

It's time for a historic investment in young people

Victorian State Election 2022

Priorities of Young People and the Youth Sector



Youth Affairs
Council Victoria

www.yacvic.org.au

Why prioritise young people?

Victoria's young people need a strong commitment from the next Victorian Government, to support them through the COVID-19 recovery and into the future.

Every young person deserves the support and opportunities to achieve what they want in life. But there are significant gaps in services for young people across employment, mental health, housing and more. And the COVID-19 pandemic has further slammed young people and is still impacting their lives.

That's why Youth Work Matters. More young people than ever before need generalist support to (re)engage with community, school, family and services; and for specialised interventions in areas such as mental health, employment, and housing. YACVic's survey of 61 (77%) Local Government Councils across Victoria found that COVID-19 increased the demand for youth services, including mental health, employment and housing, adding pressure to services that were already facing significant challenges.

We're calling for commitment to a historic investment in youth services and programs across Victoria, to rebuild the social and economic fabric of young people's lives.

Skilled youth workers provide strengths-based, holistic care to young people to reach their full potential and thrive as active members of their communities. They recognise young people as experts in their own lives, and work with and alongside them in a way that promotes and encourages this. Youth workers are extremely effective in prevention and early intervention, with non-stigmatised approaches that engage young people and build trust. They facilitate diversion before issues become crises, and smooth pathways to more complex care if needed.



YACVic's Top 5 Election Priorities

As the peak body and leading policy advocate for young people in Victoria, YACVic's vision is that the rights of young people are respected, and they are active, visible and valued in their communities.

To achieve this important vision, YACVic is advocating for increased investment in the systems and services that young people use, to improve their access to support when and where they need it, and to more opportunities to engage in the broader community.

In particular, YACVic is calling on all political parties to commit to:

1. **Early Intervention:** Invest in more early intervention and prevention services for young people across Victoria
2. **Workforce Development:** Build youth sector workforce capacity and training to improve young people's lives
3. **Systems Reform:** Improve approaches for key services supporting young people
4. **Youth Participation:** Include young people in decisions that affect their lives
5. **Sector Cohesion & Efficiency:** Invest more in collective action, information sharing and efficiency, especially via YACVic's role as the peak body

1. Early Intervention

Invest in more early intervention and prevention services for young people

Investment in early intervention and prevention services for young people ensures fewer young people require acute interventions and crisis support. Or if they do require specialist support, can be supported with warm and trusted referrals, and system navigation.

This enables young people to seek out opportunities and positively engage in their communities, empowering them to live active and fulfilling lives. It significantly reduces service costs to the government – research shows that \$1 of investment returns at least \$2.62 of benefit.

Youth workers and community programs also play an important support role for young people who cannot or will not access specialist services (due to availability, privacy, access needs, marginalisation or stigma).

This is particularly important in rural and regional communities, where specialist services are limited and often difficult to access.

Such programs can be crucial for supporting the needs and rights of diverse groups, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, disabled young people, LGBTIQA+ young people and young people of refugee and migrant background, as well as young people who are already experiencing other significant challenges such as poverty, family violence, trauma, AOD or other health issues.

1. Early Intervention

Key Priorities

- Invest more in generalist youth services and community-based programs for all young people, especially in rural and regional areas
- Invest in specialist early intervention youth programs where young people are already disengaging or at-risk (e.g. mental health, youth justice, family violence, education, housing, employment).

Additional Priorities

- Fund more youth workers in school, health and sports environments, to identify emerging issues and address challenges early and holistically.
- Complement police with youth workers in public spaces where young people gather.
- Communicate information about government policies and initiatives via youth-friendly formats and channels
- Consider the extension of services which currently stop at 18, up to 25, recognising that many young people continue to need support well into young adulthood.

2. Workforce Development

Invest more in the capacity and capabilities of the youth sector to drive improved outcomes for young people (and communities)

Skilled youth workers and youth services provide important social and economic benefits to young people and the community.

Youth workers can be very versatile, having impact across multiple settings such as community organisations, schools, health and disability services, sport, recreation and the arts, with a generalist approach or focusing on specialist needs such as mental health, family violence, homelessness, AOD, and residential care.

However, there is a lack of adequate, multi-year funding for youth programs, resulting in high staff turnover due to job insecurity.

There is also a shortage of trained youth workers in regional and rural Victoria, and of youth workers with lived experience of marginalisation and disadvantage, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, multicultural, disabled and LGBTIQ+ communities.

At the same time, recent graduates often have difficulty finding secure employment in the youth sector, due to a lack of entry-level positions that provide employment pathways for people completing their Bachelor of Youth Work, Diploma of Youth Work, or other relevant courses.

In addition, a recent Youth Sector Survey found that 40% of existing workers had not completed foundational training courses, but highlighted that such training would benefit the work they do with young people.

2. Workforce Development

Key Priorities

- Invest in building the youth work workforce by:
 - Funding supported 'earn and learn' traineeships in youth services
 - Subsidising youth work degree scholarships
 - Providing subsidies to create entry level jobs.

Priority for these opportunities should be given to young people with diverse lived experiences (young people from refugee and migrant , First Nations, LGBTIQA+, disabled, and rural communities), as well as other young people with lived experience of disadvantage or marginalisation.

Other Priorities

- Invest in short course capability building and qualification upgrades for existing youth workers (e.g. youth mental health first aid, disability awareness, cultural responsiveness, trauma informed practice)
- Invest in building a peer-worker workforce and associated network, and target young people from priority cohorts
- Increase length of funding contracts for workforce certainty and continuity

3. Systems Reform

Improve approaches for key services for young people

Many young people require joined up and targeted supports to address the various challenges they are facing. Youth services provide direct support, and also connect young people with other agencies, supporting them to have a holistic team of care around them.

The significant and ongoing challenges to young people's economic security, engagement in education, mental health, housing security, social connection and family supports, have resulted in an increased demand for critical youth services, and highlighted system deficiencies.

Young people across Victoria experience higher rates of unemployment and under-employment compared to the total population, and more needs to be done to ensure they have access to sustainable, meaningful employment opportunities.

Young people also face significant challenges related to housing security, and there needs to be a commitment to review the current system and how it disadvantages young people.

There is also a severe lack of youth-specific family violence services and skills, resulting in young people unable to access appropriate care and support.



3. Systems Reform

Key Priorities

- **Employment:** Develop a Victorian Youth Guarantee that ensures all young people are supported into secure employment, education or an apprenticeship/traineeship that is matched to their interests and goals, within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed.
- **Housing:** Develop a co-designed Youth Homelessness Strategy, which focuses on ending youth homelessness by improving access to affordable, safe and youth-appropriate housing for all young people, as well as supplying wraparound services, so that young people are supported holistically.
- **Family Violence:** Invest in youth-specific family violence services, and build the capacity of the family violence and youth work workforces, to provide targeted assistance to young people experiencing family violence.

Other Priorities

- See the Thematic and Cohort Priorities section later in this document for a range of additional priorities.

4. Youth Participation

Include young people in decision making that affects their lives

Young people are largely underrepresented in government or community decisions which affect them. Decision-makers often fail to actively seek their views and opinions, or meaningfully involve them in developing policies and initiatives that impact their lives.

Youth participation is about challenging traditional methods of decision-making and service delivery, and ensuring genuine inclusion of more underrepresented voices and diverse lived experiences.

Young people's unique needs, perspectives and ideas add real value and relevancy to policy and program development.

It is essential to prioritise genuine youth participation in policy and program development, at all levels of decision making including co-design, implementation, governance and evaluation.



4. Youth Participation

Key Priorities

- Embed funding for youth participation in grants and service agreements, and state and local government projects and reforms.
- Encourage Youth Advisory Groups in all relevant contexts, especially local government and schools

Additional Priorities

- Shift the narrative about young people to a positive one, recognising their talents and ability to contribute, and promoting pride in diversity (culture, disability, sexuality, geography)
- Lower the voting age to 16 for state and local government elections

5. Sector Cohesion & Efficiency

Invest more in collective action, information sharing and efficiency, especially via YACVic's role as the peak body

Connecting, collaborating and sharing information across the youth sector is crucial to ensuring young people have access to integrated and seamless care. It facilitates collective action, peer support and continual improvement.

However, joined up work is challenging for youth programs and services which are already overstretched and underfunded.

As the recognised peak body for young people and the youth sector in Victoria, YACVic plays an important and impartial role in informing and engaging across the youth sector and beyond, promoting cohesion, effectiveness and efficiency.

YDAS, YACVic Rural and the HEY Partners are all proven to be delivering strong outcomes. Additional funding would scale that impact for greater numbers of rural, disabled and LGBTIQ+ young people.

YACVic has also worked strongly for several years on young people's involvement in disaster resilience and recovery, and an opportunity exists for Victoria to show national and global leadership in this space.



5. Sector Cohesion & Efficiency

Key Priorities

- Provide adequate core funding to YACVic to ensure continued viability as backbone and convenor of youth sector, and to coordinate key initiatives such as supported traineeships.
- Provide ongoing and expansion funding for:
 - YACVic Rural
 - Youth Disability Advocacy Service (YDAS)
 - HEY Grants & Partners

Other Priorities

- Fund a *Young People, Disaster Resilience Centre of Excellence* at YACVic
- Establish an outcomes-focused monitoring and evaluation model in line with the new Youth Strategy, including funding for cross-sector coordination, training and embedding in programs
- Fund coordination of statewide, regional and thematic networks to promote efficient, collective practice and information sharing, and connection with schools and government departments
- Fund service hub infrastructure and satellite / co-located / outreach activity, for fair and effective geographic coverage.

Summary of Key Priorities

1. Early Intervention

More youth programs and services, especially in marginalised and rural communities.

Invest more in:

- Generalist youth services and community-based programs for all young people, especially in rural and regional areas
- Specialist early intervention programs where young people are showing signs of disengagement (e.g. mental health, youth justice, family violence, education, employment) to mitigate the need for (and cost of) crisis and acute support.

2. Workforce Development

More qualified youth workers, especially with lived experience and in rural and regional areas

Invest in building the youth work workforce, including:

- Supported 'earn & learn' traineeships in youth services
- Youth work degree scholarships
- Subsidies to create entry level jobs

Priority should be given to young people with diverse lived experiences, including of disadvantage or marginalisation.

3. Systems Reform

Improved approaches for key services for young people

A Victorian Youth Guarantee so that all young people are in secure employment, education or an apprenticeship/ traineeship matched to their interests and goals.

A Youth Homelessness Strategy prioritising access to affordable, safe and youth-appropriate housing for all young people, with wraparound services as needed

Invest to address the gap in family violence services of youth-specific supports and skills

4. Youth Participation

Include young people in decision making that affects their lives

Embed funding for youth participation in grants and service agreements, and state and local government projects and reforms.

Encourage Youth Advisory Groups in all relevant contexts, especially local government and schools

5. Sector Cohesion & Efficiency

Invest in the youth sector's capacity to work collectively for efficiency and effectiveness, especially via YACVic's role as the peak body

Increase YACVic's Core Funding to ensure ongoing viability.

Provide ongoing and expansion funding for:

- YACVic Rural
- Youth Disability Advocacy Service (YDAS)
- HEY Grants & Partners

Thematic & Cohort Priorities

Young people are complex individuals with diverse backgrounds and lived experiences. They often have competing and intersecting needs, and it can be challenging to determine which levers should be used and when, to most effectively support young people and have a positive impact on their lives.

Through extensive consultation with the youth sector and young people, YACVic has developed a detailed platform of key priorities and solutions to enhance the lives of young people across Victoria. These priorities often intersect and overlap, and it is important to acknowledge this and implement policies and initiatives that will create positive, lasting change.

The youth sector is calling on all political parties to commit to a range of important policy initiatives that will improve the lives of young Victorians, now and into the future.

Thematic Priorities

Employment

Young people across Victoria have higher rates of unemployment and under-employment versus the total population. The long-term impacts of COVID-19 have only exacerbated existing employment issues for young people.

Young people were the first to lose their jobs and the last to regain them during the COVID-19 pandemic, and more needs to be done to ensure they have access to sustainable, meaningful, secure employment opportunities.

Key Priorities

- Sustainable and meaningful jobs for all young people
- *Commit to a Victorian Youth Guarantee, with an emphasis on sustainable and meaningful employment*
- *Invest in supported traineeships for marginalised young people in:*
 - The youth sector
 - The mental health sector
 - Local councils, and
 - Other in-demand industries
- *Include youth-focused social procurement in major reforms and expenditure (e.g. Big Build, Big Housing Build)*
- *Invest in support for young people to understand their rights at work*
- *Increase entry-level job opportunities in state and local government, especially in regional areas*
- *Educate industry to create and support safe entry-level jobs for young people, in collaboration with the youth sector and schools*

Housing

Young people face desperate ongoing and systemic issues in accessing safe and secure housing. Targeted and specific action, is needed, including more investment in secure and affordable housing, as well as prevention and crisis intervention programs specifically targeting young people. In addition, more investment is required in integrated and ongoing support to ensure young people are accessing the services they need.

Access to safe and secure housing is a fundamental human right, and is a building block for young people to live active, independent and fulfilling lives.

Key Priorities

- More housing for young people
- *A Youth Homelessness Strategy, with a Youth Housing Guarantee that ensures all young people have access to secure housing*
- *Establish a dedicated youth-focused team at Homes Victoria*
- *Allocate Big Housing Build funding in line with % age of young people experiencing homelessness*
- *Include ongoing investment in wraparound support embedded in youth housing provision*

Thematic Priorities

Mental Health

Despite major commitments to mental health reforms, young people are still experiencing significant delays in accessing services, with many waiting weeks and months, and travelling to neighbouring towns. When young people can't access services, they are turning to peers, parents and teachers to fill the gap, and school counsellors and local youth workers are dealing with more complex mental health issues.

More needs to be done to address the long waitlists for youth mental health services, and workforce shortages in rural and regional communities, so that more young people can get support when they need it.

Key Priorities

- More investment in community mental health services, including generalist youth services
- *Recognise youth workers and youth programs as a unique, trusted and non-stigmatised part of the mental health system*
- *Invest in more generalist, place-based youth workers and youth programs, especially in schools and rural communities*
- *Invest in programs and supports to re-engage young people in the community and employment after COVID restrictions*
- *Invest in multicultural, First Nations and LGBTIQ+ youth worker roles in mainstream mental health services to build trust, broker access and support system navigation*

Youth Justice

Youth justice systems should prioritise rehabilitation over punishment, or risk entrenching young people in the system. This includes addressing systemic disadvantage and creating the right conditions for rehabilitation.

More investment in early intervention, more focus on inequities in remand, recidivism and better support post-release systems for those coming out of jail will free up resources in an already strained system, and ultimately result in fewer young people having contact with the justice system, and go on to lead fulfilling and productive lives.

Key Priorities

- Prevent young people entering (or remaining) in the youth justice system, especially over-represented groups
- *Raise the age of criminal responsibility to at least 14 years, and the age of detention to at least 16 years*
- *Develop a Multicultural Youth Justice Strategy*
- *Prevent discriminatory over-policing of cohorts of young people overrepresented in the criminal justice system*
- *Reform bail laws to reduce unnecessary incarceration of young people*
- *Review under-representation in diversion programs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, and young people of refugee and migrant backgrounds.*

Thematic Priorities

Education

Education and the role that schools and teachers play in the lives of young people cannot be overstated. For many young people, the classroom is where they build skills and knowledge to live full lives, gain confidence in themselves and form lasting connections. Education is key to shaping societal values.

This is why it is so important for school curriculums to be enhanced to be relevant for the modern day. There must be equal access to education for all young people and better services within all educational institutions (including TAFEs and universities).

Key Priorities

- Holistic development of young people
- *Invest in life skills training including financial literacy, independent living, civic participation*
- *Establish a student group to advise on Mental Health in Schools reform*
- *Implement student co-designed professional learning for teachers in Consent Education*
- *Fund teacher training to improve student-teacher relationships*
- *Invest in whole-of-school, tailored approaches to combatting racism*
- *Invest in measures to support disadvantaged young people to catch up and/or re-engage after COVID restrictions*
- *Increase student voice in own learning and leadership*

Family Violence

Young people are vulnerable to family violence, often experiencing significant disruption and trauma. However, young people are often not recognised as victims in their own right, and not appropriately served by a family violence system designed primarily for adult women and children.

Young people who experience family violence are at higher risk of experiencing homelessness, and often go on to experience other intersecting challenges, such as mental ill-health and disengagement from education or employment. More can be done to support young people at every stage, improving access to prevention and early intervention support, and creating youth specific family violence services for those who need it.

Key Priorities

- Address the youth-specific gap in family violence services
- *Fund youth-specific family violence services to support young people affected by and/or fleeing family violence, that are skilled and equipped to meet the diversity of young people accessing these services (e.g. including cultural responsiveness)*
- *Invest in youth participation training for the family violence sector, and family violence training for youth workers*

Thematic Priorities

Social Inclusion

Every young person should be connected to their community and have opportunities to lead and co-design initiatives. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it incredibly difficult for young people to access the essential services they need, and this has been felt even more so by particularly marginalised cohorts.

The establishment of youth hubs, co-designed with young people, may address a number of key concerns related to the accessibility of services, as well as provide safe and engaging spaces for young people to go. Further investment is also needed to address inequality and discrimination in our communities, and ensure all young people have access to the same opportunities.

Key Priorities

- Full inclusion, participation, and contribution of young people
- *Invest in more generalist, strengths-based, place-based, fun and free, youth programs, especially in rural areas and for marginalised cohorts.*
- *Invest in co-designed, dedicated youth hubs, so all young people have free access to safe/engaging spaces*
- *Develop a First Nations Youth Strategy*
- *Invest in disability inclusion training for youth, community, healthcare and sports/rec workers.*
- *Invest in youth-focused initiatives in Victoria's Anti-Racism Strategy*
- *Increase inclusion and connection by investing in:*
 - *Youth-led, place-based projects*
 - *Mentoring programs*

Gender Equity

The persistence of gender inequality and gender-based violence within Australia has galvanised public debate and activism in recent years. Yet many young people feel there is a lack of education, information and services to support them.

More needs to be done to ensure a genuinely gender-equal society. Investment must be made into gender-inclusive education and services, and prioritising programs that specifically target young people's safety, and provide equal access to opportunity for all young people, regardless of their gender.

Key Priorities

- Address young people's priorities in gender equity policy and programs
- *Research, recognise and act on the priority concerns of young people, especially gender-based violence and public / online safety.*
- *Invest in gender equity programs for young people experiencing intersectional marginalisation*
- *Invest in co-designed and co-delivered respectful relationships education in schools and community settings*
- *Invest in inclusive sexual and reproductive health services in community, and education programs in schools (including mandating in independent schools)*

Thematic Priorities

Health

Providing young people with access to inclusive services, activities and education programs that promote health and wellbeing is essential to ensuring a thriving community.

Young people deserve services within their communities that are inclusive and affordable, and improving the accessibility of these services will ensure all young people can be healthy and well.

Key Priorities

- Ensure accessible healthcare for all young people
- *Increase access to GPs to ensure there is increased availability, services are affordable, and practices are inclusive of all young people in their community, with a focus on using youth-friendly approaches*
- *Invest more in inclusive and accessible community sport, including Street Games, and target underrepresented groups. Leverage the Commonwealth Games.*
- *Invest more in youth-specific, place-based, community-based AOD support (detox, rehab)*
- *Invest in co-designed sexual and reproductive health services in community, and education programs in schools*
- *Review adequacy of vaping regulations*
- *Increase contract flexibility to allow health services to determine service priorities based on local need*

Arts, Culture & Recreation

Art, culture and recreation activities provide an important avenue for skill-development, social connection, and self-expression.

By improving access to inclusive, affordable art and culture programs for young people, we ensure that young people develop interests, talents and skills beyond what they are taught at home or in the classroom, and promote creativity and diversity of interests.

Key Priorities

- Increase opportunities and career pathways in the creative industries for young people
- *Invest Creative Victoria funding in dedicated youth-focused initiatives, with allocation in line with %age population of young people*
- *Invest in skills, confidence & networks of young industry practitioners and artists*
- *Increase opportunities and career pathways in creative and recreation industries for young people*
- *Invest in arts education pathways in regional areas*
- *Review Youth Fest model to ensure optimal relevance and impact*
- *Explore opportunities for young artists and industry practitioners to contribute to the Commonwealth Games*

Thematic Priorities

Climate & Environment

It is important to recognise that lack of climate action is detrimental to young people's mental health and civic engagement. The associated impacts of climate change, such as increasing natural disasters and extreme weather conditions, will have a lasting impact on young people, the communities in which they live, and the resources available for their development. More must be done to address the driving causes of climate change and to protect the natural environment.

Key Priorities

- Involve young people in climate action and disaster resilience/recovery efforts
- *Meaningfully engage young people in policy development for climate and environment*
- *Implement climate policies on which young people can act (e.g. recycling, plastics reduction)*
- *Prioritise young people in clean economy workforce development*
- *Invest in renewable energy, for industry and transport.*
- *Take steps to protect and preserve Victoria's natural environments for future generations*
- *Fund a Young People & Disaster Resilience Centre of Excellence at YACVic*

Transport

Most young people rely on public transport to engage in education, attend work, and connect with their friends. At present, the current public transport system across Victoria does not meet the needs of young people, especially disabled young people, and those living in rural and regional areas.

Without access to reliable, accessible, and affordable transport options, young people miss out on many opportunities that are important for their development.

Key Priorities

- Improve public transport options for young people
- *Identify and share/scale/replicate effective options to improve transport for young people in rural, regional and interface areas, and for planning for urban growth corridors.*
- *Invest in bike lanes, e-scooters, and other sustainable transport options*
- *Make the public transport network fully accessible for disabled people, and free for disadvantaged young people.*
- *Create pathways to report and follow up incidents affecting young people's safety or ability to access public transport.*
- *Expand the L2P program, and encourage more volunteers*
- *Explore inclusion of youth spaces and services in transport infrastructure development*

Key Cohort Priorities

First Nations Young People

Self-determination is vital to the political, social, economic, and cultural development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, and should be understood, respected and facilitated by all Australians.

All political parties must support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in creating culturally-centered, safe and inclusive environments for young people. More broadly, they should also include greater education about Aboriginal histories and cultures in curricula.

Key Priorities

- Self-determination and empowerment for First Nations young people
- Develop a First Nations Youth Strategy
- Support KYC to expand into regional and rural areas
- Commit to rolling out the use of the Wayipunga resource across all programs and services that work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people

LGBTIQA+ Young People

Everyone deserves to live, work and study with dignity and respect, but many LGBTIQA+ young people experience discrimination based on their gender and sexuality. This discrimination can lead to negative outcomes such as mental ill-health, highlighting the need to address this in a holistic and meaningful way.

To advance the rights of LGBTIQA+ young people in Victoria, there must be a commitment to actively work with LGBTIQA+ young people, schools and education facilities, and workplaces to ensure equitable access to services and to eliminate discrimination based on gender and sexuality.

Key Priorities

- Equality, safety and improved mental health for LGBTIQA+ young people
- *Expand the HEY grants & HEY Partners, incl. First Nations*
- *Ensure robust LGBTIQA+ inclusive practice across the service and education systems.*
- *Build on the research and evidence base to improve the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQA+ young people.*

Key Cohort Priorities

Rural Young People

Young people from rural and regional communities face significant challenges to accessing good quality, affordable, inclusive services and opportunities near their homes.

It is important to acknowledge the unique challenges rural and regional young people face, and invest in improving resources and programs in rural and regional areas to ensure no young person is disadvantaged due to the postcode they live in.

Key Priorities

- Access to services and opportunities for rural and regional young people
- Improve public transport options for rural and regional young people
- Invest more in more generalist, place-based youth workers / programs / services in rural areas

Multicultural Young People

Victoria is one of Australia's most culturally diverse jurisdictions. However, young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds still experience serious discrimination and exclusion.

The Victorian Government should prioritise eradicating race-based discrimination and exclusion, and providing culturally-responsive and sustaining supports to all young Victorians.

Key Priorities

- Equity and inclusion for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds
- Develop a Multicultural Youth Justice Strategy to end overrepresentation in system, and increase representation in diversion
- Invest in whole-of-school, tailored approaches to combatting racism
- Invest in youth-focused initiatives via Victoria's Anti-Racism Strategy
- Invest in measures (e.g. free tutoring, homework clubs) to support multicultural young people to catch up and/or re-engage after COVID restrictions
- Increase higher education scholarships for young people seeking asylum

Disabled Young People

Disabled young people have the right to equal access to employment, education, healthcare and social spaces. It is a basic human right, and vital to their emotional and social wellbeing.

There needs to be a commitment to ensure young disabled people have adequate support to achieve their personal goals, be involved in addressing issues that affect them, and lead lives free from discrimination and ableism.

Key Priorities

- Disabled young people can participate in their communities as valued and respected members
- Ensure that disabled young people's needs, perspectives and contributions are included in the implementation of the State Disability Plan 2022-2026
- Include disabled young people meaningfully in co-design of services and programs that impact them, particularly in education and health

Find out more

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