



ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025



Youth Focus

www.youthfocus.com.au



Youth Focus acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Western Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We are committed to ensuring every individual who interacts with us feels safe and is able to bring their whole selves, being welcomed with equity, dignity and respect. In doing so, we understand that we must first include, listen and reflect in order to build trust, connect and partner.

We celebrate individuality and are guided by the stories and journeys of the communities in which we live and work.

Everyone is welcome at Youth Focus



ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

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MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR & CEO

Momentum builds when you are doing things for the right reason

As we reflect back on the 2024–25 year – our 30th year of supporting young people in Western Australia – there's a real sense of momentum. A sense that Youth Focus is on the cusp of significant change and transformation.

When we launched our 2023–2026 Strategic Plan, *Thriving Together*, we set ourselves a bold vision to transform the way we delivered our services so that we could champion the mental health needs of young people in WA, supporting them to thrive in their community.

Since then, we've been laying the foundations to facilitate our vision, and we're so excited to see this has started taking shape over the past twelve months.

As we reported in last year's annual report, we're establishing a Youth Mental Health Hub in Geraldton which will help us expand and extend our support across the Mid West. Building works began on the fit-out in April 2025, and we're looking forward to opening the doors in late 2025.

We are also creating Perth's first Youth Mental Health Hub, thanks to the generous support of our philanthropic and government partners. It will be a purpose-built, youth-friendly and accessible space for young people to access a comprehensive range of services under the one roof.

These projects, which you can read more about in the Year in Review section of this report, will give us more opportunities to work closely with other service providers, develop workforce capacity across the sector, and share learnings, experience and expertise.

We've expanded our footprint, and evolved our services to support more young people across the State. Two new services in the

South West and the Great Southern regions will break down some of the barriers to accessing services that young people living in regional WA face. Our Care Navigator pilot in Capel and Harvey, supported by Insignia Community Foundation, will help young people find and access the services they need. In the Great Southern, thanks to the support of Rio Tinto and Channel 7 Telethon Trust, a youth counsellor will travel across the region so that young people can access mental health counselling in their own communities, without the need to travel long distances.

We will also expand our services in Geraldton and the Mid West in the second half of 2025, with the opening of our Geraldton Youth Mental Health Hub, and the implementation of the new Youth Enhanced Service program.

These initiatives, and others detailed throughout this report, have helped us build on our expertise and reputation. After extensive consultation and development, we completed our Outcome and Impact Model in early 2025. This significant piece of work will ensure that the way we design, deliver and measure our services is evidence-based, and delivers real outcomes, not only for the young people we support, but also for the broader community and sector.

We were proud to be the only Western Australian organisation invited to be part of a national advisory group reviewing how youth mental health services are delivered across Australia.



Board Chair Rod Jones and
CEO Derry Simpson

This gave us the opportunity to ensure the unique needs of young people and service providers in WA – the vast size of our State and what that means for accessibility, workforce capacity, and availability of services – were considered as part of the review.

Throughout the year, we've been taking steps towards being a more culturally safe and secure organisation for young Aboriginal people and their communities, including the development of our Innovate Reconciliation Plan (RAP). Our Innovate RAP builds on the commitments we made in our first RAP and has been developed with the wisdom and guidance of our Aboriginal Governance Group. We thank them for walking alongside us through this journey. Part of our commitment is ensuring our people have opportunities to listen, learn, and experience culture and Country. Our On Country days have given us a deeper appreciation and connection, and the chance to reflect on what we can do, both as an organisation and as individuals, towards reconciliation.

Our connection to our communities has been at the centre of all we have achieved over the past year. We believe that our impact is greater when we collaborate with others, whether that be young people, families and carers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, schools, other service providers, our corporate partners and community fundraisers, or our Hawaiian Ride for Youth community. Each of our teams is embedded

in the communities in which they live and work, and throughout this report there are examples of how we have come together to support young people in many different ways.

We are so grateful to every person who has given us their support.

A special thank you to our Board of Directors who have generously volunteered their time and expertise to guide us so well through what has been a year of significant opportunities and transformation.

And to our incredible staff. You are amazing! Your determination, hard work, trust, and commitment have allowed us as an organisation to not just think about what we could do differently, but to make it happen. You always put young people front and centre, and we are so very grateful for all that you do.

Momentum builds when you are doing things for the right reason. As we close out the financial year, embarking on transformational projects like the Geraldton and Perth Youth Mental Health Hubs and the establishment of headspace Manjimup (which was announced just after this reporting period), we are reminded of the power of collaboration, and how bringing together philanthropists, government, sector, and service providers, we can create even greater impact for young people across the State.

We're humbled and excited about what's ahead. The next twelve months will represent the biggest opportunities for us as an organisation, and by taking these steps, we'll be closer to realising our vision of creating a world where a young person's mental health does not get in the way of them being who they want to be.

Derry Simpson
CEO,
Youth Focus

Rod Jones
Chair, Board of Directors,
Youth Focus

ABOUT US

We believe in the potential of all young people

For over thirty years, we have been supporting young Western Australians, by ensuring that young people can access mental health services, when and where they need it.

We believe that the right support, at the right time, can change the trajectory of a young person's life. We aim to create a community in which young people feel safe reaching for support, and that high-quality services are available when they do. We help shape and enable communities that promote mental wellbeing and support young people in all aspects of their lives.

We see firsthand the scale of the youth mental health crisis. The current challenges within the youth mental health space are considerable and complex, and the need for evidence-based, accessible services is growing rapidly. Our services are grounded in clinical best-practice, combining the latest research with our own experience to understand what truly makes a difference for each young person.

We are committed to delivering high-quality, safe, and consistent services for young people across our locations, tailored to meet the unique needs of each community. We believe in delivering innovative and accessible mental health services and programs, that empower young people to get the support they need, as quickly as possible.

This report provides an overview of the services and support we have provided to young people and their communities in Western Australia during 2024-25, and the impact our work is having on helping young people thrive.





OUR VISION

A world where a young person's mental health does not get in the way of them being who they want to be.



OUR PURPOSE

Trusted to champion the mental health needs of young people in WA, supporting them to thrive in their community.

STRATEGIC PILLARS

Accessibility

We will deliver a high-quality, safe and consistent service for young people, across our locations and tailored to community needs.

Impact

We will make a measurable difference. We are committed to demonstrating the credibility, value and meaningful impact of our services.

Partnerships

Our impact is greater when we collaborate with others. With mutual respect, we partner to achieve the best possible outcomes for young people.

Sustainability

We will continue to build our capacity – in our people, practice and resources – so we can deliver on our purpose now and into the future.

OUR VALUES



Compassion *We show heart*

We are passionate about our cause and commitment to the wellbeing of our clients, teammates, and communities.



Collaboration *We collaborate*

We are motivated towards a common goal knowing that ordinary people can do extraordinary things when they work together.



Dynamic *We are dynamic*

We are adaptable, open to change and evolution, holding focus on our work through the transitions we face.



Integrity *We can be counted on*

We are clear, honest, and authentic when we communicate. Those around us have trust and confidence in who we are and what we do.



Quality *We have a real, meaningful impact*

We remain focused on our organisation's purpose. It drives us to be and do our best.

OUR PEOPLE

One of the greatest strengths of Youth Focus is our people

Our people are passionate, experienced and driven to make a difference. Through their roles and capacity, they are advocates, changemakers and leaders – personifying our purpose of championing the mental health needs of young people in WA.



headspace Geraldton Reconciliation Week

This past year has been characterised by growth, expansion and new projects. We are so proud of the way our teams have embraced these challenges with energy and optimism, while simultaneously continuing to deliver high quality and safe services.

The progress and achievements highlighted within this report would not be possible were it not for the talent and commitment of our people and teams. To these people, who have brought our strategy to life, we are so grateful.

In recognition that our staff deserve an employee experience with as much commitment and care as they offer to their work, our 2023–26 Strategic Plan sets out to create *'an employee experience that is uniquely us, supporting staff wellbeing, retention, and providing ongoing growth and development opportunities'*.

In support of this vision, our focus for 2024–25 was on the ways in which we can mature our induction and learning systems to set our people up for success from the beginning. This work has built on the work of previous years where the focus has been on remuneration, recognition, leave, flexibility and work-life harmony.

In July 2024, we introduced a competency framework, articulating the learning priorities for the organisation, and providing a road map for skills development. This framework has been partially implemented through a newly initiated partnership with online provider and platform Go1. Go1 provides free and unlimited access to tens of thousands of on-demand courses, and since its launch in October 2024, our staff have completed more than 800 courses. This partnership has also enabled part of our induction processes to be delivered online, making it easier for people based in regional and remote locations – who represent close to 40% of our staff – to access our organisational systems and processes.



Bush Medicine
Workshop,
headspace
Midland

Encouraging cultural learning, experiences and understanding is very important to how we work. In September and October 2024, all our teams across the State participated in On Country experiences. With the guidance of Elders and senior leaders in our different communities, our staff spent a day learning about local Aboriginal culture and Country. We've also encouraged and supported our people to participate in activities for NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week, and other online and in-person learning. These opportunities have deepened our collective cultural understanding and connection.

Another way we have followed through on our commitment to our people is through our internal promotion processes which over the past year has seen 26% of vacant positions filled from our internal community of staff, students, and interns, with an additional 15% of staff offered 'step up' opportunities through secondments and varied role opportunities. In a sector with frequent turnover of staff and competitive employment market, we are confident these opportunities help us retain skilled and passionate staff, evidenced by over 15% of our workforce having been with us for over five years.

Since 2020, we've implemented processes aimed at eliminating bias, and empowering women in leadership. We're proud that this has seen our gender pay gap drop from 19% to 2.6%, with many of our key positions, including our counselling and professional roles, now at pay parity.

About our people



151

Staff

65

Full-time staff

74

Part-time staff

12

Casual



86%

Leadership positions are held by women

54%

Under the age of 40

24%

Identify as LGBTQIA+

4%

First Nations peoples

38%

Live in regional or remote WA

14%

Live with a disability

23%

Multilingual

30%

Born overseas

40%

Have caring responsibilities

CONGRATULATIONS!

During the year, a number of our team were recognised for their outstanding contributions, including:

- **Casey Moller, headspace Midland** – winner Minister's Youth Worker of the Year, WA Youth Awards, September 2024
- **Joey Dijkstra, headspace Albany Advisory Committee member** – finalist, Community Leadership Award, WA Youth Awards, September 2024
- **M8D8 campaign, led by Mark Barrett-Lennard, Youth Focus Peel & South West** – winner Prevention and Promotion Award, WA Mental Health Awards, November 2024
- **Gary Ashwin, Youth Focus Meekatharra** – winner Meekatharra's Young Person of the Year, Meekatharra Community Awards, January 2025
- **Paulette Anderson, Youth Focus Meekatharra** – finalist Community Member of the Year, Meekatharra Community Awards, January 2025

OUR SERVICES

Supporting young people to be who they want to be

We understand that every young person's journey is different, and so are their needs. We work with each young person to ensure they feel in control of their mental health journey and focus on what they want to achieve.

Our range of professional, safe and confidential services for young people are delivered by qualified mental health professionals, and include:

- Counselling – at our locations, online, in schools, and in community
- Work and study support
- Group programs
- Mentoring
- Mental health education programs, such as Mental Notes, for students, families, teachers and community groups
- Community engagement, including participating in events, expos and initiatives at schools and in the community
- headspace early psychosis support
- Eating disorders program
- Postvention supports in communities following suicides and other crises.

Many of our services focus on early intervention. By working with young people at the beginning of their mental health journey, when things don't feel quite right, we can reduce the likelihood of a mental health challenge developing into a bigger, long-term problem.

Most common reasons young people access our services



Anxiety



Emotional regulation



Depression



Family conflict



Body image or disordered eating



Stress



Suicidal thoughts or behaviour



Anger issues

SNAPSHOT OF SERVICE DELIVERY



3,546

Young people supported



20,166

Sessions



55

Schools supported with counselling

headspace Early Psychosis Support

92

Young people supported

3,663

Sessions

Work & Study Support

180

Young people supported

82

Young people secured employment

Mental Health Education

5,123

Young people participated in Mental Notes

32

Sessions

About The Young People We Support

58%

Female

28%

Male

5%

Gender diverse

21%

LGBTQIA+

10%

First Nations peoples

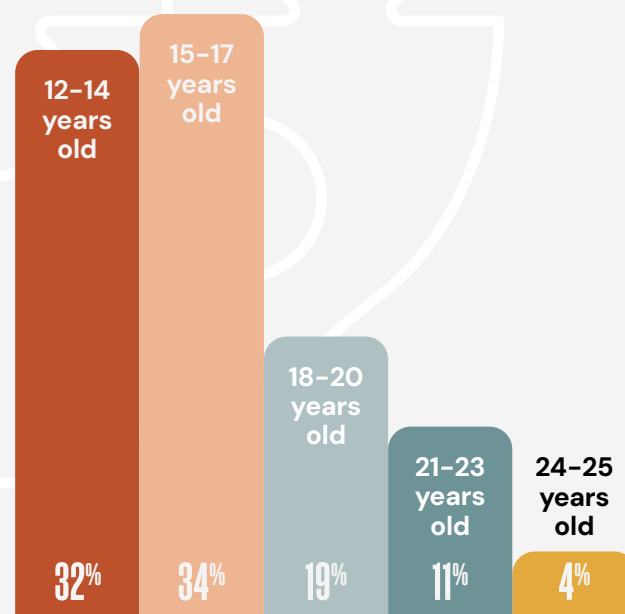
43%

Live in Perth metropolitan area

57%

Live in regional and remote WA

Average Age of Clients



OUR IMPACT

Making a difference

In measuring the impact of our services, the data only tells us part of the story. What 'success' looks like will differ for each young person – for some it will be learning new coping skills, for others it might be securing employment.

Our Outcome and Impact Model, developed following extensive consultation in 2024 with young people, carers, and staff, helps us to measure and evaluate how well we are working towards our vision that young people's mental health doesn't get in the way of who they want to be.

We work towards our vision by:

- Supporting young people to have positive experiences of help seeking.
- Reducing the effect of mental health challenges on young people's lives.
- Helping carers and families to better support young people.
- Engaging the communities we work in to be healthier.
- Contributing to a more effective mental health system in WA.

We know this because of research, outcome measurement, and service and lived experience. We measure and evaluate the outcomes of our work, using learnings to inform service development.

Our Outcome and Impact Model



SNAPSHOT OF OUR IMPACT

Reduced psychological distress



Ability to engage in day to day life



Community Engagement*

537 | **14,263**

Events to

attendees

Mental Notes

32

Sessions to

5,123

students

4

Sessions to

23

teachers

2

Sessions to

60

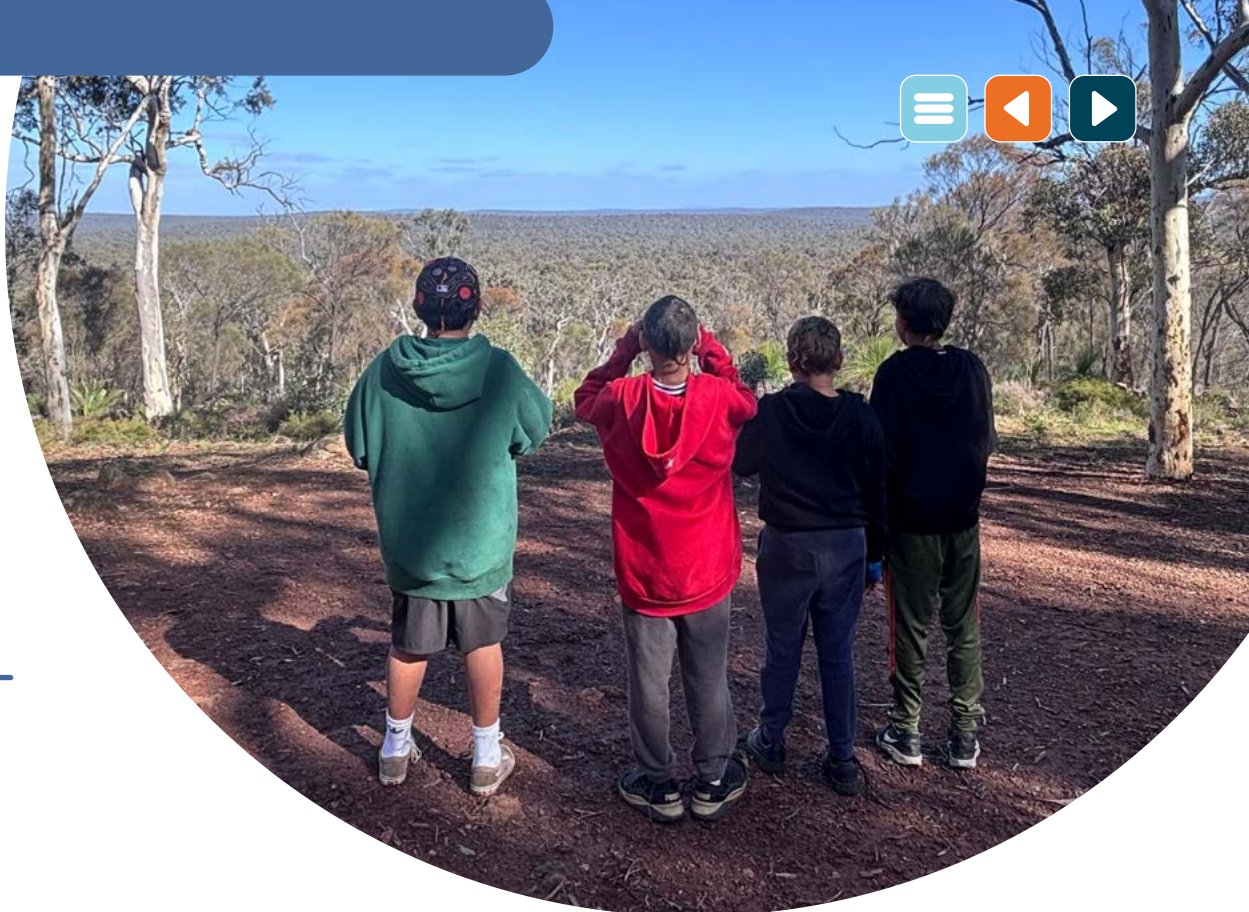
carers

**This measure was introduced in February 2025, data is only for the period February to June 2025*



2024 Northam Community Day for WA Youth Week

On Country
experience for
young people
in Northam



84%

of young people
feel they are
making progress
addressing their
goals.

93%

of young people
feel heard,
understood and
respected.

79%

of young people
understand their
mental health
better after the
session.

82%

of young people
learned something
in their session
that will help them
support their
mental health.

Supporting young people towards positive experiences of help seeking

Young people told us:

- ▶ "Figured out the different things I can do that make me feel good and how to balance that with normal life."
- ▶ "I had an amazing experience with Youth Focus, [Counsellor] supported me through counselling. We went through what I wanted to speak about during my sessions. I have made progress in the areas I needed and learned new tools and techniques I can use. Thanks [Counsellor]."
- ▶ "Super friendly staff, very inclusive and comforting. I don't dread coming in like I do with other doctors or counselling offices."
- ▶ "[Counsellor] has really helped me this session to feel validated and comfortable about an upcoming family session."

Supporting young people to reduce the effect of their mental health challenges

Young people told us:

- ▶ "I find that coming to Youth Focus helps me talk about all my problems and focus on how I can manage things better."
- ▶ "[Counsellor] is an amazing listener and has helped me learn to break out of negative thought spirals and practice a way of thinking that really helps. Thank you [Counsellor]."
- ▶ "[Counsellor] has helped me and is amazing, she has opened up my perspective in life to be more open and understand my feelings more."
- ▶ "My counsellor has been very helpful with developing my self-confidence."

OUR VOICE

One of the ways we can contribute to our goal of a more effective mental health system in WA is by lending our voice, experience and expertise to conversations around youth mental health.

During 2024–2025, we participated in:

- National Youth Mental Health Models of Care Consortium, coordinated by Orygen on behalf of the Federal Department of Health and Aged Care, December 2024 – June 2025
- Presentation *Removing barriers created by categorisation – reflections on a youth mental health service embedding a new Suicide Risk Formulation approach*, International Conference on Social Work in Health and Mental Health, Melbourne, November 2024
- Presentation *From long waitlists to a steady flow, come and go – how a youth mental health service embedded single session thinking into practice*, International Conference on Social Work in Health and Mental Health, Melbourne, November 2024
- Presentation *Expecting More From Our Early Career Workforce: How Supportive Systems Accelerate Learning and Development*, WA Mental Health Conference, November 2024
- Presentation *Lifting Language Barriers to Community-Focussed Inclusive Practice in Mental Health Services*, WA Mental Health Conference, November 2024
- Supporting Communities Forum – Child Safe Organisations Working Group, ongoing
- Working Group to transition to the new Safety and Quality Mental Health Standards for Community-Managed Organisations, Mental Health Commission, July – December 2024
- Poster presentation of our Outcome and Impact Model framework, FairGround Conference, June 2025
- Poster presentation *Four Cs of Community Engagement*, FairGround Conference, June 2025
- Common Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework (CRARMF) for Screening Family Violence Review, ongoing
- WA Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Strategy Consultation, November 2024
- headspace Governance Review (July 2024) and Funding Review (December 2024) consultations
- Participation in the headspace National Community Awareness and Engagement Forum, Melbourne, April 2025
- Participation in the headspace National 2025 Work & Study Learning Collaborative event, Melbourne, April 2025.



YRG member Katrina and Youth Focus Impact and Advisor Ellie with their poster presentation at 2025 FairGround Conference

YEAR IN REVIEW

Making our services more accessible

We're very excited to be creating youth mental health hubs in Geraldton and Perth to make it easier for young people to access the support they need, all under one roof.

We introduced our first integrated youth mental health hub in the Great Southern in 2021, based at our headspace Albany centre, which has led to significantly reduced wait times, and increased community engagement and awareness of our services.

Based on our experience in the Great Southern, and research that has found integrated youth hubs are helping to address some of the challenges with service delivery, system fragmentation, and barriers to accessing support, this past year has seen us progress the development of two new youth mental health hubs in WA.

Geraldton Youth Mental Health Hub

In 2023, we began planning for a Hub in Geraldton to meet the increasing demand for youth mental health services in the Mid West region.

With the support of \$1.4million in funding from Lotterywest, we're leasing and refurbishing the upstairs area of 193 Marine Terrace, Geraldton, where our headspace Geraldton centre is located on the ground floor. Once complete, our Geraldton Youth Mental Health Hub will be home to headspace Geraldton, Youth Focus, WA Country Health Service (WACHS), CAMHS as operated by WACHS in the Mid West and Helping Minds. The new Youth Enhanced Service program will also be based in the Hub. Our goal is to create a safe, supportive space where young people in the region can access the right help they need, when they need it.

Work began on the fit-out in April 2025, requiring our headspace Geraldton service to temporarily relocate. The Geraldton Youth Mental Health Hub is expected to open towards the end of 2025, enabling us to greatly increase the number of young people we can support, and expand our programs in the Mid West.

Presentation of Lotterywest funding certificate by Premier Roger Cook, Geraldton





Presentation of Lotterywest funding certificate by Health and Mental Health Minister, Meredith Hammat

Perth Youth Mental Health Hub

With the support of generous philanthropic partners, including the Channel 7 Telethon Trust, in November 2024 we purchased a 2120 sqm building at 28 Troode Street, West Perth to create Perth's first Youth Mental Health Hub.

Our aim in creating our Hub is to provide young people with a safe and welcoming space to access a range of services, including counselling, work and study support, integrated physical and mental health care, and social services around issues such as alcohol and other drugs, homelessness, and family and domestic violence – all under one roof and at no cost to young people or their families.

To achieve this, we embarked on extensive consultation with young people, parents and carers, to collectively create the right model of service to best meet their needs; and design an environment they would want to be part of. This consultation was made possible thanks to the generosity of the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation.

In April this year, with the property purchased and best-practice model developed, we were very grateful to have been awarded funding of \$3.545 million from the State Government, through Lotterywest, to transform the building into a fit-for-purpose space.

The Perth Youth Mental Health Hub, which will be the first of its kind in Perth, will provide an integrated, community-responsive mental health care solution, delivering holistic support for young people based on a collaborative care approach, and bringing together different service providers, with the young person at the centre of the solution.

The Hub facilitates significant expansion in our capacity to support young people in Perth and WA, with forecasting suggesting a three-fold increase in our in-house counselling capacity by year three, and the ability to double our outreach to schools

in the metropolitan area, delivering an additional 1030 counselling sessions in schools each year.

In addition to increasing the number of young people we can support both in-person and through outreach, the Hub will also allow us to develop workforce capacity within the sector, support research and trial programs, foster greater collaboration and sharing of knowledge and expertise across service providers, and support systematic change.

While the Hub will primarily see young people from the metropolitan area, the benefits will extend to young people, their families, and communities across the State, as well as to the broader sector.

It is thanks to the incredible generosity of the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation who recently awarded Youth Focus a substantial grant to support the expanded operational model of the Hub for its first five years, that this vision can truly become a reality.

Young people, carers and families, Aboriginal Elders and young people, continue to help us to shape the final design of the space.

It is expected that we will go out to tender for the fit-out towards the end of 2025, with the Hub opening in the first half of 2026.

The Perth Youth Mental Health Hub is a transformative step towards changing the face of mental health services for young people in WA and it has been made possible thanks to the shared ambition, unwavering support and powerful three-way partnership between The Stan Perron Charitable Foundation, The Channel 7 Telethon Trust and the WA State Government.



Launching the Care Navigator pilot program

In April, we launched Youth Focus Care Navigator, a pilot program backed by Insignia Community Foundation, to help address some of the significant barriers young people living in regional communities face accessing mental health support.

Mental health care and support services for young people can often be confusing to navigate for young people, and those who care about them. For regional communities, the services they need may also be a long way away. Our Care Navigator program provides information and support to young people and those that support them to help them understand what supports exist locally, what their options are, and help them connect.

The initiative aims to increase awareness of the available services in the region and build capacity within the community to seek support for young people. The pilot will be reviewed in early 2026.

Promoting our Care Navigator pilot program at community events

National consortium looking at mental health service reform

In the first half of 2025, we were invited to join a Models of Care Consortium with other leading youth mental health organisations across Australia to discuss the youth mental health system – the only Western Australian organisation to be represented.

The Consortium was established by the Department of Health and Aged Care to deliver sector-led advice to the Australian Government on the existing system of mental health services for young people aged 12 to 25 years, and explore potential new and/or refined models of care for mental health services for young people.

The aim of the project was to understand the landscape of available youth mental health services; identify gaps, challenges and barriers to access; and to highlight the need to invest, modernise and reimagine the system. This was an opportunity to collate and consolidate experience, expertise and advice from youth mental health organisations across Australia to determine practical advice on how to build a youth

mental health system that can meet the demand and deliver the outcomes required.

Early advice provided as part of the project informed the youth mental health commitments made by the federal government in the lead up to the election.

In March, we joined other organisations in signing a joint national statement on youth mental health priorities, calling for the implementation of a six-point action plan to drive meaningful change and strengthen the youth mental health system.

We remain committed to working alongside sector partners to ensure young people's needs remain front and centre, ensuring they can access the right mental health support, when and where they need it.



Launch of the Youth Focus Great Southern Program, Albany

Rio Tinto and Channel 7 Telethon Trust support new initiative in the Great Southern

A new role in the Great Southern will see a community-based mental health specialist practitioner travel across 13 local government areas to work face-to-face with young people and their families, breaking down the barriers of distance and travel that make it challenging for young people in the region to get the support they need, when they need it.

This new initiative was announced in Albany in April 2025. Since that time, we have recruited a skilled and experienced practitioner into the role, and have been working closely with local groups in the Great Southern, including sporting clubs, local governments, schools, and medical and allied health professionals to share information about the service, and identify opportunities to collaborate. The service will begin in the next financial year.

We are grateful for the generous support of Rio Tinto and Channel 7 Telethon Trust which will enable us to provide young people with counselling, individualised mental health care, and school-based support services in their own communities.

Finalising our Outcome and Impact Model

By combining extensive research with consultations with young people and teams across the organisation, we are proud to have developed the Youth Focus Outcome and Impact Model.

This model identifies and defines the key outcome and impact areas that guide our work toward achieving our vision through an ongoing cycle of measurement, evaluation, learning and service development.

Finalised in early 2025, this model helps us better understand, measure and learn from the impacts of our services for young people, their carers and families, and the communities we work in. The collaborative development has ensured that it is embedded in our organisations in a meaningful and authentic way.

The model is now being actively implementing across Youth Focus, from service reviews and data collection to guiding communication and organisational focus. It provides a clear framework for our teams, connecting everyone to the outcomes and impact of our work and motivating us to achieve them.

Sharing the voices of young people

The voices of young people were amplified loud and clear at the third Midland Youth Panel Discussion held on 25 July at the Midland Junction Arts Centre.

Organised by the headspace Midland Youth Reference Group and Our Place committee, and supported by headspace Midland, Youth Focus and the City of Swan, seven panel members shared their thoughts and lived experience on a broad range of topics, from raising the age at which young people can access social media, to the important connection between healthy bodies and healthy minds, and tackling the stigma around mental ill-health.

More than 50 people from across the sector and local community attended, including the Acting Mental Health Commissioner and representatives from WA Primary Health Alliance, Youth Affairs Council of WA, City of Swan, and many local service providers.

The insights of the panel members gave everyone in the audience much to think about, and the panel provided the opportunity for us to extend these discussions after the event.

The Youth Panel Discussion reflects our Guiding Principles at Youth Focus – to ensure what we do, and how we do it, is informed by young people and their needs.

Youth Panel Discussion, Midland





Launch of our involvement with AFL's Ahead of the Game with Youth Focus Ambassador and Dockers captain, Alex Pearce and Youth Focus Peel and South West Regional Manager Mark Barrett-Lennard

Ahead of the Game

This year marked the second year that Youth Focus has facilitated the 'Ahead of the Game' program at football clubs across WA.

A joint initiative between the AFL and Movember, the program delivers sessions in community clubs to participants in youth football, aiming to reduce stigma, create awareness, and build capacity in young people and their supporters to maintain their mental fitness.

The program has provided a valuable opportunity for our teams to connect with local football clubs and their communities in the Mid West, Great Southern, Peel and South West. This season saw an increase in the number of sessions delivered, helping young people, and the broader football club community to build resilience and learn practical tools for maintaining their wellbeing and supporting their mates during challenging times.

The program plays an important role in shifting stigma and encouraging open conversations around mental health, while being facilitated and supported by trusted mental health professionals, promoting the key message to all participants of 'Talk More, Play Better'.

Season 2026 will offer the opportunity to grow this offering across the community, with plans to meet many more young people when we roll into another season of community football.

Northam Community Day for WA Youth Week

Northam's Community Day in April 2025 celebrated WA Youth Week by bringing young people, their families, and local service providers together for a fun and unforgettable celebration.

Led by headspace Northam, the team collaborated with local organisations including Avon Community Services, Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, Shire of Northam and PCYC over a number of months to create the free community event. Held at Bernard Park, more than 250 young people and families attended, many travelling from surrounding towns to enjoy the day of activities and sunshine.

Events like these strengthen connections between service providers, local organisations, and the community in a welcoming and friendly environment. The inaugural event was a huge success, and plans are underway to hold it again.



Our Northam team with an artwork created by the community

Barndi Mayu Fashion Show

In October 2024, the Barndi Mayu 'Good Kid' Fashion show saw thirty young models strutting their way down a red dirt catwalk. More than 120 community members came together to watch the fashion show, and cheer on the young people who stepped out of their comfort zone to build their confidence, promote their culture and have fun along the way.

The event was a year in the making, and was very much a community-led initiative, supported by our Youth Focus Meekatharra team. In the lead up to the event, community members pitched together to make jewellery and clothing, and on the day, helped out in many ways from shovelling local earth to make the red dirt catwalk, to styling the models' hair and makeup, and making sure there was food for all the community after the show.

Australia's Next Top Model, Noongar woman Shannon Maguire, inspired the models. Shannon not only spent time with the young people in the months before the event sharing modelling tips during impromptu catwalks, but also provided clothes from her Kirrikin Collection for the fashion show, as well as lots of encouragement on the day.

The red dirt catwalk of the Barndi Mayu Fashion Show



Pride Tide Festival

In November 2024, Pride Tide celebrated Geraldton's LGBTQIA+ young people with a night of live music and dancing under the stars.

Pride Tide was organised by a committee of young volunteers, who came up with the idea after recognising the need for an event that would bring the community together.

Over 150 young people attended in a beautiful evening celebration of inclusion, allyship, and social connectedness.

With performances by seven local emerging bands, food trucks, a silent disco and other activities, the event brought the community together for a vibrant celebration, fostering growth and community spirit.

headspace Geraldton was proud to support young people as they collaborated with the local government, WA Country Health Services, WA Aids Council and Sweet Orange Productions to create an incredibly successful night.

For the young people involved in the event, Pride Tide helped to develop their leadership, project management and event management skills and confidence.

The impact of this night will be long-lasting, broadening the community's understanding and acceptance of LGBTQIA+ youth.



2024 Pride Tide Festival

OUR LOCATIONS

Meeting young people where they are

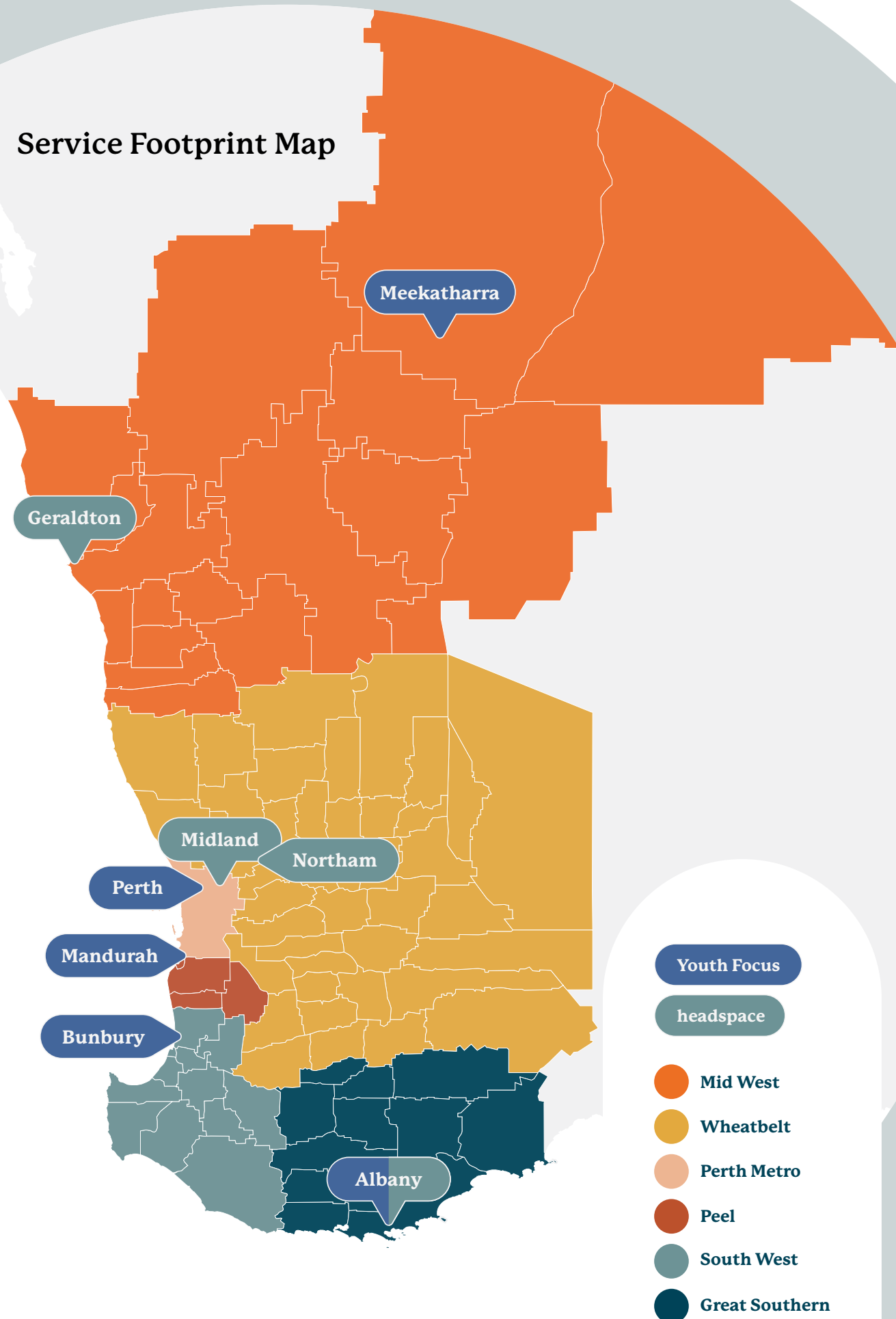
Youth Focus provides services from eight metropolitan and regional offices across Western Australia in Burswood, Peel, Albany and Meekatharra, and as the lead agency for headspace centres in Albany, Geraldton, Midland and Northam.

It's so important for young people to be able to access services within their own communities. Young people face different concerns, challenges, and barriers depending on where they live, with young people living in rural, regional and remote communities more likely to experience higher rates of poor mental health and psychological distress than young people living in metropolitan areas.



Connecting with young people in the Mid West

Service Footprint Map



Youth Focus Great Southern and headspace Albany

On Menang Noongar Boodja

This year has seen the headspace Albany and Youth Focus Great Southern team build on its strong connections in community, and introduce new services to meet the increasing demand for accessible services for young people across the Great Southern.

We gathered in July and November 2024 to listen and learn from Menang Elders and the Aboriginal community about how we can be more useful in supporting their young people and families, as one of three centres nationally selected to be part of the headspace National First Nations Community Consultation project. The project has now finished, but the learnings from these conversations have given us direction in continuing to work more closely with the Aboriginal community. Our rate of engagement with young Aboriginal people has doubled during the project, and has been maintained throughout 2025.

We continue to work closely with Kadadjiny Aboriginal Corporation, Southern Aboriginal Corporation, and strengthened our relationship with Great Southern Aboriginal Health Service in Albany and Katanning.

In October 2024, we introduced a new Community Based Suicide Prevention role funded by WA Primary Health Alliance, which enables us to provide brief intervention to young people at elevated risk of suicide throughout the Great Southern Region. To promote this new service, the team has been connecting and working with community agencies, with referrals being received from across the region, including Katanning, Denmark and Mt Barker. This role is supported and enhanced by the recently secured funding from Rio Tinto and Channel 7 Telethon Trust, which will see a community based mental health specialist practitioner travel through the Great Southern to work with young people and their families providing ongoing support.

606

Young people supported

3,242

Sessions

4

Schools we provided counselling services in



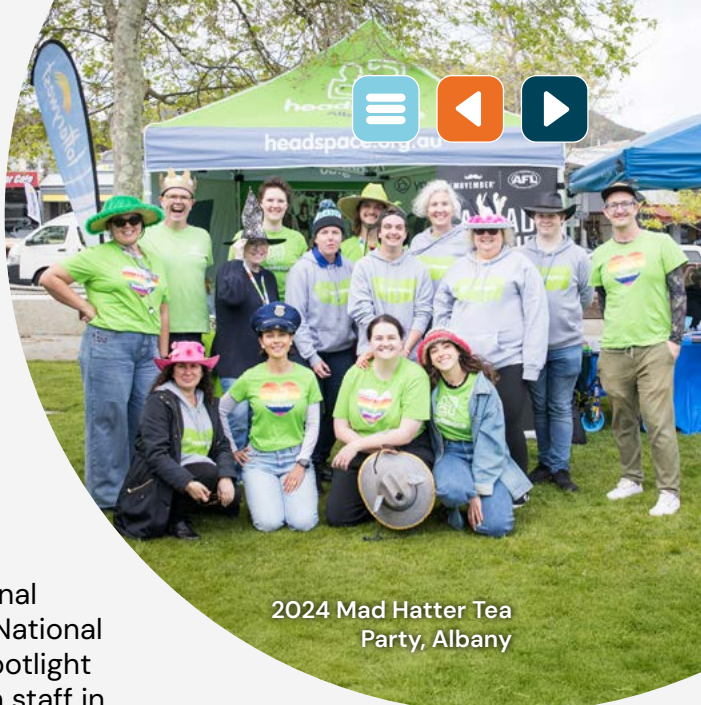
Our Albany Team on Country

Our Eating Disorders Clinic, the only regional service of its kind in WA, continued to be well used during the year, although there have been some challenges in recruiting to fill vacancies in the team as they arise.

We were proud to co-create, with headspace National Family Inclusive Practice Team and the headspace National Branding Team, a series of resources that shine a spotlight on the valuable role of reception and administration staff in welcoming and engaging families from the very first interaction. *Family Inclusion Starts at the Front Door – Guide and Tips Sheet* were published in May 2025, and shared with headspace centres around the country to inspire and support family inclusive culture in centres across the country. This opportunity came about following a workshop around family inclusion which the team delivered at the headspace National Forum in Brisbane in 2024.

The 2024 Mad Hatter Tea Party was held in October, with stalls from 20 local mental health organisations and service providers, and performances and activities throughout the day, including the popular Best Hat Parade and Competition. A Scavenger Hunt was introduced for the first time, inviting attendees to each stall and opening conversations with service providers, offering an educational aspect, as well as an icebreaker for individuals to find out more about the mental health services available.

The Mad Hatter Tea Party has become a landmark event for the Albany region, making it okay for people to talk about mental health, promoting the local support services available and celebrating mental wellness.



2024 Mad Hatter Tea Party, Albany



Our Albany team at the Sorry Day Symposium



headspace Albany Centre Manager Andrew Wenzel and
headspace Advisory Committee members Joey and Hazel

Sharing stories through art

The Blank Walls Youth Art Exhibition was held during Youth Week in April 2025, inviting young people to submit original artworks exploring the themes of ‘Hope’ and ‘Connection’. Twenty artworks were received, each telling a unique powerful story.

In collaboration with the City of Albany Arts & Culture Team, the artworks were professionally exhibited at the Vancouver Arts Centre, with several pieces selected by judges and the community to be displayed permanently on the walls of headspace Albany.

A special event was held for the selected artists at an Awards Night in June 2025, which brought the community together to acknowledge and celebrate such talented young people.

Blank Walls has transformed our space – not just visually, but emotionally. It feels more welcoming, more personal, and more connected to the young people we support. Thank you to all the young people who created artworks and shared their stories.

“I can’t believe I get paid to try and be helpful to young people. I am continuously surprised and impressed by young people’s strength to share their hopes and optimism in the face of adversity and challenge. I finish every session learning something new about young people’s ability to manage and cope when times are hard.”

Zachary, Social Worker

About The Young People We Support

9%

First Nations peoples

9%

CALD

32%

LGBTQIA+

Work & Study Support

298

Sessions

44

Young people supported

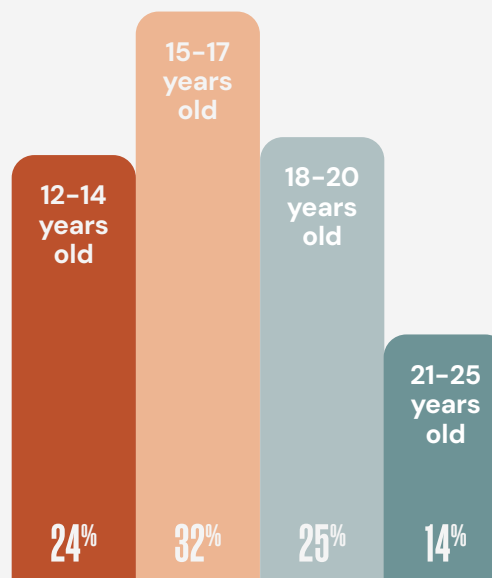
16

Gained employment

3

Began study

Average Age of Clients



Our community partners

We worked with over 20 government, local and sector organisations, schools and businesses, including:

- **Great Southern Suicide Prevention** to support community suicide prevention and postvention support.
- **City of Albany** to collaborate on community events and increase awareness and support.
- **Kadadjiny Aboriginal Corporation** for collaborating and cofacilitating weekly programs for young Aboriginal people at risk of disengaging from school.

What our Youth Counsellors are seeing more of



Increased complexity and co-occurring mental health issues



Eating disorders



Neurodivergence

Youth Focus Peel & South West

On Bindjareb, Wardandi, Pibelmen, Kaniyang Noongar Boodja

Covering a diverse area, from Northcliffe to Yallingup, Safety Bay to Collie, and out to Boddington and Northampton, the Youth Focus Peel and South West team delivers services at schools, in communities, and through telehealth so that young people can get the help they need in their own communities.

This year saw an expansion of our school partnerships, including to Christmas Island and Cocos Island, broadening our reach and improving access for young people. We have shown up as partners with secondary schools in the Peel and South West region continuously for 15 years.

Telehealth counselling is delivered thanks to the support of the CBH Group which enables services to be provided to young people living in grain-growing communities. Without this service, many of these young people wouldn't be able to access support due to distance, travel, and cost.

For young people in regional and remote WA, access to employment and education support can be limited, and this year, the Peel and South West team integrated the headspace online Work and Study Program into their service delivery for the first time. Connecting the young people who are already engaged with Youth Focus with Individual Placement Support (IPS) Specialists, allows them to explore meaningful pathways for the future, building skills and confidence for long term success.

Connecting with communities is a key part of the team's work. Participation in the AFL's Ahead of the Game program grew significantly in 2025, with young people, parents and volunteers from Donnybrook, Harvey Brunswick Leschenault, Dunsborough, Augusta Margaret River, and Busselton football clubs taking part.

Through initiatives like Care Navigator, M8D8, the Greater Bunbury Mental Health Forum, NAIDOC Week events, and other community days and events, the team spent more time this year in community, having conversations around mental health, and increasing awareness of the services available in the region.

The team also delivered services from Rockingham Youth Centre, Kwinana The Zone, Bunbury, and Peel Health Hub.

Telehealth counselling

825

Young people supported

3,448

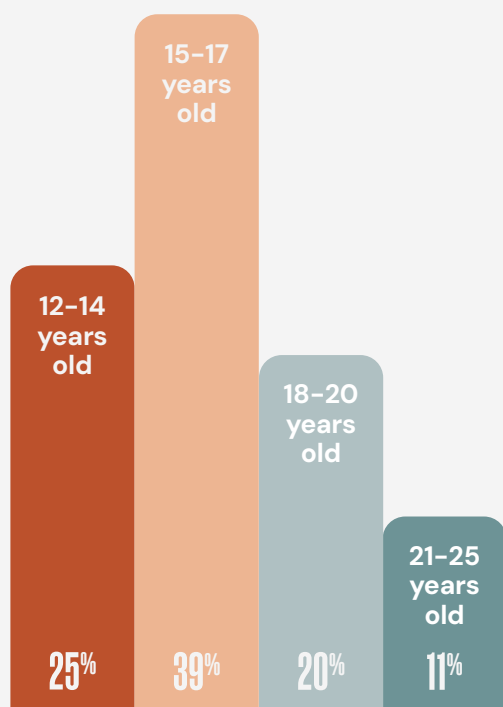
Sessions

30

Schools we provided counselling services in



Average Age of Clients



About The Young People We Support

5%

First Nations peoples

25%

LGBTQIA+



Our community partners

We worked with over 70 government, local and sector organisations, schools and businesses, including:

- ▶ **Blackwood Youth Action**, in building services and collaboration for young people across the remote and isolated spaces of the Warren Blackwood region.
- ▶ **Statewide School Psychology** services and non-government school services across schools in all our locations, for supporting the integration of mental health counselling interventions in schools, building new opportunities, and working alongside Youth Focus in suicide prevention.
- ▶ **Peel Mental Health Taskforce**, supporting the development of the No Wrong Door approach of Wandjoo Gateway for young people, to make sure they find their way to help that they need and want.

What our Youth Counsellors are seeing more of



Intimate relationship issues



Violence/coercion in the home environment



Anxiety and depression



Increased presentations of disability and neurodiversity

“My work with Youth Focus is rooted in a simple truth: every day is a good day when we are present, and every young person deserves to feel seen and supported.”

Shrusti, Youth Counsellor



Top right image: At YouthFest, Dardanup

Image below: Celebrating the M8D8 win alongside Alcoa, who support the campaign





Alcoa apprentices with the M8D8 Conversation Cards

Encouraging conversations with your mates

Now in its third year, and proudly supported by Alcoa, M8D8 focuses on the Peel and South West region and encourages young men to have conversations with their mates about their mental health – before problems become too big to cope with.

The M8D8 campaign was originally co-designed by a group of young men, and led by Mark Barrett-Lennard, Youth Focus Peel and South West Regional Manager. Since it began in 2023, the campaign has reached over 48,000 people in the Peel and South West, sparked over 35,000 engagements, and was joint winner of the Prevention or Promotion Award at the 2024 WA Mental Health Awards for its positive impact promoting mental health awareness for young men.

M8D8 is a community driven campaign, with the team working with schools, community hubs, and Alcoa apprentices to encourage conversations about mental health, and give young people the resources and confidence they might need to show up for their mates.

This year, we've introduced M8D8 Conversation Cards which were used throughout the campaign to prompt questions like "How satisfied do you feel about your life right now? Do your mates know?", "One of your mates is struggling. What does that look like?" and "Tell us about a mate who inspires you".

The 2025 campaign officially ran from April to June and had the most engagements to date, reaching over 160,000 accounts and over 500,000 views during the Instagram campaign.

Youth Focus Metro

On Whadjuk Noongar Boodja

Schools are a key partner for the Youth Focus Metro team. As well as providing counselling in 26 schools, we also continued to deliver mental health education including the Mental Notes program, and participate in school-based events and activities.

This year, our group program, Wise Minds, was introduced into eight metropolitan high schools, where it has been successfully embedded in partnership with school communities. The program empowers young people to better understand, express, and manage their emotions in healthy and constructive ways. Building on this success, we are committed to expanding Wise Minds to even more schools in 2025, ensuring that a growing number of students can benefit from this important initiative.

Our postvention service provides support in schools following a suspected death by suicide. During the year, we worked closely with other agencies and schools to provide support as required.

In 2024, we began working with Purple Hands Foundation to co-deliver Goals Ahead, an 8-week mental health program that is designed to educate and empower young people to develop their understanding of mental health issues. Delivered in schools to Year 8 and 9 students, each session blends physical activity with classroom-based learning, offering interactive and practical experiences that build skills and maximise engagement and impact.

We supported future clinicians through the development of our student placement program, with five successful student placements over the past twelve months.

Our Work and Study Support Specialists help young people figure out their goals, build their confidence and skills, and connect them with other professionals. The goal is to secure meaningful study or employment opportunities that align with what the young person aspires to do. We regularly share success stories on our website, celebrating the achievements of the young people we work with. We are proud that in each annual fidelity review, our program not only exceeds the standards, but our team is recognised for their leadership in this space.

Crystal and Mell presented at the 2024 International Conference on Social Work in Health and Mental Health

732

Young people supported

3,501

Sessions

21

Schools we provided counselling services in



As part of our commitment to continually reviewing and improving our services, we implemented end-of-session surveys to get direct feedback from young people. These surveys are one way of measuring the difference we are making through our new Outcome and Impact Model.

In May 2025, we partnered with Black Swan State Theatre Company and Hawaiian with a panel discussion about mental health following a performance of *Blue*, a powerful play about a young man's journey with his own mental health challenges. Members from our Metro, Midland and Northam Youth Reference Groups attended, together with a number of clinicians from the Metro team.



2024 PrideFEST Fairday

“I really appreciate the experience and support of my team, and I have never felt left alone. Working with young people astounds me with their insight and resiliency.”

Drew, Youth Counsellor

Taking steps towards positive mental health

In 2024, we began a close partnership with Youth Ballet WA after they approached us to help strengthen wellbeing and resilience within their community - a reflection of the trust they have in our ability to provide professional, ongoing support.

Together, Youth Focus and Youth Ballet WA are creating a supportive environment where young people can thrive - both personally and in their passion for the arts. By tailoring our mental health education program to the ballet setting, we are able to equip students with practical strategies to manage stress, build resilience and seek support when needed. Providing parents, teachers and staff with the knowledge and resources to effectively support young people's mental health and wellbeing further strengthens the understanding of the community.

We value Youth Ballet WA's partnership and commitment to integrating the program, and their ongoing involvement in activities and wellbeing initiatives to ensure it is authentic and embedded across their community.



On Country at Kaarta Koomba, Kings Park

About The Young People We Support

5%

First Nations peoples

25%

LGBTQIA+

Work & Study Support

192

Sessions

50

Young people supported

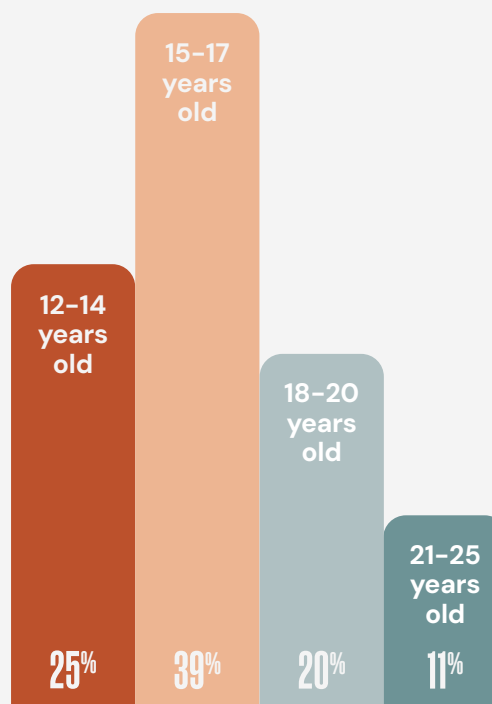
19

Gained employment

3

Began study

Average Age of Clients



Our community partners

We worked with over 70 government, local and sector organisations, schools and businesses, including:

- **Family Support Networks** to ensure young people and their families receive the right support at the right time.
- **Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA)** to amplify the voices of young people and strengthen the youth sector.
- **Imagined Futures** to reimagine and strengthen the supports young people need to thrive, with a focus on inclusive systems and lived experience leadership.

What our Youth Counsellors are seeing more of



Increased neurodivergence



School related stress



Disordered eating and body image concerns



Homelessness and concerns around safety in the home environment

headspace Midland

On Whadjuk Noongar Boodja

As our largest centre, headspace Midland delivers an extensive range of services across the City of Swan including Early Psychosis and Individualised Placement and Support (IPS) programs.

headspace Midland is a well-established presence within our community, committed to delivering safe, inclusive, accessible services to young people, their families/friends and stakeholders. Our friendly Admin team and Youth Access Clinicians are the welcoming first stop in a young person's mental health journey. Our Youth Access Clinicians provide a range of youth-led supports, meeting young people where they are at.

In 2025, the Early Psychosis team continued to expand their outreach efforts, effectively supporting young people who are at very high risk of developing psychosis, as well as those who have experienced their first episode. Through the development of holistic care plans and safety plans, the team facilitates and provides ongoing multidisciplinary support for the young person and their family and carers, working towards long term physical, social and emotional recovery.

Our IPS team continued to support young people with their work and study goals, and participated in a number of training, learning and networking opportunities throughout the year to further develop their skills and expertise.

One of the great strengths of headspace Midland is the way it engages and connects with young people and the communities around them. Their Youth Reference Group (YRG) and Our Place Committee (OPC) work with the team to develop and deliver events and activities for young people in Midland and surrounds. Events like the third Youth Panel Discussion, held in July 2024 and [detailed on page 20](#), and the Art'astic Youth Week Pop-Up Event held in April 2025, are great examples of celebrating the voices and ideas of young people, and developing the leadership skills of the YRG and OPC.

headspace Midland YRG member Oscar filming with Youth Focus Ambassador and Fremantle Dockers captain Alex Pearce

836

Young people supported

3,035

Sessions



In May 2025, the YRG and Our Place members participated in an incredible day of learning delivered by Consumers of Mental Health WA to gain skills in peer support, storytelling, and holding safe spaces for others. A number YRG and Our Place members, supported by our Community Engagement Officers, also participated in Youth Affairs Council of WA FairGround Conference, and YACtivate event in June 2025.

During the year, the team created opportunities to bring together and connect with other local business, organisations and service providers who work with young people and their families around Midland, including Picnics & Peace of Mind, and Talks & Tea.

As an important part of the Midland community, the team also participated in local events like NAIDOC Week, the Midland March That Matters, Pride Swan Festival and Pride Month, and IDAHOBIT Day. These events are an important part of our work, allowing us to have important conversations with young people and their communities, and sharing information around mental health and the services offered at headspace Midland.

In May 2025, we welcomed Sarah Kubicki as the new Centre Manager for headspace Midland and Northam.



About The Young People We Support

8%

First Nations peoples

10%

CALD

28%

LGBTQIA+

Work & Study Support

388

Sessions

51

Young people supported

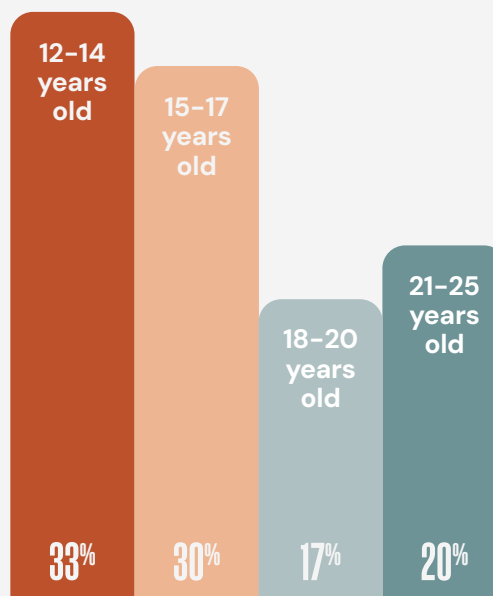
22

Gained employment

3

Began study

Average Age of Clients





Main image: Art'astic Youth Week Pop-up Event

Inset image: 2024 Pride Prom

Our community partners

We worked with over 60 government, local and sector organisations, schools and businesses, including:

- **City of Swan** to host community events and promote mental health awareness, including hosting Art'astic and regular Our Place events and meetings.
- **Midvale Parenting Hub** to promote and run 'Tuning into Teens' parent mental health education program and referring young people and their families for support.
- **Lifeline and Holyoake** who co-locate within the centre and work closely to ensure young people receive the support they need.

What our Youth Counsellors are seeing more of



**Complexity
around family
issues**



Trauma



Accommodation



Cost of living

Creating a Multicultural Youth Space

The idea to create a Multicultural Youth Space was born in early 2024 when staff at headspace Midland observed that young people from culturally diverse backgrounds lacked the opportunity to meet and connect with others in a similar situation. Many young people were sharing with their counsellors the experience of moving to a new country and trying to work out where they belong, without opportunities to connect.

The team identified the opportunity to create a space where these young people could meet, connect and share their personal experiences.

In October 2024, the team undertook a survey with young people in the community to hear what they wanted from such a space, and in February 2025, established a Multicultural Youth Space Peer Steering Group. Over many months, and informed by the survey results, the team has been worked closely with the

Youth Reference Group to co-design what this space could look like. It was important for the team that the space reflected what young people wanted, and that it could be a place where young people from diverse cultures could see themselves reflected, feel a sense of belonging, and know they are supported.

The pilot event will be held in October 2025 during the school holidays. Parents, carers and siblings will be encouraged to attend, to build trust, reflect cultural values where family plays an important and respected role, and reduce the barriers to participation. The focus will be on creating a community-based day, with the emphasis on engagement, connection and fun – with activities including games, music, movies and food.

“What I really like about headspace is being able to walk alongside young people and see them realise their own strengths, while also being part of a team that genuinely cares.”

Jovana, Youth Access Clinician



Harmony Week Long Table Lunch, headspace Midland

headspace Northam

On Ballardong Noongar Boodja

headspace Northam has a strong regional presence for young people living in Northam and surrounding Wheatbelt communities.

The Northam team works closely with the community, including local service providers and groups, to deliver place-based wrap-around supports which help young people thrive. Our Youth Access Clinicians and our Community Based Suicide Prevention Worker have a passion to provide youth-led clinical services to meet the specific experiences of young people living and working in regional areas.

Working with local schools in the region is an important way of delivering information and resources to these young people who live regionally, and have limited access to mental health support and services. We delivered mental health education sessions to students in public and private schools, and participated in school events like R U OK Day.

During the year, we continued to visit Northam Residential College and Cunderdin Agricultural College, hosting mindfulness and wellbeing workshops. These regular interactions have led the team to develop good relationships with the students and boarders, with several students now part of the Northam Youth Reference Group (YRG). These YRG members helped to organise the Cunderdin Agricultural College 2025 Wellbeing Day in June 2025.

Our relationships with Elders and the local Aboriginal community continued to guide and inspire our work. In February 2025, thanks to Ballardong Noongar Rangers and the Bridgeley Church, we organised a Men's Business On Country excursion, taking young men on Ballardong Country for a day of exploring, yarning, and connection. In March 2025, we held an afternoon of yarning, painting and learning about the local Ballardong region with Yvonne and Janet Kickett. Passing down *kaartdijin* (knowledge) from Elders to young people is an important part of keeping culture alive in our communities. Both of these initiatives were supported by ConnectGroups *Dream it Forward* Grant.

For the first time, headspace Northam participated in the AFL's Ahead of the Game program during the 2025 season, which was another great opportunity to connect with community.

To coincide with WA Youth Week in April 2025, the team organised the inaugural Youth Week Community event, a fabulous day attended by families of all ages. You can read more about this [on page 22](#).

113

Young people supported

566

Sessions



Ahead of the Game in Northam

Youth Voices magazine

In December 2024, headspace Northam's Youth Reference Group published its first ever edition of Youth Voices, a magazine created for young people in the Wheatbelt to share their stories, passions, and ways they support their mental health and wellbeing with others.

The magazine included stories on things young people are passionate about, feature articles, recipes, budgeting tips, local support services and more. As well as sharing stories and experiences, the magazine also aimed to support young people to become actively involved in their communities, collaborate with others, and make friends with people with like-minded interests.

Hard copies were distributed to services and schools in Northam and in the Wheatbelt, and a digital version was shared widely.



YRG member Paige with Community Engagement Officer Nina

“This past year at headspace Northam has been nothing short of incredible. I’ve had the privilege of walking alongside many young people on their journeys, and I’ve learned something from each of them. Their resilience, honesty, and willingness to show vulnerability continue to move and inspire me.”

Kylie, Youth Access Clinician



About The Young People We Support

16%

First Nations peoples

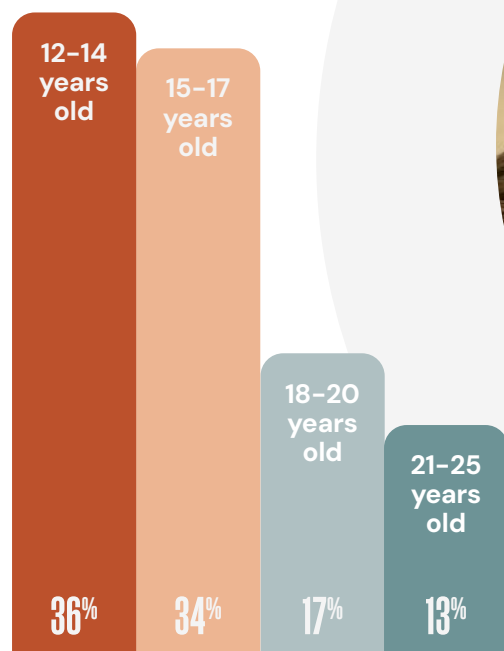
5%

CALD

20%

LGBTQIA+

Average Age of Clients



Art with Elders in Northam

Our community partners

We worked with over 10 government, local and sector organisations, schools and businesses, including:

- **Avon Community Services** to coordinate community events to engage young people in the region, including Youth Week event.
- **Cunderdin Agricultural School** to host a youth wellbeing workshop to promote and encourage wellbeing activities.
- **Holyoake** to ensure timely referrals so young people can receive the right support at the right time.

What our Youth Counsellors are seeing more of



Complexity around family issues



Trauma



Accommodation



Cost of living

headspace Geraldton

On Yamatji Boodja

This year has been one of growth and deeper connections for the headspace Geraldton team, recognising the increased demand for services in the Mid West, with a large population of young people living in the region.

A big focus over the past twelve months has been on the development of our new Geraldton Youth Mental Health Hub (which you can read more about on [page 16](#)). In April 2025, we relocated to temporary accommodation just down the road from the original headspace building, providing easy, familiar access to services for young people and the Geraldton team, and more foot traffic which has increased awareness of our service. The relocation was completed in just a day, with minimal disruption for young people and our team. Work is underway on the new Hub, and is expected to be completed by November 2025.

In April 2025, Youth Focus successfully tendered to deliver the Youth Enhanced Service (YES) Program through the Mid West. This program will begin in the second half of 2025, and will provide intensive clinical support for young people who have moderate to high mental health needs.

413

Young people supported

1,560

Sessions



Image above: Renovations underway on the new Geraldton Youth Mental Health Hub

Left image: Moving day!

During the year we've continued to adapt our practice to better meet the needs of our local community. In 2025, we introduced our Mingle on Mitchell program, which is centred around providing opportunities for the community to come together every month to have a yarn, participate in activities, and enjoy food together. It's been a wonderful way for us to build relationships and trust with the local Aboriginal community, and connect with other local organisations. We continue to provide counselling services at Mitchell Street Community Centre so that young people can access support in a familiar space, without having to travel some distance to our headspace centre.

In November 2024 and March 2025, we held Employer Appreciation Days, recognising the important role employers have on the mental health and wellbeing of young employees in the community. These events gave the team the chance to meet local businesses over an informal lunch and build partnerships with them as part of our Individual Placement and Support (IPS) program.

This year we introduced online Family and Friends Support Sessions, held in April and June, to provide information and tools to support young people, and encourage open discussions around individual challenges.



Bringing the community together

Over the past year, Geraldton reshaped its Consortium meetings to increase representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and deliver more effective outcomes for young people and their communities.

By shifting the focus to open discussion and problem solving, the Consortium has become a space for collaboration and action. Members share ideas, explore challenges, and find practical solutions together as to how they can best support young people in their communities. After each meeting, members connect over food and activities, building relationships that go beyond the meeting. Feedback is sought after each meeting, which is reviewed and used to inform future meetings, discussions and activities.

With this approach, the Consortium has grown from 10 people attending meetings in 2022 to 25-30 people at each meeting in 2025, with around 10% of members from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities. The Consortium now includes members of all ages, from young people to Elders.

The Consortium is now considered a vibrant community of partners, working to make Geraldton, and the Mid West, a place where young people feel supported, celebrated, and included.

Our community partners

We worked with over 50 government, local and sector organisations, schools and businesses, including:

- ▶ Geraldton Sporting Aboriginal Corp, Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service (GRAMS) and City of Greater Geraldton to deliver the monthly Mingle on Mitchell.
- ▶ Short Term Accommodation Youth (STAY) to co-locate the 'STAY HUB' at our headspace centre twice a week to provide support to young people with accessing housing and welfare assistance.
- ▶ WA AIDS Council (WAAC) to co-locate and support the weekly 'The Space' group for young LGBTQIA+ young people and other community events.

What our Youth Counsellors are seeing more of



Anxiety



School refusal



Financial stress



Housing instability

“Working at headspace has been one of the most rewarding experiences. As a transgender woman, I’ve walked through many of the same struggles our young people face. Being able to stand beside them, offer the support I once needed, and watch them slowly find their light has been incredible. Nothing compares to seeing a young person who once felt shut down begin to smile, engage, and connect because they finally feel understood.”

Ari, IPS Vocational Specialist



2024 Pride Tide

About The Young People We Support

22%

First Nations peoples

8%

CALD

26%

LGBTQIA+

Work & Study Support

207

Sessions

35

Young people supported

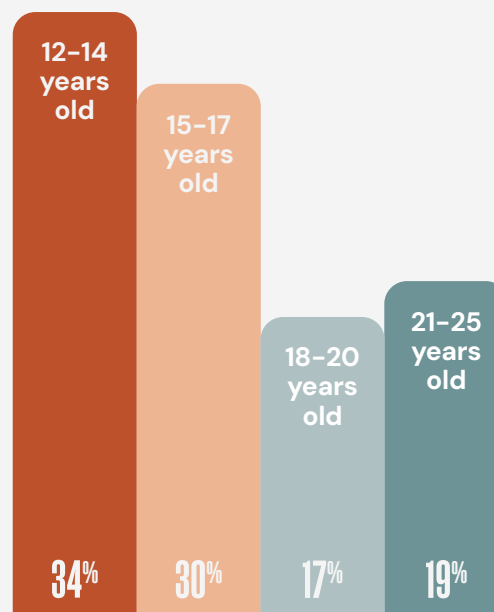
9

Gained employment

7

Began study

Average Age of Clients



headspace Geraldton Reconciliation Walk 2025

Youth Focus Meekatharra

On Yamatji Boodja

Youth Focus Meekatharra offers young people and their communities a safe and welcoming space to relax and be themselves, while the team provides trusted community engagement and support.

The team's work is guided by the Social and Emotional Wellbeing model (SEWB), which takes a holistic view of health and collectivist view of self, recognising that the wellbeing of young people is deeply connected with the wellbeing and health of the wider community. By creating strong community relationships, the team works collectively with the community towards long-term resilience and positive outcomes for young people. Their contribution to the community was recognised in the 2024 Meekatharra Community Awards (see page 9).

Our Youth Focus Meekatharra team collaborates closely with Aboriginal Elders, community organisations and young people to ensure that any support offered is culturally sensitive and relevant. This year, that has included helping with forms and advocacy during court appearances, assisting community members with abstudy applications and housing support letters for young people in their care, and working closely with organisations like Social Reinvestment WA, Yulella Aboriginal Corporation, Meeka Youth Shire Services and Meekatharra's Communities of Focus to deliver events and activities for the community.

Our centre provides a space where community members of all ages can come together to yarn, participate in our Women and Men's Groups, connect over activities, and have something to eat. We are also able to take the community around town and out on Country thanks to our 12-seater bus, generously purchased by the Outred family for us in June 2024.

During the year, we welcomed a number of visits from Youth Focus team members from across the State. These visits have provided additional support and capacity at key times, as well as provided opportunities for shared learnings. Although some 535kms away, we've developed a strong relationship with our headspace Geraldton colleagues, and both teams regularly connect and collaborate for the benefit of both staff and their respective communities.

In October 2024, the team participated in the annual Walk for Suicide Awareness. This community event brings together people from across the region to walk in solidarity, taking time to remember those lost to suicide and acknowledge the strength it takes to reach out for support.

28

Young people supported

66

Sessions

99%

First Nations young people supported

Art Therapy with Elders

Art therapy with Elders has quickly become a community favourite for both young people and Elders. Each session creates a space for cultural connection, storytelling, creativity and healing, giving young people a meaningful way to express themselves while deepening and celebrating their connection to culture.

Supporting opportunities like this is at the heart of our work in Meekatharra. These sessions give young people the chance to connect with and learn from the wisdom and strength of Elders, while allowing us to listen, show up and build trust across the community. Our priority has always been about creating a sense of safety and belonging for the whole community, and this is felt in every art therapy session at the centre.

The art therapy sessions are made possible by the generosity and leadership of Elders in Meekatharra, especially Glenda. Her talent and kindness have brought this program to life, and her colourful cartoon artworks, now displayed in the centre, have added joy and character to the space.



Top right image: Art therapy with Glenda

Middle right image: Young people with some of the artworks created by Glenda

Bottom left image: Annual Meekatharra Walk for Suicide Awareness



Our community partners

We worked with over 10 government, local and sector organisations, schools and businesses, including:

- ▶ **Social Reinvestment WA** to advocate for the treatment of young people facing the justice system.
- ▶ **Yulella Aboriginal Corporation** to coordinate community events and for ongoing strategic planning.
- ▶ **PhD Candidate Craig D'Mell** on his research into *Implementing Cultural Safety in Research Methodology: The Co-design Process of a brief therapeutic intervention for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people who are engaging in self-harm and/or suicidal behaviours.*

What our Youth Counsellors are seeing more of



Economic disadvantages



Limited education or job prospects



Systems and processes often not meeting the needs of Aboriginal youth



Our Meekatharra team with the Social Reinvestment WA team



Main image: Youth Focus CEO Derry Simpson and COO Angela Wright visiting Meekatharra

Inset image: Youth Focus Meekatharra Service Manager Paulette Anderson with Tingo



“Working here gives me the chance to be part of the community in a meaningful way. I get to see firsthand the challenges young people face and work alongside them to find practical, realistic ways forward. It’s about listening, showing up, and helping create opportunities that make a difference in their everyday lives.”

Paulette, Service Manager

OUR PARTNERS

Connection and collaboration

Our impact is greater when we collaborate with others. We value the relationships and partnerships that enable us to collectively make a difference in the lives of young people across WA.

YOUNG PEOPLE

As a youth-led organisation, the perspective and experiences of young people are integral in shaping everything we do. By listening – and learning – from young people we can show up in ways that are meaningful to them.

One of the ways we do this is through our Youth Reference Groups (YRG), made up of passionate young people who help us understand the issues young people care about, and the things that are impacting their communities. Our YRGs collectively help shape our service delivery, policies and partnerships.

During 2024–25, members of our Youth Reference Groups:

- Organised community events, including Youth Panel Discussion, Pride Tide Festival and Pride Prom.
- Joined us at community outreach and engagement events and activities.
- Created safe spaces for young people to connect through regular drop-in sessions, with activities including board games, movie nights, and art and crafts.
- Represented Youth Focus at YACWA FairGround conference and YACtivate in June 2025.
- Amplified youth voices by participating in panel discussions about mental health, including a special performance of *Blue* by the Black Swan State Theatre Company.
- Participated in consultation for our new Perth Youth Mental Health Hub and Geraldton Youth Mental Health Hub.
- Initiated projects to support other young people.
- Shaped and informed strategic projects and policies, including the new website and the Youth Focus Outcome and Impact Model.

Carers and family members also play an important role in supporting young people with their mental health. We provide education sessions to carers and family members and can also support them during the counselling process with the permission of the young person. We have carers representatives on our advisory group to inform our policies and processes.



headspace Midland YRG members

ABORIGINAL ELDERS, YOUNG PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES

Our vision for reconciliation is that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and communities are empowered to make decisions that impact their ability to build strength and capacity, to share a shared national identity of equity, respect and partnership.

In order to achieve this vision, we must create culturally safe and secure services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, and walk alongside Elders, young people, families, and communities.

To us, this means showing up, having a yarn, and working together to understand and not assume what is important in each of our diverse communities. Sometimes this happens in structured ways, like the Big Yarn project in Albany, or the creation of the Mingle on Mitchell initiative in Geraldton, and other times it's about cooking a feed for the community during sorry business, or supporting young people to do some art in a safe space. The relationships we have with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our different communities are a privilege that strengthens our work, and deepens our organisational and individual cultural understanding.

A key focus during the year has been the development of our Innovate Reconciliation Plan (RAP), which builds on the commitments we made in our 2020-2022 Reflect Reconciliation Plan.

In the development of our Innovate RAP, we've been on a journey of listening and learning, working with Elders and communities to understand how we can collectively achieve this. We are very grateful to our Aboriginal Governance Group, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities we walk with, for their wisdom, guidance and trust through this process.

Our Innovate RAP was conditionally endorsed by Reconciliation Australia in June 2025, and will be released later this year.

We will continue to seek the advice and guidance of Elders to shape our actions, and to find ways to show respect, provide opportunities, build relationships, and maintain strong, transparent governance.



Image above: Lindsay Martin (L) and Lindsay Dean (R) with headspace Albany Regional Manager, Andrew Wenzel (centre)

Image left: Lenny Papertalk with headspace Geraldton Regional Manager, May Doncon

GOVERNMENT & SECTOR

Our work with government and sector partners helps us contribute to our goal of a more effective health system in WA through listening, advocacy and partnership.

During the year, we continued our strong partnerships with the sector's peak bodies and agencies including WA Primary Health Alliance, Youth Affairs Council of WA, WACOSS, WA Association for Mental Health, and headspace National.

We also continued our commitment to research and developing an evidence-base for youth mental health through partnerships with University of Western Australia, Curtin University, Orygen, Australian National University, Perron Institute, and The Kids Institute, amongst others.

At a local level, each of our centres worked closely with like-minded service providers in their regions.

In October 2024, we were invited to be part of the State Government's launch of its Youth Action Plan, *Koorlangka Bidi 2024-2027*. We were proud to be involved in the launch, talking with many incredible young people, and sharing our work with them.

Following the 2025 State and Federal elections, we have been meeting with local Members of Parliament, and Government Ministers to talk about youth mental health, and our role in the sector.





COMMUNITY SUPPORT

We are so grateful for the incredible support of the Western Australian community. Our donors and supporters make it possible for us to deliver the mental health support that young people need, in locations and schools across Western Australia. Whether it's through fundraising, donations, or leaving a legacy in their Will, each of our supporters makes a difference in the lives of young people.

From the bottom of our hearts to yours, thank you for helping us work towards our vision of a world in which young people can be who they want to be, without their mental health getting in the way.

Photo courtesy of Burswood YRG member Rhea



Mineral Resources has supported our services for more than 10 years

CORPORATE PARTNERS & DONORS



Our impact for young people is only possible through the power of partnerships. Our partnerships enable us to grow our support services, innovate to meet community needs, and break down barriers that might prevent young people from having access to services.

We are very proud to have passionate, long-standing partners who help us achieve our vision, and we are deeply grateful for their commitment to walking alongside us to deliver improved outcomes for youth mental health in Western Australia.

Many of our partnerships support specific needs, services or initiatives in local communities. We work closely with organisations and foundations to identify how we can achieve meaningful social impact together, in line with the unique needs of each community, so we can provide the services young people need, where and when they need them. Together, with our partners, we're providing local support, making a collective difference.

The impact our partners help achieve is woven throughout this report, including:

- Bringing outreach services to young people in communities across the Great Southern region, made possible by Rio Tinto and Channel 7 Telethon Trust.
- Increased youth counselling capacity, thanks to Channel 7 Telethon Trust, Mineral Resources, Cash Converters and Alcoa.
- Getting young men talking about their mental health through our M8D8 campaign, proudly supported by Alcoa.
- Accessible counselling services via telehealth throughout regional and remote areas in the Wheatbelt thanks to CBH.
- Tailored, culturally appropriate support services for young people in Meekatharra, thanks to Royal Flying Doctor Services.
- Our Mentoring program for young people, which was supported by a group of intrepid miners who trekked through the Kimberly wilderness to raise funds through the Miner V Wild corporate challenge, led by LiveMine.
- Our Work and Study support program, which helps young people secure and maintain meaningful employment and achieve their goals, thanks to the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation.
- Our Care Navigator pilot project in Capel and Harvey, which helps young people in these regions find the local support services they need, made possible by Insignia Community Foundation.
- And of course, the iconic Hawaiian Ride for Youth raising funds and awareness for youth mental health, alongside naming rights partner of 23 years, Hawaiian.

THANK YOU

We couldn't do it without you!

A huge thank you to the individuals, businesses, corporations and organisations who have financially supported us in 2024-25. Your generosity and support are greatly appreciated and enables us to support thousands of young people across WA with their mental health.

Premier & Major Partners



Official Partners



Official Supporters



Event Sponsors

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 KPMG | Locus Property | MACA | Morgans | Office National (Canning Vale) | Okeland Communities | oOh! Media | Pedal Mafia
 Rapid Relief | Resource Capital Funds | Shadforth | Sodali & Co | St John Ambulance WA | Steinepreis Paganin
 Synergy Consulting | Trench Health & Fitness | WA Leaders | WAPHA

HAWAIIAN RIDE FOR YOUTH

The annual Hawaiian Ride for Youth brings the community together to raise funds and awareness for youth mental health.

The Hawaiian Ride for Youth is more than an annual cycling event – it is a powerful demonstration of community support for youth mental health.

In March 2025, 140 cyclists, supported by 40 volunteer support crew, completed the week-long ride. Despite the tough conditions, camaraderie and determination carried the riders through another successful event, raising over \$2 million for Youth Focus to provide youth mental health services.

This year we introduced the inaugural 2 Day Challenge, with 30 cyclists, including the Premier of WA, Roger Cook, riding from Perth to Mandurah to join the main peloton for a school visit before returning to Perth together the following day. Sponsored by Budget in celebration of their 20-year partnership, the peloton was an opportunity to celebrate long term sponsors, WA leaders, and dedicated coaches, who have all been committed to the Ride's mission.

Over the 23 years, the Hawaiian Ride for Youth has raised \$36 million for mental health services for young Western Australians. The Ride would not be possible without the dedication of the cyclists, who commit to six months of training in addition to the weeklong Ride. In addition to the Riders, we would like to thank the volunteer Support Crew, Hawaiian Ride for Youth Volunteer Organising Committee, the communities we ride through and the sponsors who generously support the event.

This year, Avoca Insurance and Risk and Budget Car and Truck Rentals celebrated 20 years of partnership. Their long-standing commitment, through both active involvement and financial support, reflects their dedication to the cause and the WA community. This year also marks Hawaiian's 23rd year as naming rights partners, demonstrating their deep commitment to young people and communities across WA.



Rider Noelle at Time Trials

“The Hawaiian Ride for Youth is a symbol of what communities can achieve when they come together for a greater cause. Seeing both seasoned and first-time riders, including families passing on the legacy of support, shows the long-lasting impact we are creating for future generations of Western Australians.”

*Derry Simpson,
CEO Youth Focus*

COASTAL

Albany | Denmark | Walpole | Pemberton
Busselton | Australind | Pinjarra | Mandurah | Perth

INLAND

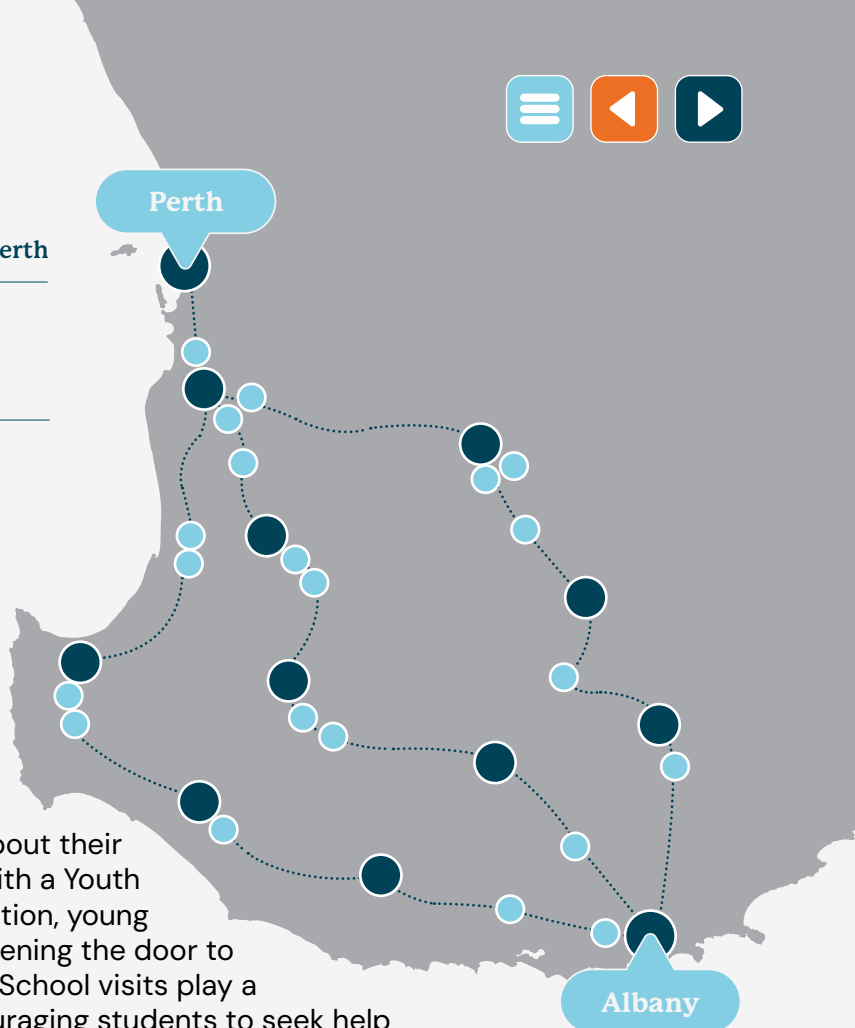
Albany | Mt Barker | Denmark | Manjimup
Collie | Harvey | Pinjarra | Mandurah | Perth

WHEATBELT

Albany | Gnowangerup | Katanning | Kojonup
Narrogin | Pinjarra | Mandurah | Perth

Schools visited

Along the 700km journey, pelotons visited 16 schools, engaging young people in conversations about mental health. By sharing their own stories and experiences, riders showed students that it's okay to talk about their mental health and they are not alone. With a Youth Counsellor available after each presentation, young people feel encouraged to seek help, opening the door to connecting them with ongoing support. School visits play a vital role in breaking down stigma, encouraging students to seek help when needed, and reminding them that support and services are available.



COASTAL

North Albany Senior High School | Denmark Senior High School | Pemberton District High School
Georgiana Molloy Anglican School | Australind Senior High School

INLAND

Great Southern Grammar | Mount Barker Community College | Manjimup Senior High School
Collie Senior High School | Harvey Senior High School | Mandurah Catholic College

WHEATBELT

Gnowangerup District High School | Kojonup District High School | Katanning Senior High School
Narrogin Senior High School | The Western Australian College of Agriculture Narrogin

About the riders

41

First year riders

26

Riders under 30

29

Female riders

15

Long-term riders
(over 10 years)

16

Family groups

24

Riders from sponsor
organisations

Riding in to the 2025 Welcome Home Ceremony



OUR GOVERNANCE

Leading with purpose

OUR BOARD

We have been deliberate in our recruitment of talented, committed and passionate Directors, who each bring with them not just corporate acumen and commercial experience, but also an understanding and alliance with our organisational values.



ROD JONES

Chair & Director



DERRY SIMPSON

CEO & Managing Director



PROFESSOR ASHLEIGH LIN

Director & Chair of Quality, Safety, Clinical Governance Committee



BILLY MESTON

Director & Chair of Finance, Risk, Audit & Governance Committee



CHRISTINA MATTHEWS AM

Director



FRAMY ANNE BROWNE

Director



DR PETER WYNN OWEN

Director



PHIL RENSHAW

Director



RUSSELL GIBBS

Director

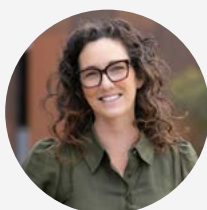


SAM RETALLACK

Director

Individual profiles of our Board Directors are available on our website.

OUR EXECUTIVE



DERRY SIMPSON

Chief Executive Officer



ANGELA WRIGHT

Chief Operating Officer



NICOLE HOUTBY

Chief Financial Officer



JILL DOWNARD

Chief Marketing Officer



ERIN HALL

Executive Manager,
Culture and Capability

“Being on the Youth Focus Board gives me the opportunity to truly appreciate the diversity, strength and resilience of the young people in WA. What a privilege!”

Professor Ashleigh Lin | Board Director

Individual profiles of our Executive team are available on our website.

OUR FINANCIALS

Investing in the future

Youth Focus is committed to employing its assets in an effective, efficient and sustainable way, and at all times, for the benefit of the young people and communities we support.

With ever-increasing demand for our services, 2024-25 marked the beginning of a strategic growth phase for Youth Focus; with the acquisition of a new property in West Perth, the refurbishment of two premises, and the introduction of new services across a number of our sites.

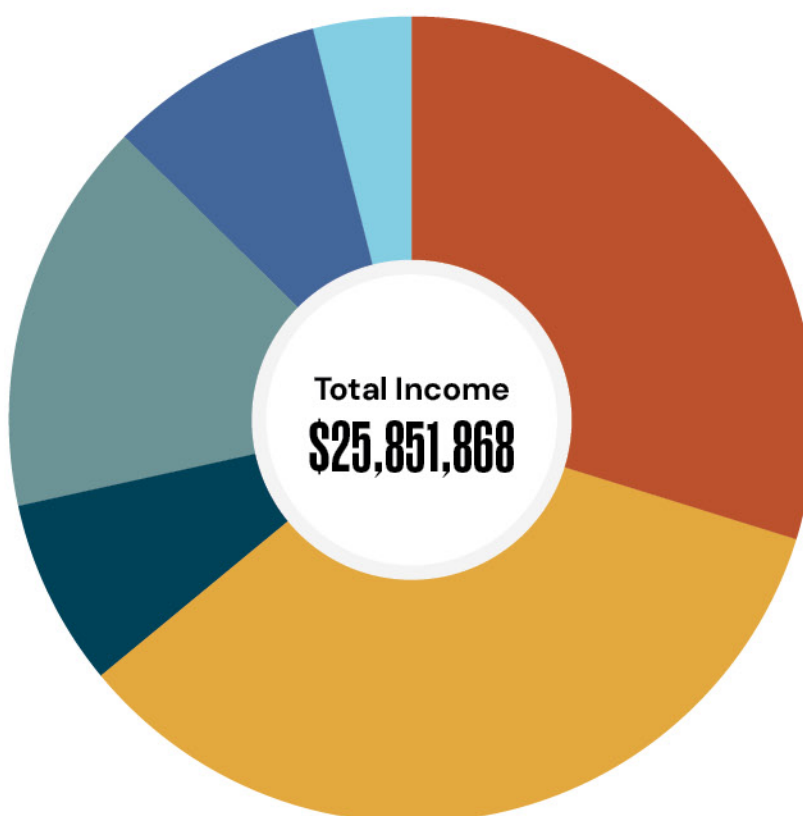
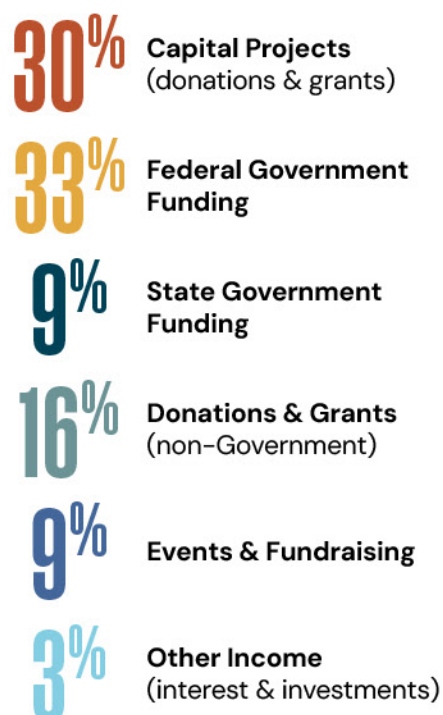
This progress has been made possible through a number of significant philanthropic donations and capital grants, which combined account for \$7.75m of our reported \$7.8m surplus, all of which is now attributed towards the completion of our capital projects relating to new and enhanced service locations. This investment has created a shift in our financial position compared to the prior year, which will settle as the capital projects are completed, and they transition to business as usual.

Total income for the year is \$25,851,868 – an increase of \$10.2m from the previous financial year. While this growth in income can be largely attributed to the capital projects, we were also successful in securing additional government contracts and corporate partnerships; facilitating an expansion in service capacity across our regions.

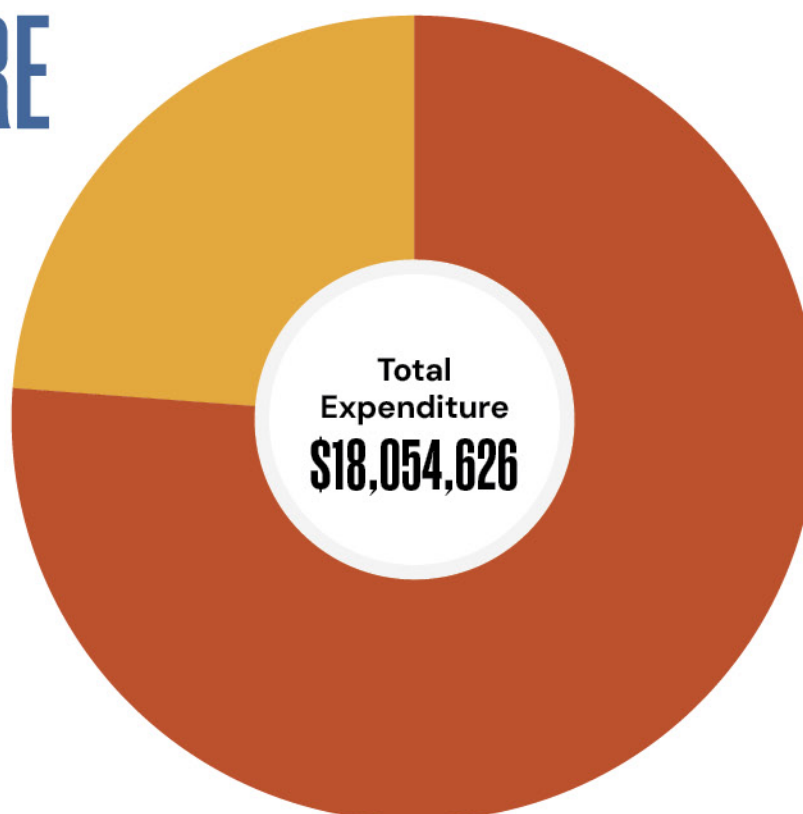
Expenditure relating to staff costs accounted for 77% of our overall spend, with client-facing staff being our primary investment. We invest responsibly in our fundraising efforts to ensure that our sources of funding remain diverse, and so that we can continue to adapt our services to meet the needs of young people across the State.



INCOME



EXPENDITURE





Youth Focus



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