



# **Port Stephens Youth Strategy 2015-2018**

## **Part D**

### **Demographic Profile Young People aged 12 – 24 years**

*Young people are a significant sector of the community and therefore part of council business ... building communities which are attractive to young people and which involve and acknowledge young people creates benefits for the whole community.*

Policy Framework – bikes, bands and strategic plans.  
Local Government Association of Queensland Inc 1997

**February 2015**

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## Acronyms

LGA: Local Government Area  
ABS: Australian Bureau of Statistics

## INTRODUCTION

The Port Stephens local government area covers 979 square kilometres and is home to a population of 67,938 people (ABS Estimated Resident Population, June 2012).

Port Stephens has a total of 10,138 young people aged between 12 – 24 years, 51% male and 49% female. This accounts for 15.8% of the total population in the Local Government Area (LGA) (ABS Census 2011). For NSW the comparable percentage is 16.3%. As shown in **Table 1** below the proportion of young people in this age group in Port Stephens has experienced a slight decline in the past decade however the actual total number of young people has increased with each census count.

**Table 1**

### Port Stephens – Age 12 – 24 years – LGA wide

Age Group (years)	2001 Census (persons)	2006 Census (persons)	2011 Census (persons)
<b>12-17</b>	4,905 (8.6%)	5,374 (8.9%)	5,286 (8.2%)
<b>18-24</b>	4,039 (7.1%)	4,409 (7.3%)	4,852 (7.5%)
<b>Total:</b>	<b>8,944</b> (15.7%)	<b>9,793</b> (16.3%)	<b>10,138</b> (15.8%)

## LOCAL PLANNING AREAS

The Rural West planning area<sup>1</sup> has the highest proportion of young people (19.3%) in relation to its total population. With a very broad population spread of youth across the LGA there is a corresponding diversity in terms of need. This range of 'need' is not only defined by difference in age, but also geography. For many young people the need to be connected not only to their immediate community, but also beyond 'home' in order to access education, training and employment opportunities is important.

The majority of youth service provision for the LGA, including alternative education programs (WEA), accommodation and health services, as well as local secondary schooling, is more accessible in the two largest planning areas of Port Stephens, Raymond Terrace and Tomaree Peninsula. 19% of people in Raymond Terrace are defined as youth (12-24 years of age) while the Tomaree Peninsula has the largest number of young people for the LGA in this age group with a total youth population of 3,384 (33.3%).

**Table 2**

### Port Stephens – Age 12 – 24 years (by planning areas)

Age Group (years)	Tomaree Peninsula	Tilligerry Peninsula	Medowie	Raymond Terrace	Karuah/Swan Bay	Rural West	Rural East	Fern Bay/Fullerton Cove
<b>12-17</b>	1,835 (7.5%)	448 (7.1%)	803 (9.3%)	1,147 (9.0%)	94 (7.1%)	592 (10.7%)	185 (6.8%)	76 (3.9%)
<b>18-24</b>	1,549 (6.3%)	409 (6.5%)	664 (7.7%)	1,273 (10.0%)	87 (6.6%)	478 (8.6%)	301 (11.0%)	93 (4.8%)
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3,384</b> (13.8%)	<b>857</b> (13.6%)	<b>1,467</b> (17.0%)	<b>2,420</b> (19.0%)	<b>181</b> (13.6%)	<b>1,070</b> (19.3%)	<b>486</b> (17.8%)	<b>169</b> (8.8%)

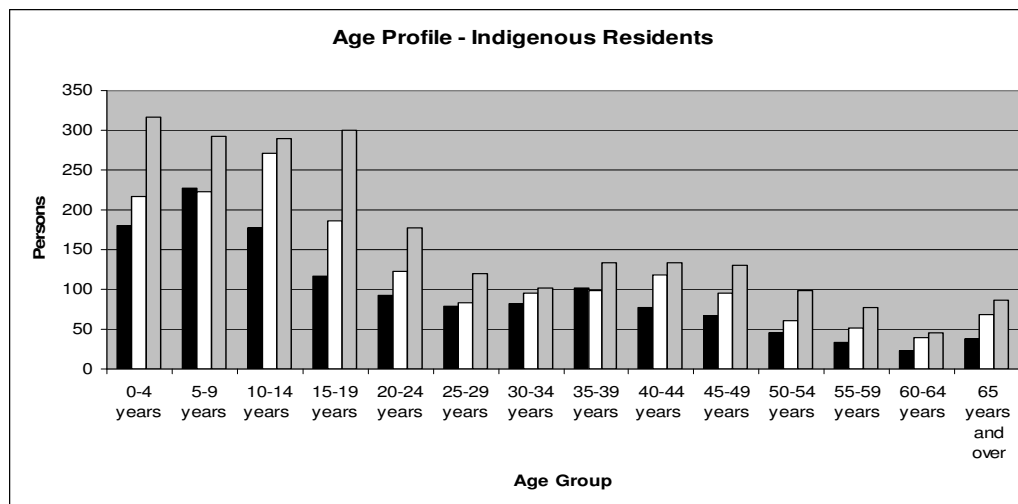
<sup>1</sup> Port Stephens has eight defined Planning Areas identified in ABS Census Data. Other planning areas are; Tomaree; Tilligerry; Medowie; Raymond Terrace; Rural East; Karuah/Swan Bay; and Fern Bay /Fullerton Cove

## PLACE OF ORIGIN

Of the 10,138 young people between the ages of 12 -24 years living in Port Stephens 637 (6.3%) identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait (ABS Census 2011). This is 27% of the entire Indigenous population in Port Stephens (see **Figure 1** below). In Raymond Terrace, where 6.4% of the population identify as Indigenous, compared to 3.6% for the wider LGA, the median age for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders is 17 years.

**Figure 1**

### Port Stephens Indigenous Population



Of all household responses in 2011 ABS Census, 70% indicated that both parents were born in Australia and 91% of 15-24 year olds identified as being born in Australia. Based on a recent study conducted by the Centre for Multicultural Youth, CALD Youth Census (Australia) 2014, over the past 5 years the CALD youth population has grown at a much faster rate than that of 12-24 year olds born in Australia. Between 2006 and 2011 in NSW the growth rate was 0.25% for Australian born compared to 2.2% growth rate for CALD young people. In the Hunter Region (excluding Newcastle/Lake Macquarie) the youth population represents 17% of the total population, of which 6.6% identify as being from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background (CALD) and a further 13.3% from CALD ancestry. This trend is emerging across the eastern seaboard of Australia which includes Port Stephens.

## HOUSEHOLDS

23,976 households responded to the 2011 ABS Census with 73.2% identifying as 'Family households'. Of these household, 7,065 identified having occupants between the ages of 15 - 24 years. Of these occupants, 3.6% were married; 9.4% were living in a recognised de facto relationship; 38% were dependent living with parents; 31.4% non- dependent; 3.4% a relative; 2.5% unrelated; 2.8% a group household member; 2.1% lone person; and 6.8% other. 4% of young people between 15-24 years of age also indicated that they required assistance as a result of a disability.

74% of all households indicated that they had some form of internet connection, while 22.3% indicated they were not connected to the internet in any way. 3.7% of households did not respond.

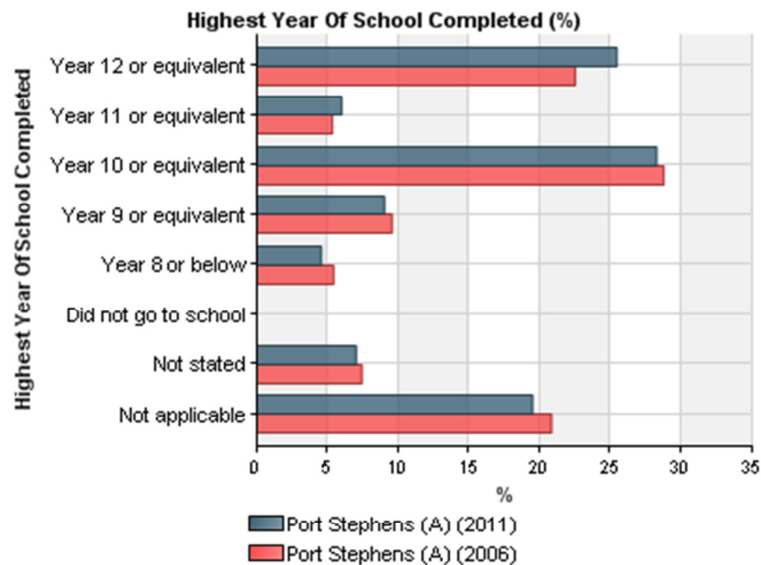
92% of households in Port Stephens identified English as the only language spoken at home.

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Changes in Federal Government Policy, in January 2010, requiring students to stay at school until the age of 17 years has led to school completion rates in senior high school years improving in recent years as evidenced in **Figure 2** below. The ongoing efforts of local high schools in supporting students in their completion of their school education through the development and provision of alternative school based programs has also significantly contributed to this positive trend. These programs include more general life skills and alternative behavioural based programs delivered by school staff and community agencies, through to accredited training provided by TAFE and other qualified training providers.

**Figure 2**

### Population by School Completion



**NOTE: School Completion corresponds with the ABS Census variable 'HSCP Highest Year of School Completed'.**

In 2014, enrolments at the three public secondary schools account for approximately 50% of the total youth population between 12-17 years in Port Stephens. Hunter River High, based in Raymond Terrace, has 744 students; Irrawang High (Raymond Terrace) 750 students; and Tomaree High (Tomaree) 1200 students. The two local independent high schools, Medowie Christian and St Phillips Christian College, Salamander Bay have close to 1200 secondary

students enrolled between them. Approximately 27% of the local youth population between 12-17 years attend secondary school outside of the LGA.

For the purposes of discussing post - secondary school education, training and employment opportunities, 15 -24 years is a preferred reference point. In this age bracket, based on 2011 Census data, there are 7,591 youth in Port Stephens of which a total of 3,618 identified as being enrolled in an educational institution. This is 47.6% of the total target population. Students still at secondary school between the ages of 15-17 years would be included in this total figure.

Increasingly for many young people living in Port Stephens, enrolment in University or other Tertiary Institutions is a preferred post- secondary school option. In the 2011 census 7.5% of young people in Port Stephens between the ages of 15-24 years identified as being enrolled in full time university or other tertiary institution, while 1.8% were enrolled part-time. In comparison to 2006 census data (see **Table 3** below) this represents a significant increase in the participation of young people living in Port Stephens at University or similar tertiary institutions.

**Table 3**

### **University / Other Tertiary Institution Enrolment**

<b>University or Other Tertiary Institution by Student Attendance</b>	<b>2001 Census</b>	<b>2006 Census</b>	<b>2011 Census</b>
Full-time aged 15 – 24 yrs	333	388	570
Full-time aged 25 yrs & over	147	149	193
Part-time aged 15 – 24 yrs	72	90	137
Part-time aged 25 yrs & over	396	369	502
<b>Total:</b>	<b>56,690</b>	<b>60,242</b>	<b>64,268</b>

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2001, 2006 and 2011)

In 2011 the number of full time students between 15-24 years of age attending a Technical or Further Educational Institution (including TAFE) was 206 (2.7%) while a further 450 young people in this age bracket (5.9%) attended part time.

In terms of post-secondary qualifications achieved, of the 1,149 of males between 15-24 years who responded to the 2011 census, 49.3% indicated that they had completed a Certificate 111 & 1V Level course. Likewise of the 1,104 females between 15-24 years who had completed some form of post- secondary study, 38.2% had also achieved at a Certificate 111 & 1V level.

Of all young people aged between 20-24 years in Port Stephens, only 24% identified as being enrolled in an educational institution. It can be expected that for many young people between the ages of 20-24 years, being employed in some capacity, as opposed to studying, is a greater priority (see figures for Employment for 20-24 years olds P7).

For many young people, finding a balance between work and study has become a significant challenge, as indicated in **Table 4** (P7). Young people are placing increasing importance on finding work at an early age, with 21.7% of young people between 15-19 years indicating they are working part time as well as studying full time.

**Table 4**

Young People (aged 15-19 yrs) Engagement In Work/Study	2011 Census
	% of all 15-19 year olds
Working full-time and studying part-time	4.2
Working part-time and studying part-time	1.9
Working part-time and studying full-time	21.7
Working full-time (not studying)	8.8
Studying full-time (not working)	37.1
Working full-time and studying full-time	0.6
Not stated	25.7

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, National Regional Profile: Port Stephens Local Government Area, May 2013)

## EMPLOYMENT

Of the total youth population in Port Stephens between the ages of 20-24 years, 43.1% indicated in the 2011 census that they were employed full time while a further 22.62% indicated that they were working part time. 259 young people in this age cohort (7.6%) indicated that they were unemployed and looking for either full time or part time work.

For young people between 15-19 years of age, 8.25% (349) indicated that they were unemployed and looking for either full time or part time work.

With a combined figure of 15.85% of young people in Port Stephens between the ages of 15 and 24 years being unemployed, based on 2011 census data, it is alarming to consider that youth unemployment in Australia has since 2011 progressively increased. This trend is highlighted in statistics showing a marked increase across Australia, between January 2012 to January 2014, of the number of young people who receive a Newstart Allowance from Centrelink. In 2012 there were 95, 677 recipients compared to 108,552 in 2014, an increase of 13.5%<sup>2</sup>.

Increasing unemployment is a real concern for communities such as Raymond Terrace, where 37.3% of all unemployed persons in the community are under 25 years of age, which is 4% higher than the NSW average<sup>3</sup>.

## INCOME

<sup>2</sup> Australian Youth Unemployment 2014 Snapshot: Counting the Costs; Brotherhood of St Laurence. 2014

<sup>3</sup> Feasibility study for establishing a Community Education Space in Raymond Terrace. Gleeson Consultancy. 2014.

Of the 4,213 young people between 15-19 years of age, 29.8% indicated in the 2011 Census that they received nil income per week. 35.3% of the same age cohort indicated that they received an income between one and two hundred dollars a week.

For young people between the ages of 20-24 years of age, 4.8% said they received nil income per week while 35% said they received an income between four hundred and eight hundred dollars per week. A further 22% said they had an income of between eight hundred and two thousand dollars per week.

For 15-19 year olds the 2011 Census indicates that 50% of young people working indicated that they worked in the Retail, Accommodation and Food based services. For 20-24 year olds who responded, the main areas of employment were in Manufacturing and Construction (31.8%) and Retail, Accommodation and Food based services (23.5%)

## **YOUTH PARTICIPATION**

In a Youth Participation survey conducted by Port Stephens Council in 2013, 35.25% of the 281 respondents (51% male and 49% female between 14 and 19 years of age) it was identified that Council could best support the participation of young people in community by supporting better access to employment, training and education.

Survey participants also indicated a very strong involvement in volunteering in community across a broad range of groups including; church youth groups (17.65); Clean Up Australia Day (27%); fundraising for charities (12.6%); Surf Life Saving NSW (2.5%); and Rural Fire Service (2.2%).

Based on the ABS 2011 Census data, of the 4,214 young people between 15 – 19 years of age living in Port Stephens who responded 11.5% indicated that they had volunteered for an organisation or group in the community. 11.8% of young people between 20-24 years of age replied in the same fashion. 4.75% of respondents between 15 and 24 years of age also indicated that they had provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability.

In a further survey conducted by Council, to gather data for the development of the Port Stephens Youth Strategy, 359 young people responded with 89.3% being between 12-17 years of age and 10.7% being between 18-24 years of age. When asked, 'what do you liked about the Port Stephens area?', 51.3% of the 181 respondents indicated Outdoor Sport Activities while a further 62.3% of a total of 220 respondents indicated they liked Open Space (e.g beaches and parks). The importance of the outdoor environment, both natural and built, to young people is further highlighted in the Youth Participation survey conducted by Council where 281 respondents (41%) indicated that they 'participated in community' via sport and other recreational activities.



