

ALPINE SHIRE 2022 - 24

Youth Strategy



Photo: Don Owers Photography 2018

*We acknowledge the First Nations Peoples of the Alpine Shire.
We acknowledge their living culture and their unique role in the life of this region.
We pay respects to their Elders, past, present, and emerging.*

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INTRODUCTION

Young people are central to a vibrant and healthy community. When given opportunities, young people bring passion, energy, and creativity to the whole community.

This inaugural Alpine Shire Youth Strategy (the Youth Strategy) 2022-2024 sets the direction for the next three years, guiding Communities that Care Alpine (CTCA) and its partners' efforts to cultivate resilience, wellbeing and opportunities for young people and their families in the Alpine Shire.

The Youth Strategy establishes a clear focus for CTCA and identifies CTCA's role, priorities, and initiatives to create the greatest positive impact for young people in Alpine Shire.

CTCA consists of a group (coalition members) of passionate and committed schools, community organisations and service providers who will leverage their strengths to deliver on the Youth Strategy. To deliver on the priorities set out in the Youth Strategy, collaboration across the community is critical as well as the participation, contribution, and the voice of young people.

The Youth Strategy was developed in collaboration with coalition members and aligns to their aspirations to create a thriving Alpine Shire where young people live, work and study. It was also designed through an extensive engagement process with young people across the Alpine Shire.



SCOPE

Young people in the Alpine Shire are unique and diverse individuals with different identities, needs and priorities.

The Youth Strategy:

- covers young people aged from 12 years to 25 years who work, live, learn and play in Alpine Shire
- is a whole of community strategic document
- will address the needs and social development of young people with an inclusive and intersectional approach
- recognises that family, peers, community, and school are four key pillars that support, enable and influence healthy behaviours

Intersectionality is a way of thinking about the relationship between an individual's multiple social identities (race, religion, gender, class, ability, age etc.) which form their experience of power, privilege and disadvantage.

Our Young People

There are approximately 1,600 young people aged 12 to 25 years living in the Alpine Shire, making up 14% of the total population, by contrast, people aged over 65 form approximately 24% of the total population of Alpine Shire.

The Alpine Shire is about 300 kilometres northeast of Melbourne, 70 kilometres south of Albury/Wodonga and 40 kilometres southeast of Wangaratta. Approximately 140 young people travel outside of the Alpine Shire on a daily basis for their secondary schooling.



Social Development Strategy



The Youth Strategy is underpinned by the Communities That Care Social Development Strategy which is an evidenced based framework that organises protective factors into a simple process for action to promote positive youth development.

The Social Development Strategy identifies the following key components to increase protective factors for young people in Alpine Shire:

Healthy beliefs and clear standards for behaviour: Young people are more likely to engage in healthy, socially responsible behaviour when parents, educators and the community around them communicate healthy beliefs and clear standards.

Bonding: Strong, attached relationships with those who hold healthy beliefs and clear standards are an important protective influence. To create these bonds, young people need:

Opportunities: Provide opportunities for active participation and meaningful involvement with prosocial others, including families, schools, communities, and peer groups.

Skills: Teach young people the skills they need to succeed.

Recognition: Provide consistent recognition and praise for their effort, improvement, and accomplishments.

Protective factors can be defined as characteristics or attributes in individuals, families, or communities (including peers, culture and environment) that promote health and wellbeing.

Our Vision

Young people of the Alpine Shire are aware of and can access opportunities to connect, learn and collaborate to create a thriving, safe, supportive and inclusive community.

Our Priorities

Our priorities outline the focus of our activities over the next two years. Each of these priorities are important and will require collaboration, strong partnerships, and dedicated resourcing from CTCA coalition members to achieve success.

Health and Wellbeing

Healthy, well, empowered and safe

Opportunities and Recognition

Flourishing in their chosen passions, goals and aspirations

Self-advocacy

Celebrated, and have a voice in shaping our community

Our Commitment

To support health and wellbeing of young people we will:



Form and maintain impactful partnerships

Form and maintain partnerships with service providers, including schools and community organisations that will empower young people. Our partners connect young people to services, opportunities and resources that will contribute to their social development and enhance their life outcomes.



Elevate the voice of young people

Support the facilitation of ongoing, relevant and tailored opportunities for young people to raise their voice in the community. Our coalition partners support and lend our platforms to uplift and engage young people, to participate and advocate for issues important to them.



Develop an evidence base

Collect information and data that is comprehensive to make informed decisions about our work. This will entail having open communication about activities and outcomes between coalition partners. Moreover, to support reflective practice and continuously improve outcomes for young people, the coalition embeds monitoring and evaluation in processes and funded activities.



Promote service quality and safety

Promote and advocate for high standards of service quality and safety for all young people, maintaining a 'do no harm' approach.

Implementation Plan

The Youth Strategy is supported by an implementation plan that will define key actions against priority areas, including measures to track progress and outcomes.

What Young People Told Us

The 2019 CTC Youth survey results for Alpine students provided a rich snapshot of health and social issues. CTCA also used data from Mission Australia Youth Survey 2020 to identify additional social issues. In 2021 CTCA engaged Spark Strategy to take a deeper dive into the presenting health and social issues for young people following bushfires and public health orders due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- 450 students from years 5, 6, 7, 9, and 11 attending eight schools across the Alpine Shire completed the CTC Youth survey in September 2019
- 5,826 young people from Victoria aged 15 to 19 years completed the Mission Australia 2020 Youth Survey
- 201 young people aged between 12 and 25 years attended consultations with Spark Strategy to take a deeper dive into the presenting health and social issues from November 2021 to May 2022.

The most important issues that young people identified throughout the CTC Youth Survey, the Mission Australia Youth Survey and Spark Strategy consultations were:

- Substance use - alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, vaping
- Community Norms - normalisation of drugs and alcohol use
- Mental Health & Wellbeing - bullying, coping with stress, confidence in confidentiality of services
- Social isolation - need for more events due to a sense of loss of celebration where young people acknowledge specific milestones or events in their lives
- A place where young people can meet for information and support
- Family conflict
- Academic and vocational opportunities, work experience, pathways
- Establishment of creative arts culture
- A voice about social issues
 - Gender identity
 - The environment
 - Equity and discrimination
 - Body image

What We Will Do

Priority 1:

Young people are healthy, well, empowered and safe

Young people will have increased information about and confidence in the health and wellbeing services available to them.

We will achieve this by:

Initiative	Coordinator
Delivering drug and alcohol-free events in collaboration with young people.	Alpine Shire Council
Implementing mental health week in the Alpine Shire.	Alpine Shire Council Alpine Health
Exploring delivery of Youth and Teen Mental Health First Aid training.	Alpine Shire Council Alpine Health
Exploring funding to develop a strength-based communications strategy which utilises contemporary and engaging tools to ensure key messages are reaching all young people and community.	CTCA - steering committee
Exploring funding to support a feasibility study of a mobile youth truck which travels to different towns in the Alpine Shire.	Alpine Shire Council Alpine Health
Lobbying for ongoing funding to support placed-based mental health services e.g. Alpine Youth Support Services.	Alpine Health NESAY
Supporting development of resources and delivery of programs which support young people experiencing bullying, family conflict and discrimination.	Alpine Shire Council Alpine Health NESAY
Supporting development of resources and delivery of programs which support young people in relation to sexuality, gender identity and body image.	Alpine Shire Council Alpine Health NESAY



Priority 2:

Young people are flourishing in their chosen passions, goals, and aspirations

Alpine Shire’s young people will be supported in pursuing and achieving their passions, goals, and aspirations for the future. The coalition will come together to promote existing initiatives on contemporary and relevant channels to ensure they reach as many young people as possible. Over the next two years education, career and special interest opportunities will be enhanced to support young people flourish in their aspirations.

We will achieve this by:

Initiative	Coordinator
Promoting existing employment pathway programs to all young people and local employers that enhance the creation of, and engagement in, local employment opportunities.	NELLEN
Exploring and promoting a broad range of vocational training opportunities.	Alpine Shire Council Alpine Health NELLEN
Continuously improving the Alpine Shire Youth Awards by collaborating with young people to lead and organise the event.	Alpine Shire Council
Developing a calendar of events associated with arts, culture, creativity and design for all young people who are interested in these vocations.	Alpine Shire Council Alpine Health
Delivering drug and alcohol-free events in collaboration with young people.	Alpine Shire Council
Supporting and promoting collaboration for delivery of Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) events.	CTCA



Priority 3:

Young people are celebrated, and have a voice to shape their community

Young people will be empowered to participate in events which promote their voice, unique ideas, and experiences. This includes opportunities to get involved in organising youth events, participating in leadership and mentoring programs and playing active roles in the Alpine Shire.

We will achieve this by:

Initiative	Coordinator
Exploring and supporting establishment of Youth Advisory or Action Groups.	Alpine Shire Council Alpine Health
Providing opportunities for young people to participate in school and community leadership opportunities.	Alpine Shire Council Schools in Alpine Shire
Delivering Alpine Shire Youth Awards in collaboration with young people to lead and organise the event.	Alpine Shire Council
Promoting and supporting volunteering opportunities for young people.	Alpine Shire Council

OUR STRATEGIC ENABLERS

During the planning process we identified three strategic enablers that will underpin our success in delivering on the Youth Strategy. These enablers must be in place for us to achieve all three strategic priorities and the ultimate impact we seek for our young people, and our community at large.

Collaboration and partnerships

Seeking appropriate partners to achieve our strategic priorities will drive positive outcomes for young people. This will include networking, information exchange, coordination of activities, and sharing of resources within the coalition to avoid duplication and create maximum collective impact.

Data and reflective practice

A critical factor of the CTC approach is ensuring actions are driven by robust data collection, which is underpinned by the latest research and best practice. This is about using data and evidence to inform decision-making, improving services and pivoting away from programs that are not leading to positive outcomes.

Reshaping community norms

Young people are shaped by those they spend time with and in the environments in which they spend their time. To support healthy behaviours and positive role modelling, the coalition will work together to build positive and healthy messages around shared social standards, norms and perceptions in the community. A key part of this is delivering effective, tailored, and consistent messaging to young people, community, partners, parents, carers and other stakeholders.



OUR VALUES

Our values underpin how we will work together as coalition members, with young people and the broader community and how we want others to work with us. Our values also act as a reminder of the important role we play in being role models and mentors to young people in the Alpine Shire.



Accountability and commitment:

We build trust between coalition partners, our community and with the young people we work with. We inspire change by doing what we said we were going to do, being bold and putting our hand up when things don't always go to plan.



Youth Participation and empowerment:

We seek young people's voices, energy, engagement and participation to inform our approach and initiatives. Young people, our partners and the community will be empowered to create meaningful outcomes in the Alpine Shire.



Belonging and compassion:

Our interactions with each other, young people and the broader community are underpinned by instilling a sense of belonging and compassion. We will strive to walk in other's shoes, hear different perspectives and use empathy and pragmatism to inform our actions and decision-making.

COMMUNITIES THAT CARE ALPINE

CTCA is a community-based initiative designed to promote the healthy social development of children and young people. Alpine Health is the coordinating agency for CTCA within the Alpine Shire and it is supported by a range of coalition members who are made up of schools, community organisations and health and wellbeing service providers in the region. CTCA aims to improve the lives of children, young people and families living in the Alpine Shire.

Alpine Health is a Multi-Purpose Service with three sites in the towns of Bright, Mount Beauty and Myrtleford. Alpine Health provides integrated Acute Health, Community Health and Community and Aged Residential Services for residents and visitors of the Alpine Shire.

Alpine Shire Council provides a broad range of services to residents, ratepayers, businesses and visitors.

The North East Local Learning and Employment Network (NELLEN) is one of 31 Victorian Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs). NELLEN's core objective is to improve education and employment participation, engagement, attainment and transition for all young people aged 12 to 25 years.

NESAY is a youth and family community agency based in North East Victoria, providing a range of services that enables young people to achieve safe housing, develop their independent living skills, foster and nurture family relationships and sustain education and employment.

Myrtleford P-12 College is a prep to year 12 co-educational public school. It has over 375 students.

Marian College is a Catholic co-educational secondary school. It has over 190 students.

Mount Beauty Secondary College is a co-educational secondary public school. It has approximately 180 students.

Bright P-12 College is a prep to year 12 co-educational public school. It has approximately 595 students.

Porepunkah Primary School has approximately 100 students.

Dederang Primary School has approximately 38 students.

Victoria Police provides policing services to the Victorian community across 54 Police Service Areas, within 21 divisions and four regions.

Formed in 2021, The Alpine Saints Myrtleford Football and Netball Club wellbeing team aims to de-stigmatise mental health issues and provide a support base for people to have confidential conversations, with access to other supports and programs across the Alpine Shire.

CLOSING REMARKS

The Youth Strategy captures our commitment to the safety, health and wellbeing of young people in the Alpine Shire. CTCA and its partners look forward to working together with young people to activate this Youth Strategy into meaningful and tangible impact for young people today and for future generations.

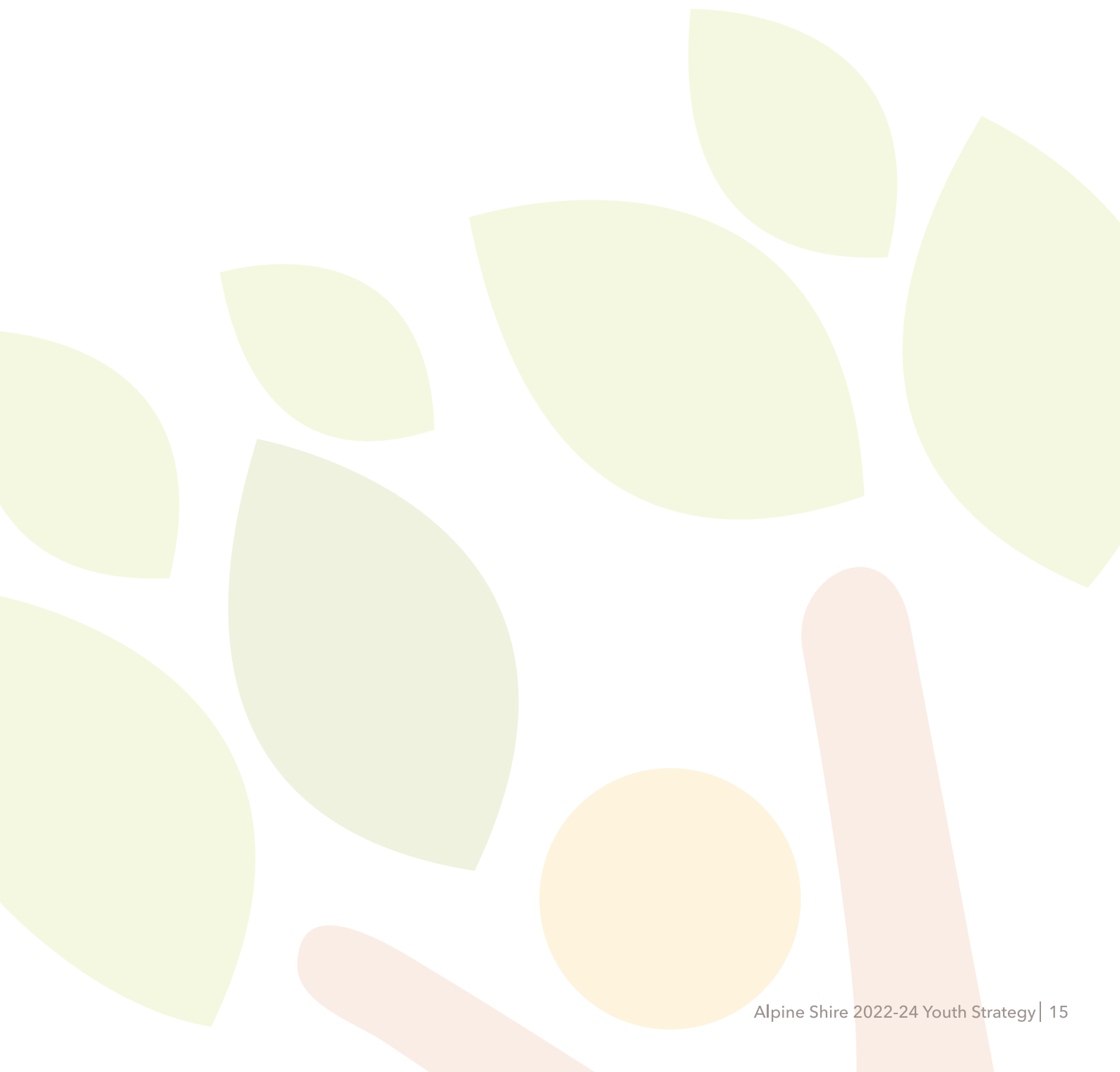


The development of this Youth Strategy involved a co-design approach that was driven by extensive stakeholder engagement, research and analysis. Our strategic planning process included three workshops, ten focus groups, seven group interviews, and two surveys. The result has been engagement with over 200 young people between the ages of 12 to 25, 29 representatives from CTCA coalition member organisations - Myrtleford P-12 College, Marian College, Mount Beauty Secondary College, Bright P-12 College, Alpine Health, Alpine Shire Council, NELLEN, NESAY, Myrtleford Football and Netball Club Wellbeing Team, and Victoria Police. This extensive engagement has been successful in revealing a wealth of rich ideas, perspectives, and insights to create a thriving Alpine Shire for our young people.

Alpine Health and Alpine Shire Council have conducted a Gender Impact Assessment for the Alpine Shire Youth Strategy.



We extend our thanks to everyone involved in the strategic planning process, who shared their time, experiences, suggestions, and stories with us.



CTCA steering committee:



CONTACT US

If you have any questions about the Youth Strategy or the work we do, we'd love to hear from you.

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