



Overview

Council's vision for Port Phillip is an engaged, healthy, resilient and vibrant city (City of Port Phillip, Council Plan 2013-2017). The Family, Youth and Children (FYC) strategy is the key document that will guide the delivery of this vision for families, young people and children. We will do this by ensuring quality and accessible family, youth and children's services that meet the needs of community.

City of Port Phillip (CoPP) has an integrated approach to supporting our community through planning, budgeting and service delivery in line with our obligations under the Local Government Act (1989), which recognises the leadership role of local government in the community. This means Council plans and coordinates services and encourages a sense of community for all people including children and their families (City of Port Phillip Early Years Plan 2012-2015).

Council also has a diverse role in ensuring we have a community where all families, young people and children can achieve their full potential.

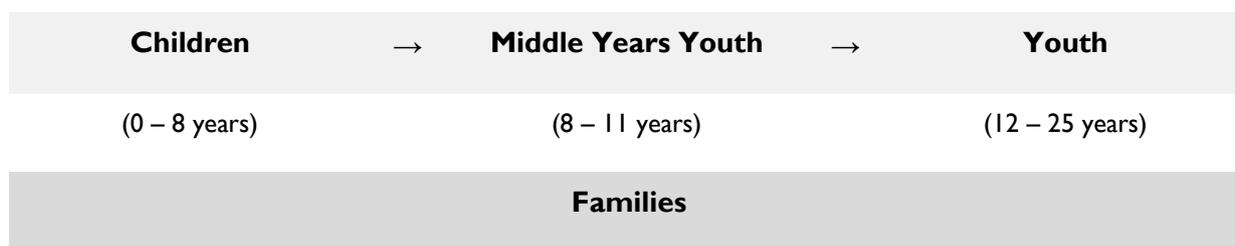
As a key provider of services including Family Support (including In Home Care), Maternal and Child Health and Early Childhood Education and Care programs (including Family Day Care and Vacation Care), we provide and promote the best opportunities for families, youth and children. We have a role in providing support and training to community based early years services, playgroups and toy libraries.

In the area of Youth Services, Council provides leadership in connecting and coordinating the sector for the benefit of young people across the municipality, as well as funding key specialist organisations to deliver services.

Council also provides funds and other resources to meet the changing needs of our community through services such as support to playgroups, provision of early childhood facilities and emergency relief programs for vulnerable community members.

Council advocates at all levels of government on the range of services available for families, young people and children, as well as, actively promoting for the rights of children and young people to be active citizens.

The Family, Youth and Children (FYC) Strategic Plan will guide the Council’s work with the following cohorts:



The Council’s Family, Youth and Children (FYC) strategic plan will:

- guide the development and implementation of policies and plans
- drive service delivery, reviews and planning
- inform budgeting and resource allocation by assisting with the prioritisation of tasks, projects and new initiatives
- shape individual staff performance plans
- guide our engagement and consultation with the community
- articulate Council’s priorities to deliver on its Council Plan commitments.

The FYC strategy sits alongside other key plans and strategies that support the delivery of the Council Plan, most notably the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and the Social Justice Charter.

The key documents within the FYC department that provide more specific policy and legislative detail for the FYC strategy are the

- Early Years Plan 2012-2015,
- Youth Development Strategy 2008 (in development as the Youth Commitment 2014-19)
- Middle Years Commitment (new; in development, 2014-19); and the
- Child Care Policy.

Methodology

The following was implemented to ensure an evidence-based strategy that reflects, supports and responds to the needs of families, young people and children.

- Establishment of an internal dedicated working party.
- Internal and external community forums and discussions.
- Examination of international and national literature research.
- Review of trends through commissioned reports and data analysis.
- Consideration to policy and sector changes.

What did we find out?

Reports:

The CoPP commissioned a number of reports to provide the evidence-base for this strategy.

These reports allowed us to build on our knowledge, inform our service delivery and guide our planning and policy development.

Most notably was the 2012 Semann & Slattery report *City of Port Phillip Family Liveability Study*¹. Some of the key findings in this report include:

- Increased growth in the number of families, young people and children living in the municipality is due to increased migration in and decreased migration out and an increasing birth rate.
- A sense of community, convenience to the Central Business District (CBD) and access to beaches, parks and gardens are seen as key assets that attract families with children and keep them living in CoPP.
- Education options from early childhood through to secondary school influence residents in decisions to leave the municipality. The main concerns are the capacity of existing education provision to meet the needs of increasing number of children and families in the municipality.

To advance our understanding of the experiences for young people in the “middle years” and child to adolescent transitions, the CoPP also commissioned a study by cmc Consulting in 2011².

This report found:

An absence of clear policy and practices for the middle years has resulted in an inconsistent service response for young people age 10- 14 years.

- The increase in the demand for support and the complex needs of families, children and young people place pressures on services to respond with limited resources and experience.
- The need for greater collaboration between the youth, children, family and education sectors is important in providing a more integrated response across services for young people aged 10-14 years.

This report was a preliminary local investigation; which has been further supported by the Youth Services sector. The study made three recommendations for the best way for Council to respond to children and young people. They are:

- To develop a policy platform to create an integrated framework that bridges the gap between the early years and youth.
- To implement an integrated service continuum that begins at birth and continues into adulthood, capturing the span of 0 to 25 years of age.
- To have a partnership approach across the service sector and community agencies to deliver an integrated response in meeting the needs of children and young people.

¹ Davies,C., Madden,L., Soper,R. Reilly., & Semann,A (2012). *City of Port Phillip Family Liveability Study*. Port Phillip City Council: Family, Youth and Children's Research Project.

² cmc Community Services Planning and Development (2011). *Understanding the Middle Years and Child to Adolescent Transitions*, Port Phillip City Council: Family, Youth and Children Department.

In 2013, CoPP engaged Wayfaver Consulting to consult with children aged 3-12 years and to ascertain if their ideas, hopes and dreams have changed since the initial conversations that informed the 2010 Kids Plan. This update to initial consultations, *Kids Plan Consultation Report*³, provides us with a snapshot of ideas from children that live, play or are educated in Port Phillip. This information, whilst only from a small number of children, provides us with a basis to discuss what is important to our youngest citizens as well as a starting point to continue our dialogue with children and young people.

Some of the most notable discussions that will influence our strategic planning are:

- Most children had limited or no independent mobility.
- Many children talked about parks, gardens reserves and play areas as places they like to go.
- Most children reported using technology including iPods, iPads and computers.
- Children generally felt safe in their houses and their neighbourhoods.

Sector Change:

The sectors in which Council is involved have undergone unprecedented change over the past few years, most notably the Early Years reforms driven by an evidence-based national reform agenda driven by both State and Federal Governments. It is now widely accepted that the first few years of a child's life are critical in influencing the development of their brains and are a strong predictor of outcomes in later life.

The State Government's *Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children Inquiry 2012*⁴ has injected an urgency and focus on the needs of vulnerable children and their families and the relevance and adequacy of existing family and children support systems.

In addition there has been a growing understanding that the needs of children in the 8-11 years age group (known as the Middle Years) are changing and that they are not being adequately addressed by early years or youth programs. This cohort is experiencing unique life changes and the service sector needs to address these critical gaps.

The 2013 report, *Building the Scaffolding: Strengthening support for young people in Victoria*⁵ by the Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS) and the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic) looks at the role of the community sector and government organisations in promoting better outcomes for all young Victorians. This key report not only identified the Middle Years as an emerging issue but recommends a holistic approach to effect long term change in the Youth services sector.

³ Wayfaver Consulting (2013), *Kids Plan Consultation Report*. Port Phillip City Council: Family, Youth and Children Department.

⁴ Cummins,P., Scales,B., Scott,D (2012) *Protecting Victorian's Vulnerable Children Inquiry*. Victorian government printer, State Government of Victoria

⁵ Atkins,C., Colvin,K., Grogan, P., Morstyn,L., Rose,J (2013) *Building the Scaffolding. Strengthening support for young people in Victoria*. Victorian Council of Social Services & Youth Affairs Council of Victoria.

Some facts about children and young people in Port Phillip:

On Census night 2011 children aged under 15 years represented 10.9% of Port Phillip's usual resident population. This is a rise of 1.1% when compared with 2006 census data. Of these, 51.3% (5,182) were male and 48.7% (4911) were female.

The table below highlights the change in the numbers children and young people from the 2006 and 2011 Census data.

City of Port Phillip	2006		2011		Change	
	Number	%	Number	%	2006 to 2011 (number)	2006 to 2011 (%)
Age groups (years)						
0 to 4	3,912	4.6	4,580	5.0	+668	+17.1
5 to 9	2,473	2.9	3,086	3.4	+613	+24.8
10 to 14	2,045	2.4	2,376	2.6	+331	+16.2
15 to 19	2,579	3.0	2,442	2.7	-137	-5.3
20 to 24	6,846	8.0	6,590	7.2	-256	-3.7

Source: Census data 2011

The steady growth in the numbers of children in the municipality up to the age of 15 is further supported by the annual birth notifications being at a 10 year high. In 2013 birth notifications were 1385 which represents a 30% increase since 2003.

Since 2006, the percentage of children attending primary school has risen by 31%. Secondary schools enrolments have increased by 14%. In 2011, 3,629 children were attending primary school with a further 2,298 enrolled in secondary education. 1,155 children were recorded as attending some form of preschool.

Of children attending primary school 62% (2,273) attended a government school, while 25% (895) attended non-government primary education.

At the secondary level, 30% (682) attended a government secondary school, 21% (481) attended a catholic secondary and 49% of students attended an independent Secondary School.

The 2011 census identified 1723 children under 15 years living in households with an income of \$600 a week or less:

- 37.2% of those in this income bracket came from a household with an income of \$400 to \$599 per week
- 26% live in a household with an income of \$300 to \$399 per week
- 20.6% live in a household with an income of \$200 to \$299
- 11.2% live in a household with an income of \$100 to \$199
- 4.2% with Nil or negative income.

Between 2011 and 2018, the age structure forecasts for City of Port Phillip indicate a 11.3% increase in population under working age, a 22.4% increase in population of retirement age, and a 9.9% increase in population of working age.⁶

The table below provides forecast data by five year age groups up to 24 years of age. New development opportunities within the Fishermens Bend Urban Renewal Area will impact on the forecast data. This forecast currently incorporates early estimates for the Fishermens Bend Urban Renewal Area; however figures will need to be revised as more information becomes available. This forecast is consistent with the steady increase in birth notifications over the past 10 years.

Forecast age structure - 5 year age groups

City of Port Phillip - Total persons	2011		2018		2028		Change between 2011 and 2028	
	Age group (years)	Number	%	Number	%	Number		Number
	0 to 4	4,817	4.9	5,250	4.8	5,447	4.6	+630
	5 to 9	3,231	3.3	3,546	3.3	3,681	3.1	+450
	10 to 14	2,453	2.5	2,887	2.7	3,047	2.6	+594
	15 to 19	2,664	2.7	3,549	3.3	4,017	3.4	+1,353
	20 to 24	7,536	7.7	8,463	7.8	9,677	8.1	+2,141

Population and household forecasts, 2011 to 2036, prepared by [.id](#) the population experts, December 2013

⁶ Forecast.id, <http://forecast.id.com.au/port-phillip/population-summary> (accessed on February , 2014)

Emerging trends:

The literature research and Council's extensive knowledge and experience in the FYC sectors highlight some key opportunities and challenges facing our community.

The most prominent themes that have influenced the development of the FYC strategy are:

- **Increased pressures** on families, children and young people, both economic and social, has resulted in more complex needs that require more complex and coordinated service responses. Compounding this, families are experiencing higher levels of isolation due to less extended social and family support due to wider demographic and geographic population shifts.
- **Affordability and the demand** for services such as child care are impacting on some family's ability to access appropriate and timely services.
- The **significant changes in the sector** provide additional challenges and opportunities. This is further complicated by a service sector that spans three levels of Government and can be a challenge to navigate for the community.
- **Future urban development** will create additional demand for services and supports that are already struggling to meet current needs. Extensive waiting lists for early childhood services and limited education options for young people will all be compounded as more people move into the area.
- The **advancements in technology** and the availability of information can support innovative practices that can keep the community informed. However the increase in the amount of information available, both research and data, provides additional challenges in navigating and keeping up to date with what is happening at a local, state and international level.

The factors identified above have resulted in the development of a strategic document that will deliver on Council's commitment to ensuring quality and accessible family, youth (including middle years) and children's services that meet the needs of community.

Purpose of the Strategy

The FYC Strategy will be the overarching document that will guide the development, review and implementation of all FYC policies, plans and commitments. These include, but are not limited to, the Child Care Policy, Early Years Plan, Youth Commitment and Middle Years Commitment.

The strategy and its three high level goals and associated priorities will guide the work of Council over the next five years. Each priority area will be supported by an annual action plan that will have a clearly articulated monitoring and reporting framework to ensure implementation of the strategic plan at an operational level. These action plans will inform each teams planning process and subsequent key performance indicators will keep us accountable against the priorities articulated in the FYC strategy.

City of Port Phillip Family Youth & Children Strategy 2013-18

Vision

A community where all families, young people and children achieve their full potential.

Council's role

Working together to create the best opportunities for families, young people and children.

Purpose

- Provide direction for services for the next 5 years.
- Drive innovative practices and positive change.
- Influence change - internal and external.
- Promote Council's Family, Youth and Children work– Internal and external.
- Inform and guide service plans and individual staff performance plans.
- Guide policy and strategy.
- Inform budgeting and resourcing e.g. IT.



Goal 1: Integrated service response

To implement an integrated service response to strengthen working partnerships and provide a more comprehensive, informed and responsive service to families, young people and children.

Integrated service delivery builds “connections between services in order to work together as one to deliver services that are more comprehensive and cohesive, as well as services being more accessible and more responsive to the needs of families and their children.” Prichard P, Purdan S, Chaplyn J. Moving Forward Together, Centre for Community Child Health, Royal Children’s Hospital, Melbourne, 2010

Priorities for the next five years

City of Port Phillip (CoPP) continues to invest in responding in a coordinated way to the needs of families, young people and children. Over the next 5 years we will have established two additional integrated centres. Alongside the physical structures that will support an integrated service model, our Family, Youth and Children service will provide a best practice response to community need.

Interdisciplinary Approach

- Partner with key stakeholders, internally and externally, to ensure an interdisciplinary approach that positively influences the outcomes of families, young people and children.
- Be guided by the social determinants of health to inform practice and policies.
- Work with key stakeholders to further develop an integrated continuum of services that begins at birth and continues into young adulthood.
- Build understanding in non-Council services about the opportunities and benefits of an integrated service response.
- Investigate more opportunities to develop integrated services models through co-location, if this is not possible, look at satellite models that are underpinned by an integrated service response.

Best Practice

- Systematically collect, use, and store data to better understand and monitor key issues to drive better outcomes.
- Critically analyse our work in order to progress our services and ensure they meet the needs of the community.
- Monitor trends and research to inform our practices and policies.
- Through training and research, we will pursue a high level of understanding of the issues and the demographic data of our community.
- Disseminate and distribute information to the public to support open communication and stimulate community action.

Goal 2: Positively influence health and wellbeing outcomes for families, young people and children.

To provide high quality services and build others' capacity to make a positive difference for families, young people and children in our community.

Research highlights the importance of the early years and the influence of quality education and care services in improving the health and wellbeing outcomes for families and children. There is also increasing research highlighting the need for strong cross-sector support for young people to positively influence their flow of experiences across settings such as family, education and community.

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Priorities for the next five years

CoPP is a key provider and leader for the provision of services and supports for families, young people and children. Over the next 5 years we will strengthen health and wellbeing outcomes by building capacity in the following areas:

- education and care services
- delivery of early years' programs
- Adventure Playgrounds
- health and support services provided by Maternal Child Health
- Family Support programs.

In addition, we will strengthen capacity in our Youth Services by continuing to actively work with key stakeholders to ensure young people feel safe and welcomed within the community and develop our work in these areas through our *Youth Commitment* and *Middle Years Commitment*.

CoPP will provide programs, services and embrace advocacy opportunities that address the changing needs of our community including some of our community's most vulnerable families, children and young people.

Service delivery

- Provide high quality universal and targeted services that continue to improve the opportunities and experiences for families, young people and children.
- Update and implement the City of Port Phillip's Child Care Policy.
- Manage and maintain Council's Children's Services Wait List, and work towards developing a transparent communications system.
- Promote flexible models of service delivery responsive to the changing needs and expectations of the community.
- Extend community/parent education programs to assist in meeting the needs of children, young people and their families.
- Act to strengthen a community culture that understands and cares for children, young people and their families.
- Evaluate our services to ensure we continue providing a consistent service expectation that meets family, young people and children's health and well-being.

Build capacity

Physical environment

- Continue to provide infrastructure, both buildings and maintenance, for community based services that operate in our facilities. These include kindergartens, playgroups, youth services and toy libraries.
- Investigate all opportunities to expand or build new services to meet the growing demand for education and care services within our municipality.

Social environment

- Take a leadership role in encouraging a cross sector response: including community, not for profit and commercial, to ensure a diverse market place that will meet the changing needs and expectations of the community.
- Continue to investigate innovative responses to meet the changing needs and expectations of the community.
- Listen to members of our community, including children and young people, to hear their voices on matters affecting them.
- Work with the local community to build capacity to influence the health and wellbeing outcomes for families, young people and children in our community.
- Strengthen a place based approach that develops the skills and resources of the community to support them to deliver tailored and sustainable outcomes for families, young people and children.
- Recognise, and effectively utilise, digital platforms as social environments for young people to connect and engage in their space.

Advocacy

- Advocate at a local, state and federal level to increase awareness of the changing needs of families, young people and children e.g. education services, middle years and education and care spaces.
- Pursue opportunities at all levels of government to increase funding and infrastructure to support the needs of the community e.g. education resources, education and care places, middle years and youth services.

Goal 3: Address inequality, affordability and accessibility issues for families, young people and children

Our goal is to provide and facilitate access to affordable universal services with a proportionate response to the needs of families, young people and children.

“Port Phillip is a community that is diverse in need. Above-average income and increased housing prices do not minimise the impact on some of the community where disadvantage is keenly felt.”

- *Creating a child friendly Port Phillip, City of Port Phillip, 2012-2015.*

We know that families, children and young people living under these circumstances often find it challenging to access and afford services which may impact them reaching their full potential.

“To reduce the steepness of the social gradient in health, actions must be universal, but with a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the level of disadvantage.”

- *Fair Society, Health Lives, The Marriot Review 2010*

Priorities for the next five years:

Over the next 5 years, we will build partnerships to strengthen and broaden our response to the community including those needing extra support. We will develop, implement and maintain systems that will ensure an efficient and effect response including:

- A data system that will enable us to analyse, track and measure the changing needs of our community.
- A system that will support strong evidence based practices that influence outcomes for all families, young people and children across the municipality.

Partnerships

- Invest in interdisciplinary and interagency partnerships that continue to support a coordinated response to the needs of our community.
- Establish and support strong, connected communities to work at a local level to influence outcomes for families, young people and children.
- Actively work with the community to improve the provision of and access to core universal services for all families, young people and children.

Access for All

- Provide opportunities for families, young people and children experiencing difficult circumstances to access affordable services that support them to reach their full potential.
- Influence and drive the development of services that meet the needs of all those in our community through evidence-based approaches.
- Work with our community to explore technologies that will support access and improve service delivery.
- We will use the CoPP Social Justice Charter as a guide to inform practices and policies.