



Regional
NSW

Office for Regional Youth

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Young people in regional NSW are comparatively worse off than in metro, by some key measures



Regional
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Young people are leaving regional areas. The ones that stay behind do not get the same opportunities.

- 83% of regional areas had negative net internal migration of 15-24 year olds in 2015-16.
- Young people made up 12% of the population in regional NSW, with all age groups projected to fall by 2036 except for those 65+.

Regional youth are not as job ready as their metro peers.

- 34 per cent of regional 20-24 year olds have not completed their Year 12, compared to 15 per cent in Sydney.
- Four in ten regional youth are not engaged in employment, education or training, compared to three in ten in Sydney.

Youth unemployment and non-participation is higher regionally.

- ABS data shows youth unemployment is highest in Coffs Harbour-Grafton at 22.4 per cent (12 month moving average).
- Regional youth unemployment averages at 12.9 per cent on a 12 month moving average.

There are more young unemployed people than there are local jobs.

- Regional areas all have more than one unemployed young person per job advertised, whereas Sydney has less than one.
- Almost forty per cent of unemployed people in regional NSW are aged 15-24.

Regional youth are facing more social issues.

- Several regions have significantly higher juvenile assault rates, particularly in west and north-east NSW.
- Suicides are a leading cause of death for regional youth, at a higher rate (up to 66 per cent higher) to their metropolitan peers.

Regional youth – a key priority for the NSW Government



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Commitments

- Minister for Regional Youth, the Hon. Bronwyn Taylor MLC
- Office for Regional Youth

Commitments

- The first NSW Regional Youth Framework and Action Plan
- \$50 million through the Stronger Country Communities Fund for youth infrastructure and programs

Commitments

- A Regional Youth Taskforce to advise the Minister

Consultations with young people and their communities shows that we have some work to do

Extensive consultations with young people and their communities, included:

- 26 forums with over 700 students, facilitated by the Advocate for Children and Youth People
- 48 interviews in 9 locations, with over 180 people in young people and the people in their lives

Views of regional NSW are mixed, trended towards negative



Boring

Isolated

Small/small minded

Limited opportunities

Expensive



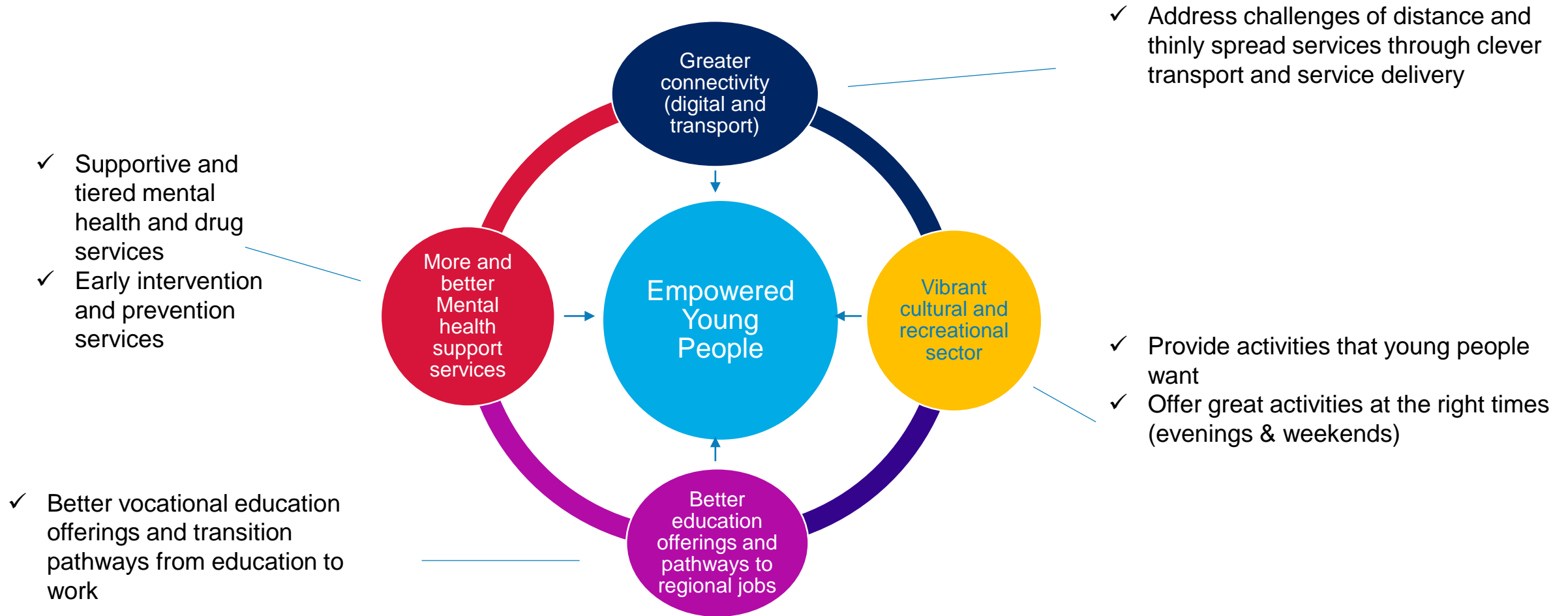
Lack of recreational activities
Lack of work and study opportunities
Transport
Mental health
Regional NSW not for young people



Close knit communities and family
Nature
Good place to grow up
Older people tend to have more positive views



The consultations identified 4 pillars of work for the Office for Regional Youth



Regional NSW Youth Framework

Empowering youth in regional NSW



Regional NSW Youth Framework and Action Plan: www.regional.nsw.gov.au/our-work/pwa-rd/office-for-regional-youth

Regional NSW Youth Action Plan

Empowering youth in regional NSW



Regional NSW Youth Framework on a page

Vision: All regional young people have opportunities for meaningful work, accessible health care and education; and feel part of vibrant and inclusive communities

Guiding principles

Support <> Resilience <> Fairness <> Get ready <> Youth voice <> Culture, Identity and Inclusiveness

Key pillars

1. Work ready
Prepared for regional jobs of the future

Priorities

1. Young people have better access to great education and training opportunities
2. Young people have improved skills and knowledge to navigate the pathways into careers
3. Young people have clearer options to take them from school to training, work and further education opportunities
4. Disadvantaged or at-risk young people are better supported to learn and achieve
5. Young people have increased understanding of the workforce

2. Wellbeing
Mentally and physically healthy

Priorities

1. Young people and their families are supported to improve wellbeing
2. Increasing young people's understanding of their health needs and navigate the health system
3. Young people have access to culturally and youth-appropriate services
4. Increasing the number of young people who can get help, wherever and however they choose to seek it

3. Connectivity
Able to access services and opportunities easily

Priorities

1. Young people have increased access to safe private transport
2. Young people have increased access to safe public transport to the places they need to go
3. Young people are able to access services without traveling long distances
4. Young people have the skills to navigate and use information and systems

4. Community
Connected and valued by their community

Priorities

1. Young people are provided the opportunity to shape their communities
2. Young people have increased access to a variety of youth-appropriate activities
3. Young people feel safe in, connected to, and valued by their communities and connected to their culture.

Strategic alignment

20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW <> Regional Development Framework
Department-specific youth strategies <> Local youth strategies

Diversity in regional NSW

Aboriginal young people <> Vulnerable and disadvantaged <> Young people with disability
LGBTIQ+ <> Young people from a refugee background <> Culturally and linguistically diverse



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Vision: Young people learn, work and thrive in regional NSW.

Guiding Principles

EMPOWERMENT

RESILIENCE

EQUITY

START EARLY

YOUTH VOICE

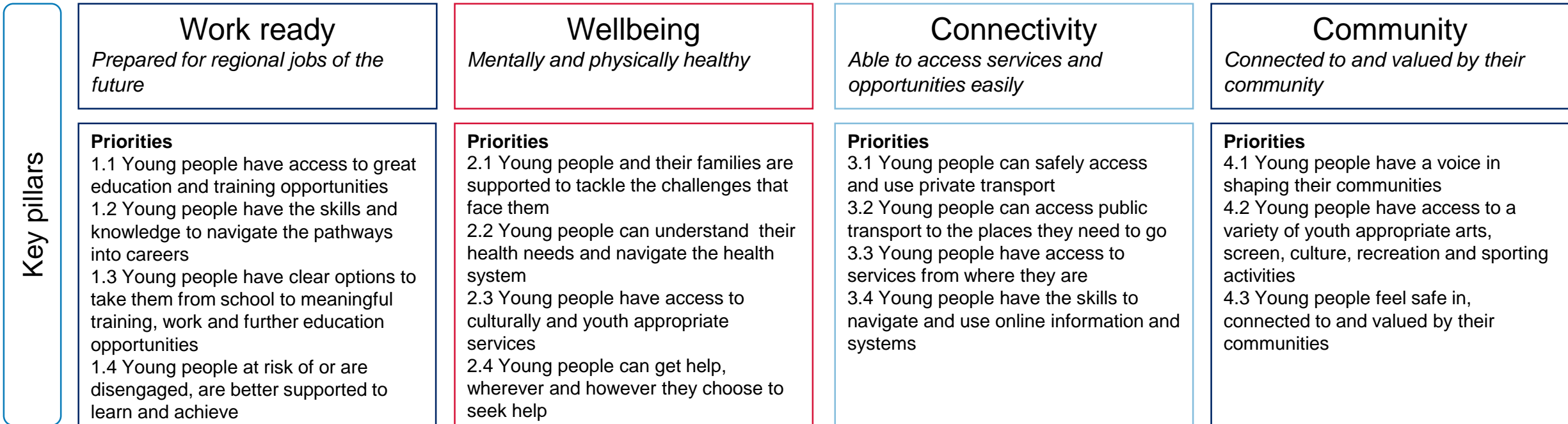
CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Where

Regional NSW is defined as all of NSW outside of Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong

Who

Young people aged 12-24 years living, working and studying in regional NSW



Strategic alignment

20 Year Economic Strategy for Regional NSW

Regional Development Framework

Cluster-specific youth strategies

Local council youth strategies

Diversity in regional NSW

Aboriginal young people

Vulnerable and disadvantaged

Young people with disability

LGBTIQA+

Refugee

Culturally and linguistically diverse



Issues & Enablers

Issues:

- Local variability of issues across regional NSW
- Broad distances and physical/social isolation for young people restricts opportunities and impact on mental health
- Perception issue: Perceptions that rural communities are not for young people
- Fewer educational, employment and recreation opportunities

Enablers:

- Place based solutions, co-designed by young people and their communities
- Physical and digital connectivity is important to enable young people to access opportunities
- Young people valued and participating in their community
- Innovation in service delivery models can address distance, but investment is needed.
- Better coordination and collaboration between services and sectors to get the best outcome

A person wearing sunglasses is looking out a window at a sunset over a field. The person is holding a large map or document. The scene is captured from inside a vehicle, with the window frame visible. The background is a bright sunset over a field.

Regional Gap Year

- Website for young people looking for opportunities to work and travel, meet new people and have new experiences:
 - where and when work is available (including hours, pay and skills needed)
 - How to apply and travel to the locations
 - Draft itineraries
 - Accommodation, events and attractions
 - Safe work info and links to tax and pay info
 - free training and skills courses
 - careers advice and mental health counsellors
- Social media campaign to build connection

Thank you

