

Darebin: "our young people"

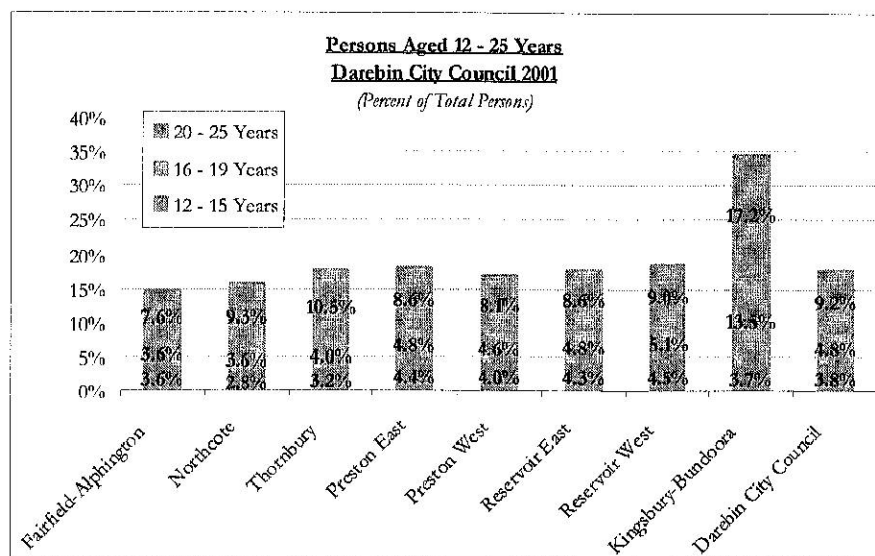
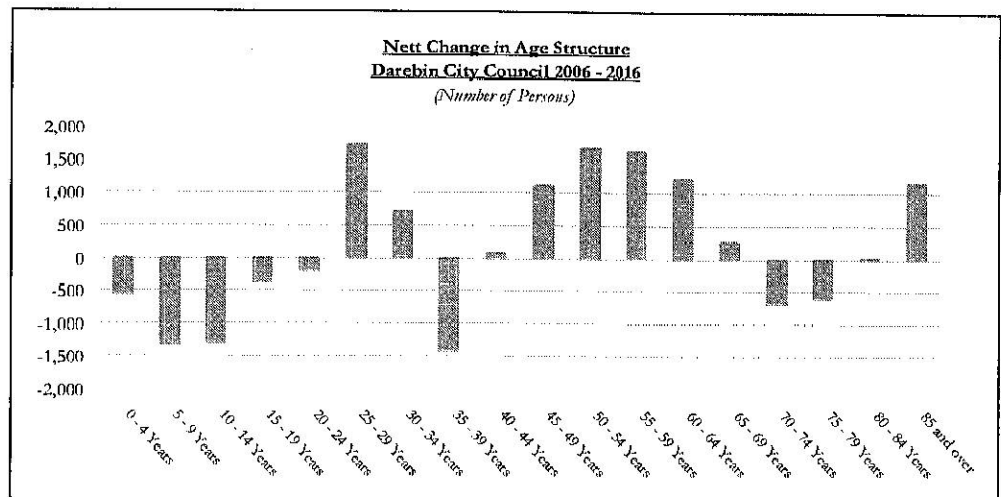
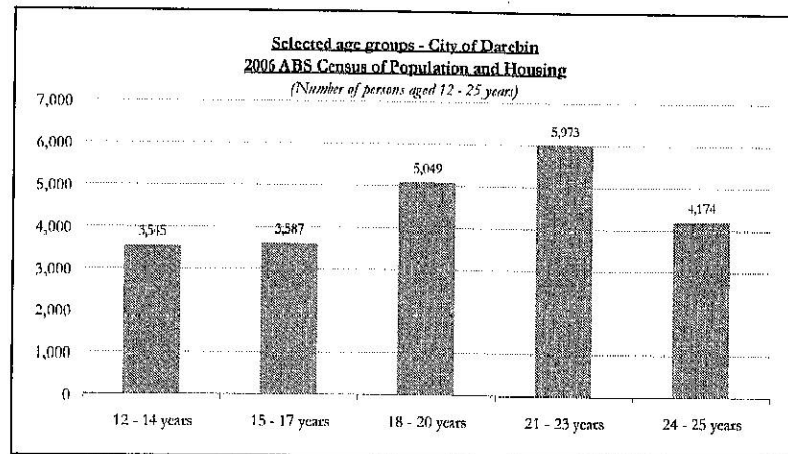
Youth Status Report 2007/08

This Status Report gathers together information about what we know about young people (aged 12 – 25) who live in Darebin.

Darebin is a highly diverse community with unique pressures that create challenges for supporting local residents. Darebin ranks as the 6th most disadvantaged municipality out of the 32 metropolitan municipalities in Melbourne.

The report has been prepared for the members of the Darebin Youth Service's Network and will be used to develop priorities and actions for 2008.

The report also aims to provide an overview of the key issues impacting on young people in Darebin and provide key information and profiles on local issues which can be used for funding submissions, advocacy and service planning to improve coordination and collaboration.



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Above: Location of young people across Darebin suburbs (2001 census data)

According to the 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing there are 22,328 people aged 12 to 25 years in Darebin, making up 17.4% of the total population of 128,068.

The population of the City of Darebin is ageing - an increase is expected in the number of older adults, along with decreases in the number of persons aged 0 to 24 years.

Darebin has the highest metropolitan **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander** (ATSI) population (1,087 people). A total of 316 persons between 10 and 24 years of age in the City of Darebin reported that they identified as Aboriginals or Torres Strait Islanders in the 2006. Persons aged between 10 and 24 years account for 28.5% of the ATSI population in the municipality, and 4.7% of the total number of 10 – 24 year olds in the municipality. (2006 Census)

Residents between 10 and 24 years of age speak 96 languages other than English at home. A total of 38.7% of the 10 to 24 year old population speak a language other than English at home. The most common languages spoken by the 10 to 24 year age group are Greek, Arabic, Mandarin, Italian and Vietnamese.

A total of 6.8% of respondents aged between 5 and 24 years reported having a **disability** compared to 19.0% of other respondents (Darebin City Council – 2007 Household Survey). A total of 408 people aged between 5 and 24 years of age reported that they require assistance with a core activity (2006 Census)

young people are telling us...

Youth Summits are held annually in the City of Darebin and are organised and run by secondary school students from all the colleges in the municipality. *Youth summits are a joint project between Darebin Youth Services, and Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre, and supported by Victoria Police, Darebin Community Health Centre and Kildonan Child and Family Services.*

2007 DAREBIN YOUTH SUMMIT

Darebin secondary students gathered to discuss '**Freedom, Fun and Human Rights**'

The top six issues, chosen by student representatives of all the schools involved via a school survey process were finalized at an exciting Pre-Summit Planning Day. These six issues are:

- The **right** to not be stereotyped
- The **right** to be safe everywhere
- The **right** to basic necessities regardless of income
- The **right** to freedom of speech and expression
- The **right** to equality
- The **right** to be treated with respect and dignity

WHERE TO NOW? ACTIONS

- The On Track Youth Summit Planning Committee is working on putting into action the key recommendations from the Summit workshops.
- Presently, the focus is on kicking off 2008 with some exciting events, such as fun and innovative school based safety activities, utilization of young people in training modules to raise awareness around their experiences of being stereotyped by some adults, eg. by some police, just to name a few.
- Advocacy initiatives around the other Summit issues are also being planned, thus, it is anticipated that our "On trackers" will be very busy throughout the rest of 2007 and into the New Year.
- For more information email **Georgia Loukopoulos:**
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Youth Summit 2005 prioritised: (1) school & community facilities, (2) bullying and peer pressure, (3) healthy lifestyles, and (4) community facilities

Key issues from the 2003 and 2004 Youth Summits included bullying and community safety.

(See youth summit pages at www.youth.darebin.vic.gov.au)

There are 12 Secondary Schools in Darebin including two Prep to Year 12 colleges. Of these, there are two girl's schools and one boy's school and an independent co-educational Islamic college. There are two tertiary institutions- La Trobe University (Bundoora) and NMIT (Preston).

Within the Northern Metropolitan area, school retention rates from Year 7 to 12 are 87.6% and Year 10 to Year 12 are 88.1% with 81% from Year 12 applying to Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre for tertiary places.

In 2006, there were 1727 young people categorised as Early School Leaving and 3,141 17-24 year olds who had not completed Year 12.

Darebin schools in 2006 had, on average, satisfactory VCE completions of 93.8%, ranging from 77% to 100%. (Data from VACC)

In 2006/07, 88% of Darebin students completing Year 12 had a Tertiary offer. By April 2007, of students who had completed Year 12 in 2006, 80% were in education and training (41% enrolled at University, 34% enrolled in TAFE/VET and 5% in apprenticeships/traineeships). 20% were not in training or education (13% where employed, 5% where looking for work and 2% deferred).

In previous years the majority of Vocational Education and Training (VET) students in Darebin at secondary colleges were studying Information Technology (24%), music industry skills (16%), hospitality or multimedia (each 13%) or cabinet-making (9%).

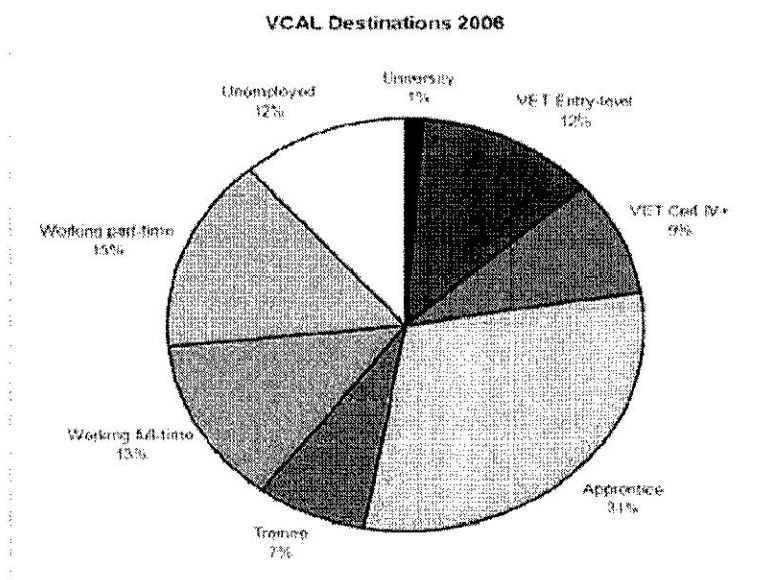
Further information is available from Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network (INLLEN), and On-Track data.

There is one major TAFE campus (Northern Metro Institute of TAFE) which also provides an alternative Year 10 and a specialist young migrant education program (YAMEC). 9 of the 12 Darebin schools, as well as NMIT, offer the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL). Alternative providers include Preston Reservoir Adult Community Education (PRACE).

In 2006, 598 students participated in a VCAL program. This is a rise from 2005 (481) and 2004 (320). (Source VACC, PRACE, NMIT)

Some of the issues for schools providing VCAL are:

- The negative perception a VCAL class gives to the school and its community.
- Seeing successful outcomes in the early phase of implementation of a VCAL program as it may be a longer term strategy.
- Having a staff team that is committed to providing pathway options for post-compulsory students as opposed to a single careers teacher.



Above: Destination data for VCAL students in 2006: data provided by Vic Dept of Education and Training

Darebin Community Health runs groups throughout the year. These include:
 Teenage Leisure Group - (during school terms), Teenage Holiday Program - (School Holiday) Girly Group - Group for young women 12-16 years to address issues related to self esteem, sexual health, body image etc. Runs for 6 weeks each term. The Link Up - program is a service for young people that are marginalised and disconnected from community supports. The program provides group and individual support tailored for the needs of young people. Groups to date have included a writing group, art therapy, and social support and joint groups with other services.
 Anxiety/Depression Group - Coppin it Sweet 8 week group for young people managing anxiety/depression and self esteem issues.

Anglicare Northern Youth Services provides a range of programs and services, particularly in relation to young people on protective orders through the Department of Human Services. Services offered include an intensive youth support program, counselling, drug and alcohol program and a housing support service. Anglicare also provide accommodation for young people in Darebin including a Lead Tenant Program and Adolescent Community Placements (ACP). Key initiatives for 2008 include a School Holiday Program. Key issues are limited and affordable housing and accommodation options; issues of substance use; lack of recreational activities and limited access to alternative education and employment opportunities. www.anglicarevic.org.au

The Smith Family in Epping facilitate the Learning for Life Program which is co-located at Kildonan, though the two have no other affiliations at this stage. The Smith Family supports members of the City of Darebin with Learning for Life scholarships, from Prep through to Uni/TAFE. This is a long term commitment to these families and their education. The program is aimed at supporting lifelong learning and works from a community development approach looking at capacity building and social capital. The Smith Family no longer provides any emergency relief. Referrals to families are made through talking to Welfare Officers or year level coordinators, etc at their schools for ongoing support or discussion

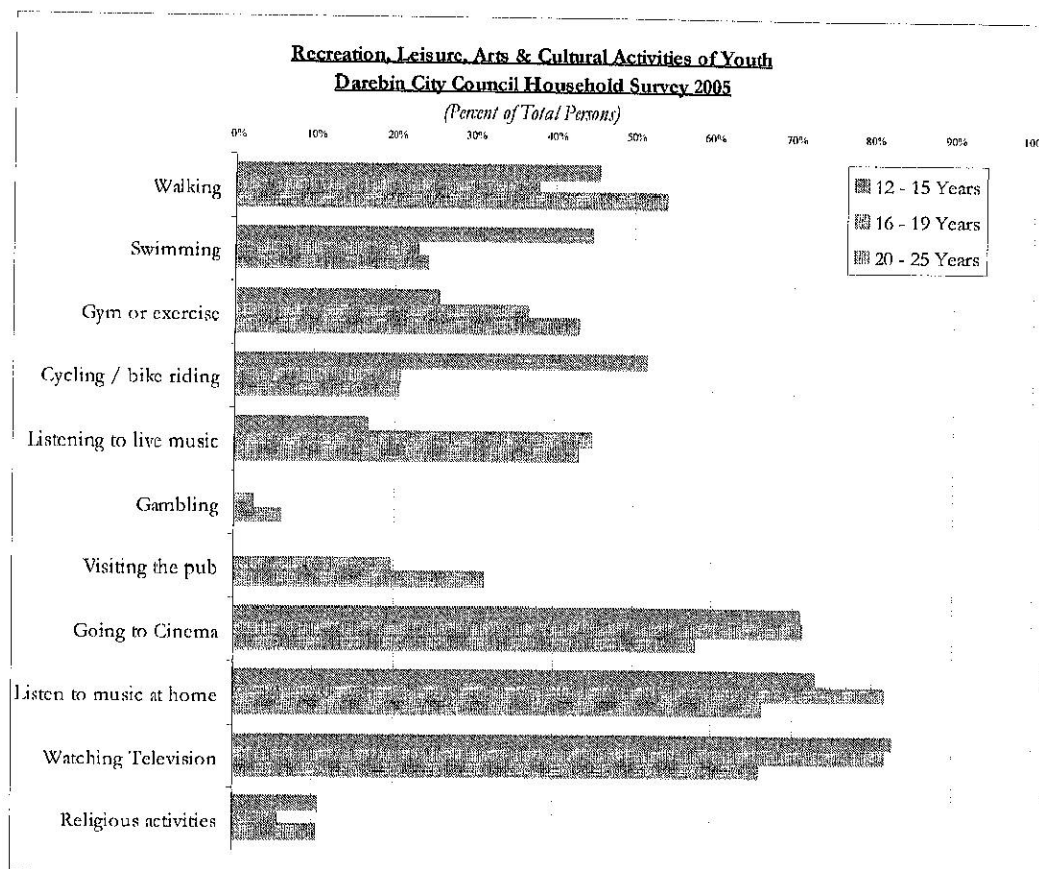
Kildonan's Youth Services offers a range of services and programs - Youth support and mentoring such as The Reconnect Program and The Youth Mentor Program. Activity programs such as Young Artists Group, Homework Program and Teenage Activity Group. School based programs that provide linkages and supports so that community, local government agencies and schools work together. Youth participation forums facilitate participation in partnership with young people and other services. www.kildonan.unitingcare.org.au

The *Salvation Army's Shop 16* provides a safe place for children and young people in Reservoir to make friends, get assistance with homework and set goals for the future. Key issues include early school leaving, social isolation, low self-esteem and risk-taking behaviours.
gen.peterson@aus.salvationarmy.org

Darebin City Council Youth Services include:

- *Darebin Youth Resource Centre* -providing homework support, leadership and training programs,
- *Decibels Youth Music Centre* provides low cost recording and program space to engage a wide range of young people. Decibels runs a number of music based programs *from Decibels and within the communit.*
- *African Access Project* recreation and health promotion programs and activities for newly arrived young people form Somalia and Sudan
- *Youth Development Programs* - Darebin youth summit which is an annual schools based forum, Darebin FReeZa/Spiltmilk Productions: youth music events committee and on track leadership program
- *Social and Recreation Programs* - weekly recreation program, skate events and clinics, summer camping program and a Teenage School Holiday Program.
- *Youth Advocacy and Coordination* - Darebin Youth Information Booklet and website, www.youth.darebin.vic.gov.au
- *Northland Youth Centre* - provides a drop in space and is operated by council and a range of local youth service providers under a cooperative management model. In 2008 the NYC is being redeveloped, and will be moving to a larger space next the bus terminal and McDonald's express.
- *yUTE Program* operates in the Preston and Reservoir area. The Mobile Outreach Service and activity service targets local young people and seeks to engage and build trust by offering a range of activities with the aim of re-engaging these young people into their local community, schools and employment.

As part of Council's Householder survey, a range of information is collected. In 2005, the main recreation, leisure, arts and cultural activities of young people in Darebin are shown in the graph below:



Above: Selection of recreational activities by age range (2005 Darebin household survey)

The proportion of households in Darebin who own a computer has continued to increase in 2007, with almost three quarters of respondent households reporting they have one or more personal computers (72.6%) while 64.2% indicated having internet access.

Approximately 1,000 young people have attended FreeZa all age alcohol and drug-free music events run in Darebin in 2006/07 and these were organised by a youth committee supported by Council's Decibels Youth Music Program.

The *Darebin parks and open space* research found that young people are using parks for socialising, playing on play equipment, walking and playing sport. Levels of activity increase throughout the day, peaking between 3pm and 6pm. 'District parks' tend to be utilised more by families for picnics, barbecues and other social activities, and community events.

www.darebin.vic.gov.au

There is heavy demand for *structured activity programs* for young people in Darebin, with current programs easily being able to double in size. Teenage holiday programs and summer camping activities are similarly over-subscribed. One of the key issues for parents is the reluctance to leave their younger teens unsupervised (10 to 15 years) during holidays. This is compounded by a significant reduction in service delivery and choice for children moving from primary to secondary school holiday programs in Darebin (*Darebin Council research*).

Northern Metropolitan Melbourne is very well-served by local provider networks, some of the key ones include:

Northern Schools Health Promotion Network - a network of educators and health and community workers who have an interest in education, health and welfare.

Inner Northern Local Learning & Employment Network- mission is to improve learning and employment outcomes for young people by influencing systems and developing sustainable partnerships that improve pathways. www.inllen.org.au

Regional Youth Affairs Network- brings together community members, service providers, young people and all levels of government. Members can influence Victorian State Government policies and decisions. www.youth.vic.gov.au

Northern Metropolitan Regional Youth Affairs Network: nfilips@darebin.vic.gov.au

Darebin Youth Services Network – Local practitioner network meeting 6 times per year on local issues. Extensive email network nfilips@darebin.vic.gov.au.

Two School Focused Youth Services (North and South) - Linkage role between schools and agencies to support the wellbeing of young people, including brokerage funding for partnership projects.

Two Student Support Service Officers Networks (Northcote and Darebin) - Consists of guidance officers, psychologists, social workers, speech pathologists. The Northcote and the Darebin network are working closely together to coordinate support services within schools in the Darebin Area.

Catholic Education Office has two, main wellbeing networks – the *Northern Health Promoting Schools Network* – for pastoral and welfare co-ordinators who have an interest in wellbeing, and a *Deputy Principals Network*.

Major Service Collaborations in Darebin include:

Northland Youth Centre is a combination of agencies working on a collaborative model to operate a youth service at Northland Shopping Centre. (See above).

The *East Reservoir Neighbourhood Renewal Initiative* is a partnership between local residents, State Government, City of Darebin, Darebin Community Health, and Melbourne City Mission. The aim is make improvements to the East Reservoir area, in terms of safety, wellbeing and improving connections within the community. The Youth strategy is being developed as a guide for partners and stakeholders, for the next six years.

Child FIRST helps vulnerable children, young people (age of pre-birth to 17 years and 11 months) and their family, via a referrals system, to access relevant services if there is significant concerns for a child's well being and development. The City of Darebin is in a catchment with Nillumbik, Banyule, Yarra and Whittlesea. If the individual is in need of protection a referral by ChildFIRST is made to Victorian Department of Human Services - Child Protection.

Local policy

The *Darebin Council Plan 2005 – 09* outlines 50 commitments across a range of areas including civic engagement and service delivery which includes youth services.

Darebin City Council has outlined a *Youth Services Model for 2006 – 2009*, with local initiatives reviewed and updated annually. The Model aims to assist local young people 12 – 25 years to make the transition from dependence to independence by providing a variety of opportunities for personal, social and skill development.

Priority issues have been identified as:

Recreation/Arts – including promoting outdoor and adventure activities and building self-esteem and confidence

Education/Training – including promoting youth leadership models and developing career and vocational skills

Health Promotion – including promoting positive lifestyle choices and developing integrated referral networks

Information, Advocacy and Coordination – Promote youth issues to the community and encourage joint agency service responses.

Future Directions: The Victorian Government's Action Agenda for Young Victorians. *brings together a 'Top 40' list of initiatives, grouped under five desired outcomes as follows:*

- *Contribution and making a difference:* Young people are valued in their communities for their contribution. Young people have opportunities and are acknowledged, to participate in meaningful ways.
- *Achieving potential through informed life choices:* Young people are engaged with school, training or employment, staying connected to learning and valued for their creative expression.
- *Having resources and making connections:* Young people are resourced to build and gain access to networks and services in their communities.
- *Managing healthy, active and diverse lives:* Young people chose healthy lives in communities that are inclusive and welcoming of their diversity.
- *Being safe and promoting safe behaviours:* Young people feel safe in environments that matter to them and are able to negotiate decisions about their own safety.
www.youth.vic.gov.au

A selection of the actions:

- *Online youth participation initiative* – the new Youth Central website (www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au);
- *Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs)* – continued commitment to build on the work of the LLENs over the next four years.
- *Neighbourhood Renewal Youth Engagement Program*- to integrate and involve young people within projects, giving input into planning and decision-making processes.
- *English as a second language for refugee students*- using VCAL to build a study program that incorporates literacy, numeracy, work skills and industry specific skills.

At present there is no identifiable youth policy of programs and services which can be accessed via government departments.

The Source is a website about youth information, programs, services, resources and entertainment for young people between the ages of 12 and 25. www.thesource.gov.au

MindMatters programs promote mental health and wellbeing in the school setting, using a whole school approach to mental health promotion and suicide prevention.
<http://online.curriculum.edu.au/mindmatters/>

National Youth Mental Health Foundation set up *Head Space* to respond in better ways to young people with mental health and alcohol and substance use issues. www.headspace.org.au

National Youth Week is a celebration of young people throughout Australia. In 2008 National Youth Week will run from 5 to 13 April 2008. www.youthweek.com

Youth Allowance is provided by *Centrelink* to young people who are studying, undertaking training or an Australian Apprenticeship, looking for work, or sick.

State policy

Federal policy