

OFFICIAL



Youth Action Plan 2024-2027

Our voices, our future



Acknowledgement of Country

We, the Government of South Australia, acknowledge and respect Aboriginal people as the State's first people and recognise Aboriginal people as traditional owners and occupants of lands and waters in South Australia. We acknowledge that the spiritual, social, cultural, and economic practices of Aboriginal people come from their traditional lands and waters, and that the cultural and heritage beliefs, languages, and laws are still of importance today.

Please note the term Aboriginal is used throughout this document to include all people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent in South Australia.

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1. Young South Australians at a glance

South Australians aged 12 to 25

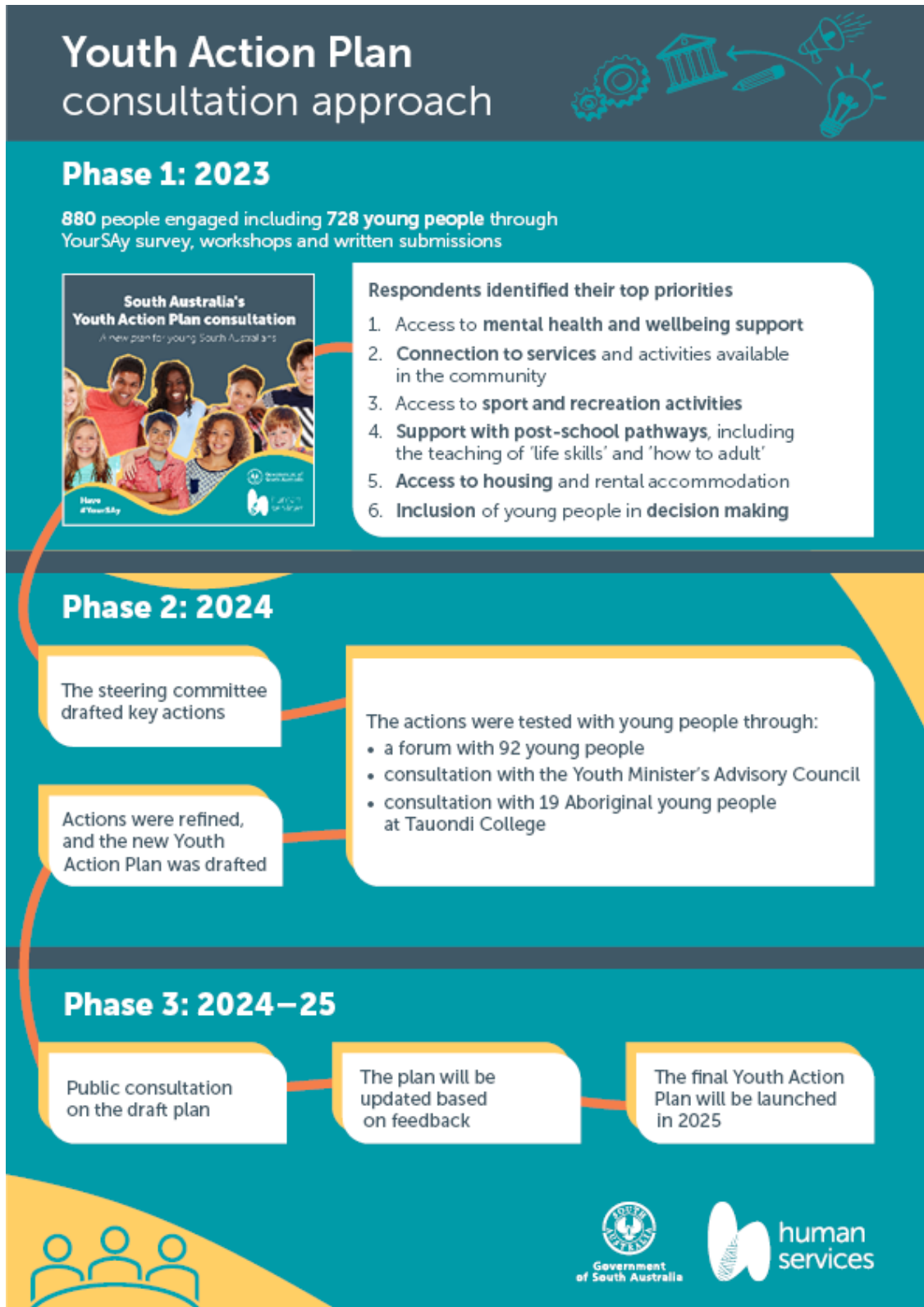
		Make up about 17% of the State's population (294,443).
	78% live in Metropolitan Adelaide, 19% live in regional areas and 3% live in remote areas.	 One in 25 (4%) are Aboriginal (11,262).
	3.7% live with a long-term health condition or disability and need assistance with core activities (11,031).	 Approximately 10% (30,000) are carers.
	18% speak a language other than English at home (53,366).	 18% were born overseas (51,698).
	76% of young South Australians are fully involved in education, training or employment.	 25% live in the most disadvantaged Council areas and 12% live in the most advantaged Council areas.

2. Fitting into the big picture

It is important to acknowledge the legislative framework and youth-related work already underway across various levels of government. This Plan will complement a range of other strategies that support and empower young people to reach their potential. These policies include, but are not limited to:

Legislation, South Australia	South Australia's Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 Children and Young People (Advocacy and Oversight Bodies) Act 2017 Young Offenders Act 1993 Youth Court Act 1993 Youth Justice Administration Act 2016
Office for Youth, Australian Government	Engage! A strategy to include young people in the decisions we make
Department for Child Protection, South Australia	Investing in their Future Child and Youth Engagement Strategy
Department for Education, South Australia	Learn and Thrive – Our Strategy for Public Education in South Australia Aboriginal Education Strategy 2019-2029 Country Education Strategy Student Pathways – Career Education and Pathways Strategy Digital Strategy 2023-2026 Safe and Supportive Learning Environments Plan of Action 2024 - 2026 Skilled. Thriving. Connected
Department for Infrastructure and Transport, South Australia	South Australia's Road Safety Strategy to 2031
Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing, South Australia	Strategic Plan 2021-2025
Department of the Premier and Cabinet, South Australia	Creating for the Future South Australian Multicultural Charter South Australian Autism Inclusion Charter
Department of Human Services, South Australia	State Disability Inclusion Plan SA Autism Strategy 2024-2029 Volunteering Strategy for South Australia 2021-2027
South Australian Housing Trust, South Australia	Our Housing Future 2020-2030 More Homes for South Australians - Our Housing Roadmap
SA Health, South Australia	South Australian Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2025 Youth Mental Health Services for South Australia – Model of Care
Preventive Health SA, South Australia	Alcohol and Other Drug Strategy Healthy Parks Healthy People South Australia 2021-2026 South Australian Aboriginal Health Promotion Strategy 2022-2030 The South Australian Suicide Prevention Plan 2023-2026 South Australian Tobacco Control Strategy 2023-2027 South Australian Walking Strategy 2022-2032

3. Creating the new Youth Action Plan, together



DHS actively partnered with young people throughout the development of the Plan. This included three rounds of consultations, where young people's voices were prioritised, and their feedback used to directly shape this Plan. Additionally, a Youth Action Plan Steering Committee, comprised of young people, youth sector and government representatives was established to guide and oversee the Plan's development.

A sincere thanks is given to the members of the Minister's Youth Advisory Council, whose active involvement was invaluable in shaping this Plan. Their guidance during consultations, assistance in refining the language, and final approval of this version for public consultation have been essential in creating a Plan that truly reflects the voices of South Australia's young people.

4. Who this plan prioritises

This Plan aims to address the needs of South Australia's young people and promote fair and equitable access to opportunities, resources and support.

Some groups of young people experience specific barriers and challenges not due to their identity but due to their experience of discrimination, trauma or adverse life events that may be related to their cultural background, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, religion, social background, and other identity markers. This Plan acknowledges that young people experience multiple forms of discrimination and disadvantage. Our efforts will be tailored to support and include those who face intersectional barriers.

Ensuring the voice of young people who experience increased isolation, disadvantage, marginalisation, and discrimination is essential for developing effective programs and initiatives that relate to young people.

The following groups are highlighted as priority groups within the plan.

Young Aboriginal South Australians

Aboriginal peoples hold a deep and rightful place as the First Peoples of Australia, with a unique history, culture, kinship relationships, and a profound connection to their traditional lands and waters. Their strengths, resilience, and cultural richness form the foundation for building a future of equality and respect.

The Government of South Australia is committed to creating opportunities for Aboriginal peoples to thrive by addressing systemic barriers in education, housing, healthcare, and employment to due to intergenerational trauma and dispossession, limited culturally safe and responsive services, and systemic racism and discrimination. Aboriginal voices will shape the design and delivery of services, driving positive outcomes as described in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap '...when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a genuine say in the design and delivery of services that affect them, better life outcomes are achieved'. Through meaningful engagement and partnership, especially in youth participation, the Youth Action Plan will advance Closing the Gap Priority Reform 1:

Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision Making, where new funding initiatives are developed, lead agencies will meaningfully engage Aboriginal stakeholders through its design.

Young people with disability and/or neurodivergence

Young people with disability and/or neurodivergence possess the right to lead fulfilling lives in environments that respect their dignity, promote their independence, and support their active and meaningful participation in family, cultural, and social life. With the right resources and opportunities, they can thrive, contribute to their communities, and experience personal growth, all while being safeguarded from risk. Their strengths, talents, and potential for positive impact are invaluable, and empowering them to fully engage in all aspects of life enriches society as a whole.

Young people in out-of-home care

Young people in out-of-home care have the strength, resilience, and capacity to thrive and achieve their full potential, just like their peers. While they may encounter unique challenges, such as interrupted education, disrupted attachments, exposure to trauma and harm or limited access to resources, they also demonstrate remarkable adaptability and determination. With the right support, stable connections, and opportunities for healing and growth, these young individuals can overcome adversity and unlock their full potential.

LGBTIQA+ young people

LGBTIQA+ communities are diverse and resilient, united by shared experiences and a commitment to advocating for equality and inclusion. While individuals within these communities may face unique challenges and discrimination, they also demonstrate remarkable strength, resilience, and a capacity to navigate adversity. These challenges are a result of societal misconceptions and biases, and can vary based on intersecting factors such as age, cultural background, and personal identity.

Culturally and linguistically diverse young people

Young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds bring unique perspectives and strengths, though they may face specific challenges related to housing, health, education, employment, and access to social and recreational opportunities due to racism, misconceptions, biases and structural inequities.

Young carers

Young people with caring responsibilities demonstrate remarkable compassion, generosity, loyalty, and resourcefulness as they provide vital care and support to family or friends facing disability, illness, substance dependency, or age-related challenges. While their contributions often go unrecognized, these young carers possess the resilience and strength

to navigate complex situations. By offering support, resources, and opportunities, we can empower young carers to maintain their physical, emotional, and psychological wellbeing, enhance their educational experiences, foster social connections, and pursue fulfilling post-school pathways, enabling them to reach their full potential.

5. Actions

The Government of South Australia and partner organisations are committed to delivering the following 27 actions. These actions have been developed with young people and are in addition to the many existing programs and initiatives already delivered in SA:

Overarching action: Action cuts across all six key themes.

Action number	Action	Priorities for young people	Action lead and support*
1	Develop an online youth hub, in collaboration with young people, which provides information on: • supports and opportunities available in the young person's community, • gaining independence, be 'work-ready', and develop life-skills, • increase understanding of democratic processes, rights, politics in practice and how to participate in decision making, and • other topics important to young people.	Increase information on mental health and wellbeing support. Improve awareness of supports and resources available, including healthy food and physical activity literacy, and life skills. Support to prepare themselves for adulthood and understand their employment rights. Increase availability of civics and rights education.	Lead: DHS

*Acronyms defined in table provided on the final page.

Key theme 1: Mental health and wellbeing – young people are healthy and well.

Action number	Action	Priorities for young people	Action lead and support*
2	Support the development of local, community-based, non-clinical, peer-to-peer mental health programs, including increasing the provision of Teen Mental Health First Aid training.	Increase access to mental health and wellbeing support, especially those in living in regional and remote areas.	Lead: DHS Support: PHSA and SAH

Action number	Action	Priorities for young people	Action lead and support*
3	Review and strengthen consent and respectful relationships education (CRRE) in every government school, connected to the Australian Curriculum and the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum.	Increase skills to be able to help each other and foster meaningful quality relationships and increase education on healthy relationships and consent, especially relating to awareness of the psychological and legal aspects of violence and abuse. Increased awareness and education to develop a more welcoming and inclusive society, particularly in relation to bullying prevention.	Lead: DfE Support: DHS, SAH and DCP
4	Support schools to give students a say in how to strengthen safety and enhance a sense of belonging at their school.		Lead: DfE
5	Support educators and schools with training and resources to better understand the challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ students, including bullying and wellbeing.		Lead: DfE
6	Provide training on bullying prevention in schools to staff and students, including peer-to-peer student training initiatives in-line with the Safe and Supportive Learning Environments Plan of Action 2024-2026.		Lead: DfE
7	Provide evidence-based resources to schools and students for alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention education and programs, including resources informed by young people.	Increase early intervention and harm reduction campaigns on substance misuse which includes vaping, drugs, alcohol, and high caffeine intakes, with a focus on the impact of social pressures.	Lead: DfE Support: PHSA
8	Facilitating connection to Country, culture and community by providing culturally safe and responsive mental health and social and emotional wellbeing services and programs to meet the needs of Aboriginal young people.	Accessing affordable, trauma informed, and culturally appropriate healthcare is a major barrier to accessing health services.	Lead: SAH Support: PHSA, DHS and LGA

Key theme 2: Connection to services and information – young people have access to information and services to meet their needs.

Action number	Action	Priorities for young people	Action lead and support*
9	Increase the provision of accessible menstrual products in primary and high schools, sporting clubs, and other community hubs.	Increase education and earlier support with sexual and menstrual health, especially for those first experiencing menstruation.	Lead: DHS and ORSR Support: DfE
10	Establish and/or strengthen data capturing and sharing to support the identification of young people and families at-risk who require early intervention support and inform future policy and practice.	Improve prevention services which address social disadvantage through early interventions for vulnerable young people and families, along with support for young parents to prevent lifelong disparities.	Lead: DHS Support: SAH and DCP

Key theme 3: Recreation, community spaces and activities – young people have spaces and activities to make friends and be active.

Action number	Action	Priorities for young people	Action lead and support*
11	Explore and implement initiatives that target cost barriers to participation to support young people from low-income families to participate in recreation activities.	Increase access to community spaces and sport and recreation activities, especially for young people from low-income households, assisting them to build and maintain social connections to respond increased reports of loneliness.	Lead: ORSR Support: DHS
12	Investigate and develop a pilot program to utilise existing school or community equipment and/or facilities to provide low-cost semi-structured sport and recreation activities outside of school hours.		Lead: ORSR and DfE Support: PHSA and DHS
13	Support local councils and communities to create opportunities for social connections with young people through sport, art & cultural experiences, nature play and other recreation activities.		Lead: DHS and LGA Support: ORSR, PHSA and DPC

Key theme 4: Transition to adulthood – young people are supported to become independent adults and reach their potential.

Action number	Action	Priorities for young people	Action lead and support*
14	Increase the awareness and capacity of community-based life skills programs.	Support to prepare themselves for adulthood and independence.	Lead: DHS
15	Provide housing support for young people in education and employment.	Increase post-school pathways support.	Lead: SAHT
16	Improve access to quality career education and guidance in secondary schools through a system-wide strategy that includes safe and structured workplace learning opportunities and individualised support for teenage workers using a variety of resources.		Lead: DfE Support: DHS
17	Improve educational outcomes, skills development, and career readiness for Aboriginal young peoples.		Lead: DfE and DHS
18	Support education and career pathways for SACE and non-SACE community language school students.		Lead: DPC
19	Explore innovative ways to increase driver's licence attainment and the capacity of driving programs, targeting young people with limited family support in obtaining a licence.	Support to travel or gain a driver's licence to support independence and attend education, work, and recreation opportunities.	Lead: DHS Support: LGA and DIT
20	Develop youth-led campaign to promote volunteering opportunities and the benefits of volunteering, such as skill development, experience, connection and attainment of SACE credits.	Increase meaningful volunteer opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge they require to enter the workforce, particularly in regional areas and for young people with disability.	Lead: DHS

Key theme 5: Housing and cost of living – young people have access to safe and secure housing and have the necessities to thrive.

Action number	Action	Priorities for young people	Action lead and support*
21	Increase the supply of affordable housing that meets the needs of young people, including partnerships.	Increase the availability and affordability of housing for young people.	Lead: SAHT
22	Create fairer housing conditions and opportunities for young people.	Improve the security of housing for young people experiencing vulnerability.	Lead: SAHT
23	Support young people leaving care to access secure long-term housing.		Support: AGD Lead: DCP Support: SAHT and DHS
24	Improve access to home internet for families and provide free laptops to high school students on school card.	Strengthen financial support for young people experiencing vulnerability.	Lead: DfE

Key theme 6: Participation – young people have a voice in decisions that impact them and their community.

Action number	Action	Priorities for young people	Action lead and support
25	Support the establishment of local Youth Advisory Committees or similar youth engagement processes across South Australia and improve connection and idea sharing between them and policy makers.	Involve young people in designing and implementing policies and initiatives which affect them.	Lead: DHS and LGA
26	State government agencies will seek input from young people on policies and initiatives which affect them.		Lead: All Support: DHS
27	Implement innovative ways to encourage, and reduce barriers to, young people participating in engagement activities, to support diverse representation.	Diversify representation on Youth Advisory Committee to ensure young people with different experiences and needs are considered in the development of policies and initiatives.	Lead: DHS Support: LGA

Summary of agencies and their actions

Abbreviation	Name of agency	Number of actions as lead	Number of actions as support
DHS	Department of Human Services	11	8
DfE	Department for Education	9	1
SAHT	South Australian Housing Trust	3	1
ORSR	Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing	3	1
LGA	Local Government Association of SA	2	3
SAH	SA Health	1	3
DCP	Department of Child Protection	1	2
DPC	Department of the Premier and Cabinet	1	1
PHSA	Preventive Health SA	0	5
AGD	Attorney-General's Department	0	1
DIT	Department for Infrastructure and Transport	0	1

6 Measuring and reporting on progress

Young people have called for real, measurable change. We are committed to ongoing monitoring on the progress of these actions to assess their impact and guide future policies and initiatives. We will develop an evaluation framework to quantify impact of the actions and report on action completion when the plan expires.