these services and develop locally relevant solutions. Similarly, the strengths and resources of community members, organisations and groups are identified and enhanced for the benefit of all concerned.

## Role of the Shire of Mundaring in Youth Affairs

The Shire of Mundaring recognises the importance of creating a positive community in which young people are valued and supported. Past practices which may have excluded young people from planning processes have given way to an environment in which councillors and shire staff actively seek and receive feedback from young people. This has been made easier by the strong connection and open channels of communication between the shire and young people that are linked to the Seen and Heard and other local youth services. Seen and Heard serves as a youth friendly, accessible and responsive interface between young people in the community and the more formal, process and governance focussed Shire of Mundaring.

In order to provide clear information to the community about how the shire can work to support youth focussed services and projects it is important to identify the precise role/s that the Shire of Mundaring will undertake. Adhering to the following roles ensures that the shire works within its financial and staffing capacity while still producing positive outcomes for the community as a whole. These roles are:

- **Leadership and Co-ordination** - The shire will work to monitor available youth services and facilities. Where gaps in services or a lack of essential facilities are identified in consultation with young people and service providers, the shire will take a lead role in co-ordinating the appropriate response. This may involve undertaking tasks such as preparation of funding submissions, co-ordinating meetings and lobbying at a state and/or federal level.
- **Support and Development** - The shire will work to support local service providers and other community groups who seek to deliver positive activities, events or services for young people. Support is provided through a community development approach and may encompass

“hands on help” in the establishment phase, advice on funding opportunities and provision of resources where appropriate.

- **Service Provision** - In some instances, it is appropriate for the shire to take on the role of funding and/or provision of staff to deliver a particular service to the community. Due to finite resources, the shire minimises its involvement in direct service provision and as a result will investigate all other alternatives, such as supporting other agencies to undertake delivery of a service or seeking external funding to cover the costs of staffing.
- **Planning and Policy** - It is essential that the shire develops plans and policies that are underpinned by consultation with the community and uses transparent processes to identify strategies and priorities. Proper planning processes ensure that the needs of various sections of the community are addressed openly and fairly. The shire will regularly review and update plans for young people, to ensure they are being implemented in a timely manner and remain relevant.
- **Advocacy** - in conjunction with the shire’s Seen and Heard Youth Programme (Seen and Heard), the shire will advocate on behalf of young people and service providers to ensure that their concerns can be expressed and considered by decision makers at the local level and beyond.

## Who are Young People?

The period of ‘youth’ is generally defined by the International Year of Youth (1985) definition as being between the ages of 12 - 25 years. In practice, this is often seen as being too broad, particularly in respect of service development. Because of this, the focus of this document is on the issues identified by young people within the Shire of Mundaring between the ages of 12 - 20 years. For the purposes of a working definition, this period is defined as "a period of transition from childhood to adulthood, which closely follows puberty, but extends beyond it for a variable period. It involves biological, psychological and social changes" (Sommer, 1987).

The shire recognises that the age between 12 and 20 years encompasses possibly the most significant transition within the human lifespan, namely that from childhood to adulthood. In order to be successful in this transition a young person is required to meet a range of personal challenges - a process that is most effective when the community is both supportive and understanding of the challenges faced.

## Young People in WA

The 2006 National Survey of Youth, conducted by Mission Australia, has gathered information from 1500 young people from WA. The Western Australian component of this national survey found the following about young people:

Living arrangements:

- The majority of young people live at home with their parents.

Income source:

- Their main source of income is family/parents, with income from employment becoming more common as age increases.

Employment/education:

- 65% percent of young people are studying full time
- 18% of young people are studying part time
- 5% of young people work full time
- 16% of young people work part time
- 26% of young people were unemployed or studying part time while looking for work
- 27% chose not to work.

Values:

- The top 3 things that young people value are family, friendships and being independent
- As young people age, friendships and being independent become less important and are replaced with being financially secure and feeling that they are valued/needed.

Concerns:

- Body image is an area of increasing concern for young people
- Other major concerns include abuse, family conflict, suicide, alcohol and other drugs, school and study problems and bullying/emotional abuse.

Support network:

- Overwhelmingly, young people will turn to their relatives/family friends for advice and support when they have a personal problem. Friends were also identified as a source of information and support by almost 90% of respondents
- The internet and magazines are cited as a major source of information and advice
- Over 80% of young people surveyed thought that there was enough information available on issues that concern them.

Activities:

- Sports, arts/cultural activities and youth clubs/groups are the top three activities young people are involved in. Volunteering is also an activity being undertaken by young people that has increased in frequency over the past 4 years.

For more detailed information on the brief summary presented above, please refer to the National Youth Survey 2006 conducted by Mission Australia. These findings are closely aligned with the overall national results of the survey. Consultation undertaken by Seen and Heard and the shire has also resulted in findings that closely reflect the state trends reported above.

## Young People in the Shire

Please refer to Attachment A for a summary profile of young people in the Shire of Mundaring.

## Progress since 2001

As a result of the 1999 Shire of Mundaring Youth Needs Study and Youth Strategy, which identified numerous gaps in services for local young people, the shire developed the Seen and Heard model. This community development based model has built on existing strengths and resources within the Mundaring community and has been highly successful in engaging local young people and developing partnerships between youth service providers within the community.

Since its launch in April 2002, Seen and Heard has been delivered to the community on behalf of the shire by Parkerville Children and Youth Care. Seen and Heard Youth Development Officers have been guided in their work with the local community by the following principles:

- Working together in partnerships with local service providers, schools and community members
- Local solutions to local problems
- Personal development of young people
- Information dissemination
- Professional behaviour

Generally, Seen and Heard aims to enhance the well being of all young people aged 12-20 who reside within the Shire of Mundaring. The success of the Seen and Heard model has resulted in:

- More events and activities developed for local young people, by local young people
- The development of the Mundaring Youth Peak Body Network of local youth service providers and community representatives. This has led to a more co-ordinated approach to working with local young people
- Increased training opportunities for local young people and youth service providers
- Increased funding for local events, activities and services through the development of successful grant applications
- The development of "The CREW"- a group of young people who volunteer to create events and activities and get involved in lobbying, developing funding submissions and carrying out research and consultation on local issues.

Young people have been heavily involved in large scale shire events such as Trek the Trail and Seniors Week. Seen and Heard link young people into these events as volunteers. Seen and Heard have provided successful youth spaces at the last three Trek the Trail events and other community events such as the Darlington Arts Festival, Chidlow Show and the Swan View Show. Strategies to include young people into future Mundaring Truffle Festivals will also be developed as part of planning for this event.

As well as the development and ongoing funding of Seen and Heard, the shire provides part funding and administration support to the Parent and Adolescent Counselling Service (PACS) (also funded by the Department for Child Protection) which provides professional counselling and support to young people and their families who are experiencing conflict.

In the western suburb of Swan View, the shire has a lead role in the development of a fresh, new youth facility that will house a range of youth services including the Swan View Youth Service. This major development will be well placed to provide support to some of the more “at risk” young people living in this area as well as the general youth population. The shire currently contributes funding to support a recreation program which operates through the Swan View Youth Service.

The shire has supported junior sport through the provision of subsidised facility fees for junior teams. Over the past 10 years, the shire has also committed to the development of skate parks and dirt jump tracks in selected areas of the Shire of Mundaring. There are now 3 permanent skate facilities situated in Mount Helena, Darlington and Mundaring. High quality dirt jump tracks have also been developed in Darlington, Chidlow and Woorloo.

The shire supports the development of youth art projects through the contribution of funding to the Mundaring Arts Centre and the Katharine Susannah Pritchard Writers Centre. This funding is used to support youth participation in local arts based activities and writing development workshops. The Mundaring Arts Centre has involved young people in Youth Week celebrations, the Worn Out Worn Art project, the Art Acquisition Scheme and sculpture workshops for Trek the Trail. Katharine Susannah Pritchard Writers Centre has involved young people in the annual Book in a Day challenge, and various writing groups and workshops.

In 2004, the shire developed the Youth Development Awards (YODA). This award is a contribution of \$500 from the Shire of Mundaring, towards the development of a skill or passion in a young person - be it sporting, artistic or a hobby. It recognises the diverse activities which engage young people from the shire, and acknowledges that the cost associated with these activities can be prohibitive to young people and their families. Over the past three years the shire has supported over 40 young people (as individuals or part of a team) to further their areas of interest through travel to competition, purchase of specialised equipment, or participation in training opportunities.

## Development of the Plan

The development of the strategies outlined in this document involved the following key tasks which were undertaken during 2007 and early 2008:

### ***Phase One – Consultation With Young People***

Launching Into Youth Community Consultation conducted by "The CREW" and Seen and Heard.  
A follow up survey was also conducted in November 2007 to gain clarification on some of the findings.

### ***Phase Two – Consultation with Service Providers***

Survey of and discussion with people who provide services to young people within the shire.

### ***Phase Three – Document Review***

Review of statistics, literature review and incorporation of relevant material from other shire reports.

### ***Phase Four – Identification of Key Areas***

Collation of all information, review of policy statements

### ***Phase Five – Review/ Feedback period.***

### ***Adoption of Plan by Council***

## Phase One - Launching Into Youth Community Consultation With Young People

A key document that has informed the development of this Youth Plan is the Launching Into Youth Community Consultation Report to the Shire of Mundaring. This report was developed by The CREW, with support from Seen and Heard staff. The CREW developed and facilitated a number of innovative consultation methods which gathered valuable information from local young people.

Local young people were encouraged to identify strengths and assets as well as weaknesses and gaps, share their vision for the community, and give

general feedback and opinions. Innovative strategies, which appealed to young people, were used to provide fun and interesting ways for young people to have their say. These included a “Fridge Fest”, use of Voice Boxes and Backchat! sessions. Overall, 329 young people participated in consultation.

For more detailed information on the innovative methods used to gain input from local young people as well as the outcomes, please refer to the Launching Into Youth Community Consultation- Report to the Shire of Mundaring prepared by the Seen and Heard Youth Programme.

The completed Launching Into Youth Community Consultation report was presented to council where the document was endorsed in September 2007. The results of this consultation have been incorporated into this Planning for Youth document.

In order to further clarify information obtained through the Launching into Youth Community Consultation, a follow up survey was conducted by shire community development officers in November 2007. This survey was completed by 130 young people and gathered further information specific to health services, emergency accommodation, transport and information requirements.

## Phase Two - Consultation with Service Providers

Consultation was conducted during November 2007. Local service providers were invited to participate in the development of the plan through:

- Completion of a written survey that elicited their views on what is working well, emerging trends and gaps in services for young people.

All youth service providers on the Mundaring Youth Peak Body Network were invited to complete a survey. Seven local service providers including representatives from both public high schools, a representative from local church youth groups and staff from youth counselling/drop in services chose to participate.

- Participation in discussion at the November Mundaring Youth Peak Body meeting. Further informal feedback was obtained from local police, youth work students, school chaplains and school nurses.

A review of meeting notes for the past 4 peak body meetings was also conducted to ascertain areas of concern, trends and possible project ideas.

## Phase Three - Review of Statistics and other Reports and Studies

Background research and recommendations made in the following reports and studies have been incorporated into the development of this Planning for Youth document;

- Launching Into Youth Community Consultation -Report to Shire of Mundaring (2007).

- National Survey of Young Australians 2006 key issues and emerging trends - Western Australian Summary (Mission Australia, 2006).
- Review of the Swan View Youth Service 2005 (Other Gee & Rajan, 2005).
- Development of a Regional Community Crime Prevention Plan (Draft) 2007-2010 (Matrix Consulting 2007).

#### Phase Four - Identification of Key Areas

Throughout the consultation phase, issues that have been identified can generally be allocated to one of the following areas:

- Health and wellbeing
- Transport
- Culture and the arts
- Public space and recreation
- Education, training and employment.

These key areas have become the focus of strategy development for this plan.

#### Phase Five - Policy Review/Feedback Period

The draft Planning for Youth document was distributed for feedback between December 2007 to January 2008. Local youth service providers, councillors and shire staff were invited to comment. All feedback was incorporated where practicable.

#### Phase Six - Adoption by Council

The document was presented to the February 2008 meeting of council for consideration/adoption.

# YOUTH STRATEGIES

## Health and Wellbeing

The shire takes a holistic approach to the health and wellbeing of its young people and as such, seeks to support the availability of youth friendly, accessible services, information and education that promote individual and community health.

### Background

The shire takes a holistic approach to health and wellbeing. As such, it recognises that the term “health” encompasses the physical, emotional, mental and social wellbeing of its young people.

It is recognised that youth is a period generally characterised by good health. Consultation undertaken throughout the development of this plan indicates that the majority of young people are confident in their knowledge of how to make positive, healthy choices and where to find information if they need it.

For some young people however, specific risk taking behaviours that are more prevalent during adolescence can increase their risk of serious health issues. Often the extent of risk taking behaviours is impacted upon by factors such as isolation, depression, boredom and a lack of life support relationships. These risk taking behaviours may include alcohol or drug use, unhealthy eating patterns or unsafe sexual behaviour. They may also be exacerbated by underlying mental health issues and vice versa.

As becomes more evident in consultation with youth service providers who deal one on one with young people “at risk”, the shire acknowledges that there are pockets of young people within the community who require intensive support to minimise their participation in risk taking behaviours and the resulting consequences. This may include professional support in the management of:

- Alcohol and drug use
- Mental health issues
- Body image issues
- Sexual health issues

- Education and employment barriers
- Conflict with family, teachers and other students
- Truancy
- Homelessness

The shire, through its support of Seen and Heard, the Mundaring Youth Peak Body Network and PACS promotes the provision of professional support services for young people. Regular training, reporting and supervision are key requirements which ensure professional levels of service delivery. The shire, through Seen and Heard, regularly offers training opportunities for Mundaring Youth Peak Body Network members.

The shire believes that increasing young people's self esteem, sense of self worth, communication skills and level of knowledge equips them to be more self protective thus minimising their participation in risk taking behaviours.

The Launching Into Youth Community Consultation, follow up survey and consultation with local youth service providers has identified a general level of satisfaction with health services and health information available for young people in the Shire of Mundaring.

**Some key points of interest arising from consultation:**

- Most young people access their family doctors and school nurses for health care and information.
- Some suggested services that young people felt would be of benefit to youth health and wellbeing include:
  - More doctors
  - More school nurses
  - Additional counselling services
  - A youth friendly health clinic
  - Gym/walking groups
- In terms of health promotion and information dissemination, the majority of young people were confident that they could access health and wellbeing information if they needed it. Most cited family, friends and school as primary sources of information.
- Young people demonstrated a knowledge of key health and wellbeing strategies, identifying eating well, exercise and being aware of risks as the top three things they do to stay healthy.
- Youth service providers work closely with young people who may be in need of more specific, personal health care and information. These workers have identified:
  - A clear need for more sexual health education and related services.
  - A clear need for more services and education relating to mental health matters.
  - Serious concern over the increasing use of alcohol and other drugs among young people.

- Local Church groups play a significant role in delivering support to young people generally but also offer professional support in the areas of drug and alcohol counselling and support with mental health issues where required. Most local churches host a regular Friday night youth group that is open to all young people. These groups are well attended. EastGate Youth (EGY), based in Mt Helena, also offer outreach services.

## **The Shire of Mundaring**

- Recognises that both community and preventative health strategies and access to quality health care are important for young people.
- Recognises that risk taking is an integral aspect of adolescent development, and acknowledges the importance of promoting strategies to reduce risk in this regard.
- Acknowledges that access to confidential and appropriate health services and health education is necessary.

## **Aim**

To encourage young people to establish and maintain healthy lifestyles by making informed, positive choices in regard to their health and wellbeing.

## **Shire Roles**

Planning and Policy  
 Leadership and Co-ordination  
 Support and Development  
 Advocacy  
 Service Provision

## **Strategies**

- Regularly update and promote the Shire of Mundaring Youth Health Services wallet card and the Youth Services Directory to ensure young people are aware of local health and support services and how to contact them. Ensure contacts for crisis care services and emergency accommodation services are included.
- Continue lobbying at state and federal levels for increased GP coverage in the area.
- Continue to promote networking between local youth service providers through the Mundaring Peak Body Youth Services.
- Continue health and wellbeing information dissemination through the Seen and Heard programme.
- Investigate the possibility of a return of the Street Doctor (formerly MAC bus) service to the Mundaring area.
- Investigate ways in which the shire, through Seen and Heard, can support local church based youth groups.
- Provide a space in central Mundaring and Swan View for visiting specialised service providers to offer outreach services. These could be based in the Seen and Heard office and the Swan View Youth Centre building and Chidlow Professional Offices.
- Given the national trend for young people to access more information through the internet, the shire support the development of a youth focussed website. This will provide information about local youth

events, transport options, activities and services and will link young people to other specialised sites providing information on health and wellbeing.

### **Specific strategies relating to sexual health and wellbeing**

- Research existing strategies employed by other youth health agencies to promote safe sex practices. Adopt strategies where appropriate.
- Support local service providers (such as school nurses) to deliver sex education and protective behaviours classes in school and other appropriate group settings where possible.
- Investigate possible sources of funding for the employment of a health promotion officer who can focus on delivery of youth health programs such as PASH (Promoting Adolescent Sexual Health) and Protective Behaviours in the school setting and through other local groups.

### **Specific strategies relating to drug and alcohol use**

- Continue to implement the Over 18 Safe Consumption of Alcohol project.
- Source and distribute existing relevant health promotion materials in relation to alcohol and other drugs for local use.
- Support existing drug and alcohol education programmes and support services to operate within the Shire of Mundaring.
- Promote alcohol and drug free activities for young people.
- Liaise regularly with local police to identify issues of concern relating to youth access to and use of alcohol and other drugs. Respond accordingly with education strategies where appropriate.
- Continue to support Local Drug Action Group initiatives.

### **Specific strategies relating to mental health and wellbeing**

- Research and implement (where appropriate) initiatives to raise awareness of and assist young people in recognising mental health problems, locating appropriate support services and seeking help. Could be targeted at young people through schools, sporting clubs and other local groups.
- Provide a range of opportunities for young people to develop skills in stress management, communication and problem solving.
- Continue to provide crisis contacts on the Youth Service Card.
- Encourage youth participation/volunteering in community events and activities. This helps young people develop a sense of connection and belonging to their community and has positive mental health benefits.
- Support the implementation of anti bullying programmes in schools, sporting clubs and other local community organisations.

# Transport

Transport is a major factor in the quality of young people's lives and the shire will endeavour to maximise access to quality transport options within available resources.

Access to transport, for any age group is strongly linked to issues of independence, employment and safety. The Shire of Mundaring understands that transport needs are of greater concern to its residents because of its broad geographical spread and the distances between our many small townsites.

Key points from consultation with young people and service providers:

- The most common form of transport for young people is “lifts with parents”.
- Most young people who have access to public transport are happy to use it. They recognise the cost and environmental benefits as well as the independence that it provides.
- There is a high level of dissatisfaction with the frequency of public transport in the more eastern end of the shire (Chidlow and Wooroloo) as well as in suburbs that are further from Great Eastern Highway (for example the outer lying areas of Parkerville).
- To many young people, there is a sense of close community within townsites. They express that they have no need for other transport because everything they want to access (such as the deli and skate park) is close by and they can walk or ride to get there.
- Most young people who use transport or want better access to transport need to get to central Mundaring or to Midland, for work, access to shops or access to the city rail connection.
- Many local service providers have identified lack of access to transport as a serious risk factor. It isolates some young people from important health, counselling and employment services.

**The Shire of Mundaring:**

- Recognises that our young people are restricted in the forms of transport available to them.
- Recognises that young people rely heavily on public transport.
- Recognises that transport is a critical factor in young people accessing youth services, employment, education/training and recreation.
- Acknowledges that a lack of adequate transport options heightens isolation, which often underpins other issues.

## **Aim**

To facilitate the development of safe, convenient and affordable transport options for young people living within the Shire of Mundaring.

## **Shire Roles**

Planning and Policy

Leadership and Co-ordination

Support and Development

Advocacy

Service Provision

## **Strategies**

- Continue to lobby local Transperth, Swan Transit and the State Government to review frequency and timing of public transport services to the hills area.
- Research the feasibility of the development of a community bus service, to feed into the existing Midland-Mundaring service.
- To research the feasibility of developing a specialised transport service for young people needing to access health and counselling services in central Mundaring or Midland.
- Include information about transport options on all material promoting youth events and activities.

## Crisis Accommodation/Homelessness

The shire recognises that housing is an essential and basic right for all people, and is committed to encouraging safe and affordable housing options for young people within the Shire of Mundaring as well as supporting families to deal positively with conflict.

For young people wishing to leave home to access work and study opportunities closer to the city or who seek independence from their family, it is difficult for them to acquire affordable, appropriate, safe and secure housing. Housing affordability is an issue for the whole community but has a particular impact on families with older teenagers.

Due to rising rent, housing, fuel and general living expenses moving out of home is becoming more difficult for young people. Statistics from the 2006 Census indicate a higher number of young people in the 17-24 year old age range living in the shire which could be indicative of extended living at home arrangements for young people after they have finished school. This trend impacts on families and will lead to prolonged periods of dependence of young people on their parents for financial and social support. This situation may also result in greater potential for conflict within families.

In family situations where conflict is an issue, lack of affordable housing options for young people becomes a serious problem. Existing emergency accommodation services are under pressure and often have extended waiting times for access. Without emergency accommodation options, there is potential for young people to seek refuge from family conflict in unsafe places. This may have the flow on effect of exposing a young person to additional risk factors such as poor nutrition, abuse or drug or alcohol use.

### **Some key points of interest arising from the consultation:**

- Most young people who participated in the consultation had never actually needed to use emergency accommodation services but thought that it was an important option for young people in the area.
- One service provider reports that homelessness, for both young people and families as a whole is becoming a serious problem which they believe is being exacerbated by Centrelink breaching penalties (withdrawal of payments). This service has had recent referrals from 2 local young people who were living in public areas, without access to adequate hygiene facilities or food for extended periods of time.
- Conflict between young people and their families, and the potential this creates for other more serious problems such as homelessness, ranked as one of the top three overall concerns for local service providers.

## **The Shire of Mundaring:**

- Is concerned that accommodation options available to its young people are limited.
- Views family relationships as a crucial factor in working with young people.
- Recognises that the issue of homelessness impacts on the health and wellbeing of young people, and is often interwoven with other significant issues.
- Recognises the importance of the family unit but at the same time acknowledges that this isn't always the most appropriate housing option for both the young person and the family.

### **Aim**

To ensure that a range of viable and appropriate accommodation options are available to young people within the Shire of Mundaring, and that support is available to young people and their families in relation to family conflict, accommodation issues and concerns.

### **Shire Roles**

Planning and Policy  
Leadership and Co-ordination  
Support and Development  
Advocacy

### **Strategies**

- Investigate the feasibility of the development of a register of local families who will look after young people on a short-term basis in crisis situations.
- Lobby state and federal ministers and determine what support they can provide to young people in crisis in the shire.
- Liaise with local service providers to collect and collate more information about the level of crisis and long term emergency housing that is required by young people in the Shire of Mundaring.
- Explore how the need for crisis accommodation is managed in other similar shires. Liaise with community housing, EMRC and youth service agencies to determine levels in needs in other areas and potential partnerships.
- Continue to support the delivery of the Parents and Adolescent Counselling Service.
- Investigate the feasibility of funding an additional PACS counsellor to support families and young people to resolve conflict.

## Education, Training and Employment

The shire is committed to supporting the development of a diverse range of education, training and employment opportunities for young people. This will be achieved through support of existing and new service providers and support of local businesses and the stimulation of economic development in the region.

### **Background**

Achievement in education, training and employment has many positive benefits to self esteem and increases a young person's social and financial independence.

The growth of business in the Mundaring area, coupled with a statewide shortage of employees has resulted in a positive effect on employment opportunities for young people within the shire.

Although employment, education and training is not recorded through consultation as a key area of concern, it can be projected, from other information available that:

- It is more difficult for young people living in the outer areas of the shire to access employment, education and training opportunities.
- Due to the increased costs associated with living independently some young people may be financially restricted in their access to employment, education and training opportunities.

The opportunities for young people to become involved in part time/casual work, apprenticeships and traineeships within the local community are also limited due to the current lower level of business development within the Mundaring shire.

A key point of interest arising from the consultation:

- Many young people are supportive of the increased development of shops in Mundaring and have identified them as a source of employment opportunity.

### **The Shire of Mundaring:**

- Recognises it has a role to play in the support and development of education, training and employment opportunities for young people.
- Acknowledges the many positive effects achievement in education, training and employment has on a young person's self esteem and their ability to become financially and socially independent.
- Acknowledges that further education and training opportunities are currently limited within the shire.
- Acknowledges that lack of access to transport can limit education, training and employment opportunities.

- Is committed to facilitating the further development of a variety of opportunities for young people to increase their employment options and job seeking skills.

## **Aim**

To increase the potential for young people within the Shire of Mundaring to participate in education, employment and training, and to assist young people to overcome the barriers (such as transport) which may affect their participation in education, training and employment opportunities.

## **Shire Roles**

Planning and Policy

Leadership and Co-ordination

Support and Development

Advocacy

## **Strategies**

- Support the implementation of the Shire of Mundaring's Economic Development policy - thus acknowledging that economic development brings more jobs and on the job training opportunities for all local people.
- Provide the opportunity for work experience placements within shire operations and administration, thus providing a model for the community.
- Develop a promotional campaign to encourage local businesses to take on trainees and work experience students.
- Encourage education and training providers to offer programmes based in the central and eastern parts of the shire through the provision of suitable space (e.g. at the Hub of the Hills) and promotional support.
- Ensure young people are targeted in promotional strategies for the Shire of Mundaring Jobs Expo.
- Investigate the development and maintenance requirements of a local database for job vacancies, traineeships and apprenticeships appropriate to local young people.
- Provide opportunities for young people to develop their skills and knowledge through volunteering efforts within the local community.
- Support youth enterprise schemes within the shire to encourage young people to develop their own business ideas.

## Public Space/Recreation

The shire will support and encourage the provision of a diverse range of leisure and recreational options, which are affordable, able to be accessed by young people and which meet their expressed needs. Young people will be encouraged to use public space along with the rest of the community, and their needs will be taken into account when planning the future use of public space.

### Background

In the 1999 Youth Needs Study, lack of places to 'hang out' and 'lack of things to do' were rated as the two largest problems for young people. Current consultation indicates that young people, while always identifying "boredom" as an issue, appreciate the diverse range of activities and opportunities that their natural environment and local community offer. Walking, riding, skating, BMX, organised sport, swimming, participation in local events and just "hanging out" are all activities enjoyed by many local young people.

As a result of the 1999 Youth Needs Study, the need for access to unstructured recreational activities was addressed through the development of skate parks, dirt jump tracks and upgrades of local trails. This past commitment from the shire, as well as its continued support of local sporting clubs and facilities, has resulted in young people identifying the shire's recreational facilities as some of the top 3 things they like about living in the shire.

Some points of interest arising from the consultation:

- When asked to identify whether they thought the shire felt safe, fun, friendly or boring (respondents could choose more than one answer):
  - 66% answered safe
  - 54% answered friendly
  - 43% answered fun
  - 15% answered boring.
- Skateparks, pools, sporting facilities and Lake Leschenaultia were all specifically identified as things that young people value about living in the shire.
- The Launching Into Youth consultation identified a youth specific facility as something that was missing in the shire. It was suggested that a commercially viable coffee shop/internet cafe, movie theatre or bowling alley could fulfil the need for young people to have somewhere to go to "hang out".
- Young people value the open space, natural bush environment, low density housing, sporting clubs and friendly feel of the shire.

- The lack of gym facilities that are accessible for young people was identified as a gap in health/recreation services in the shire.
- Improved shades, seating and fountains were identified as being desirable additions to local skateparks.

#### **With particular relevance to Swan View:**

For young people in Swan View some specific gaps were identified by young people, service providers and consultants. These relate to the need for viable recreational options, increased services and improved youth facilities which are essential to support local efforts to overcome issues such as substance abuse, graffiti and crime. All of these issues are more prevalent within this western area of the shire (Other Gee & Rajan, 2006; Matrix Consulting 2007). The Swan View area has the highest youth population within the shire and is characterised by high density development (Profile id, 2007). Strategies for the Swan View area include:

- Redevelopment of the Swan View Youth Centre building.
- Co locate services within the Swan View Youth Centre building to provide professional support to address issues arising from family conflict, use of drugs and alcohol and truancy.
- Support locally based recreational opportunities to engage young people at risk.

The provision of ‘youth friendly’ public space is an important consideration for council. In general, community members are supportive of “seeing and hearing” young people at play or just “hanging out” in their community. The shire recognises that young people have a right to access public space and that it can assist in promoting a positive image of young people by ensuring that youth facilities are relevant, well maintained and visible in the community.

#### **The Shire of Mundaring:**

- Recognises that young people have as much right as other groups within the community to access public spaces for recreation or other needs.
- Acknowledges that young people need an encouraging environment within which to grow and develop as valued members of the community.
- Recognises that young people are in a stage of their life that is depicted by relatively high activity levels, liveliness, creativity and risk taking behaviour.
- Recognises the importance of young people feeling a sense of belonging in their community, and therefore feeling able to contribute in a meaningful way.

#### **Aim**

To facilitate and encourage the provision of a wide range of affordable leisure and recreational alternatives, which are accessible to young people living within the Shire of Mundaring.

To foster positive relationships and communication between young people and the community.

To encourage young people to use public space along with the rest of the community.

To include young people in planning the future use of public space.

## **Shire Roles**

Planning and Policy  
Leadership and Co-ordination  
Support and Development  
Advocacy  
Service Provision

## **Strategies**

- Develop a working party to investigate the feasibility of a community based coffee shop/café that has a particular focus on young people in a highly visible site in central Mundaring.
- Work with local gymnasium providers to increase their accessibility for young people.
- Investigate the feasibility of adding basic gymnasium equipment to existing recreational facilities such as the swimming pools.
- Support the redevelopment of the Swan View Youth Service.  
When centre is completed:  
Co-locate services within the Swan View Youth Centre building to provide professional support to address issues arising from family conflict, use of drugs and alcohol and truancy.
- Continue to subsidise junior level organised sport through reduced facility fees, and to promote junior sport throughout the Shire of Mundaring through information provision to the community.
- Facilitate the development of young people's art and music through a range of programmes.
- Support the development of a variety of recreation/arts based activities to engage young people at risk in the Swan View area.
- Maintain existing dirt jump tracks and skateboarding facilities and upgrade/install seating, shade and fountains.
- Continue to involve young people in the development and implementation of local youth recreational activities and events through youth led initiatives.
- Include young people in the development of the shire's Recreation Plan.

## Culture and the Arts

The Shire of Mundaring is committed to providing and supporting opportunities for local young people to express their creativity through participation in a range of cultural activities. The Shire of Mundaring recognises that young people should be encouraged to develop their own cultural identity and expression.

### Background

Young people express their creativity in a variety of ways and the need for a diverse range of leisure options is a common theme of all consultations which have taken place with young people.

Some points of interest arising from consultation with young people:

- Throughout the Launching Into Youth Community Consultation, young people expressed a desire to see more youth events facilitated by Seen and Heard.
- Young people enjoy being included in larger community festivals. Seen and Heard's "Youth Space" is seen as a successful model for making young people feel included as part of broader community celebrations.
- Seen and Heard Dance Parties were identified as being a popular, regular attraction.
- Young people have identified a lack of safe, accessible public places for young people to gather and to just "hang out".

### The Shire of Mundaring:

- Recognises the importance of cultural diversity and the expression and celebration of such diversity.
- Acknowledges that art and music are creative mediums through which young people often express themselves.
- Acknowledges that young people's pursuit of creative expression should be encouraged and further developed as positive tools in the building of self esteem.
- Recognises the importance of including young people and emphasising their "voice" through membership of the Arts Advisory Group and the Cultural Planning Reference Group.

### Aim

To encourage and facilitate the development of arts and cultural opportunities for young people.

To support young people in the creative expression of their identity.

## **Shire Roles**

Planning and Policy

Leadership and Co-ordination

Support and Development

Advocacy

Service Provision

## **Strategies**

- Continue the shire's support of the Mundaring Arts Centre and Katharine Susannah Pritchard Writers Centre and their youth art projects.
- Ensure that young people are encouraged to participate in the shire's cultural planning process.
- Continue to involve young people in the development and implementation of local youth events through youth led initiatives such as Seen and Heard's "CREW".
- Continue to seek funding for youth art projects and youth events.
- Continue to support existing successful strategies such as Seen and Heard's Youth Space at community festivals and dance parties.
- Continue to involve young people in planning for culture and the arts through the provision of membership opportunities for young people on relevant local advisory groups and committees.

# IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Youth Implementation Plan, included as Attachment B, provides details to assist shire and Seen and Heard staff to action the strategies that have been determined throughout the consultation processes. Included in this plan is

- An allocation of each strategy to the person/s who will initiate action and take on the lead role
- Possible project partners
- A preliminary estimate of the resources that may be required to complete the project
- A preliminary estimate of funding that may be required to complete the project as well as external funding agencies that could be approached
- The date by which each strategy will be addressed
- An indicator that will be used to measure achievement in implementing each strategy.

Please note:

This plan will be reviewed and updated annually.

To prevent repetition some strategies have been combined.

Throughout the implementation plan, a number of acronyms are used. These are explained in the key included on the cover page.

## The Way Forward

Once adopted by council, the implementation of this plan will become the responsibility of the officers identified in the Implementation Plan. Many of the strategies identified within will flow on to become focus areas for the Seen and Heard Youth Programme. These will be fed into Seen and Heard through existing review processes and their implementation monitored through existing reporting mechanisms. The Executive Manager Community Services will monitor the overall implementation of the plan. A review of the plan will be submitted to council each year.

The resources required to enable the implementation of the strategies identified are likely to be greater than the shire has the capacity to provide. For this reason, additional resources will be sought from a range of appropriate external funding sources. It is envisaged that this will occur in a co-ordinated manner, with a range of strategic partnerships being formed between the shire and other community groups to maximise funding opportunities.

## Acknowledgements

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### **The CREW**

For the time and effort put into the consultation component of the Launching Into Youth Community Consultation 2007.

### **Local Service Providers from the Mundaring Youth Peak Body**

For sharing their experiences of working with young people in the Shire of Mundaring.

### **Seen and Heard Youth Programme**

For developing the Launching into Youth Community Consultation Document

### **City of Swan**

For sharing feedback from consultation carried out in the Swan View area.

Shire staff would like to acknowledge **Shannon O'Neil and Michelle Emmerson** who developed the Shire of Mundaring Youth Policies, many of which remain unchanged herein, as part of the 2001 Teaming Up Community Partnerships with Young People document.

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