Youth Needs Consultation and Analysis 2015

Results and recommendations

March 2015

We acknowledge the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to them and their cultures, and the elders, both past, present and future.

Contents

Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

In 2011 the Shire of Exmouth embarked on its first comprehensive Youth Needs Consultation and the results are now shaping the way in which young people are seen as members of the Shire of Exmouth community.

Fast forward to 2015, and a further consultation process was undertaken to compare where things were, and what is happening now. Have things changed for young people in Exmouth? What has improved? What things have declined and what is the way forward for the future.

The original consultant was once again brought in and the same technology and methodology that was utilised in the 2011 consultation was used again. This enabled the results to be gathered in a consistent way so that a small longitudinal consultation was possible. The technology used as the consultation tool were interactive methods that were electronically based and did not embrace traditional paper based methodology. This is still very much a preferred mode of consultation as young people are immersed in a technology driven world.

The High school once again opened their doors for the Shire to come and engage with the students and the results have been remarkable. Other key participants were Youth Action Exmouth (hereafter referred to as YAE) as well as young people at the Skate Park and the PCYC Youth Rooms. Young people have come up with creative, responsible, pragmatic and well thought through ideas to respond to *their needs in their community,* but were also more aware of the need for action, as many of them remembered the consultation process in 2011.

The next steps are the critical ones, as there are now comparisons available for examination, and the Shire has a large part to play in coordinating various networks and strategies to ensure that the momentum for the process continues. These are indeed exciting times, as the young people surveyed made it clear that *they did want to participate and be part of solutions for the whole community.*

It was the goal of the consultation to continue to develop creative, innovative and responsive approaches to the changing needs of the Shire of Exmouth youth population and indeed invite them to be active partners in developing these initiatives to address their needs.

It is important to note at this stage that establishing a Youth Council/Youth Advisory Group was a key recommendation from the 2011 consultation and YAE are the outcome of this recommendation.

Young people are active citizens in our communities! Increasingly acceptance of the principle of young people's involvement is being turned into practice through a variety of participation activities across Australia. However, some communities have difficulty in translating their commitment into practice that is meaningful for children and young people, which is effective in bringing about change and which becomes embedded within the values and ethos of our communities. This is an ongoing challenge to many local governments across Australia. The Shire of Exmouth has embraced this challenge and has taken the important step of initiating and supporting YAE, a group run by young people, doing things for and with young people, actively supported and resourced by the Shire.

As communities we often use the term participation not simply to mean 'taking part' or 'being present' but as having some influence over decisions and action. We also use the terms 'involve' (passive verb) and 'participate' (active verb) interchangeably.

Meaningful participation is a process, not simply the application of isolated participation activities or events and this is why YAE is such an important group. Nurturing this participation takes time, commitment and a willingness to listen and be flexible and responsive to new ideas.

This requires developing new child/youth-adult relationships: rooted in mutual trust and respect and engaging in child-adult dialogue. Where relationships are positive, then children and young people's involvement is integral to daily practice, rather than an after-thought or an occasional tick box exercise.

The Shire of Exmouth demonstrates its commitment to the principles of meaningful participation through its Vision, Purpose and Values. This vision was embarked upon in 2011 and now in 2015, the commitment, particularly through YAE is beginning to yield fruit and impact on the young people of Exmouth.

Shire of Exmouth 2011-2015

To support and develop a vibrant, welcoming community that embraces its past, values its present and plans for a sustainable future.

Our Purpose

To responsibly provide governance for the whole community in the best interests of current and future generations.

Our Values

- *Be open and accountable*
- *Act with honesty and integrity*
- *Be friendly, approachable, fair minded and responsive*
- *Act with sensitivity towards the environment and heritage*
- *Be innovative and contemporary*

Whilst the Project Objectives for 2011 remain the same in 2015, the consultation process will assist with the Shire's future strategic direction in the following ways:

- ✓ Identify the level of awareness young people have of the services and resources available to them;
- ✓ Determining how the Shire, community organisations and young people can work best together to increase participation amongst young people in the community;
- ✓ Gain an understanding of the needs and expectations of young people in the Shire;
- ✓ Determining what the young people consider to be the important issues; and
- ✓ Determining how to meet the challenges identified in the study[1].

It was the goal of the consultation to continue to develop creative and responsive approaches to the changing needs of the Shire of Exmouth youth population.

A key feature of this is ensuring that YAE are meaningfully engaged and use this document as a tool for analysis and planning.

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[1] Jude Bridgland & Associates Scoping Document 2011.

One of the critical aspects of the consultation was commitment in theory and practice to authentic youth participation. What emerged throughout the consultation was the need to be mindful of these principles at all stages of the process, hence they are detailed here:

- ✓ enable fun, challenge and excitement;
- ✓ allow participation by choice;
- ✓ avoid pigeonholing of young men and women and generalising about their behaviour, opinions or ideas;
- ✓ maximise the opportunity for success through providing information, training, support, resources, time and space;
- ✓ address opportunities, needs and issues that are valued and respected by young people, their peers and the community;

- ✓ start with the talents, capacities, assets and skills of young people, rather than their problems and deficiencies;
- ✓ involve young men and women from the start;
- ✓ create opportunities for young women and men to lead and teach;
- ✓ maximise decision making and accountability by young people;
- ✓ develop young people's awareness of the social, political, economic, cultural and personal aspects of the issues affecting them;
- ✓ make sense of, and demystify adult structures and processes;
- ✓ build active and supportive working relationships between young people and other members of the community;
- ✓ provide opportunities for training and skill development; and
- ✓ encourage opportunities to reflect and analyse their experiences.[2]

These were key considerations for the 2011 and 2015 consultations.

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[2] *From "Principles to Enable Effective Youth Participation" www.bankofideas.com.au*

The 2015 consultation utilised the same research methodology and theoretical underpinnings as the 2011 consultation namely:

The Shire of Exmouth Youth Consultations needed to embrace a number of methodologies in order to be reflexive and innovative enough to accommodate the diverse needs of Exmouth's youth population and other key stakeholders.

Preparation for the research was significant with careful consideration being paid to the development of the research tools. It was important to be flexible enough to embrace a range of settings and potential outcomes involving the young people being consulted. The questionnaire that was developed primarily involved quantitative question styles (particularly in Qwizdom), so that a realistic picture was built about what the young people in the Shire of Exmouth perceive to be happening and what they would like to see happen. This was particularly in relation to their ongoing involvement in planning and thinking strategically about youth issues in their local area.

Participatory Action Research (PAR): This research model was chosen as the primary research paradigm because of the flexibility (and hence scope for

creativity) built into it. This enables processes to be responsive to the needs of those being researched.

This is indeed relevant when considering the aims of the Shire of Exmouth youth consultations, in which principles of participation and social action are of paramount importance.

Theoretical Framework: In addition to this, power is a central issue to all of this discussion and the youth consultation needed to be framed within applied post structuralist approaches that presume that youth participation mechanisms are a technique by which unengaged young people come under governance, surveillance and control. In particular, the Youth Consultation needed to be attentive to the capacity of various youth participation mechanisms to engage young people as empowered subjects who are aware of the terms of their engagement, who are accountable to, and able to hold accountable, those to whom they give power (Bessant, Sercombe, & Watts, 1998; Sercombe, 1992).

This is specifically why the range of approaches were utilised namely: informal conversations, Qwizdom surveys in schools, focus groups and other anecdotal information[3].

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[3] Jude Bridgland & Associates 2011 Scoping Document.

An innovative interactive technology tool was utilised by the consultancy team (Qwizdom). This tool was particularly useful at engaging with 10-18 year olds and combined response system technology with the survey processes. Interactive keypads were given to each survey participant (in school settings) and young people then had the opportunity to respond in 'real time' to survey questions.

Strengths:

✓ Overcomes literacy and numeracy issues
✓ Cross-cultural
✓ Simple and intuitive to use (for Gen Y and millennials)
✓ Confidentiality
✓ Range of questions styles: T/F, choose one answer, multiple choice, scaling/prioritizing.
✓ Can be easily followed up in focus group style settings.

Confidentiality was paramount and a particular strength of Qwizdom is the ability of young people to respond completely confidentially to the questions asked. Young people reported that this was a huge benefit, as they were not concerned that their friends could see their responses and this facilitated honest and open responses to sensitive issues.

Sample in 2011

Over 125 children and young people (aged 11-17+) from a broad range of backgrounds were engaged in the research in a variety of ways. This equates to approximately 5% of the *total population* of the Shire of Exmouth (2,487

people as of June 2010). The population of Exmouth District High School was 379 in 2011 (K-12).

Sample in 2015

Over 141 young people (aged 12-17+) from a broad range of backgrounds were engaged in the research in a variety of ways. This equates to approximately 5% of the *total population* of the Shire of Exmouth (2,536 people from the 2012 Figures). The population of Exmouth District High School was 449 in 2014 (K-12), which represents a population growth of 18% over three years (please also refer to the Education Act amendment of 2014 noted in the next paragraph).

The age range focused on was 12-17+ years for the purposes of this consultation. The number of young people consulted gives us a reliable result that can be corroborated across the Shire of Exmouth youth population. Many of the young people consulted in 2011 were consulted again in 2015, as they were now in High School. Another critical consideration is the amendment to the Education Act that occurred in 2014 that shifted all year 7 students from Primary to High School, so whilst the 11-year-old age bracket was not able to be consulted in 2015, we did not miss out on 12-year-old young people as they were already in High School).

Methods included

1. **Qwizdom workshops in schools.** This was done in one day at Exmouth District High School, with students from Year 7-12 all involved[4]. These were the bulk of the numbers and many of the young people consulted further at the PCYC and through casual

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[4] Undertaken in Exmouth District High School on 11th June 2015.

conversations had already done the Qwizdom process in school the day before.

2. **Casual discussions and purposeful informal questioning** took place at the PCYC Youth Rooms on Friday nights (both within the centre and outside near the Skate Park)[5].

3. **Anecdotal information** from local young people in and around the Skate Park[6].

4. **Two informal focus groups at the Youth Rooms.** One was run by the Shire's Community Development Officer and a volunteer from the PCYC and the other was run by the consultant outside of the PCYC close to the Skate Park[7].

5. **A feedback session that involved YAE** giving specific responses on the results graphs generated from the schools Qwizdom sessions[8].

6. **A Youth Stakeholder Forum** session with key youth agencies in Exmouth. This involved the Police, Chaplain, Council staff, church staff and PCYC staff. The draft results generated from the schools Qwizdom sessions were discussed[9].

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[5] Undertaken on Friday 12th June 2015.
[6] Undertaken on Thursday 11the June 2015 and Friday 12th June 2015.
[7] Undertaken on Friday 12th June 2015.
[8] Conducted on Friday 12th June 2015.
[9] Conducted on Friday 12th June 2015.

In the 2006 census, Exmouth had a SEIFA code of 1000, which ranked it 84 out of 142 Local Government areas in Western Australia, with 142 being the highest ranking (ABS, 2006).

In the 2011 census, Exmouth had a SEIFA code of 1015, which ranked it 101 out of 142 Local Government areas in Western Australia. This represents a significant improvement in the four indexes used to measure SEIFA (ABS, 2011). This improvement is also reflected in Exmouth District High Schools ICSEA score, which has increased from 973 in 2011 to 1024 in 2014. The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA)[10] score is based a number of key variables as listed in the footnote.
Exmouth District High School had a population of 379 (K-12) in 2011 and increased to 449 (K-12) in 2014[11].

The major issue that has emerged in Exmouth as a result of the 2011 census and a study done by the Brotherhood of St Laurence in 2014 is youth unemployment (Brotherhood of St Laurence, 2014). Exmouth and a number of remote and very remote locations in Western Australia were specifically identified in the 2011 census. It is projected that youth unemployment will reach 28.3% by 2016 in areas such as Exmouth (ABS, 2011). This has been further reinforced by the 2014 research. Whilst this is a projection, this is an important piece of demographic data with regards to planning and emerging youth issues.

It is important to note that the 2011 census data was not available when the 2011 Youth Plan was completed.

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[10] The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) is a scale that enables meaningful comparisons to be made across schools. It has been developed specifically for the *My School* website for the purpose of identifying schools serving similar student populations. The variables used in calculating a value on the ICSEA scale include student-level data on the occupation and education level of parents/carers, and/or socio-economic characteristics of the areas where students live, whether a school is in a metropolitan, regional or remote area, proportion of students from a language background other than English, as well as the proportion of Indigenous students enrolled at the school. ICSEA should be interpreted with the assistance of the *About ICSEA* Fact Sheet, the *Guide to understanding ICSEA*, the *2010 ICSEA Generation Report* and relevant FAQs, provided on the *My School* website under 'More information.

[11] Sourced from 'My Schools' website http://www.myschool.edu.au/

Exmouth is a large regional centre in Western Australia, characterised by pristine natural attractions.

Whilst the population is estimated at 2,487 as of June 2010, the population of the town can swell to well over 6,000. This has impacts both positive and negative for the town inhabitants. Young people reported that tourism does have a significant impact on them, and most commonly they feel less safe and the town feels crowded. In the words of YAE, 'we have a love/hate relationship with tourists', on one hand there is action, new people, vibrancy, activities and more work available. On the negative side, however, they perceive that the crime rate increases and as mentioned previously, they feel less safe.

To counteract this phenomenon, well organised and established youth programs are required, but this too poses challenges, as there is a heavy reliance on volunteers and this brings with it implicit limitations.

Given too that Council has limited capacity to respond in a practical sense to youth issues in town, there is a strong reliance on volunteers to staff and maintain youth related programs.

There are a range of services for young people and effective coordination is critical. These were issues in 2011 and remain as core issues in 2015. Some of these programs include: Friday night youth group, PCYC Youth Rooms, Skate Park supervision etc.

There seems to be a strong commitment to a Collective Impact[12] approach to youth service provision in town by allied health, schooling support and church based youth outreach, as identified at the Youth Stakeholders Forum[13].

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[12] http://collectiveimpactaustralia.com/

[13] Collective Impact is a framework for facilitating and achieving large scale social change. It is a structured and disciplined approach to bringing cross-sector organisations together to focus on a common agenda that results in long-lasting change. When Kania and Kramer wrote about collective impact in the Stanford Social Innovation Review in the fall of 2011 they identified five key conditions:

1. All participants have a **common agenda** for change including a shared understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.

2. Collecting data and **measuring results** consistently across all the participants ensures shared measurement for alignment and accountability.

3. A **plan of action** that outlines and coordinates mutually reinforcing activities for each participant.

4. Open and **continuous communication** is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and create common motivation.

5. A **backbone organisation**(s) with staff and specific set of skills to serve the entire initiative and coordinate participating organisations and agencies

Results

It is important to note the following caveats and limitations with the results on the following pages:

1. The charts on the following pages are the data sets generated by the research results from Qwizdom session in schools and the commentaries are augmented by qualitative data generated in discussions and focus groups.
2. The 2011 and 2015 results are presented side by side so that easy comparisons can be made.
3. Primary school children were consulted in the 2011 sessions, but due to time constraints, were not able to be consulted in 2015. The Primary School results from 2011 have not been included in this report.
4. There were some questions in 2011 that were asked which could not be asked in 2015 due to time limitations. There were two consultation periods possible in 2011, however only one consultation period was possible in 2015.
5. It is important to note that 2015 is lacking an 11-year-old cohort, but given the numbers of young people consulted, comparisons can still easily be made that are statistically reliable and are supported by YAE.
6. Many of the 2011 consultation participants were also consulted in 2015.
7. Where there are clear themes emerging a commentary on "Implications" is included.
8. When there was specific feedback from YAE recorded, there is a section included "Initial Responses from YAE".
9. When specific actions are suggested, through any of the consultation processes, they are listed as "Actions", however, some results do not have specific Actions connected with them as they relate closely to other results and are subsequently dealt with there.

Summary of Youth Consultation Key Demographic Data		
	2011	**2015**
Total students surveyed	**127**	**141**
11 year olds	23	0
12 year olds	25	30
13 year olds	24	36
14 year olds	24	34
15 year olds	16	24
16 year olds	9	13
17+ year olds	6	4
Male	49	75
Female	30	66
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	9 (7%)	9 (6%)
Speak language other than English at home	10 (8%)	13 (9%)
Born Overseas	4 (3%)	11 (7%)

2011: A good mix of both genders was achieved when averaged across all age groupings researched. The age range spanned from 11 to over 18 years of age. When considering youth needs this is the group of highest need as they do not have access to the full range of community facilities due to their age.

According to ABS data, the languages other than English spoken at home in the Shire of Exmouth are (in descending order): German, Dutch, Filipino, Afrikaans and Japanese.

Given that in the 2006 census, only 3.7% of Exmouth's population indicated that they speak a language other than English at home, this is an issue that requires further investigation. This also may correlate with the high mobility of the town population.

This data is significant as the ABS data for the Shire of Exmouth indicates that only 1.5% of the total population identify as Indigenous as compared with 2.3% across Australia.

What this indicates is that from the young people consulted with, a larger than average percentage were from Indigenous backgrounds and thus would identify needs aligned with their background and interests. Typically, areas of Indigenous concentration also correlate with larger households, and areas of higher need. Hence the Shire needs to carefully consider resource allocation that is appropriate and respectful of their unique needs (ABS, 2006 and 2011).

Overwhelmingly the majority of young people identify as Australian born, with a small percentage born overseas.
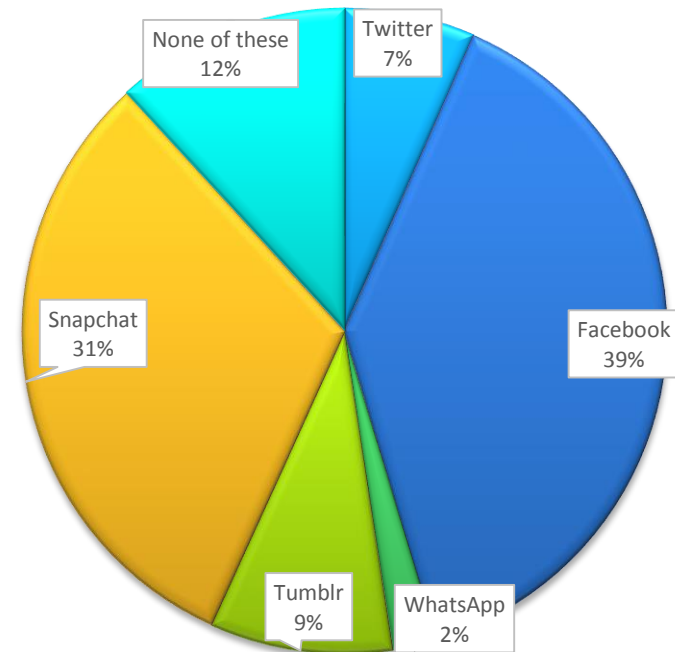
None of the characteristics of the population have changed dramatically between 2011 and 2015.
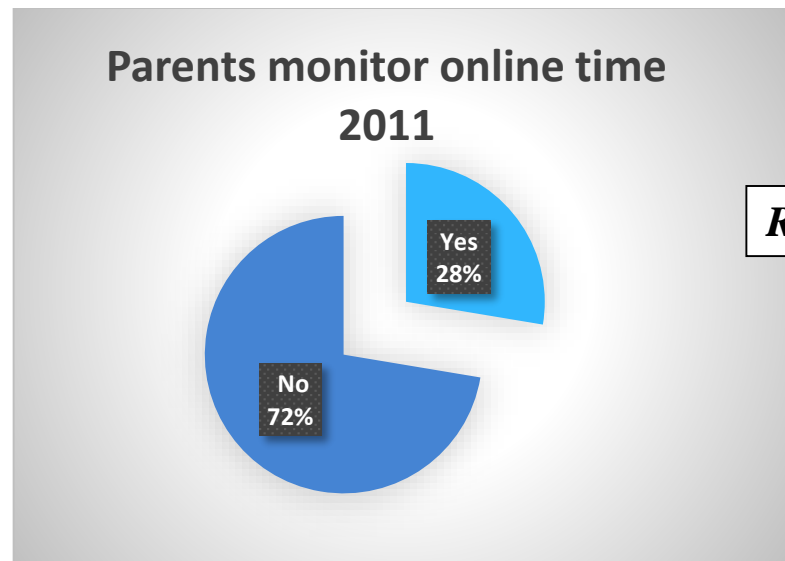
Social Media usage 2011
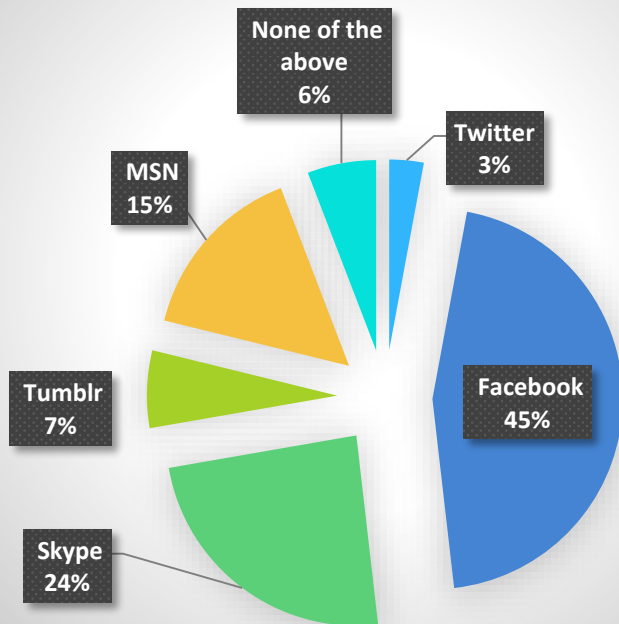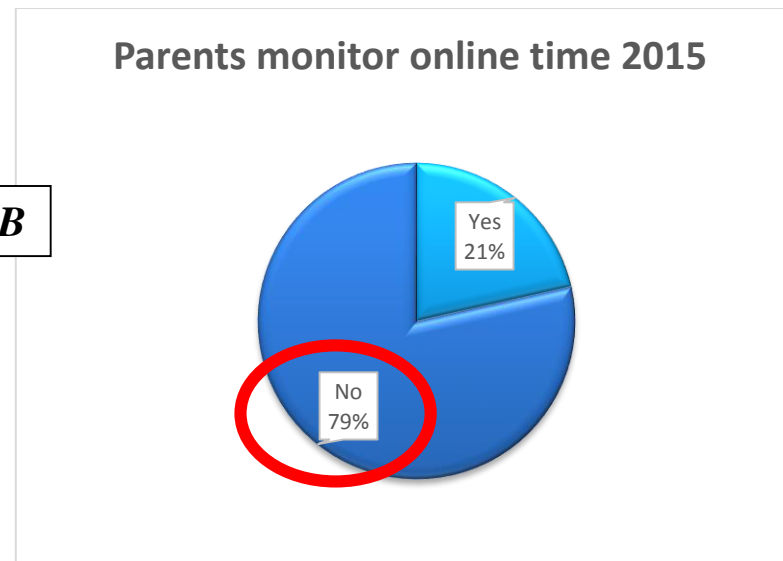

Social Media usage 2015

Young people are immersed in Web 2 technology (Facebook, Skype, Tumblr, MSN Twitter etc). Research indicates that young people are online, that is, they are accessible almost 24 hours a day, instantly. With the advent of wireless technology, young people can be 'plugged in' constantly, and this impacts significantly on their modes of communication, their engagement in community activities etc (White and Wyn, 2008). The results of the consultation echo this strongly.

Implications: What is important for the Shire of Exmouth is communications with young people. A clear communications strategy now needs to be a priority, particularly given that YAE reported that Facebook is their main means of connection with their peers.

Initial response from YAE: YAE reported that whilst the 'legal' age to have a Facebook account is 13, the vast majority of young people in High School have a Facebook account. They also reported that Instagram is a very popular App with young people in Exmouth and they want to use it more effectively to promote activities. YAE expressed concerns regarding the uptake of Snapchat. They felt that young people did not understand that even though the images 'disappear' they remain an online record of their activities and screenshots can be taken of the images and used at other times, by other young people. This contributes in their opinion to online and offline bullying as well as health and wellbeing issues.

Parents monitor online time 2011

Yes 28%
No 72%

Results Chart B

Parents monitor online time 2015

Yes 21%
No 79%

This is a salient issue, as increasingly young people are being bullied via online related means (this is evidenced in results graphs following). The correlation between what participants indicated concerning bullying and the amount of time they spend online unmonitored needs to be carefully considered. This generation are referred to as 'digital natives' (an inadequate term) but a term that captures the invasiveness of their engagement with technology (White and Wyn, 2008).

Young people have reported through various research articles (AYAC, 2011), that whilst they may perceive that they are tech savvy, the rhetoric now is that young people have 'deep, narrow specialisation', that is, they know more and more about less and less. This is of major concern in relation to life online versus life offline and young people are often not able to distinguish between the two (White and Wyn, 2008).
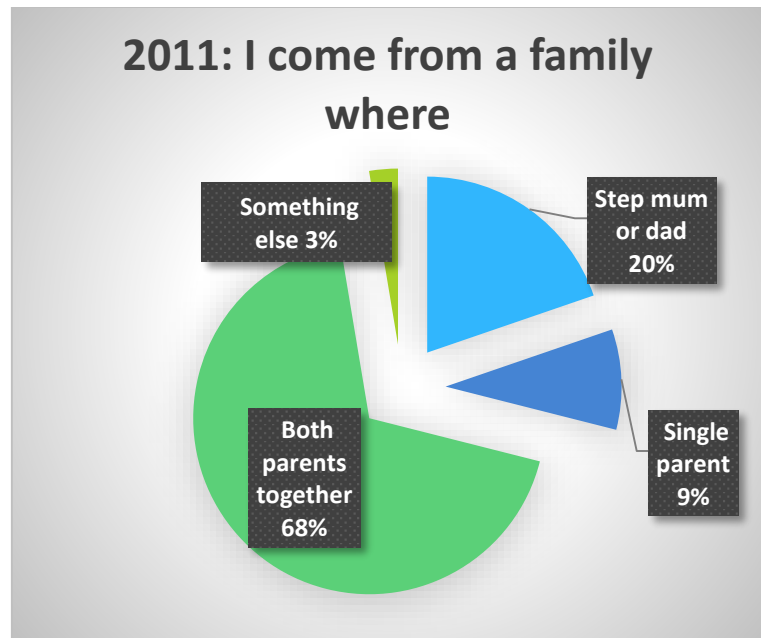
Recent research indicates that more than half of Australian children are smarter than their parents when it comes to going online, enabling them to outwit adult restrictions (McAfee, 2012).

Between 2011 and 2015, there has been a decline in monitoring of young people's online time by parents (7%).

Implications: Young people need supportive environments, mentoring and opportunities to make mistakes without fear of online bullying and stalking. This is where an appropriately supervised space where young people can benefit from role models, mentoring and support could be of benefit. They can experience the consequences of their online and offline identities in a relatively safe space.

Initial response from YAE: Parents often work long hours and go to work very early. Young people in Exmouth are accustomed to spending quite a bit of time at home unsupervised.

Actions: YAE suggested that Facebook and other online means become key places where 'being safe online' messages be emphasised, so that hopefully eventually 'the seriousness of their online activities' becomes a reality.

2011: I come from a family where

- Something else 3%
- Step mum or dad 20%
- Both parents together 68%
- Single parent 9%

Results Chart C

2015: I come from a family where

- I have a step mum or dad 17%
- I live with a single parent 19%
- Mum and dad are together 64%

Family composition is an important issue when considering youth needs and program development. What is noteworthy here is the increase in blended family composition in High School, and Exmouth has a higher than state average number of single fathers caring for children.
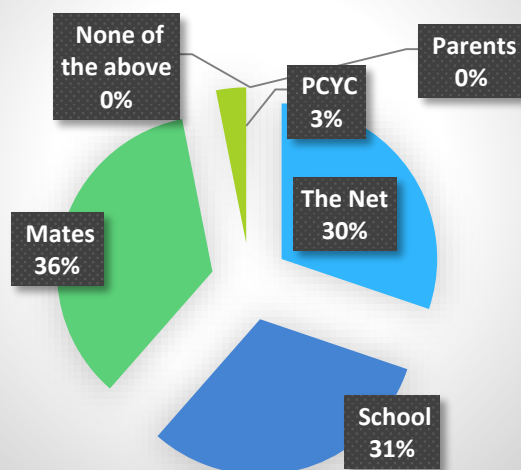
The "Something else" category in the 2011 results refers to children and young people who live with other family members for example grandparents.

The stand out increase is young people living with a single parent. It has increased from 9% in 2011 to 19% in 2015, however, upon further investigation, it was identified that included in the 19% were children that lived between mum and dad's houses week on week off. This reflects Family Law system reforms gazetted in 2006, which flagged changes in care

arrangement for children of separated parents. This change accounts for the 10% increase in this category (AIFS, 2006).
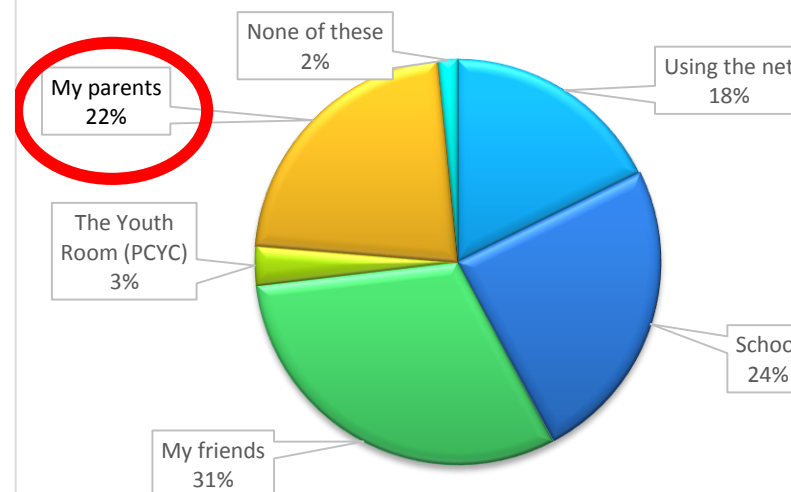
Implications: Sensitivity to potential barriers such as family composition are important issues in relation to engagement and young people. Finding times and processes that accommodate their unique needs is critical.

2011: I find out about things going on through

- None of the above 0%
- Parents 0%
- PCYC 3%
- The Net 30%
- Mates 36%
- School 31%

2015: I find out about things going on through

- None of these 2%
- My parents 22%
- Using the net 18%
- The Youth Room (PCYC) 3%
- School 24%
- My friends 31%

What is interesting to note here is that the consultation findings correlate strongly with national research regarding modes of communication for young people. Parents figure prominently in the 2015 figures, whereas they were absent in the 2011 data set. 'The internet' has also surprisingly decreased between 2011 and 2015.

Other modes that are prominent across all age groups are Internet (predominantly Facebook, Instagram and increasingly SnapChat) along with SMS. Hence when activities and events are planned and advertised, more targeted promotion can be achieved.

Implications: Another noteworthy inclusion is engagement with the PCYC, and this has the potential to be a significant point of engagement for the young people of Exmouth. Whilst the figure has remained the same between 2011 and 2015, the changes in place at the PCYC will have a big

impact according to the young people engaged in the focus groups and conversations.

Initial response from YAE: YAE were interested in finding out more about the increase with parents to 22% in 2015, but they reported that they felt that the findings for 2015 were 'spot on'. They didn't have an explanation for the increase from 0 to 22% for parents, but saw it as a positive thing.
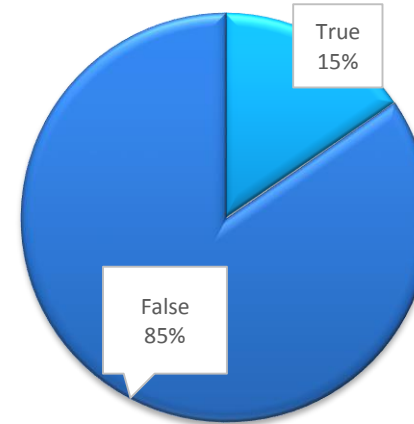
The Shire needs to consult closely with YAE, so that the proposed communications strategy flagged in 2011 is able to be completed from the Shire's end. They would like to use their Facebook site more regularly and effectively too.

2011: There is plenty to do in Exmouth

Yes 17%

No 83%
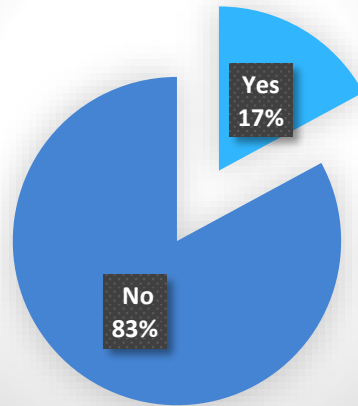
2015: There is plenty of things to do in Exmouth for young people

True 15%

False 85%

It's clear from the responses that the majority of young people perceive that there is not enough to do in Exmouth. This opinion has not changed significantly from 2011 to 2015.

Implications:
This is a key opportunity for young people to be engaged so that they find the solutions to their issues, and accessing these young people who report that there is nothing to do is an important first step. They need to be challenged to be working towards solutions to their concerns and be supported and resourced to do so.
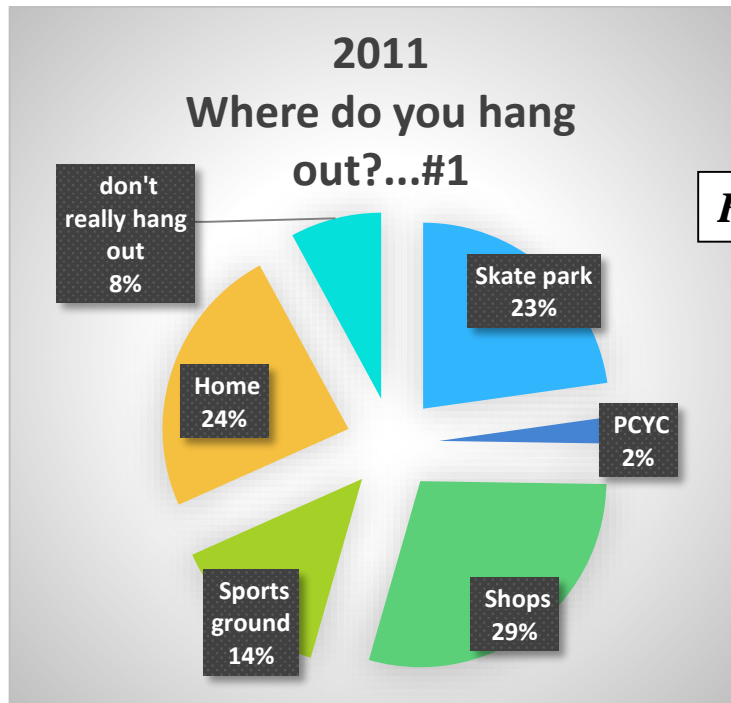
Initial response from YAE: YAE consider boredom to be the root of many of the problems young people face in Exmouth. They also indicated that their peers have plenty of ideas about how to respond to boredom.
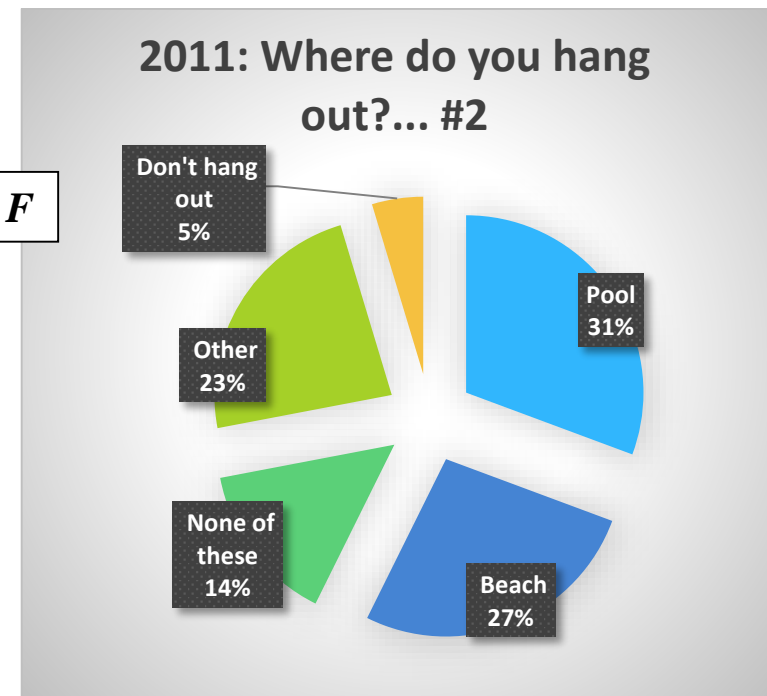
These include:
- Beach bus with 'no strings attached' pick up and drop off only.
- Free wi-fi
- PCYC open after school (with food, support and activities)
- Water based activities/ Pontoon at beach (like Mandurah, but better)
- Family fun nights: Laser tag, zorb balls, soccer,
- Movie nights (outdoor space at PCYC)
- Music festival (battle of local bands and big headliner)

PCYC: specific suggestions regarding refurbishment
- Gaming consoles, new TV and musical instruments
- Workout area, indoor trampoline
- Paint walls and open up space to be 'less dingy'.

2011
Where do you hang out?...#1

don't really hang out 8%

Skate park 23%

Home 24%

PCYC 2%

Sports ground 14%

Shops 29%

Results Chart F

2011: Where do you hang out?... #2

Don't hang out 5%
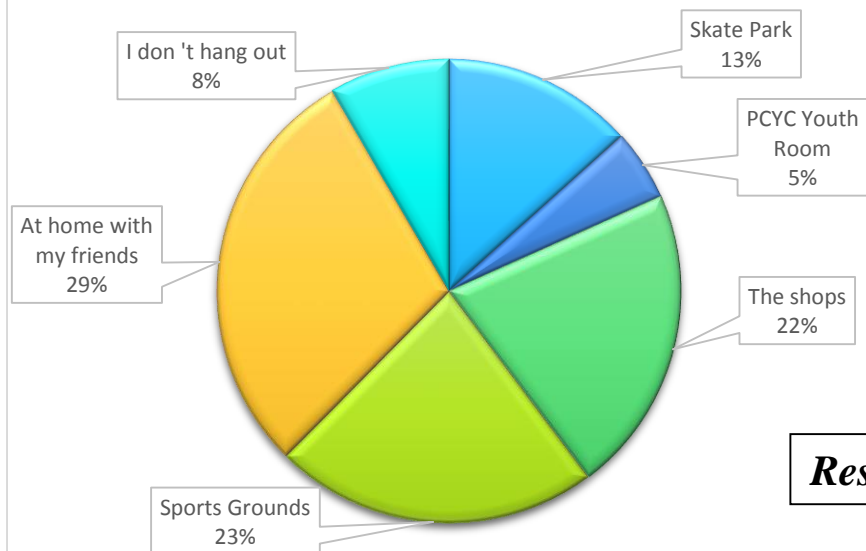
Other 23%

Pool 31%

None of these 14%

Beach 27%

2011: The top spots to hang out were:
1. The Pool (when it's open)
2. The shops
3. The beach
4. Home
5. Skate Park
6. Sports grounds
7. None of these places
8. Don't really hang out
9. PCYC

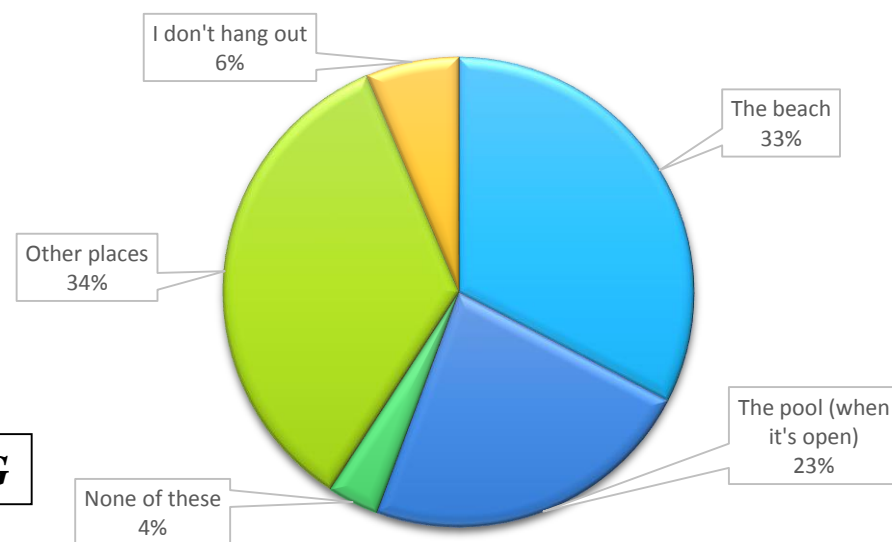**2015: The top spots to hang out were: (please refer to results graphs on next page)**
1. Other places (which include the Caltex petrol station)
2. The Beach
3. Pool (when it's open)
4. At home with my friends
5. Sports grounds
6. The shops
7. Skate Park
8. Don't really hang out
9. PCYC
10. None of these places

2015: Where do you hang out...1 of 2

- Skate Park 13%
- PCYC Youth Room 5%
- The shops 22%
- Sports Grounds 23%
- At home with my friends 29%
- I don 't hang out 8%

2015: Where do you hang out...2 of 2

- I don't hang out 6%
- The beach 33%
- The pool (when it's open) 23%
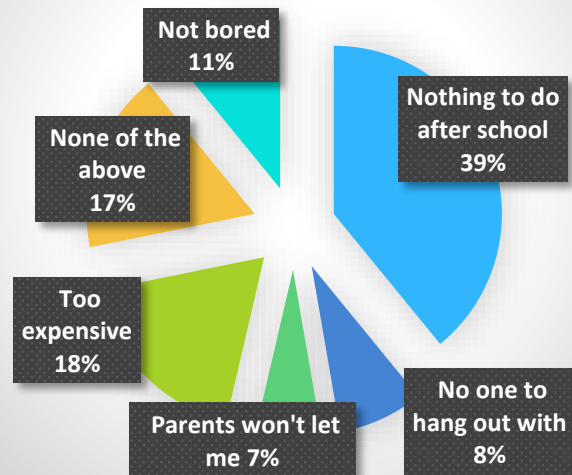- None of these 4%
- Other places 34%

Results Chart G

An interesting outcome is 34% of young people identified that they hang out at "Other Places" which include the local petrol station (which is a change from the 2011 findings).

Initial response from YAE: YAE reported that the Caltex is the only place open later into the night. The lights go off at 9.30pm at the Skate Park and the Youth Rooms shut then too. They suggested that the Youth Rooms could shut later on Friday nights to address this issue (possibly 10 or 10.30pm).
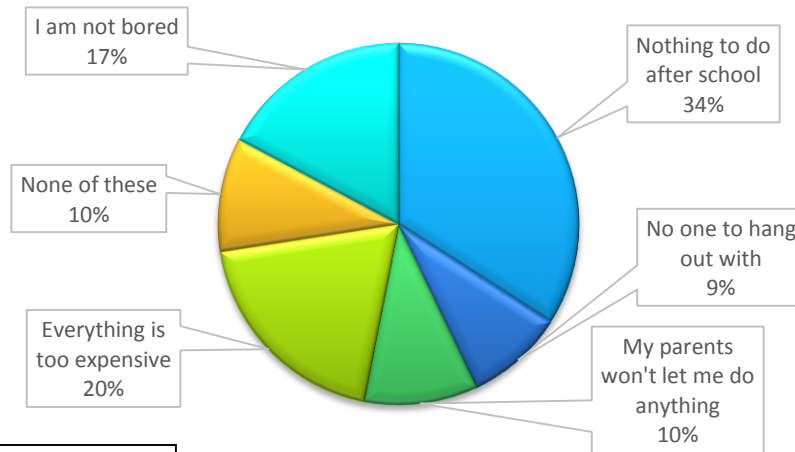
Actions: This could be a key role that YAE could play, to consult and find out where these "other places" are (besides the Caltex) and ask the young people of Exmouth what they would like to do to respond to these needs (and if they do in fact perceive them as something that needs to be responded to).

2011: If you or your friends are bored...why?

Not bored 11%
None of the above 17%
Too expensive 18%
Parents won't let me 7%
No one to hang out with 8%
Nothing to do after school 39%

2015: If you or your friends are bored...why?

I am not bored 17%
None of these 10%
Everything is too expensive 20%
Nothing to do after school 34%
No one to hang out with 9%
My parents won't let me do anything 10%

Results Chart H

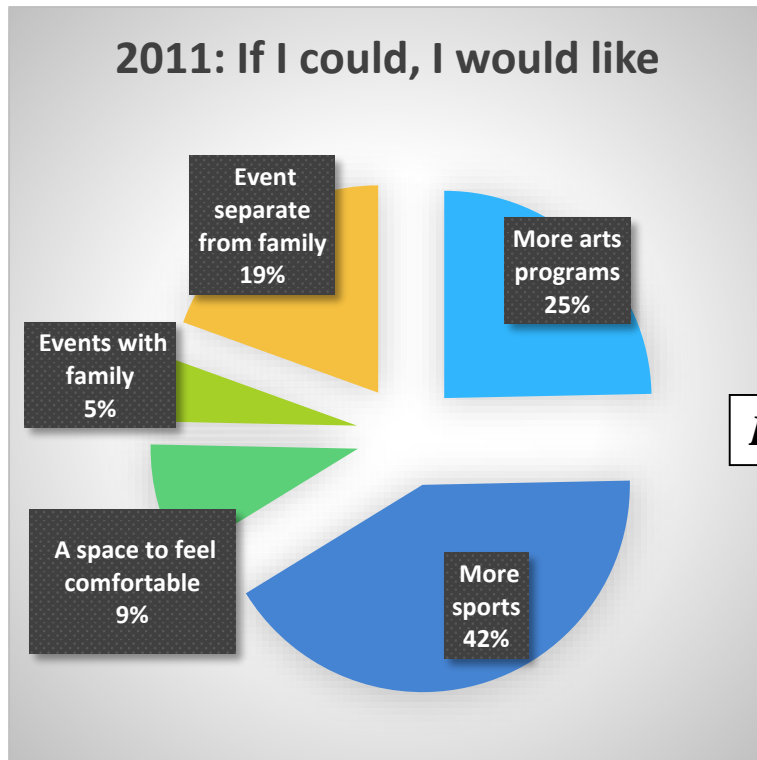**2011: The reasons why High School aged young people get bored were:**

1. Nothing to do after school
2. Everything is too expensive
3. None of the above
4. I'm not bored
5. No one to hang out with
6. Parents won't let me do stuff

The consistency between answers for 2011 and 2015 demonstrates that similar concerns remain with regards to boredom and the issues that surround it.
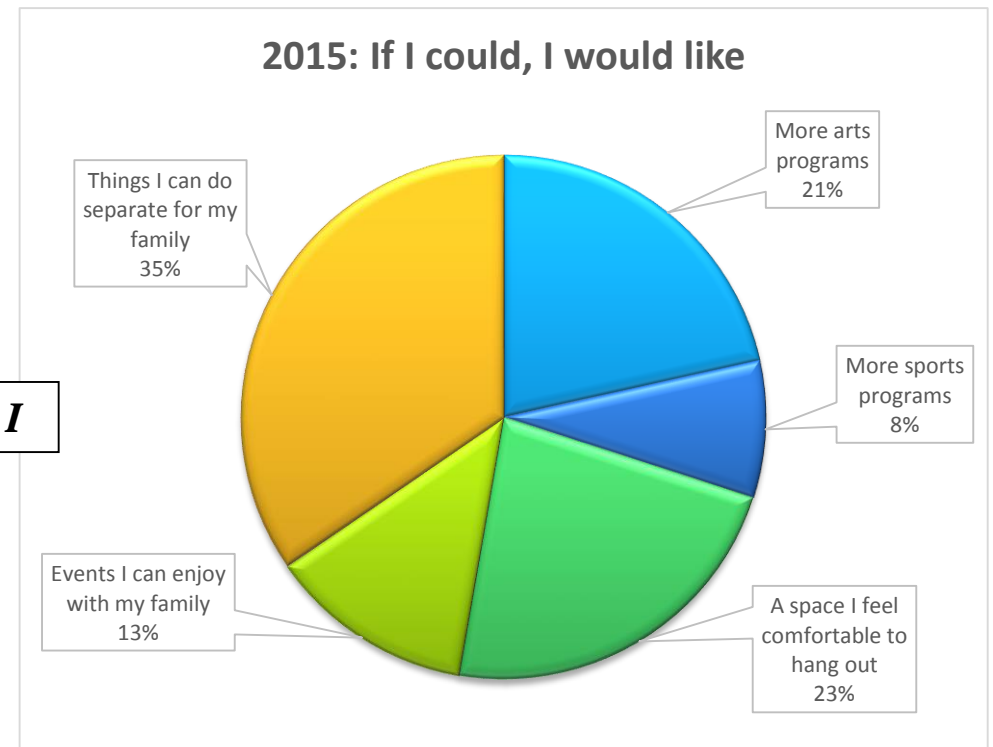
2015: The reasons why High School aged young people get bored were:

1. Nothing to do after school (decreased by 5%)
2. Everything is too expensive (increased by 2%)
3. None of the above (decreased by 7%)
4. I'm not bored (increased by 6%)
5. No one to hang out with (increased by 1%)
6. Parents won't let me do stuff (increased by 3%)

Initial response from YAE: They reported that this is the biggest issue in their opinion and leads to other problems. The findings here not only indicate young people's preferences, but could also flag their level of awareness of facilities and resources in town.

2011: If I could, I would like

- Event separate from family 19%
- More arts programs 25%
- Events with family 5%
- A space to feel comfortable 9%
- More sports 42%

Results Chart I

2015: If I could, I would like

- Things I can do separate for my family 35%
- More arts programs 21%
- More sports programs 8%
- A space I feel comfortable to hang out 23%
- Events I can enjoy with my family 13%

In 2011: Young people's preferences were:
1. More sports
2. More arts programs
3. Events separate from family
4. A space to feel comfortable
5. Events with family

In 2015: Young people's preferences were:
1. Things I can do separate for my family
2. A space I feel comfortable to hang out
3. More arts programs
4. Events I can enjoy with my family
5. More sports programs

Implications: There seems to have been a marked change with regards to the need for more sports programs and this could be due to the recent introduction of new sports programs (such as basketball) or a change in how activities other than sports are perceived.

Initial response from YAE: YAE feel that the events they have been able to run so far have been very successful and lots of young people came along. They just want to be able to run more things and need more help. YAE commented that young people that are newer to town may not be as aware of the resources and activities available to them.
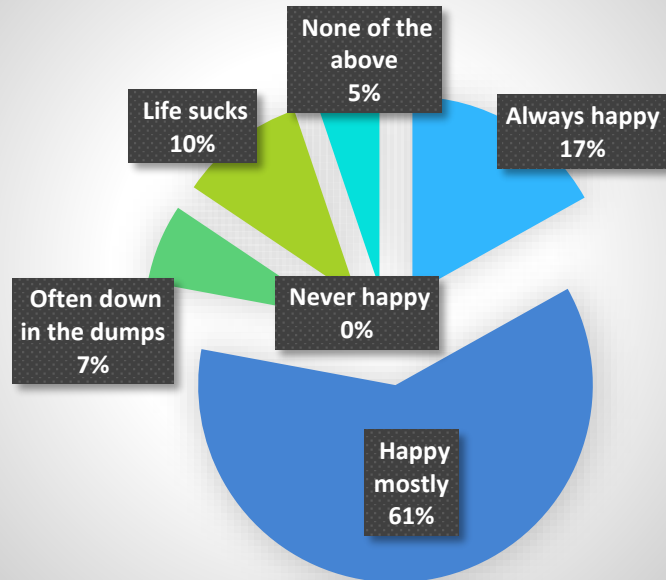
Actions: This is a key area for YAE in conjunction with Council explore more fully with young people and work together towards solutions.

In discussions at the PCYC Youth Rooms, the young people were very keen to refurbish the Youth Rooms and take on more ownership of what happens there on Friday nights and after school.
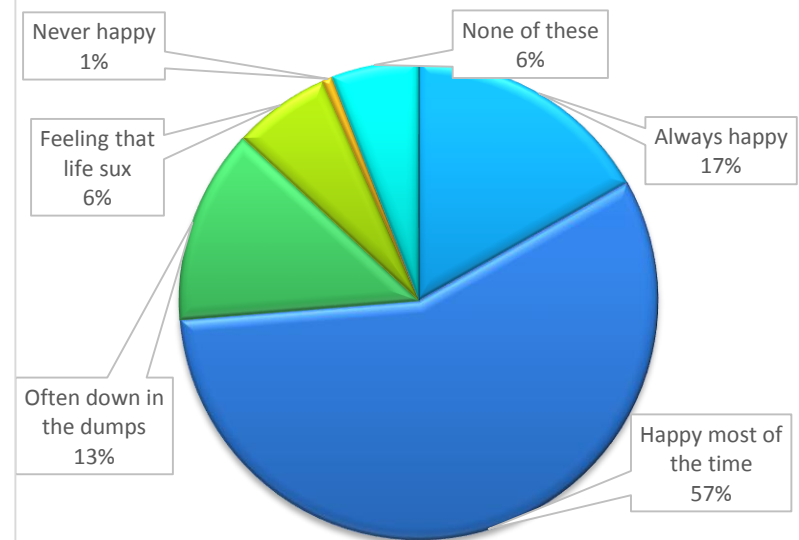
In addition to this, young people at the PCYC expressed their desire to participate in planning and organising events and activities (for example an outdoor cinema projected onto one of the external walls of the PCYC).

2011: I am...

None of the above 5%

Life sucks 10%

Always happy 17%

Often down in the dumps 7%

Never happy 0%

Happy mostly 61%

2015: I am...

Never happy 1%

None of these 6%

Feeling that life sux 6%

Always happy 17%

Often down in the dumps 13%

Happy most of the time 57%

It is encouraging to note that the majority of young people in Exmouth indicate that they are always or mostly happy. The remainder of the youth population need to be able to access activities and support services as the need arises. This includes a range of online resources such as Headspace and Reach Out. Mental Health issues have become a significant issue for the youth population. One in four young people are currently experiencing some form of mental health issue in Australia[14].

Implications: What is important to note is that young people did report that they were concerned about many aspects of health: sexual, physical

and emotional and this needs to be taken into account when activities are being planned. Young people in the informal focus groups indicated that they were not aware of online resources that could be a source of ongoing confidential support. They were reticent to access local support because of the stigma of needing support and also that other people might find out, especially their parents.

Actions: Given the 2015 results, the area to monitor and discuss with YAE is the increase in young people who are often 'down in the dumps' as this has

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[14] *https://www.youthbeyondblue.com/footer/stats-and-facts*

almost doubled. ("down in the dumps' defined in relation to depression http://health.vic.gov.au/edfactsheets/downloads/depression.pdf)

Confidential online resources and support include:

1. **Headspace** is the National Youth Mental Health Foundation providing early intervention mental health services to 12-25 year olds. http://headspace.org.au/
2. **Beyondblue** provides information and support to help everyone in Australia achieve their best possible mental health, whatever their age and wherever they live. https://www.beyondblue.org.au/
3. **Kids Help Line** http://www.kidshelpline.com.au/
4. **ReachOut** provides practical tools and support to help young people get through everything from everyday issues to tough times. http://au.reachout.com/

Ensuring that the young people of Exmouth have easy and ready access to these online support services is critical. Given that the Shire and YAE are committed to a communications strategy with young people, this needs to be embedded into this strategy.

2011: When I am going through a tough time, I feel I have enough support and information to help me

No 56%

Yes 44%

2015: When I am going through a tough time, I feel I have enough support and information to help me

No 37%

Yes 63%
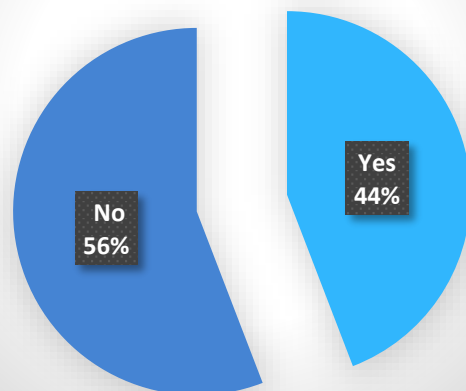
This data set augments the previous data set, as it indicates that although most young people feel happy, young people perceive that they would like more time and support from significant people in their lives.

It is very encouraging to see that, although there are still 37% of young people who feel that they do not have enough support, the number of young people who do feel as though they have enough support has increased by almost 20% from 2011 to 2015.
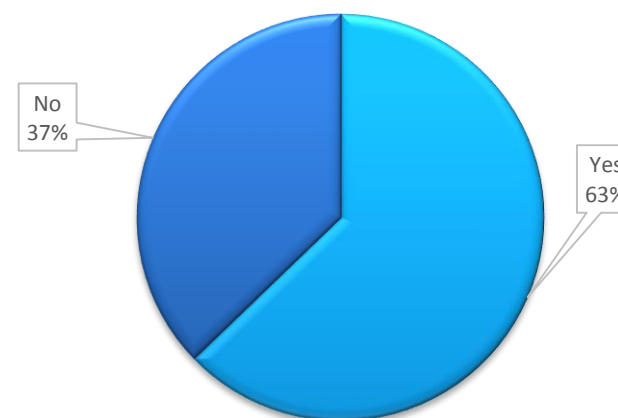
Implications: This issue in conjunction with the data set on the following page is an important one, as it relates directly to wellbeing and mental health. The young people consulted indicated that this was a significant issue in their lives and hence requires ongoing prioritisation.
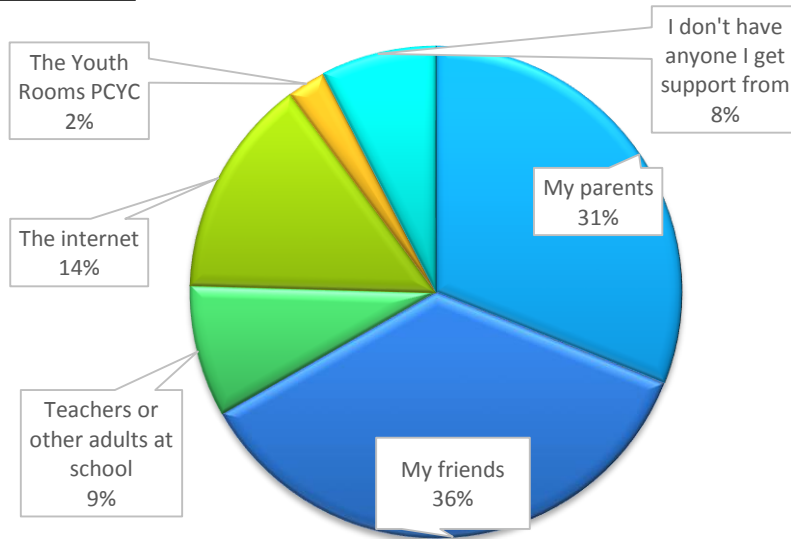
Actions: In addition to information on the YAE Facebook page, YAE indicated that they would like to promote strong health and wellbeing messages at events (and this could be a source of funding possibilities too).

2011: When I am going through a tough time, I get support from
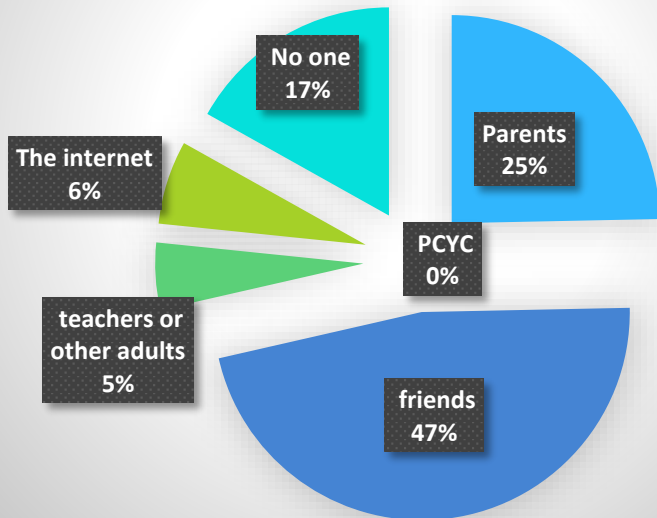
Results Chart L

2015: When I am going through a tough time, I get support from

Between 2011 and 2015, the sources of support changed in the following ways:

1. Friends were still in the top position but decreased from 47% to 36%.
2. Parents were still in second position but increased from 25% to 31%.
3. I don't have anyone I get support from decreased by more than half from 17% to 8%.
4. Teachers and other adults at school increased from 5% to 9%.
5. The internet more than doubled.
6. The PCYC rated as a place to get support.

Hence enhancing the work of the PCYC and re-launching it as a space such as this could be beneficial. The key here is to work alongside key groups of young people to ascertain which approach will have the most traction.
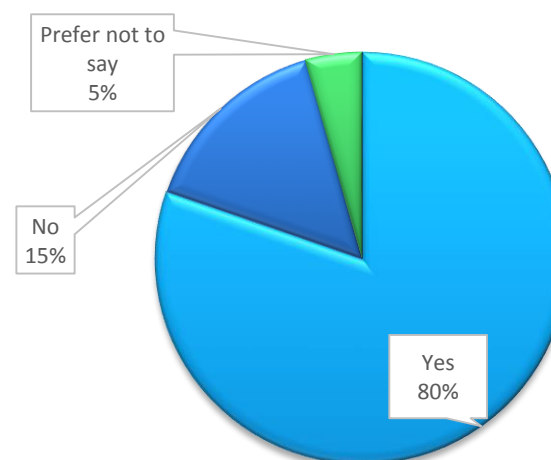
Initial response from YAE: YAE were concerned about the 8% of young people who don't have anyone they can get support from.

2011: I have been, or I know someone who has been bullied

Prefer not to say
5%

No
5%

Yes
90%
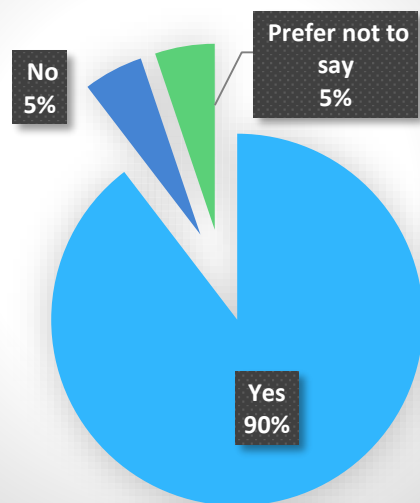
Results Chart M

2015: I have been, or I know someone who has been bullied

Prefer not to say
5%

No
15%

Yes
80%

This data set is a major concern for the young people of Exmouth. Initiatives that are devised, planned and executed by young people to combat the issue of bullying will be the most effective. However, there is some good news, as 'Yes' responses have decreased by 10%, which is an encouraging sign. It would be worth investigating whether anti-bullying programs have been running in local schools and what they perceive are the outcomes.

Implications: Bullying has far reaching consequences (both online and in person) and the most marked effects are mental health issues. Young people

are concerned for their own and their friend's mental health and need mentoring and support around this issue. Linking with key external funding to run events promoting belonging and resilience are important here. Programs such as Act, Belong, Commit (Mental Health WA) would be a key partner here. YAE have already run some very successful events and ongoing support is needed to ensure that these can continue.
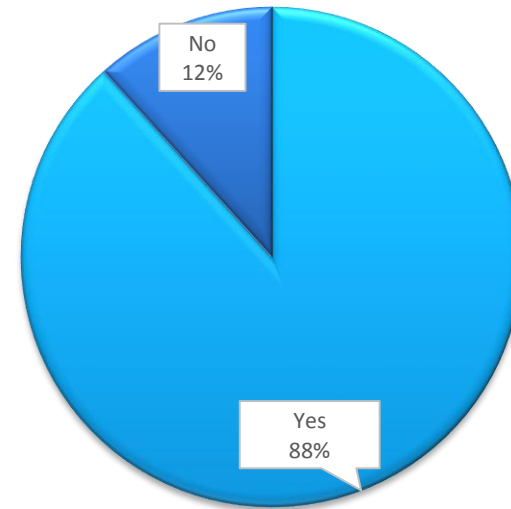
Actions: YAE want to run more events that have a strong health and wellbeing message present.

2011: I feel safe in my community

No
14%

Yes
86%
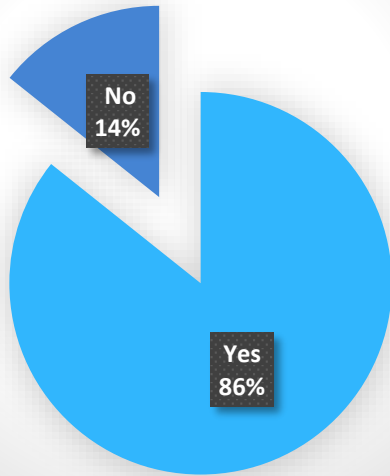
Results Chart N

## 2015: I feel safe in my community

No
12%

Yes
88%

The young people surveyed indicated that the times that they feel most unsafe in their community are around the tourist season. The figures have not changed significantly between 2011 and 2015. In discussion in the focus groups and informal discussions, they also readily acknowledge that Exmouth relies on tourists, so it is a difficult issue for them.

Implications: Links to previous findings in relation to mental health issues as well as an ongoing sense of belonging, worth and citizenship are key issues to continue to grapple with here. These are the sorts of issues that Youth Action Exmouth (YAE) can continue to address.
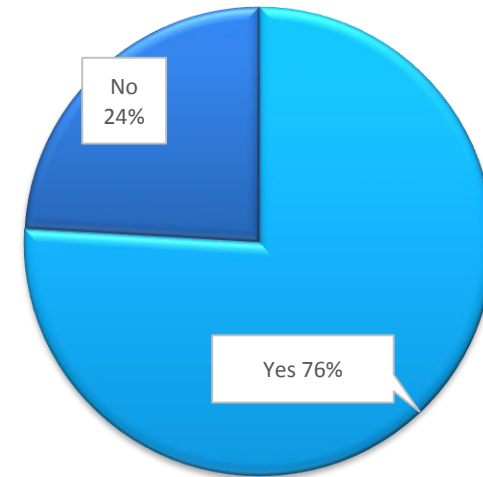
Actions: YAE suggested that more street lighting was needed to help young people feel safe (all year round).

2011: I feel that I get to spend enough time with my parents

No 29%

Yes 71%
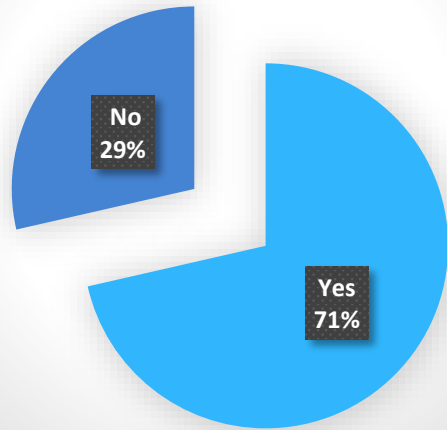
Results Chart O

2015: I feel that I get to spend enough time with my parents

No 24%

Yes 76%

In 2015, 76% of young people reported that they feel that they spend enough time with their parents. This figure has slightly increased since 2011. The remaining 24% of young people want to spend more time with their parents and this could be contributed to by longer working hours by parents and a perceived lack of connection with their children.

Implications: Again, this feeds into the mental health picture for young people in Exmouth and also possibilities for after school activities in town.

2011: I have concerns about...

None of this stuff
14%

Loneliness
18%

Someone drinks too much
18%

Fights in family
23%

Isolated or depressed
14%

Mum or dad not around
13%

Results Chart P

2015: I have concerns about...

None of this
17%

Loneliness
20%

Someone I know drinks too much, too often
11%

Fights in my family
23%

Isolation & depression
15%

Mum & dad not being around
14%
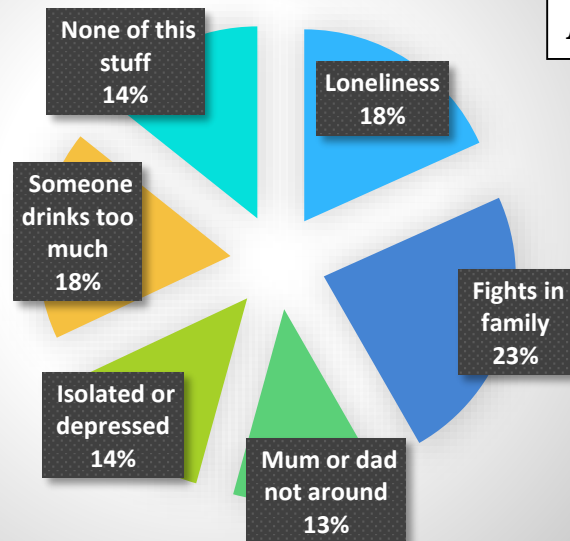
Young people feel deeply about issues that impact on their lives especially in relation to their family life. The results for both 2011 and 2015 indicate that young people do indeed have concerns that are significant.

Implications: Early intervention and prevention are critical here and places where young people can access free, confidential support are critical.
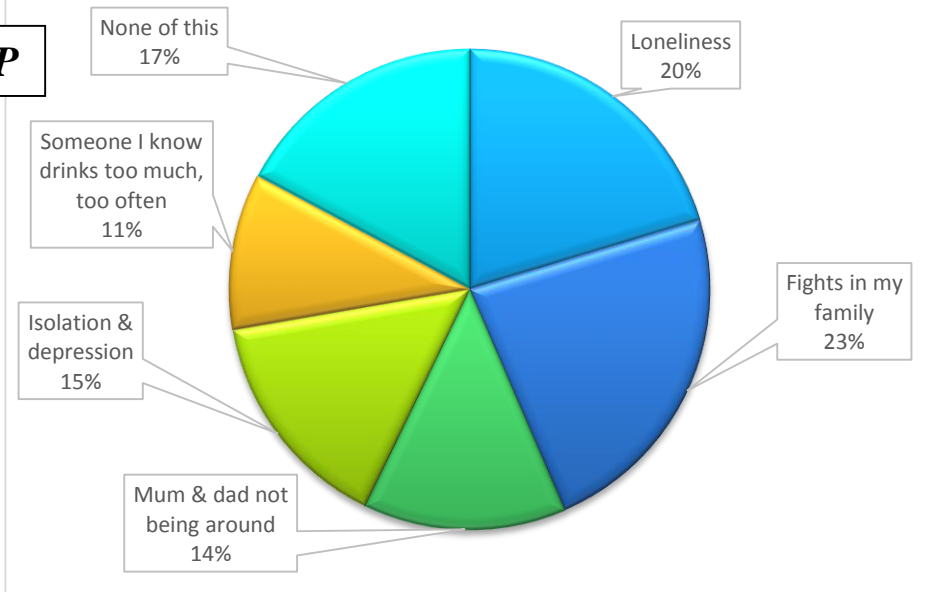
Providing increased opportunities for young people to connect with school based support and outreach services in the schools is an important first step.
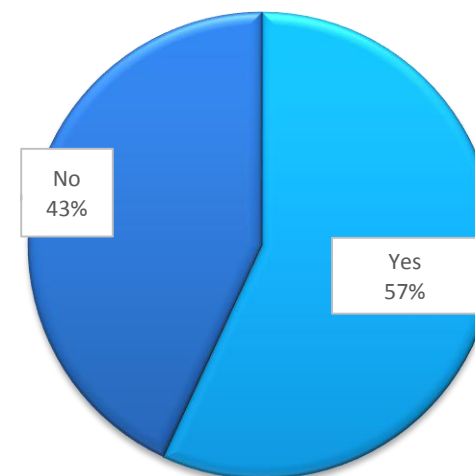
Actions: YAE were keen to see positive messages about young people out in the community. They also want to use Facebook as a way of getting messages to young people that they can access free and confidential support for these concerns online.

2011: I feel connected to my community

No 34%

Yes 66%
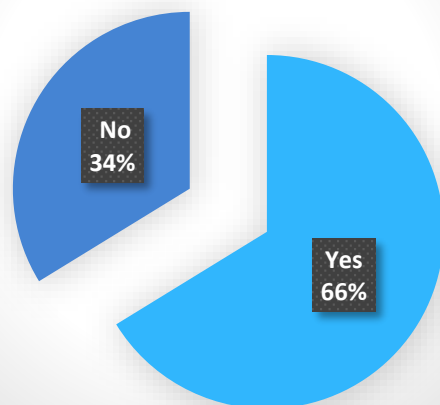
Results Chart Q

2015: I feel connected to my community

No 43%

Yes 57%

Young people's sense of connection with their community has decreased by almost 10% between 2011 and 2015. What requires further attention is why so many young people do not feel connected, particularly in relation to issues such a mobility of the population and tourism.

Implications: These are issues that groups of young people can address very effectively, through a range of activities and programs designed and executed by young people themselves.

Initial response from YAE: YAE indicated that engaging the youth population more fully through events, increased opening hours at the PCYC and generally the momentum that this will create will no doubt foster a stronger sense of belonging for young people. These issues are tied to boredom, lack of perceived activities, health and wellbeing concerns etc, so responding to these will have a very positive effect all round.

2011: After school I plan to

Results Chart R

- Work in a city 22%
- Work offshore 25%
- Work in town 10%
- Uni...
- Tafe...
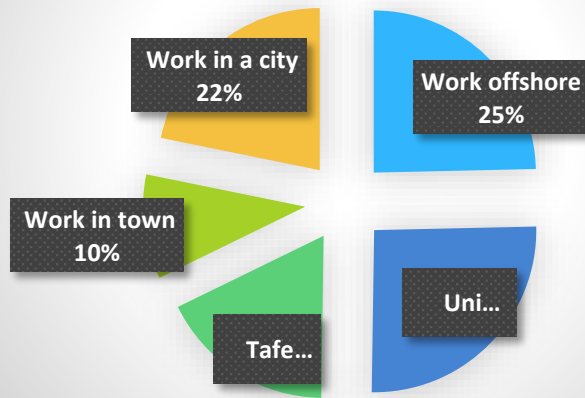
2015: After school I want to

- I have no idea 30%
- Work on the rigs offshore or on the mines 7%
- Go to work in thecity 11%
- Go to Uni 30%
- Work in town 13%
- Go to TAFE 9%

This is a useful data set with regards to young people's aspirations, and would warrant further exploration. Whilst it is important to compare figures, the stand out in this data set is the 30% of young people who reported that they have no idea what they want to do. This question was not asked in Primary Schools in 2011 (ie to the 11 and 12 year olds), so the emergence of this 30% could be due to the fact that asking 12 year olds this question (in 2015) was asking about an issue that they had not considered yet. As previously stated [15], a noteworthy issue is that of youth unemployment. A recent study done by the Brotherhood of St Laurence

(2014) reported that it is projected that the youth unemployment rate will increase to 28.4% by 2016. This is a concern and needs urgent attention.

Implications: Much of this data assumes that young people will have to leave Exmouth in order to pursue further education, training or employment. Whilst this is commendable, in the short term, this means that the youth population significantly shrinks once young people attain school leaving age. However, those who do remain in town, will in most cases be unable to find employment.

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[15] Brotherhood of St Laurence (2014)
https://www.nesa.com.au/media/62599/140324_brotherhood%20of%20st%20laurence_youth%20unemployment%20jumps%2088%20per%20cent%20in%20parts%20of%20australia.pdf

2015: My parents want me to stay local after I finish school, but I dont want to

- True 9%
- Not applicable/don't know 47%
- False 44%
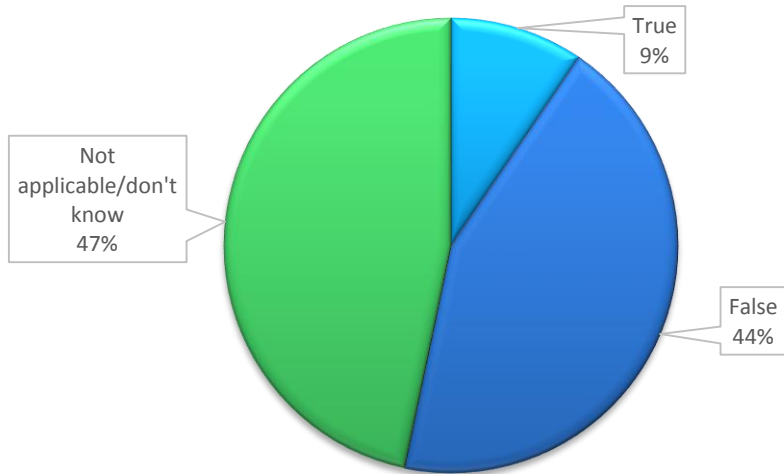
Results Chart S

2011: My parents want me to stay local after school

- True 10%
- Not applicable 47%
- False 43%
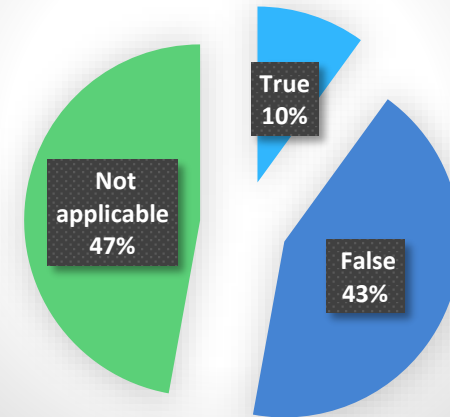
Initial response from YAE: YAE indicated that once young people leave town, it quite unlikely that they return in the short term.

2011: I feel like I have enough to achieve my goals

True
41%

False
59%
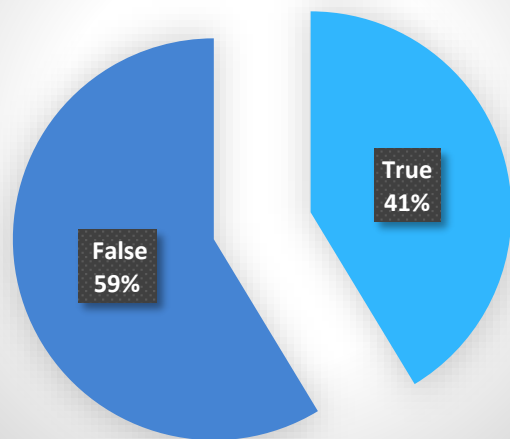
Results Chart T

2015: I feel like I have everything I need to achieve my goals

Don't know/haven't thought about it
22%

True
38%

False
40%

This data set augments the previous data set, as the influence of parents has a significant impact on young people's career choices and aspirations.
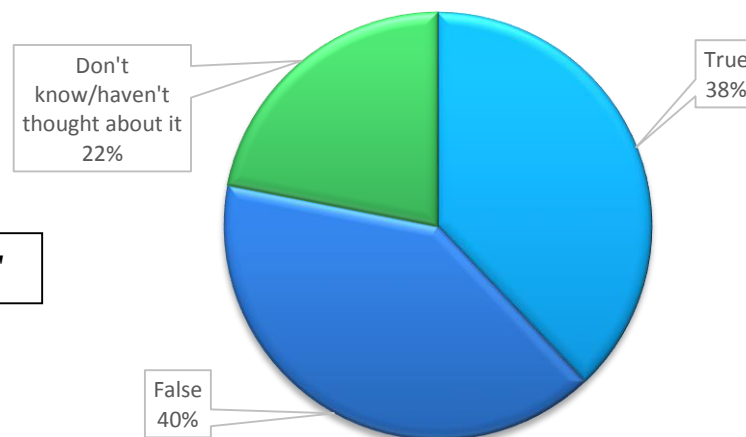
Implications: If this issue can begin to be addressed by young people themselves, the health and vitality of the community will benefit. This needs to be a longer term goal embedded into all program development within the Shire and broader youth services.

Initial response from YAE: YAE commented that due to the lack of choice with subject in senior school, a significant number of young people currently move away to boarding school (either in Geraldton or Perth) for their senior high school years. They stated that this seems to work for those families that can afford it, but it limits options available to families and young people who cannot afford this.

There is a perception, that if you do not have choices about what to do after school that you are 'stuck' in Exmouth in a job that might not have a good future, especially if your parents don't run a business in town. This is an issue that YAE feel could start to be addressed by raising it as an issue in the school in Health lessons, by support staff in the school (eg chaplain), and by talking about it, young people feel that they can raise their concerns (if they have any).

Actions: YAE thought that addressing other issues that have been raised, will have a ripple effect on the positivity and future aspirations of young people. One step at a time.

2011: What would you like to see in Exmouth for Young People?

- Internet or youth café 36%
- none of the above 21%
- Youth worker 9%
- Youth card with info 17%
- Better youth room 17%

Results Chart U

2015: What would you like to see developed for young people

- Internet/Youth Cafe 36%
- None of these 9%
- A youth worker available 12%
- A Youth Info card 18%
- A better Youth Room 25%

Again, corroboration with previous data sets (and between 2011 and 2015) is important here so that a comprehensive picture regarding young people's future plans and aspirations can be built. This will have a long term impact on the vitality of the Shire of Exmouth.

Implications: If this issue can begin to be addressed by young people themselves, the health and vitality of the community will benefit. This needs to be a longer term goal embedded into all program development within the Shire and broader youth services.
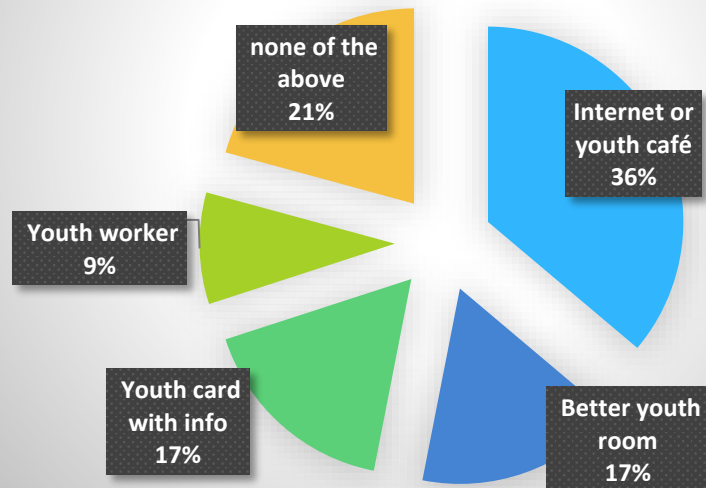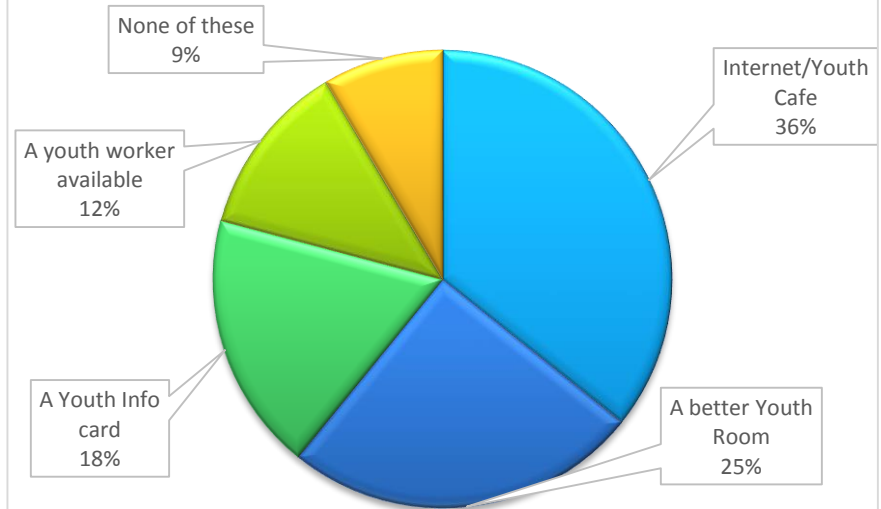
2011: The things that young people would like to see in Exmouth are:
1. An Internet/Youth Café.
2. None of the above.
3. A youth card with helpful information and better youth rooms (PCYC).
4. A Youth Worker they can readily access for help and support.

2015: The things that young people would like to see in Exmouth are:
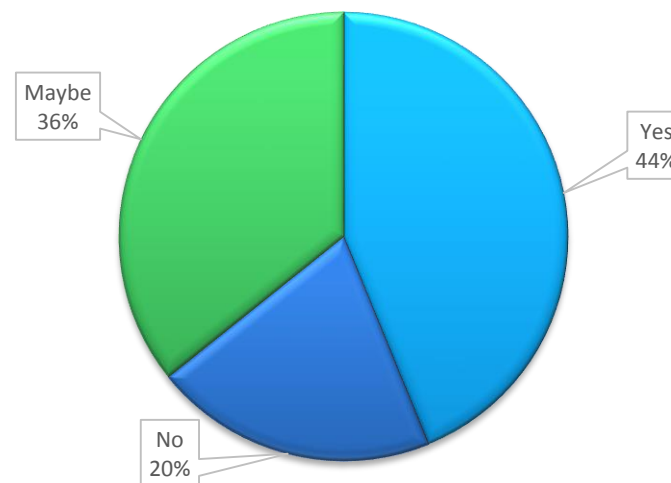1. An Internet/Youth Café.
2. None of the above.
3. A youth card with helpful information, better youth rooms (PCYC).
4. A Youth Worker they can readily access for help and support.

2011: Would you volunteer time to help plan and/or run youth events

Maybe 31%

No 16%

Yes 53%
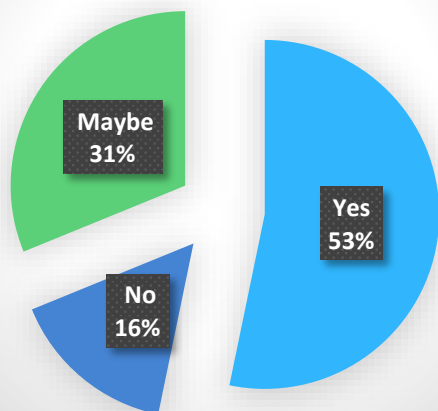
2015: I would volunteer my time to help out organising events

Maybe 36%

Yes 44%

No 20%

Whilst the number of young people willing to give up their time to help plan and run youth events has decreased between 2011 and 2015, once there is energy and events happening, young people will re-engage. They need to be given clear and meaningful opportunities to volunteer.

This is an exciting outcome as young people overwhelmingly are keen to be involved and engaged in solutions to their issues! This was strong in 2011 and has become even more of a priority in 2015.

This is now a work in progress through YAE.

Actions: The Shire has a key role to play in supporting YAE to recruit volunteers and maintain them. This is the most difficult part of working with volunteers, being clear about meaningful roles and retaining them. This will enable YAE to work actively at events and activities with their pool of volunteers.

2011: What is the #1 Issue for Young People in Exmouth?

Results Chart W

No role models 3%

Other 4%

Lack of info 1%

Boredom 31%

Drugs 23%

Under age drinking 38%

2015: #1 issue for young people in Exmouth

No role models 5%

Something else 6%

Lack of infomation 1%

Boredom 44%

Drugs 25%

Underage drinking 19%
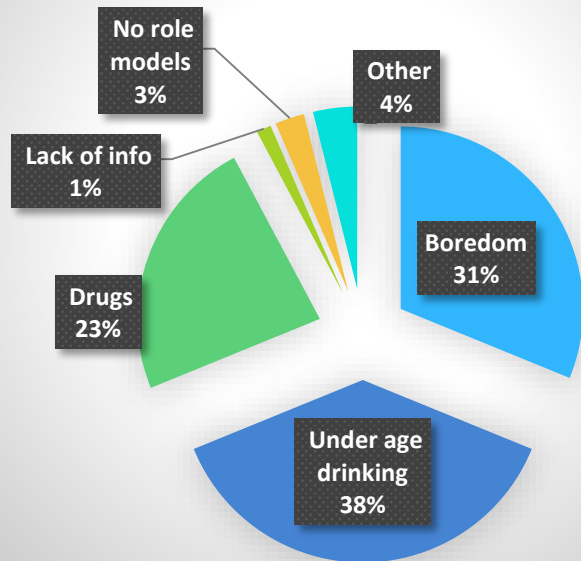
2011: The #1 issue according to young people in descending order were:
1. Underage drinking
2. Boredom
3. Drugs
4. Other
5. No role models
6. Lack of information

2015: The #1 issue according to young people in descending order were:
1. Boredom
2. Drugs
3. Underage drinking
4. Something else
5. No role models
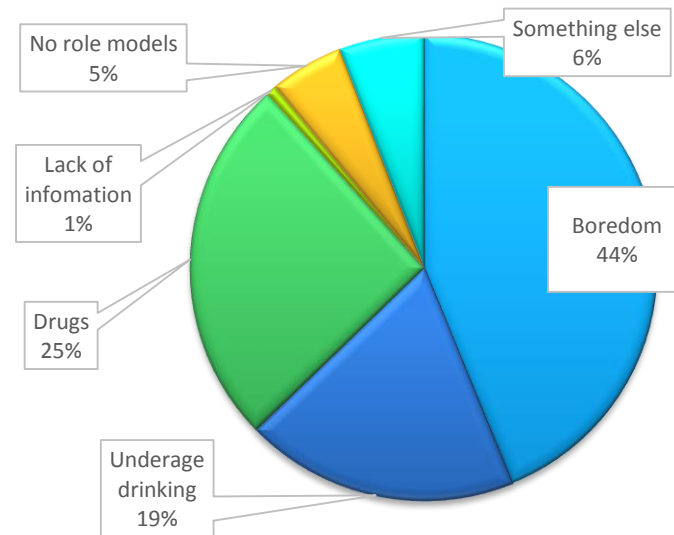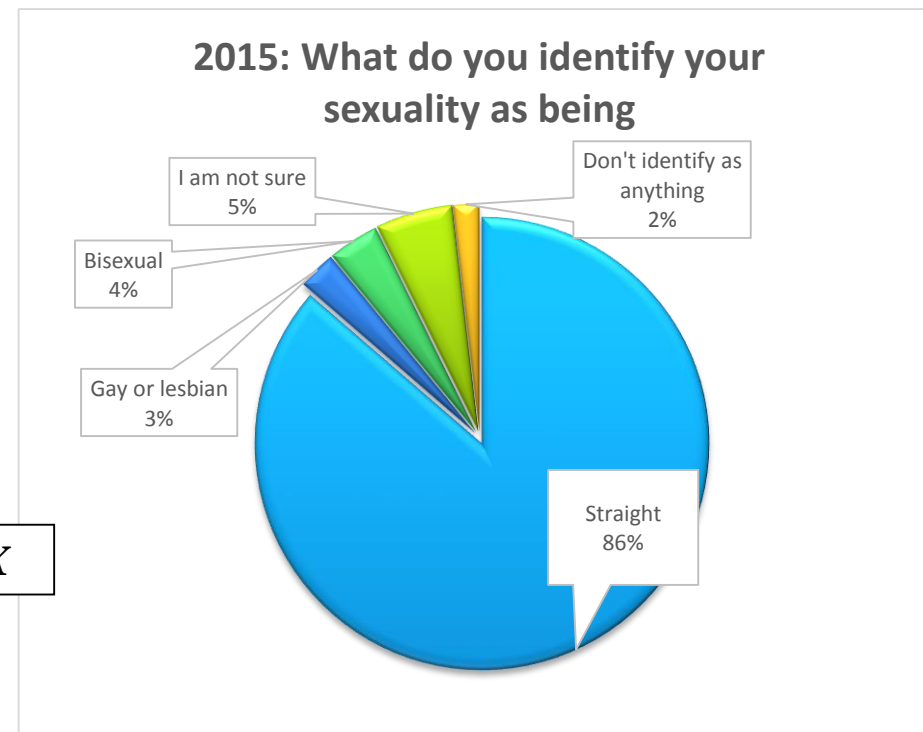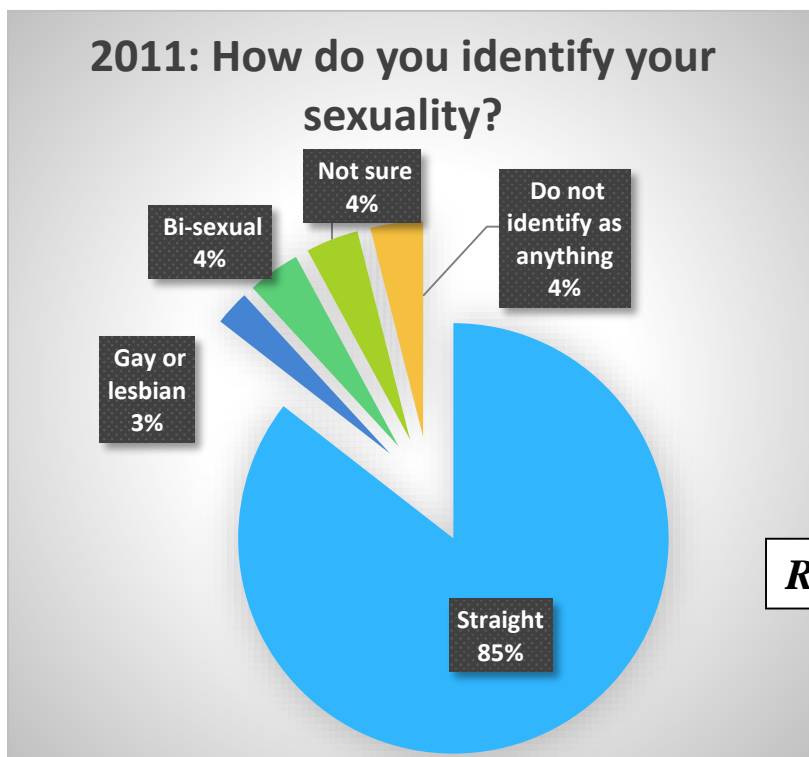6. Lack of information

2011: How do you identify your sexuality?

- Not sure 4%
- Do not identify as anything 4%
- Bi-sexual 4%
- Gay or lesbian 3%
- Straight 85%

Results Chart X

2015: What do you identify your sexuality as being

- I am not sure 5%
- Don't identify as anything 2%
- Bisexual 4%
- Gay or lesbian 3%
- Straight 86%

These figures correlate with national figures regarding young people and their identified sexuality. This has implications for program development and sensitivity, as well as bullying issues. The figures have remained very stable between 2011 and 2015 which highlights their reliability.

The figures relating to young people's knowledge and activity regarding safe sexual practices is one that needs to be addressed at a range of levels. This relates to the findings on the next page as well as the current data set. This is the most concerning figure from all of the research conducted. There has been a sharp rise in Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's) in Western Australia over the past 2 years, and this has figured prominently in the youth population. This is an area that warrants careful planning as to next steps to begin to address the issue in Exmouth.

2011: I have had unprotected sex

Not sure 9%
Yes 20%
No 71%

Results Chart Y

2015: I have had unprotected sex

I am not sure 6%
Yes 15%
No 79%
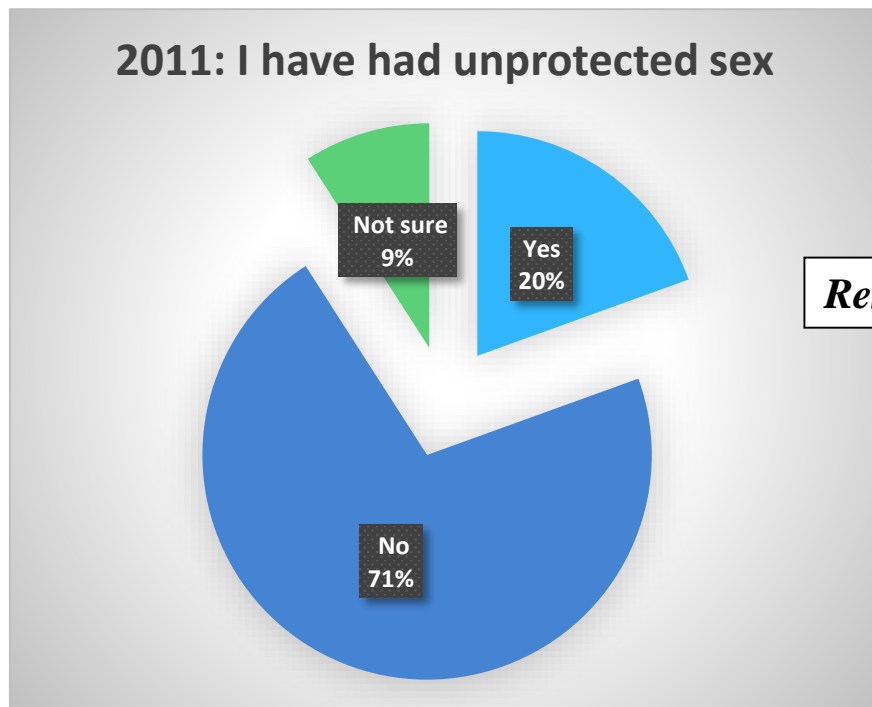
Implications: Council need to consider formalising partnerships with key agencies within the Shire. This could be done in the form of establishing clear and agreed working protocols to state what role each agency takes in addressing the issue, so that there is no duplication, but more importantly, that resources can be shared so that addressing these issues and finding solutions is paramount. This also relates to Collective Impact processes which have been mentioned previously in this report. YAE also have a key part to play in this process.

Actions: This is an issue that needs some well-developed and targeted education around what kinds of sexual activities and types of contraception that are deemed to be safe sex. Issues with sexual orientation (as stated on the previous page) also need to be included in the process. The Youth Affairs Council of WA (YACWA) have the "Youth Educating Peers" [16](YEP) Program, which aims to support and educate young people on relationships, sexual health and blood-borne virus (SHBBV) issues[17].

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[16]

[17] https://www.yacwa.org.au/blog/projects/the-yep-project/

2011: I smoke or have smoked cigarettes

Yes 32%

No 68%
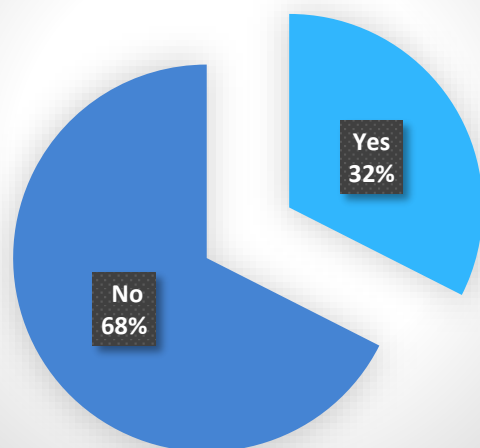
Results Chart Z

2015: I have tried or I smoke cigarettes

Yes 18%

No 82%
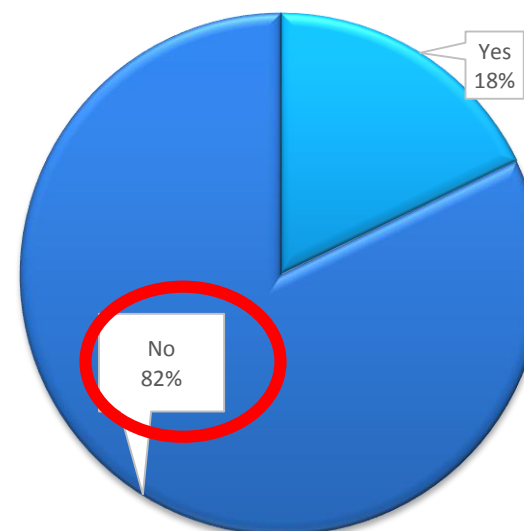
2011: Given that the youth population are the target of many anti-smoking campaigns, this is a disturbing outcome. Again, this is an issue that needs to be addressed cohesively across all youth service providers in the Shire.

What is encouraging to note is that 38% of young people have not engaged in any of the activities mentioned. This type of data is valuable to youth service providers in planning and collaborating about how to address youth health priorities.

There is good news in 2015, however. The message regarding smoking is getting through. One issue to consider is whether young people may be utilising other types of drugs as 'their drug of choice' instead of smoking cigarettes.

Actions: The public health messages around smoking are ongoing. What needs to be addressed are the messages around boredom, underage drinking and inconsistencies in messages around what the adult population engage in and what is accepted in Exmouth (more fully responded to through the next data set).

2011: I have or have used...

- Drugs 5%
- Alcohol 24%
- Sex 20%
- Tagging etc 2%
- Violent sometimes 11%
- None of the above 38%

Results Chart Za

2015: Health and Wellbeing: I ...

- Have used drugs 12%
- None of these 30%
- Drink alcohol 21%
- Have had sex 14%
- Graffiti/vandalise/ tag stuff 7%
- Am violent sometimes 16%
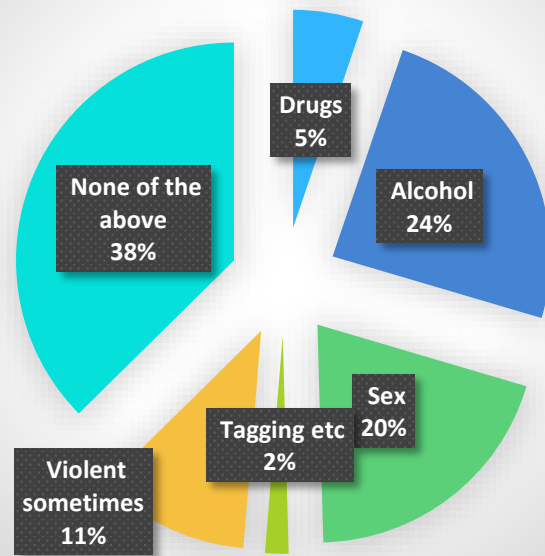
The most noteworthy statistic from this data set is the increase in the 'am violent sometimes' as it has increased from 11% in 2011 to 16% in 2015. Additionally, the use of drugs has increased from 5% in 2011 to 12% in 2015, which is a concern.

Implications:
What is required is an 'all of community' approach to the use of drugs and violence, as young people perceived (in informal conversations) that drug use and violence are quite socially accepted within the adult community.
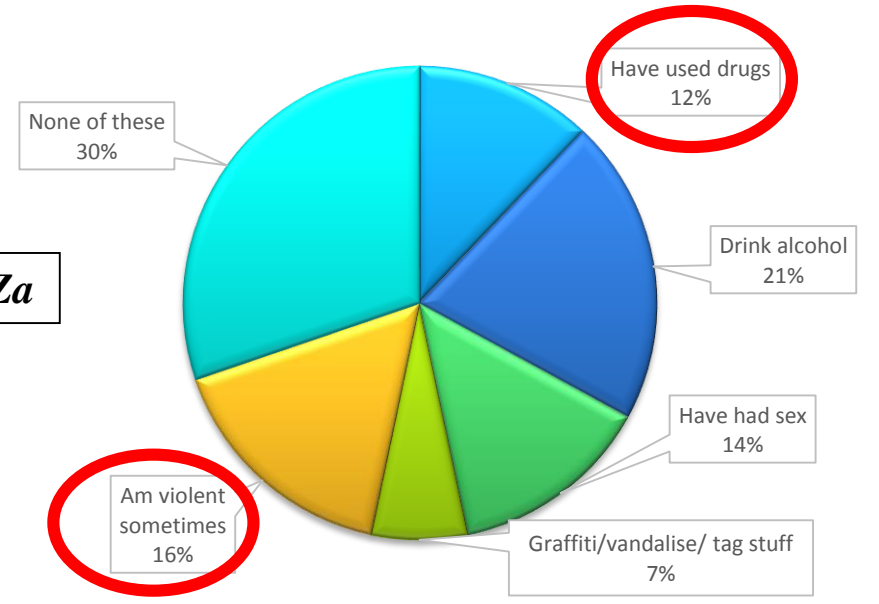
The consultation has also indicated that there is a perception that graffiti/vandalism has increased, and a clear solution was proposed by the young people at the Youth Rooms.

Their answer was to open up various sites in town as 'urban art' walls, where young artists could practice their skills in a safe and legal manner. These walls could be semi-regularly painted over so that new work could be created. The YACVIC article explains the nature of graffiti, gives valuable

insights from young people themselves and poses excellent strategies in how to respond[18].

Initial response from YAE: YAE see responding to this to be a community wide issue. The adult population engage in anti-social levels of drinking, and some levels of other drug use, but this is perceived as being ok (and they have places that they can do it), but it is not ok for young people. This also sometimes also leads to violence. YAE indicated that addressing this is frustrating, because 'why should young people change if the adults are doing it?'

Actions: The culture of anti-social drinking (and the ripple effects) in the adult population needs to be responded to before the youth population can see the point of not engaging in these activities.

The Shire support YAE and the young people at the Youth Rooms to create some legal urban art walls. (Please refer to the City of Melville's PHAZE Urban Art Program for how to do this[19].)

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[18] Youth Affairs Council of Victoria.
file:///C:/Users/jgbso_000/Downloads/Public%20Space%20-%20A%20Consultation%20with%20Young%20People%20who%20Graffit.pdf

[19] http://www.melvillecity.com.au/news-and-events/news/the-next-phaze-for-urban-art-project

2011:
I get lots of school support from...

Teachers 22%
Friends 32%
Others in the community 11%
Online 6%
Parents 29%
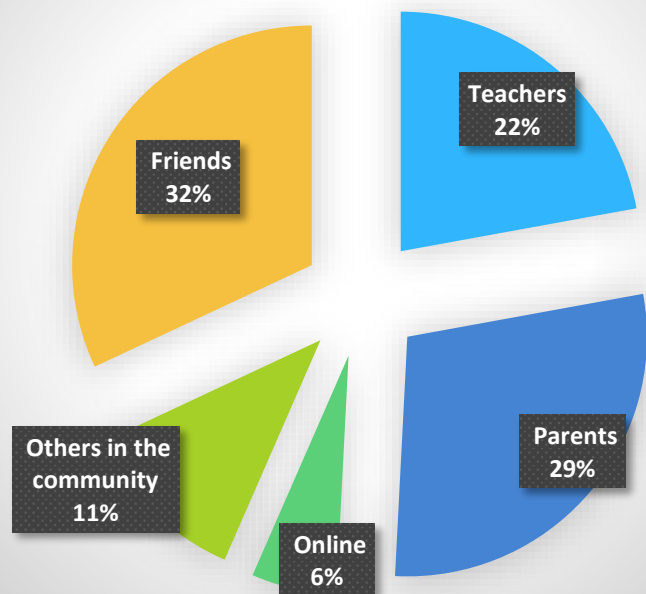
Results Chart Zb

2015: I get support with my school work from

My friends 26%
Teachers 24%
Other people in the community 7%
Online resources 13%
Parents 30%
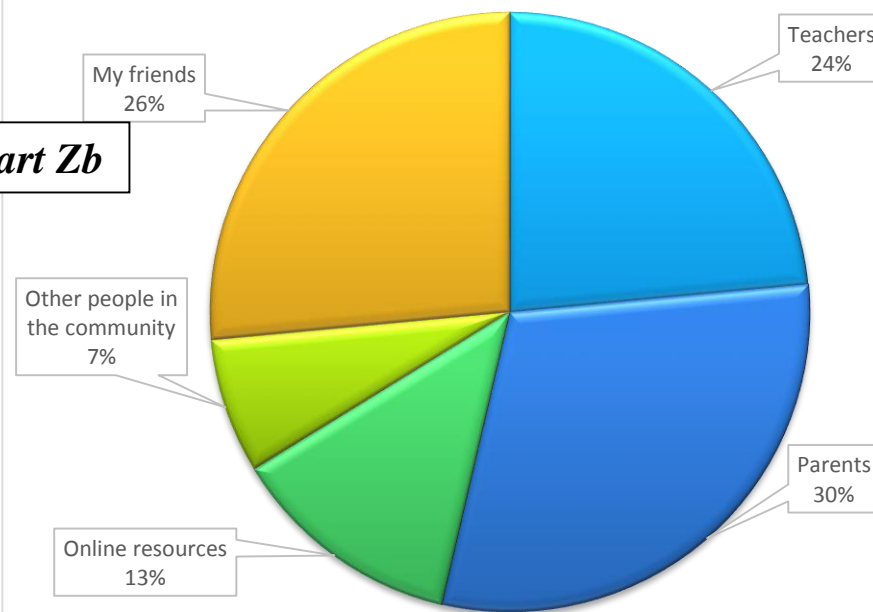
This is another encouraging set of data, as it indicates that many young people get support from a range of people and of course online. Online support doubled between 2011 and 2015.

What is going to make this information more meaningful is corroborating results with their perceptions of engagement and other broader support.

Actions: The Shire to actively support (via coordination) goal driven networking with youth services providers so that this network can meet regularly and come up with collective strategies to more effectively support the school and young people.

Recommendations

Overall, the depth and breadth of information elucidated by the consultation process is exciting and gives clear directions for future youth related planning within the Shire of Exmouth. The consultation in 2011 built a strong foundation and now the outcomes of 2015 further strengthen the process.

Youth Action Exmouth (YAE) are an outcome from the previous consultation, as forming a young people's action group was considered to be the key in advancing youth issues in Exmouth.

The Top Priorities for 2011	Actions	Outcomes
1. **YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL (YAC)**	The establishment of a key group of young people, who are supported and acknowledged strongly by Council. They would be in a leadership position for young people in Exmouth.	**Youth Action Exmouth (YAE) has been established**
2. **YOUTH ROOMS/SPACE/ HUB**	The provision of a youth space planned, designed and run by young people that is safe, clean, multifunctional and accommodates a whole range of interest groups and allied youth services.	**PCYC due to open more frequently after school and some evenings**
3. **YOUTH ENGAGEMENT/ ENTERTAINMENT**	Development of interest groups linked as sub-committees to YAE who plan and execute youth specific activities and help coordinate existing groups of young people in Exmouth.	**Still to be looked at**
4. **WEB 2 TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATIONS**	Council examine a Communications Strategy as a means whereby young people can link via Web 2 technology in Exmouth.	**Still to be looked at more fully by YAE**
5. **HEALTH**	Physical/sexual and mental health issues. Further support and focus.	**Still to be looked at**
6. **SCHOOLING SUPPORT**	Engagement with school support processes, which includes expansion of existing services.	**Still to be looked at**

Young people in Exmouth have a unique opportunity to impact on their participation in a significant way, and one means of ensuring that this will happen will be through the formation of various youth-led planning groups (eg skate facilities user's groups, a young women's group various other activity planning groups). This could build on the strong work of YAE and enhance effectiveness.

Research indicates that the formation and support of groups of young people to develop, plan and run their own activities is the best way to ensure that youth engagement is vibrant and sustainable. This of course has a ripple on effect to the remainder of the community. Comparing the Priorities from 2011 and 2015 creates a clear way forward.

Some strong recurrent themes emerged namely:
1. The need for a venue/facility where young people can access free, accurate information about concerns they have. This is particularly in relation to relationship, sexual and mental health (including bullying). YAE's comments regarding these issues are that there is a very strong need for this, as well as readily available information about where young people can access support online.
2. Sport plays a significant role in the lives of young people in Exmouth and there is a strong desire for more Arts/Music and Theatre based activities to be available.
3. Young people in Exmouth want to be involved in designing and implementing initiatives to respond to their needs.
4. Social networking plays an ever increasing role in the lives for young people. It is their major source of communication along with word of mouth and this needs to be embraced by the Shire. YAE indicated that their Facebook page is their major source of connection with local young people (currently 158 'likes')
5. The current youth rooms seem to be underutilised, as it does not seem to be utilised by the broadest range of young people.

When needs such as this are identified, it highlights that young people are a particularly vulnerable population in our communities and require services and resources[20].

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[20] 2011 Exmouth Youth Needs Analysis Report findings

The Top Priorities for 2015:

1.	YOUTH ROOMS/SPACE/ HUB	This is now a major priority and the young people of Exmouth are ready to help, with the support of youth services in town, Council and other adults.
2.	YOUTH ENGAGEMENT/ENTERTAINMENT	Development of interest groups linked as sub-committees to the YAE who plan and execute youth specific activities and help coordinate existing groups of young people in Exmouth. This will build on the foundational work that YAE has already done.
3.	WEB 2 TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATIONS	Council examine a Communications Strategy as a means whereby young people can link via Web 2 technology in Exmouth. Accessing free wi-fi is a major issue for young people.
4.	HEALTH & WELLBEING	Physical/sexual and mental health issues. This is a major issue and requires carefully planned responses.
5.	SCHOOLING SUPPORT	Engagement with school support processes, which includes expansion of existing services.

The Youth consultation key findings are an important next step toward developing an approach to young people and the services that they use. The findings from 2011 and 2015 have been augmented and hence the key findings include:

Youth Participation and Web 2 Communication

2011: Overwhelmingly, young people wanted to be included in the design and execution of projects and activities that affected them. This was strongly indicated through the enthusiasm of young people in the schools and also through informal discussions. Many young people responded positively and indicated their ongoing interest via wanting to be kept up to date with the consultation and the findings.

In addition to this, it was evident that the Shire of Exmouth needs to review its current marketing methods to young people. Young People's use of Web 2 technologies is well documented throughout all current research.

2015: What has changed, and will continue to change is the mode of Web 2 technologies that young people utilise, and this trend will continue. SnapChat, Instagram and other photo/video based apps were very popular amongst the young people, with a perception emerging that Facebook is now used by older people, so younger people tend to utilise it less.

YAE indicated that there is a growing number of young people who have smart phones, so instant communication with their peers is relatively simple, especially via the YAE Facebook page. They would also like to utilise apps such as Instagram as appropriate.

YAE and the young people at the Youth Rooms expressed a strong desire for youth representation on the PCYC Committee. They saw this as a logical way to express their ideas, needs and support for the ongoing work of the PCYC.

Skate Park and Facility needs

2011: Young people identified that they have basic needs that need to be addressed at the skate park for instance: adequate shade and safety were issues highlighted. The young people also expressed a strong motivation to be involved in the development of these ideas and to directly contribute to finding solutions together with the Shire of Exmouth.

2015: The skate park has been very successful, with many of the short term needs identified already having been achieved. These include lights for safety, shade and water. These additions have been welcomed by the young people, however, the big issue for the skate park is how to now manage the different age groups who frequent the park. Younger people (who often utilise scooters and bikes, as well as skateboards) commented that older kids 'hassle' them and they are concerned when older ones turn up to the park and drink alcohol and smash glass. This is an issue that young people would like to see somehow resolved and they are prepared to be part of working towards a solution. A number of young people also suggested that there be some kind of 'bluetooth' sound system set up for them to use for music at the skate park. They suggested that it could be a user pays system where they pay $1 to hook up their Ipod via Bluetooth or USB.

They also indicated that the lights at the Skate Park go off too early and this encourages older skaters to drive their cars up and use their headlights for

light. This, in the opinion of the young people consulted at the Skate Park encourages frustration, drinking and smashing of glass.

Safety and security

2011: Safety and security was a recurring theme particularly in relation to the onset of the tourist season. This is an issue that warrants further investigation and youth-led processes would be the most effective means of delving deeper into the issue with young people.

2015: A number of young people also raised concerns about cyber safety, especially with the huge uptake of apps such as Snapchat. It was reported that Snapchat is commonly used to send inappropriate photos of a sexual nature, but many young people are not aware of the dangers of such activities. Online education about this is readily available and could be posted to the YAE Facebook page on a regular basis.

The consultation indicates that graffiti/vandalism has increased, and a solution to this issue was raised by the young people. Their answer was to open up various sites in town as 'urban art' walls, where young artists could practice their skills in a safe and legal manner. These walls could be semi-regularly painted over so that new work could be created. Please refer to page 14 of "A report of a consultation with young people who graffiti on the Graffiti Prevention Bill Exposure Draft"[21].

Youth Space/PCYC and Interests

2011: Young people also identified that they would use a 'youth friendly' or 'youth café' space, where they could get free access to the internet, informal counselling and confidential advice.

The current youth space (PCYC youth rooms) seems to be underutilised and this could be for a range of reasons. Research and knowledge indicates that youth spaces need to be active and dynamic places, with mixed mode usage so that one group does not dominate the culture and ownership of the space. In addition to this, staff need to be cognisant with ABCD (Assets Based Community Development) so that young people's engagement increases in depth and impact. Young people's interests were also noteworthy: more than half of those young people researched stated that sport was a major interest as well as music/theatre and dance. Again, they wanted to help in the planning of these activities and wanted to know what scope there was for this to occur.

2015: The issue of boredom is still a big issue for young people and the YAE commented in particular that the PCYC facility is underutilised. This was also reflected in comments from the young people in the informal focus groups conducted at the PCYC. They commented that they would love the PCYC to be open after school with food available (for example hot dogs, pizza, toast etc for after school snacks).

Young people were also unequivocal regarding their desire for a dance venue (discos, dance parties etc) as well as movie nights. One focus group developed this idea more fully whereby they could convert the outdoor area into a movie space with bean bags, snacks available and project the movie onto the large brick wall. There was lots of energy around this idea and the

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[21] Youth Affairs Council of Victoria.
file:///C:/Users/jgbso_000/Downloads/Public%20Space%20-%20A%20Consultation%20with%20Young%20People%20who%20Graffit.pdf

young people said that it would be a big draw card, especially if it was semi-regular.

In addition to this, they were very keen on the idea of a Drama Club where they could work on productions that could then be showcased in town. YAE reported that the school had really tried to get a production off the ground, but it had to be cancelled, and the young people were very disappointed.

Other suggestions that the young people came up with include:
1. A Beach Bus to run during holidays/some weekends to take kids to beach who do not have access to private transport.
2. Pontoons at the beach, giant slides with water guns and slides (similar to Mandurah).
3. A tarpaulin on the dunes as a slip and slide.
4. Outdoor movie nights at PCYC. Create a simple al fresco area and project movie onto wall outside PCYC with bean bags, popcorn and good sound.
5. A better TV in the PCYC for movies and gaming.
6. Activities on the oval/events such as Laser Tag, Zorb Balls and Soccer.
7. Indoor trampolining and workout area.
8. Family picnic day with huge inflatables, twister.
9. Young people representatives on PCYC committee to ensure that the voices of young people in the community are heard.
10. Repaint entire PCYC and work on new murals for inside and outside (designed and done by local young people).
11. A local music/talent festival featuring young people.

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[22] For example:
1. Increased personal satisfaction
2. Development of social networks
3. Learning new skills or maintaining existing ones
4. Gaining work experience.

Alcohol, other drugs and health related concerns

2011: Young people expressed a considerable concern regarding alcohol and other drugs. They were anxious about the number of young people who use alcohol and other drugs who were underage despite all the warnings about their dangers. In addition to this a large number of young people articulated concern in general about alcohol and other drugs, health, sexuality and family issues.

2015: The young people involved in informal discussions indicated that the survey findings were accurate with regards to the usage of alcohol, and other drugs. These issues go hand in hand with boredom and the perceived lack of activities and opportunities in Exmouth. With responses to all the other issues listed, YAE in particular suggested that alcohol and other drug related issues would decrease.

Youth Work Training and Volunteer Utilisation

2011: In many regional and remote Western Australian communities access to quality well trained Youth Work and Community Development staff is a challenge. There may only be one position that is not even youth specific within Local Government Areas, hence utilisation of volunteers to ensure that youth related services and programs are delivered is necessary. This brings a range of benefits and issues. What is important to note is that in order for youth activities and programs to flourish in Exmouth, volunteers must be utilised and they need to be fully equipped for the task. If this is done effectively, the work can grow, volunteers will be responsible and potentially, excellent outcomes can be achieved[22].

As well as:
1. The ability to manage crisis situations and
2. Preventative measures to reduce legal liability.

There is a valuable website that is invaluable with regards to volunteer recruitment, management, retention, costs, training and recognition:

For example:

1. Increased personal satisfaction
2. Development of social networks

2015: This issue remains largely unresolved with the attraction and retention of trained and experienced youth workers being a core concern. This was reflected in the discussion with key stakeholders in the community as well as by the young people (in the informal focus groups), as it is hard to get to know new workers and they don't like it when they seem to move on so regularly.

Much of the excellent work of YAE depends on continuity of staffing (both within Council and the broader youth sector), and hence, this issue needs constant energy and skill to ensure that YAE remains 'youth' driven and supports the young people in a way that they can grow and develop their skills as well as driving projects in the community.
The young people would like to see more volunteers, but also importantly, wanted to take on roles of responsibility and play their part in helping the Youth Rooms be open more regularly.

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http://www.sa.gov.au/subject/Community+support/Volunteering/Information+for+organisations+that+involve+volunteers/Volunteer+management
In addition to this, there is a Risk Evaluator specifically designed for organisations who utilise volunteers. It can be found at

https://www.myriskmanagementplan.org/content/static/demo/

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