



Dear Minister for Youth the Honourable Hannah Beazley,

I write to you about the new 'WA Youth Strategy' that is being formulated by the Department of Communities. As a Western Australian with a demonstrated passion for how government can enable young people to be independent, experience inclusion and wellbeing, and be involved in leadership I appreciate the consultation that has occurred with young people in Western Australia, about the new 'WA Youth Strategy'. I understand that there is an intention for the strategy to respond to the insights and challenges that have been raised in the consultations.

I also understand that the WA government has a series of existing commitments and investments that seek to improve outcomes for young people. I anticipate the new 'WA Youth Strategy' will be an opportunity for the government to demonstrate greater ambition and foresight in youth strategy, with new ways of enabling success and quality of life improvements for young people.

To now, insufficient action has been taken to respond to the challenges that young people most often cite, such as barriers to home ownership and gainful employment, the alleviation of rising costs to live, homelessness, eliminating discrimination in schools, reducing young people's propensity to be involved in crime, and entrenched disadvantage.

I am conscious that some of the challenges young people raise extend beyond the scope of authority of the youth minister, yet this does not diminish the need for an advocate in government to be raising these issues with other Ministers.

My understanding is that the proposed 'WA Youth Strategy' will require approval from Cabinet. In this context, I hope Cabinet can commit to the investment required to bring to fruition new responses to challenges to young people's success and quality of life.

I acknowledge that solutions need to be put forward that can be developed at speed, and where possible maximise use of multiple parts of government, to connect existing expertise, capability, and mechanisms. With this in mind I wish to put forward a series of solutions which can increase the success and quality of life of young people in WA, respond to a series of challenges young people have cited, and realise opportunities.

Propelling Youth into Politics

The following solutions aim to begin a journey towards propelling more youth into political action, participation in civics, and voter engagement:

- Establishing a new set of funded **Electorate Office Internships**, ideally a 2 day a week paid opportunity for young people aged 16+, over 6-10 months – inspiring youth involvement in civic engagement, increasing opportunities for gainful employment (responsible entity Department of the Premier and Cabinet)
- A new **Propel into Politics Scholarship** offering at least 1 scholarship a year to a young person studying politics/globalisation at university who identifies from a group which is traditionally underrepresented in politics, such as:
 - Young people who are care experienced and victim-survivors of partner and family violence
 - First Nations young people
 - Sexuality and gender diverse young people
 - Young people with a disability or a persistent psychosocial health condition
 - Young people who have been a distress migrant to Australia.



A Life Outcomes Focus

The following solutions aim to increase potential for positive life outcomes for young people faced by obstacles to securing housing, obtaining a driver's licence, and targeting addictions risk:

- Funding a **Youth Foyer Project in Murdoch** – responding to youth homelessness and increasing quality of life (responsible entity Dept of Communities).
- Funding a Care Experienced young people '**new to university residential bursary**' (1 year) (responsible entity Dept of Communities).
- Additional **health education resources** for young people on the health risks of vaping, tobacco use, and drug abuse. (funded by Healthway and developed by a youth service).
- Grant funding for a pilot program to support a cohort of young people in the **metropolitan area** who are income support reliant, do not have adequate personal support, and who are jobless to obtain a **driver's licence**. The grant funding could support young people with obtaining a learner's permit and securing driving lessons (responsible entity Dept of Transport).
- Establish a **Shared Equity Home Building Accelerator** – by increasing the amount of housing specially funded and built to be offered for shared equity purchase, this can result in far lower barriers to home ownership for young Western Australians (responsible entity Dept of Communities).

Social Connectivity

The following solutions are aimed at increasing the opportunity for young people to socially connect in locations that suit them, can be vibrant, and are equipped for activities that promote pro-social behaviours. And additional investment for existing initiatives to increase social impact:

- Establishing a **Youth centres co-investment fund**, A multimillion dollar grant fund which can be used for co-investing in capital works for new youth centres in areas without an 'existing' youth centre (responsible entity Dept of Communities).
- Enable an increase in the amount of young people who can participate in the WA Youth Parliament, through providing additional funding (responsible entity Dept of Communities).
- Funding at least 1 Youth volunteering specialist within the non-profit sector in WA, to increase take up of the Y volunteering website. And to increase traditional and non-traditional forms of volunteering among young people in pursuits such as Landcare, food and crisis relief, and social inclusion activities for young people who are victims of family violence, have enduring or terminal health conditions, or are perceived to be disadvantaged by remote location (responsible entity Dept of Communities).

I trust that with new solutions, investment, and the optimism this pursuit of change deserves that all this and more can be achieved.

I am on young people's side for now and always, this means choosing to embrace a future of opportunity for them.

Kindest intentions,

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