

## WHITTLESEA YOUTH COMMITMENT

### SPIRIT OF CO-OPERATION HANDBOOK 2020-2022

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## VISION

The Whittlesea Youth Commitment (WYC) is a long term community based initiative that is committed to:

- Ensuring that every young person in the City of Whittlesea completes either Year 12 or its equivalent in accredited training and is linked in to employment.
- Providing an integrated response by education, human services and employment sectors to ensure a seamless provision of support for young people in the City of Whittlesea.
- Advocating for services and facilities that provide improved support young people in the City of Whittlesea

## OBJECTIVES

The WYC is an early intervention strategy designed to enhance opportunities for young people to live and work in a healthy and prosperous community.

The overall objective of the WYC is to identify and meet the requirements of young people in their efforts to make a successful transition from secondary education to their chosen destination.

The WYC is realised by:

- Providing all young people with the opportunity and support to complete Year 12 or its equivalent
- Being flexible about the nature of this equivalence, which will be defined by the needs and aspirations of young people themselves
- Providing new learning, training and further education options for young people to achieve their goals
- Offering new work placement, work opportunities, skill development, and community support structures for young people to achieve their goals
- Establishing a school and community-based mediating structure that will assist young people, as teenagers and as young adults, to meet their needs in terms of knowledge, learning, the labour market and their transition to adulthood
- Developing partnerships between schools, employers and youth-focussed support services to help young people transition to post school study and employment

The outcomes the WYC seeks are:

- Improved mobility by young people between education, training and work
- Learning and training environments actively re-engaging disaffected young people
- An informed community supporting the objectives of the WYC
- Increased employment opportunities for young people
- More comprehensive preparation for stable employment through schools and forms of work placement
- Deeper and sustained employer commitment to structured training and workplace learning for younger people
- Strengthened integration of community service, education and employment sectors ensuring clear, seamless and signposted provision of programs and services that meet the needs of young people
- Appropriate forms of direct support for each young person to enable them to realise their goals in terms of learning, work and citizenship

This Handbook should be read in conjunction with:

- The *Whittlesea Youth Commitment Spirit of Co-operation Agreement 2020-2022* (see Appendix One), and
- The *Whittlesea Youth Commitment Strategic Advisory Group Terms of Reference* (see Appendix Two).

## **BACKGROUND**

First established in 1998, the WYC is an integrated response by the community services, education, and employment services sectors, which is intended to ensure clear, seamless and sign-posted provision of programs and services which meet the needs of young people.

In 2001, the WYC became the recognised local planning group in the City of Whittlesea for the Hume Whittlesea Local Learning and Employment Network (HWLLEN).

The HWLLEN is a not-for-profit, membership-based organisation that works strategically across the municipalities of Hume and Whittlesea to assist young people to complete Year 12 (or its equivalent), and to improve transition outcomes for young people.

HWLLEN aims to achieve this by brokering sustainable partnerships between schools, business and industry, community groups, and parents, to improve education and employment outcomes for young people.

HWLLEN is one of 31 LLENs across Victoria and it is funded by the Victorian State Government.

In 2012 the WYC merged with the Whittlesea Community Futures (WCF) Partnership Youth Cluster. The vision of the WCF Partnership is to create a connected inclusive community that shapes its own future, by developing innovative service models, joint planning and pursuing resources for services and facilities that provide improved support for the residents of the City of Whittlesea.

The WYC is now the major Youth Network for the City of Whittlesea, as well as being the representative agency for the Youth Cluster, as part of the WCF Partnership, and it is the key vehicle for the delivering upon the HWLLEN's Strategic Plan in Whittlesea.

By means of an annual Service Agreement between the City of Whittlesea and HWLLEN, the WYC receives additional funding for the provision of the delivery of services that benefit young people's education and employment outcomes.

WYC membership is formalised through the signing of a Spirit of Co-operation Agreement every three years.

## **EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE**

Research, both globally and locally, is key to providing evidence to underpin the strategies and activities implemented by the WYC and its partners. The WYC engages in active research to ensure a continuum of targeted responses to the needs of young people.

All WYC events and programs are evaluated with feedback sought from a wide spectrum of participants including students, parents/carers, school staff, industry and community representatives as appropriate. In addition to directing and supporting strategies and the development of three-year WYC Action Plans, local research and evaluations have enhanced the participation of services, enabled programs to be mobilised by new organisations, and have attracted extra funding (philanthropic and other) to initiate and support targeted programs to address specific needs.

Ways in which the WYC has demonstrated its commitment to providing evidence-based research in recent years include:

- Facilitated workshops with RMIT to provide participant input for the development of the *Socio-ecological models of young people's well-being, resilience and enterprise: The Whittlesea Middle Years School (Re)engagement Pilot Project (2018)*
- Continued support for schools to undertake the Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) as a means of collecting data for schools and the municipality to assist with the measurement of interventions implemented in response to an identified data gap around the Middle Years (2013-present),
- Facilitating the development and launch of the *Middle Years in Whittlesea: a collective response. A municipal Middle Years strategy for the City of Whittlesea (2016-2017)*
- Commissioning the Whittlesea Under 16 Project gathering data on early disengagement (2012-2013)
- Evaluating the WYC HWLLEN Partnership Evaluation Whittlesea Youth Commitment (2011)

## WYC IN ACTION

The core role of the WYC is to create and develop sustainable relationships and partnerships with local education providers and community groups to support transition from primary to secondary schooling and to expand pathways to further education, training and employment.

### WYC Network

The WYC Community Team is the 'engine room' of the WYC. It draws together local practitioners involved in addressing young people's wellbeing, education, training and employment needs.

The purpose of this group is to:

- Facilitate opportunities for schools, community and government agencies to work together to address the needs of young people, with a particular emphasis on those facing multiple barriers to education, training and employment
- Identify gaps in services and propose ways to improve collaboration and service delivery to provide seamless services to young people

Regular opportunities for communication and networking are provided for members of the WYC Community Team, with online access provided to all members for sharing information about programs, projects, training and employment opportunities through the WYC's extensive database, and by the facilitation of targeted and themed meetings and forums throughout the year.

### Partnership Initiatives

In addition to convening the WYC Strategic Advisory Group and the WYC Community Team meetings which are held 5 to 6 times per year, the WYC facilitates a number of projects and initiatives such as:

- *Career Networking for Young People/Youth Employment Opportunities Fair* – bringing together businesses, employment agencies and education providers with young people seeking access to, and advice for, further study, apprenticeships, traineeships, and employment options
- Forums, seminars and workshops – recent forums include: *Networks to Wellbeing: strengthening connections for positive youth mental health (2018 & 2019)*; *Middle Years in Whittlesea: a collective response (2017)*; *21st Century Capabilities: the future of jobs, skills and work (2018)*
- Industry Tours – providing opportunities for careers and pathways school staff to visit local industry and business sites and gain a greater awareness of pathway and employment options
- The Whittlesea School Leavers' Guide – revised and printed each year providing a diverse range of information and local contact details for school leavers including advice about applying for jobs, further study, training, employment and support services
- Making Choices Brunch – a 'speed-dating' style event bringing industry representatives together with school students to discuss careers and pathways with a focus on broadening students' awareness of the new and diverse employment options
- Real Industry Job Interviews – a curriculum-based program designed to better equip students for interview preparation and presentation
- Vocational Education Awards – these Awards promote the importance and relevance of vocational education and training pathways, and celebrate students' engagement and achievements within their chosen fields
- Whittlesea Student Representative Council (SRC) Cluster – facilitated by Baseline for Young People, with students from all secondary schools in the City of Whittlesea invited to participate in meetings, camps and the VicSRC Congress

- Finding My Place – Students in Years 10 and 11 participate in an eight-week program facilitated by Yarra Plenty Regional Library to raise their awareness of the value of completing a Year 12 education
- Invigor’8’ing Education – Year 8 students participate in a special program to encourage them to value education by trying new things such as assisting at a leisure centre with child-care, recreational activities and cooking, or trying their hand at trades such as bricklaying, plumbing and carpentry at their local TAFE or Trade Training Centre
- Find Their Feet – a personalised journey into the future world of work for students in Years 8 and 9 and their families as they chat about future skills and employment options with representatives from a range of local industries

These and other such projects are made possible by the collaborative work and in-kind support of stakeholders in conjunction with funding provided by the HWLLEN and the City of Whittlesea.

## **CURRENT SPIRIT OF CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT**

The current WYC Spirit of Co-operation Agreement will operate from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2022 (see Appendix One).

## **MEMBERSHIP**

All who sign the current WYC Spirit of Co-operation Agreement are members of the WYC for the duration of that Agreement.

WYC members are entitled to:

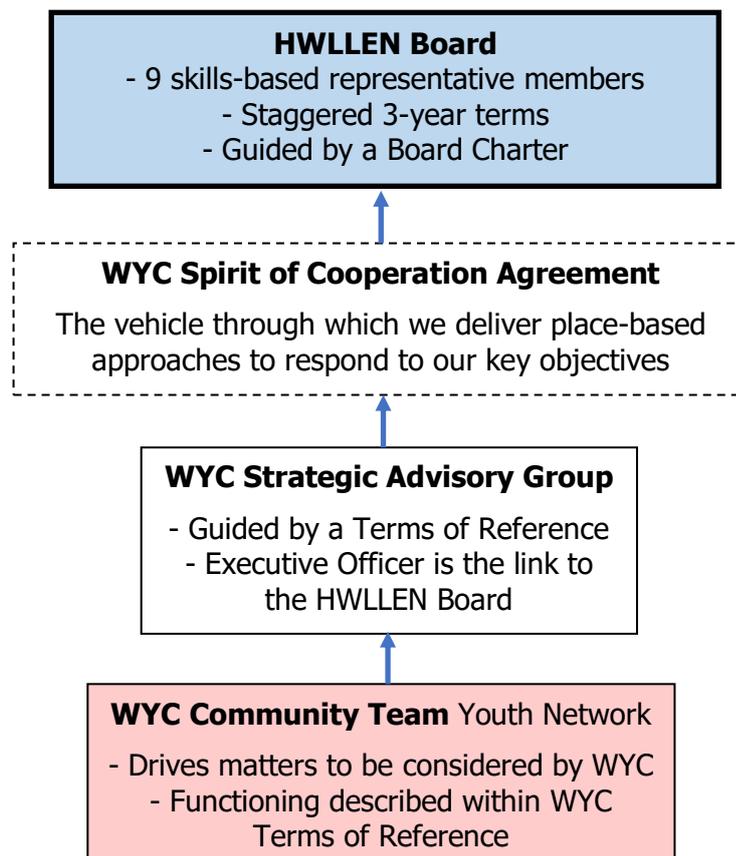
- Information and resource sharing
- Membership of the WYC Community Team
- Partnership development opportunities with other members
- Opportunities to promote your activities through the WYC network
- Input into the decision-making processes of the WYC

## MANAGEMENT

The WYC Strategic Advisory Group is responsible for the management and oversight of the WYC. Representation on the WYC Strategic Advisory Group is to be reflective of the current WYC Action Plan key priorities and will be revisited in December each year to ensure relevance.

The *Whittlesea Youth Commitment Strategic Advisory Group Terms of Reference* (see Appendix Two) describes the role, responsibilities and functioning of the Strategic Advisory Group.

The relationship between the WYC and the HWLLEN is represented in the diagram below:



## APPENDIX ONE

*Whittlesea Youth Commitment Spirit of Co-operation Agreement 2020-2022*

### WHITTLESEA YOUTH COMMITMENT

#### SPIRIT OF CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT 2020-2022

#### What is the Whittlesea Youth Commitment (WYC)?

The WYC is a long-term community-based initiative that is committed to ensuring that every young person in the City of Whittlesea has access and support to complete either Year 12 or its equivalent in accredited training, and is linked in to employment.

The structure and activities of the WYC are outlined in the WYC Handbook.

#### The Commitment

*'To enable children in their Middle Years and young people to become empowered citizens capable of participating in safe, equitable and sustainable education, community and work opportunities.'*

The WYC will deliver on this Commitment by bringing together representatives from education, training, employment agencies, service providers and local businesses to enhance the opportunities for youth in the City of Whittlesea.

#### Purpose

The purpose of this Spirit of Co-operation Agreement is to formalise arrangements between the schools, agencies, organisations and businesses supporting the WYC. Specifically, to:

- Confirm the principles of the WYC.
- Establish comprehensive communications strategies to involve partners of the WYC in achieving its goals and link the community through communication, by sharing knowledge, expertise and resources in a spirit of co-operation.
- Commit to collectively using best endeavours to undertake the proposed work of the WYC and support and encourage partnerships between schools, industry, education providers and community to bring about a strategic and whole-of-community approach to benefit young people.
- Commit to identifying organisational accountability within each WYC organisation for the achievement of WYC principles.

#### The Agreement

As a signatory to this Spirit of Co-operation Agreement, you commit to doing what you can as an organisation, within your own work plans, to deliver on the Commitment.

This can be demonstrated by your organisation's involvement in the activities of the WYC.

## Underlying Principles

Partners of the WYC will work cooperatively and make a commitment to support young people to:

- Make a successful transition from primary school to secondary school and engage in learning.
- Provide all young people with the opportunity and support to complete Year 12 or its equivalent.
- Be flexible about the nature of this equivalence, which is defined by the needs and aspirations of young people themselves.
- Ensure the provision of a safety net, to support young people who are not completing Year 12.
- Develop new learning, training, employment and further education options for young people to achieve these goals.
- Explore new work placement, work opportunities, skill development and community support structures for young people to achieve these goals.
- Continue to measure the progress made towards meeting the needs of all young people in the region.
- Develop and customise the curriculum provision of schools, TAFE and other training providers to better support the aspirations of young people.
- Develop innovative and collaborative arrangements between key providers of employment, education, training and personal support services.
- Implement strategies that promote a seamless inter-agency collaboration on the progress of young people in their transition.
- Support the families of young people to engage in their children's learning
- Work collaboratively to raise awareness of the diverse needs and issues of young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origins, and who have disabilities, in order to support their engagement in education, training and employment.
- Work collaboratively to support young people address health, welfare and social issues that are a barrier to engagement in education and training.

## Partnership

Becoming a partner of the WYC is free and is open to all who are willing to work together as a community to enhance the well-being, learning, training and work opportunities of its young people.

All those who sign up to the Spirit of Co-operation Agreement become partners of the WYC which entitles you to:

- Information and resource sharing
- Membership of the WYC Community Team
- Partnership development opportunities with other members
- Opportunities to promote your activities through the WYC network
- Input into the decision-making processes of the WYC

(See next page for Signing Page).

## Organisation Details:

Name of Organisation: .....

Name of Signatory: .....  
(Principal/CEO/Manager)

Phone: .....

Email: .....

Signature: ..... Date: .....

Contact details for WYC Community Team database and information dissemination:

Name: ..... Phone: .....

Email: .....

Name: ..... Phone: .....

Email: .....

**Please return to Helen Mecozzi** Email: [helen.m@hwllen.com.au](mailto:helen.m@hwllen.com.au)

## APPENDIX TWO

### *Whittlesea Youth Commitment Strategic Advisory Group Terms of Reference*

## **Whittlesea Youth Commitment Strategic Advisory Group Terms of Reference**

### **Background**

The Whittlesea Youth Commitment (WYC) is a long-term community-based initiative that is committed to ensuring that every young person in the City of Whittlesea has access and support to complete either Year 12 or its equivalent in accredited training, and is linked in to employment.

The WYC is the major Youth Network for the City of Whittlesea and is the representative agency for the Youth Cluster as part of the Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership. As the local planning group in Whittlesea for the Hume Whittlesea Local Learning & Employment Network (HWLLEN), the WYC aims to broker sustainable relationships supporting young people to achieve better outcomes in education, training and employment.

The WYC Strategic Advisory Group is the first level governing body for the WYC.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the WYC Strategic Advisory Group is to provide strategic oversight for the activities of the WYC, and also to act as a link back to the HWLLEN Board, which is the higher level governing body for the WYC and from where the WYC derives the protections of incorporation.

### **Objectives**

The aim of the WYC is to:

- provide an integrated response by, and collaborative platform for, organisations, businesses, education providers, community groups, and government departments to ensure a seamless provision of support for young people in the City of Whittlesea.
- advocate for services and facilities that provide improved support for young people in the City of Whittlesea

Thus the objective of the Strategic Advisory Group is to ensure the WYC has a current Action Plan in place which reflects the Vision and Aims of the WYC, and delivers on the key priorities of the Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership in relation to young people.

### **Role**

The role of the WYC Strategic Advisory Group is to consider and action activities on behalf of the WYC, which deliver on the goals of the current WYC Action Plan.

## **Responsibilities**

To oversee and guide the activities of the WYC.

To report to the HWLLEN Board on the functioning of the WYC.

To communicate HWLLEN Board priorities to the WYC.

To report to the Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership on the activities of the Youth Cluster.

## **Membership**

The WYC Strategic Advisory Group shall comprise of members who are representatives of signatories to the WYC Spirit of Co-operation Agreement, located or operating in the City of Whittlesea.

WYC Strategic Advisory Group members must also be members of HWLLEN.

Representation on the WYC Strategic Advisory Group is to be reflective of the current WYC Action Plan key priorities and will be revisited in December each year to ensure relevance.

Nominations to join the WYC Strategic Advisory Group can be forwarded to the WYC Strategic Advisory Group in November.

The Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Strategic Advisory Group will be elected by the members annually at its first meeting of each calendar year.

Nominations for these roles must be made using the Strategic Advisory Group Chairperson/Deputy Chairperson Nomination Form.

## **Meetings**

A maximum of six Strategic Advisory Group meetings shall be held per year, with meeting dates being confirmed annually at the last meeting of the preceding year.

The quorum for meetings is six members.

Decisions are made by consensus, wherever possible, and where this is not possible, by vote.

The HWLLEN Executive Officer (Whittlesea) organises meeting venues, prepares agendas (in consultation with the Chairperson), takes minutes, and circulates all relevant meeting papers.

## **Administrative Executive**

The WYC Administrative Executive will comprise of the WYC Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, the HWLLEN Executive Officer (Whittlesea), and a nominated representative from the City of Whittlesea.

The Administrative Executive will be responsible for making decisions regarding budget planning and approval, agenda, membership, action plan priorities, and other related matters.

Meetings for the WYC Administrative Executive will be held as required to ensure the continuing smooth operations of the WYC.

## **Protocols**

### ***Communication***

- The first point of contact for WYC Strategic Advisory Group business should be the HWLLEN Executive Officer (Whittlesea).

### ***Meetings***

- Minutes will be sent out within a week of meetings.
- Agenda items will be called for two weeks prior to meetings.
- Agendas will be distributed a week prior to meetings.
- An annual process to be implemented to review the effectiveness of meetings.

### ***Working Parties***

- The WYC Strategic Advisory Group may establish working parties to focus on specific issues or areas of work.
- Working party members will nominate a 'lead' person who will maintain working party focus, communications and provide secretariat support.
- Working parties will present on their progress at Strategic Advisory Group meetings as required.

### ***External Representation***

- Representation of the WYC in external forums will be performed by the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, HWLLEN Executive Officer (Whittlesea), or staff of the HWLLEN or others as delegated by the WYC Administrative Executive.
- Representatives will be appointed as required and reviewed by the WYC Administrative Executive on an annual basis.
- External forums will be informed in writing of delegated WYC representatives.

### **Term**

This Terms of Reference is effective from 1 January 2020, continues until 31 December 2022, and may be amended, varied or modified in between times, with the agreement of the WYC Strategic Advisory Group members.

# APPENDIX THREE

## WYC Action Plan Program Logic Model

**WYC Action Plan Program Logic Model (2020-2022)** WYC is entering the next phase of its work, with a renewed focus on Middle Years (MY) as well as continuing focus on Young People (YP) aged 15 to 25. WYC recognises adolescence is beginning earlier in the context of 'the great acceleration' of social and economic change associated with human-induced climate change and the fourth wave of industrialization, and is committed to enabling Middle Years and young people to become empowered citizens capable of participating in safe, equitable and sustainable education, community and work opportunities.

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes -- Impact		
	Activities	Participation	Short	Medium	Long
<p>WYC Spirit of Cooperation Agreement Partners</p> <p>Strategic Advisory Group: Austin Child &amp; Youth Mental Health Service (CYMHS) Brotherhood of St Laurence City of Whittlesea Department of Education &amp; Training Eastern Melbourne PHN Headspace Greensborough Hope Street HWLLEN Melbourne Polytechnic Neami YFlex RMIT Secondary Schools School Focused Youth Services/Uniting Kildonan Vic Police Whittlesea Community Connections Whittlesea YMCA Yarra Plenty Regional Libraries</p> <p>Other key stakeholders: DHS Centrelink La Trobe University Jesuit Social Services Job Actives NORTH Link / JVEN PRACE Reconnect program The Salvation Army Employment Plus Transition to Work program The Pavilion School Whittlesea Tech School</p> <p>and others as appropriate.</p>	<p><b><u>Empowering &amp; Supporting Young People's Voice</u></b></p> <p>Support development of youth leadership and advocacy skills</p> <p>Support community-based youth groups</p> <p><b><u>Fostering Holistic Wellbeing</u></b></p> <p>Support services and programs that foster safe relationships and wellbeing</p> <p>Advocate for more accessible services for young people and their families in the City of Whittlesea</p> <p>Promote mental health literacy and encourage positive active lifestyle</p> <p>Support services that address youth homelessness</p> <p><b><u>Facilitating Engagement and Retention in Education</u></b></p> <p>Facilitate activities that foster aspiration and support school engagement and retention</p> <p>Support schools and community services to enable YP in schools to attain Year 12 or its equivalent qualification</p> <p>Support agencies that provide services which target young people who have disengaged from school education and training</p> <p><b><u>Preparing Middle Years and Young People for successful transitions and exploring meaningful pathways</u></b></p> <p>Facilitate activities to provide information on careers</p> <p>Assist YP to be better prepared for transitioning into further study and employment</p> <p>Support VE by raising its profile</p>	<p>MY and YP (including Secondary students)</p> <p>YP (15-25)</p> <p>YP (15-25), Austin CYMHS, DET Wellbeing Team, SFYS, Baseline, WCC, Uniting Kildonan, BSL, VicPol, schools, Youth Workers, Social Workers</p> <p>City of Whittlesea, WYC stakeholders, MY, YP and their families</p> <p>Headspace Greensborough, Austin CYMHS, schools, SFYS, Local and State Gov, parents, teachers, community groups, Carlton Football Club</p> <p>Hope Street, City of Whittlesea, State Gov, Uniting Kildonan, JSS, Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership</p> <p>LLENs, MY and YP, parents, local industry partners, teachers, the Pavilion, PRACE, Melbourne Polytechnic, YPRL, Whittlesea YMCA, Whittlesea Community Connections, Baseline, Whittlesea Tech School, RMIT, La Trobe University, SFYS, community agencies</p> <p>PRACE Reconnect Program, Uniting Reconnect program, SFYS, Austin CYMHS, JSS Reconnect Program, NORTH link JVEN Program, The Salvation Army Employment Plus Transition to Work Program, Job Actives, DHS Centrelink</p> <p>CEAV, LLENs, school careers and pathways teams, Local and State Gov, industry reps, Whittlesea Tech School</p> <p>LLENs, Schools, universities, TAFEs, RTOs, GTOs, community groups, Local and State Gov</p> <p>LLENs, school careers and pathways teams, industry reps, NMVC, Northern VCAL Cluster</p>	<p>MY and Secondary students learn leadership and advocacy skills in a values-based setting that emphasises equity and human rights</p> <p>MY &amp; YP feel empowered to express issues of concern to them</p> <p>YP feel sense of belonging and support in group settings</p> <p>MY &amp; YP understand and discuss mental health concerns</p> <p>MY &amp; YP learn about values and practices that make relationships respectful and safe</p> <p>Parents, teachers and community learn about the wellbeing issues experienced by MY and YP</p> <p>At risk YP learn skills and feel supported to transition out of homelessness</p> <p>MY and YP gain raised awareness of the importance of education for realizing their aspirations</p> <p>Schools and community services are connected in their approach to support MY &amp; YP in school</p> <p>Young people feel holistically supported to complete Year 12 or its equivalent</p> <p>YP are aware of opportunities to reengage in education, training and/or employment</p> <p>MY &amp; YP learn about career opportunities; have aspirations affirmed</p> <p>YP feel better prepared for transitioning to further study, training and/or employment</p> <p>MY and YP and their families understand the value of VE as a pathway into careers and/or HE</p>	<p>MY and Secondary student leaders participate in policy forums and advocate for policies to address issues of concern equitably and justly</p> <p>YP participate in social action to support equity and non-discrimination for all YP</p> <p>YP participate in decision making processes as active citizens</p> <p>YP use strategies and resources to enhance their social and mental health</p> <p>MY and YP respect themselves and behave respectfully towards one another</p> <p>Parents, teachers and community leaders promote activities to enhance wellbeing of MY and YP</p> <p>At risk YP transition out of homelessness support service into sustainable work and tenancy arrangements</p> <p>MY and YP remain in education to complete Year 12 or equivalent qualification</p> <p>YP reengage in education, training and/or employment</p> <p>MY and YP pursue education and training aligned with career aspirations</p>	<p>Young people's experience of education, community and family life enables them to be critical, creative and disruptive 'agents of change' in their communities, and to develop diverse capabilities to engage with meaningful education and work opportunities.</p> <p>In line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, social, economic and education partners support each other in creating pathways into meaningful, fair and ecologically safe work and living arrangements for young people in the Whittlesea region.</p>

### Assumptions

Key stakeholders participate actively and regularly in WYC meetings  
Resources are made available by DET and DHHS as part of a partnership approach to facilitating middle years and youth transitions

### External Factors

Social climate change and fourth wave of industrialization impacts on the social and emotional wellbeing of MY and YP  
DET agrees to fund evidence-based promising practices as part of ongoing system improvement