



# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

## 2025 – 2026 ANNUAL REPORT

### 1. Overview

This Youth Engagement Report tracks progress against our Youth Plan and demonstrates how Council is delivering on its commitments to young people.

The Sorell Youth Plan 2025 sets out our approach to improving outcomes for young people aged 12–19 across the municipality. Developed following extensive consultation with more than 245 young people, local schools, community organisations and service providers, the Plan identifies the issues that matter most to young people and outlines practical actions Council and its partners will deliver over the next three years. The Plan recognises that supporting young people is a shared responsibility and focuses on building strong partnerships, creating opportunities and improving access to services.

The Youth Plan is built around five priority areas:

1. Establish Safe Spaces and Youth Hubs
2. Improve Transport Accessibility
3. Expand Social and Recreational Opportunities
4. Strengthen Mental Health and Wellbeing Support
5. Foster Youth Leadership and Community Engagement

This report demonstrates the progress made during the first year of implementation, highlighting achievements against each priority, the outcomes delivered for young people, and the opportunities to further strengthen youth services and participation across the Sorell municipality.

### Year at a glance

- Fitzies youth hub officially opened
- Approximately 600 young people engaged with the Youth Hub
- Average 25 young people attending weekly drop-in sessions
- More than 15 school holiday and after-school programs delivered
- Strong partnerships established with schools and youth organisations
- Youth Week hosted in Sorell
- Development of child-safe policies and procedures

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### 2. Delivery Against “What We Will Do”

#### Progress Status Key

- **Embedded** – This is now standard practice and is consistently being delivered.

● **Developing** – Actions are underway, with further work planned.

○ **Not Yet Commenced** – Work has not yet begun.

## Priority 1- Establish Safe Spaces and Youth Hubs

### What we did

- Set up the youth hub (Fitzies) at 11 Fitzroy street to be a dedicated youth space for young people to come and hang out, play games, eat food and access services.
- Activities delivered
  - 7 School Holiday Programs delivered (Pizza making (10) Laser Tag in partnership with Youth Matters (22), Free Kick Flip Workshop at Skatepark in Dodges Ferry in partnership with KickFlip (30), Mural Painting and Screen Printing with Rom Moynihan (8) 2 Fitzies Drop Ins (12)
  - 2 After School Programs during Harmony Week: Human Library in partnership with a Fairer World & Mamma Rosa Pizza Making Workshop (total 10 students)
  - 2 Morning Teas hosted at Fitzies for Student leaders Sorell School and Students Indie School (total 40 students)
  - Participation in Youth Workshop @ Sorell Library with YNOT (5 young people)
  - Youth Week Tasmania Launch at Fitzies in partnership with YNOT (reach 24 young people)
  - Housewarming Party @ Fitzies which included food, live music, henna, photobooth, and screen printing (reach 80 young people)
  - 4 presentations at Assemblies at Sorell School (reach 120 young people)
  - 1 Art workshop with Art students at Sorell School (reach 15 students)
  - 2 production crew gatherings at Sorell School (reach 15 students)
  - 2 visits to Indie School (reach 10 students)
  - Youth team supports Thursday Breakfast Club at Sorell School
  - 3 x a week after school Fitzies Drop In sessions (started Term 2) (reach 25 young people per week)
  - 6 Term 2 school holiday programs delivered (Pizza party (8), Golf Park with youth Matters (13), She Shreds skate event at Dodges Ferry skate park (20-25), Pancake party and department of good news film workshop (5), Rock it (5), Screen printing and badge making workshop (10)
  - B Kinder day macaroon decorating workshop @ Fitzies with Sorell School students, Indie School students, + Fitzies drop in (reach 36 young people)
  - Sorell school year 9/10 tourism class visit to Fitzies(reach 25 students)
  - Naidoc week lunch time gig at Sorell School (50 students)

- Visit to Sorell School to discuss the Youth Forum with student leaders (reach 20)
- Developed policies and procedures to ensure Fitzies follows child safe practices and frameworks
- Established connection and relationships with a range of services including Sorell School, Indie School, Headspace, JCP Youth, PCYC, Tasmania Police, YNOT, South East Salvos, Psyche Mental Health, BEST, Libraries Tasmania.
- Applied successfully for a grant from YNOT to support youth week activities. This was used to help fund local artist Rom and his mural + screen printing activities.

### Who participated?

- At present now approx. 600 young people have engaged with Fitzies.

### Methods used:

Engagement methods included:

- social media promotion
- posters and postcards
- face-to-face outreach
- school and community visits
- invitations to morning teas and events
- hands-on workshops and creative activities
- presentations at school assemblies
- participation in youth drop-in sessions
- support through school breakfast programs
- community engagement surveys
- visits to home groups.

Activities were delivered in partnership with local organisations, schools, artists, and youth services to encourage participation and strengthen community connections.

### Outcomes / impact

- Workshops with young people from Sorell School and Indie School indicated that there was a desire for a range of activities at the youth hub including cooking sessions + food available, games such as table tennis and Nintendo switch, and activities such as music and art sessions. We used this feedback to assist with the setting up of the hub, and to influence the structure of our housewarming party and drop in sessions.
- General community feedback was that there was excitement over the opening of the youth hub and a need for it in Sorell. Approximately 600 young people have engaged with the Youth Hub since February 2026.

- Continued engagement with and from Sorell School and Indie School highlights the desire for these schools to continue to work alongside the youth hub and associated youth programs.

### Progress status

☐ Embedded ☒ Developing ☐ Not yet commenced

## Priority 2 - Improve transport accessibility

### What we did

- Adjusted youth hub drop-in times to suit Indie school students needing to wait for public transport, allowing a safe place to wait.
- Provide outreach programs (skate session at skate park and workshop at Okines) at Dodges Ferry to reduce travel to youth activities for those within that community. The session was run by Kickflip coaching Tasmania.
- Continue to explore a partnership between the Ready Set Go (RSG) Program, a community initiative supporting learner drivers to gain the supervised driving hours they need to achieve their licence in partnership with Micheal from Sorell's Driving School and Workskills.
- Partnership with Dunalley Neighbourhood House in leasing the Community Van (12 seater)

### Who participated?

- Approx. 60 young people engaged

### Methods used:

- Extend hours at youth hub. Promoted via Council socials, school visits and signage.
- Engage Kick Flip Tasmania to run skate program at Dodges Ferry skate park + She Shreds Social Skate Session. Promoted via Council socials, on community pages, and posters on community noticeboards.

### Outcomes / impact

- Indie school students attended the housewarming and some school holiday programs but are yet to utilise the drop in sessions. Continued engagement with the school is required to promote Fitzies.
- Written feedback was obtained from the young people who attended the Dodges Ferry skate park session. Comments included praise for the event and the desire for more events in Dodges Ferry like the one hosted as it makes them more accessible to locals who may find it difficult to travel to Sorell or further. Feedback also mentioned the need for more public transport options and better support for Learner drivers.

### Progress status

☐ Embedded ☒ Developing ☐ Not yet commenced

### Priority 3 - Expand Social and Recreational Opportunities

#### What we did and Who participated?

- Set up and opened the youth hub 'Fitzies' in Sorell as a safe place where young people aged 12-17 can hang out after school, have fun, eat food, make new friends, learn new skills and access support.
  - Average of 25 young people a week accessing the drop in's.
- Housewarming event – Opening of Fitzies, as well as an end of term party and youth week event all rolled into one.
  - Approx. 80 local young people attended the event from a range of schools (Sorell school, Indie school, Rose Bay High, Clarence High, Elizabeth College + homeschool)
  - Event included partnerships with a range of local individuals and businesses including Kiz and Koh-Dee (local music artists), Snagged Fish N Chips, Mirrored photo booth, Minirons macaroons, and Rom Moyniham art.
- Range of workshops run out of Fitzies to encourage social interactions and new skill opportunities
  - Pizza making workshops, the human library, Screen printing and mural painting, macaroon workshop for B Kinder day (38 young people).
- External / outreach School holiday programs providing social interactions and new skill opportunities
  - Laser tag in collaboration with youth matters (22 young people)
  - Free Kick Flip Workshop at Skatepark in Dodges Ferry in partnership with KickFlip (30 young people)

#### Outcomes / impact

- Engagement in the above-mentioned programs, activities and services highlights the desire for these opportunities in the area.
- Repeat participation from individuals in a variety of opportunities.
- Feedback from business partnerships highlight their joy in being able to contribute to local youth programs and their desire to be involved in future opportunities.

#### Methods used:

- Engagement methods included social media promotion, posters and postcards, face-to-face outreach at schools and email communication with community organisations.
- Partnered with established and trusted organisations including Youth Matters, Kickflip Tasmania, and the B kinder Foundation.

#### Progress status

☐ Embedded ☒ Developing ☐ Not yet commenced

## Priority 4 - Strengthen Mental Health and Wellbeing Support

### What we did

- Activities delivered
  - Fitzies hosted a morning tea for the Wellbeing Staff of Sorell School to learn around critical support needs for students.
  - Fitzies hosted a Human Library Workshop during Harmony Week with students from the Indie School and Sorell School.
  - Fitzies is currently exploring Partnerships with mental health providers such as: HeadSpace, Psyche Mental Health, Home Base, and Rural Alive and Well.
  - In process of collaborating with Psyche Mental Health, Indie School, and Sorell school to offer the 'Love Bites' respectful relationships program.
  - Fitzies Youth Development team is part of the Youth Action Priorities (YAP) forum for Southern Tasmania to collaborate and learn from the services working in this space.

### Who participated?

- Working with Youth Mental Health Services to work within Sorell Municipality
- Meetings with Individual organisations

### Outcomes / impact

- YDO's Developing a g greater understanding of youth needs in our community.

### Progress status

☐ Embedded ☒ Developing ☐ Not yet commenced

## Priority 5 - Foster Youth Leadership and Community Engagement

### What we did

- Conversations with young people
- Enaggement with YNOT to host Tasmanian Youth Forum:
  - Fitzies and YNOT partnered to strengthen youth leadership opportunities in the Sorell community in preparation for the Tasmanian Youth Forum, which will be hosted in Sorell Memorial Hall on Friday 28 August. As part of this partnership, Fitzies engaged with student leaders from Sorell School and the Indie School leadership group to encourage their active participation in shaping the forum and ensuring that local young people's voices are represented at the Tasmanian Youth Forum.

### Who participated?

- Young people engaging with Fitzies
- Further development for student leaders from Sorell School and the Indie School.
- Worked alongside YNOT to connect with local young people in preparation for the Tasmanian Youth Forum.

### Outcomes / impact

- Increased awareness of opportunities for young people to create impact and contribute to decision-making.
- Strengthened relationships between Fitzies, YNOT, local schools, and young people.

### Progress status

☐ Embedded ☒ Developing ☐ Not yet commenced

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## 3. Continuous Improvement

### What worked well

- Establishing Fitzies created a welcoming and safe place for young people to connect.
- Strong partnerships with Sorell School, Indie School, YNOT and community organisations helped increased participation.
- Hands-on activities such as cooking, art and skate workshops consistently attracted young people.
- Listening to young people's feedback shaped programs and the fit-out of the Youth Hub.
- Outreach into schools helped build trust before expecting young people to attend Fitzies independently.

### What we learnt

- Young people continue to identify transport as one of the biggest barriers to participation.
- Building regular attendance takes time, particularly with new programs.
- Different groups of young people require different approaches to engagement.
- There is strong demand for more evening activities and programs in the Southern Beaches.

### Changes we made

- Extended Fitzies opening hours to better align with public transport for Indie School students.
- Delivered outreach activities in Dodges Ferry to reduce travel barriers.

- Used young people's feedback to influence the layout of Fitzies and future programming.
- Continued strengthening partnerships with schools and mental health providers.

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#### **4. Next Year Priorities**

- Identifying and actioning emerging issues and/or gaps
- Development of Youth Advisory Squad
- Greater involvement of service providers and their programs at Fitzies
- Development of a shared measurement framework with Youth to track our progress