

JUST  
REINVEST

NSW

## MOREE YOUTH FORUM

17 - 18 March 2022

## Report



## Acknowledgement of Country

Just Reinvest NSW would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which the Moree Youth Forum and Block Party took place, belonging to the Gomeroi people. We would like to pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, extending that respect to all Aboriginal people involved in the event.



# Contents

<b>Overview of the Youth Forum</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Background</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>The Youth Forum Process – led by young people</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>The Youth Forum</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>What we learnt from young people</b>	<b>16</b>
What’s happening for young people in Moree?	16
What can we do? Advocacy 101	26
Leadership and strength together	32
Women and men’s sessions	38
<b>Insights and learnings</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Feedback</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Next steps</b>	<b>48</b>



# Thank you

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- Mekayla Cochrane | Youth Lead
- Nicole Mekler | Youth Participation Manager
- Elisha Ralph | Administration Officer
- Judy Duncan | Community Engagement Officer
- Jenny Lovric | Community Partnerships Manager
- Daniel Daylight | JRNSW Executive Committee Member
- Lucy Tierney | Community Projects Officer
- Alanna Reneman | Operations Manager
- Geoffrey Winters | Chief Executive Officer
- Julie Williams | Mt Drutt Community Engagement Officer

## A huge thank you to our facilitators and artists

Youth Action, Sydney Policy Lab, Paul Spearim Jnr, Lorlie Haines, Jamie Sampson, Tameeka Tighe, Ian Brown, Thomas Duncan, Jaydee Picker, Natasha Pidcock, Kobie Duncan and Allira Moore.



IMAGE: Student responses to a question asking 'What would make living in Moree easier and better for young people?'

Cover artwork by Lucy Carter

We want to thank all those who contributed and helped make the **youth forum and block party** possible.

- Aboriginal Education Consultative Group
- Allira Moore
- ANTaR
- Bamara
- Bernadette Duncan
- Births, Deaths and Marriages
- Clontarf
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- Dhiiyaan Centre
- Dippers Home Timber & Hardware
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- Homes North
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- Kobie Dee
- Kyla-Belle
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- Mad Proppa Deadly
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- Mona Munro
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- Moree Secondary College
- Moree SHAE Academy
- Natasha Pidcock
- NITV
- Nooky
- NTER
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- Sobah
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- Triple One
- Vicki Briggs
- Weave Youth & Community Services
- Woolworths
- Yinarr-ma
- Youth Action
- Youth InSearch
- Yulugi Marumali & dancers – Talise Towney, Montaya French, Peta Haines, Wendy Tylee Swan, Rayarna Tighe, Janaysha Smith, Mary May Townsend, Lorraine Townsend, Thelma McGrady and Monique Graham




## About Just Reinvest NSW in Moree

Just Reinvest NSW supports Aboriginal communities to explore and establish justice reinvestment initiatives and advocates for systemic changes that build safer and stronger communities.

Justice reinvestment approaches aim to reduce the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system in NSW. Just Reinvest NSW's approach is to work alongside Aboriginal communities to support place-based, community-led and data driven approaches to inform local solutions, such as devising local 'justice circuit breakers.' This place-based approach feeds into broader policy and advocacy work to create levers for change.

Just Reinvest (JR) in Moree has a strong focus on young people, with young people's voices at the centre of our work and leading decision making. The Moree community wants to see young people feel confident, respected and supported to step up and have a voice. Community members, young people and organisations working with JR in Moree have determined the priority areas for change are around supporting families, education, mental health and wellbeing.



# Overview of the Youth Forum

From 17-19 March 2022, Gomeroi Country was home to a two-day Youth Forum, followed by a Moree Block Party. Around 300 young people attended the Youth Forum over the two days. The Youth Forum and Block Party were designed and led by young people in Moree.

The Youth Forum provided an opportunity for young people to come together, grow connections, come up with ideas, make plans for what they want to see for Moree, and learn new skills for how to make change. Young people were supported to learn and take up new opportunities, including developing leadership and advocacy skills through a variety of different workshops and sessions.

Following the Youth Forum, the Moree Block Party was held on Saturday 19 March, in partnership with Kobie Dee. The Block Party was a free community event to celebrate the strength and talent of young people in Moree. There were performances by local and travelling artists including Kyla-Belle, Caution, Nooky, NTER, Triple One, dancers from Yulugi Marumali and Kobie Dee. Stalls were set up for attendees to engage with local services and community members selling local products. There was also arts and crafts stalls, face-painting, jumping castles and an OzTag game. It was incredible to see the community come together to celebrate and show support for their future leaders.



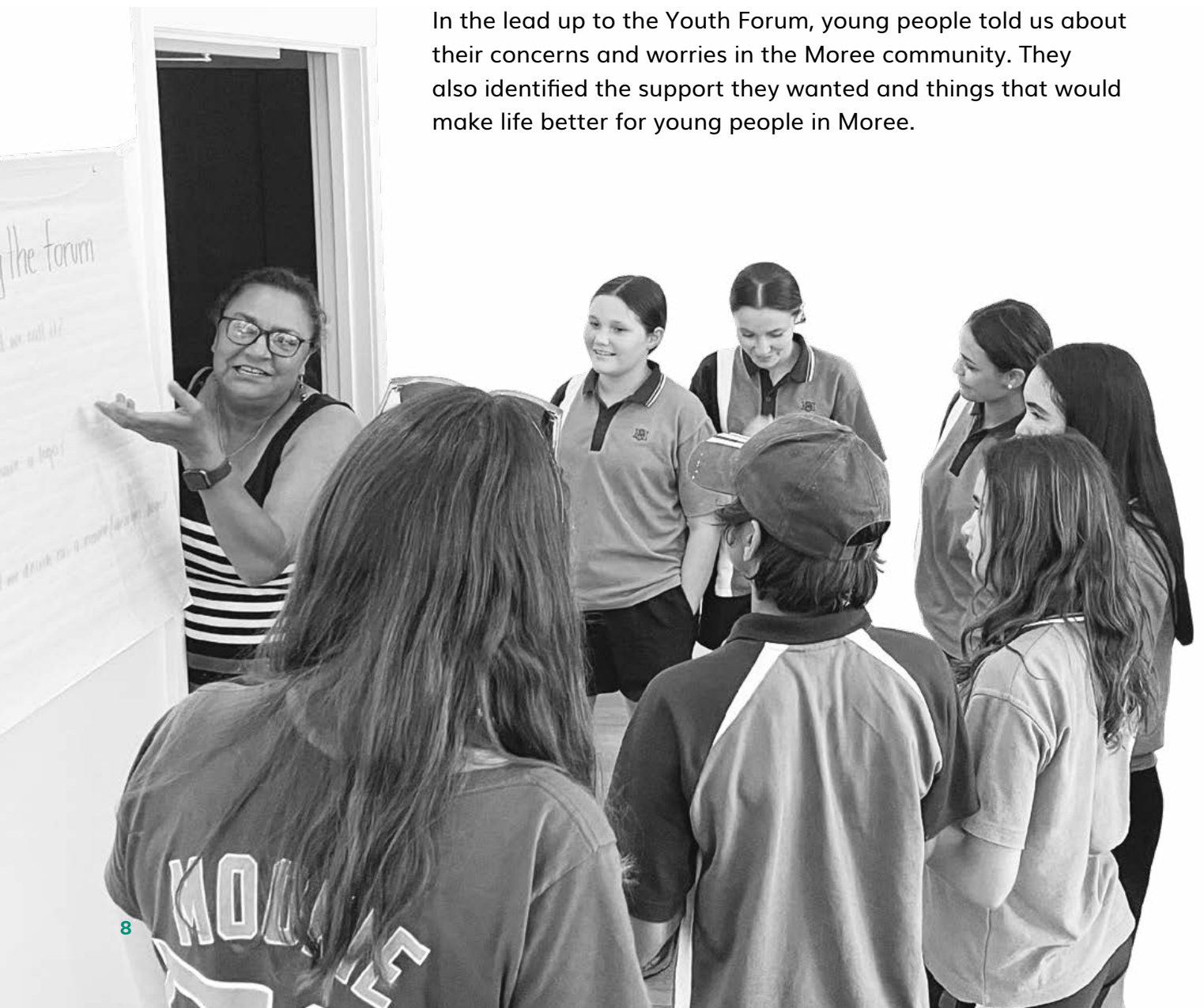
## Background

Young people in Moree want more of a say.  
They don't feel like they are being heard.

Young people talked about wanting service systems and organisations to listen to their ideas and aspirations, and actively work with them to make change.

The idea and need for the Youth Forum came directly from young people in Moree who Just Reinvest NSW have been working with over the last three years. Young people in Moree have been telling us that they want more of a voice in what happens in Moree, and that they feel like they aren't being heard. We had been hearing consistently from young people that they wanted the opportunity to come together in a safe place, to learn from each other and to explore different ways of supporting other young people. Young people talked about wanting service systems and organisations to listen to their ideas and aspirations, and actively work with them to make change. This also came out as strong theme during the Youth Forum.

In the lead up to the Youth Forum, young people told us about their concerns and worries in the Moree community. They also identified the support they wanted and things that would make life better for young people in Moree.





## Concerns and worries

- ▶ Support for young people is limited across all age groups.
- ▶ Crime and drug use in their community.
- ▶ Being stigmatised by others in the community as “bad kids” or “too hard.” Young people do not want to be stereotyped and are sick of the labels. They also don't want to be targeted by police because of this stereotyping.
- ▶ Lack of free and engaging things for young people to do in Moree.

## Support young people need to make things better

- ▶ Better, more holistic mental health responses.
- ▶ Better support for drug and alcohol addiction.
- ▶ More support for their families.
- ▶ Better support and safe places to go to during the hours young people are getting into trouble and being drawn into the criminal justice system.
- ▶ Services operating outside of 9-5pm/Monday-Friday hours.
- ▶ More opportunities to connect to culture and their community.
- ▶ More things to do, more opportunities, more fun things to do - for themselves and their community.
- ▶ Having their voices heard and they want to keep putting Moree on the map for the right reasons.



## The Youth Forum Process – led by young people

We adopted a youth-led approach with young people leading each stage of the Youth Forum and Block Party process. The Youth Forum provided an opportunity for young people to get event planning and public speaking experience, facilitation and advocacy training, and provided opportunities to connect with a variety of stakeholders from Moree and outside.

Young people took the lead by coming together for after school meetings. Nine meetings were held in total. The first meeting was held in February 2021, almost a year before the Forum took place. The month before the Youth Forum and Block Party, young people met every week as COVID restrictions eased. During these meetings we:

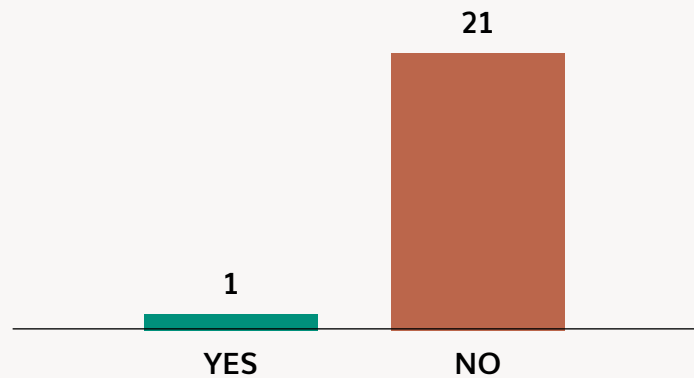
- ▶ Facilitated interactive sessions to draw out young people's ideas.
- ▶ Helped young people develop new skills, including facilitation training and advocacy workshops.
- ▶ Fostered the skills and strengths young people already had.
- ▶ Co-designed the Youth Forum program and activities. We were guided by young people on all aspects on the Youth Forum – from the food served, to the way the sessions were structured and what services (including resume writing support, birth certificates, legal advice etc) and activities (e.g. music making, mechanical bull, creative spaces, they chose and contributed to the art and photography exhibition spaces, etc) should be included in the Forum.
- ▶ Had young people give feedback on each session run by external facilitators (Youth Action and Sydney Policy Lab) to ensure that the content would land with young people from Moree during the Youth Forum.
- ▶ Discussed the idea of collaborating with Gomeroi Rapper, Kobie Dee on a Moree Block Party and inviting him to also attend the Youth Forum. These ideas came directly from young people.

Young people were also engaged in the lead up to the event through the Saturday Night Youth Program.

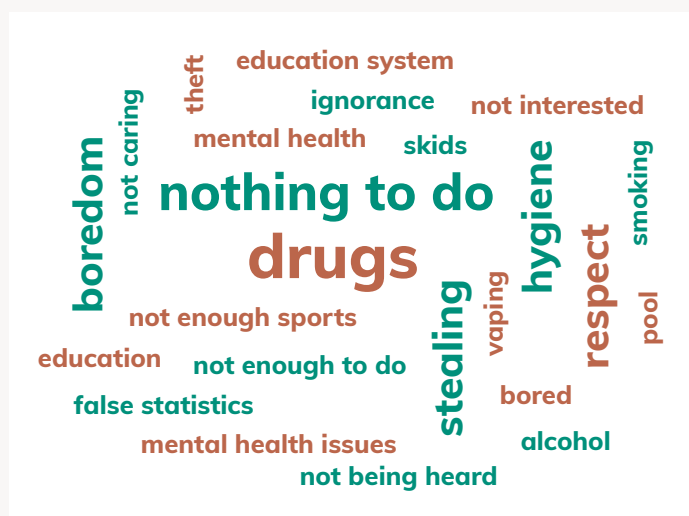
They led all of the work needed to make sure the Youth Forum happened, including decorating the space, setting up the venue, identifying mentors, designing the evaluation survey and making flyers for the event.

Despite COVID lockdowns, we worked with year groups at Moree Secondary College through Zoom, using Mentimeter, to get young people's feedback.

### Do you feel like young people's voices are heard in Moree?



### What are three big issues for young people in Moree?



Mentimeter feedback from young people from Moree Secondary College



**IMAGES:** First planning meeting for the Youth Forum in February 2021.

**What would make young people excited to come?**

- Community support
- Learning new things
- Workshops
- Youth program
- Live music (eg Kobie Dee, young performers in Moree)
- Music/disco
- Cultural dancing - Shae Duncan
- Bangarra
- Talent quest
- Footy
- Girls tackle football
- Midnight movie
- Block party
- Haircuts and beauty stuff
- Lucky door prizes
- Disco
- Have girls and boys business

All this work was grounded in the fact that we are incredibly lucky to have a great JR team in Moree and worked with Miyay Birray who together led these sessions, facilitated further youth engagement and who are passionate about continuing to lead this work.

**IMAGE (L):** Minutes from planning meetings with young people. Young people worked with our team to make many of these things happen.

# The Youth Forum

## Attendees

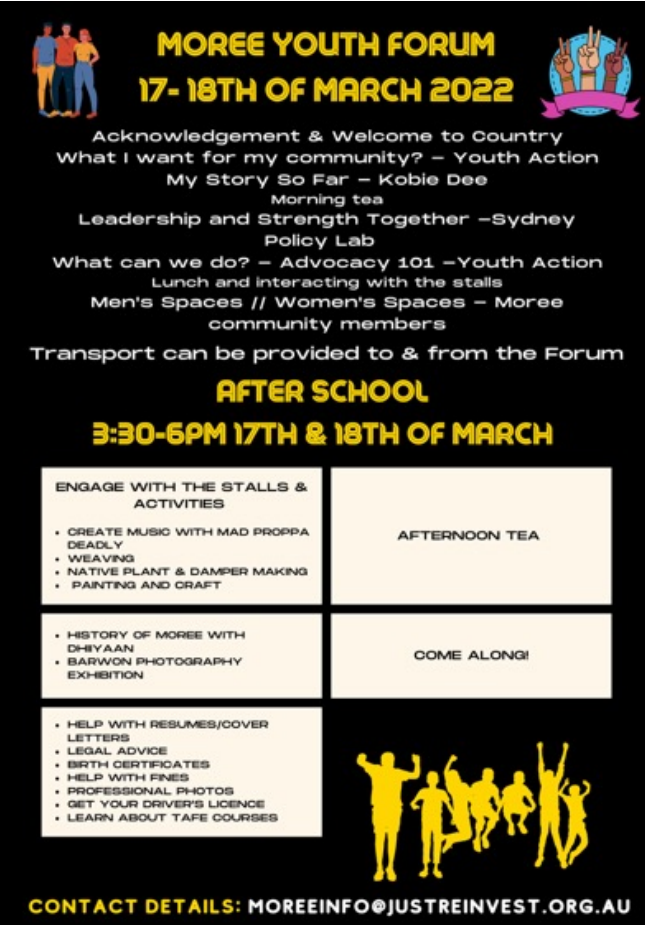
**Day 1** Moree Secondary College students from years 7- 9, 11-12 and some year 10 students.

**Day 2** St Philomena's students from years 7-9 and some year 10 students.

Young people over the age of 11 that don't attend school, were at TAFE, were suspended or were attending Barwon were invited to attend the Youth Forum on Day 2.

All young people in Moree were invited to attend informal afternoon sessions on both days, including fun activities and services for young people to engage with.


## The Youth Forum Program



**MOREE YOUTH FORUM**  
**17- 18TH OF MARCH 2022**

Acknowledgement & Welcome to Country  
What I want for my community? – Youth Action  
My Story So Far – Kobie Dee  
Morning tea  
Leadership and Strength Together –Sydney  
Policy Lab  
What can we do? – Advocacy 101 –Youth Action  
Lunch and interacting with the stalls  
Men's Spaces // Women's Spaces – Moree  
community members  
Transport can be provided to & from the Forum

**AFTER SCHOOL**  
**3:30-6PM 17TH & 18TH OF MARCH**

<b>ENGAGE WITH THE STALLS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CREATE MUSIC WITH MAD PROPPA DEADLY</li><li>• WEAVING</li><li>• NATIVE PLANT &amp; DAMPER MAKING</li><li>• PAINTING AND CRAFT</li></ul>	<b>AFTERNOON TEA</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• HISTORY OF MOREE WITH DHRYAAN</li><li>• BARWON PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION</li></ul>	<b>COME ALONG!</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• HELP WITH RESUMES/COVER LETTERS</li><li>• LEGAL ADVICE</li><li>• BIRTH CERTIFICATES</li><li>• HELP WITH FINES</li><li>• PROFESSIONAL PHOTOS</li><li>• GET YOUR DRIVER'S LICENCE</li><li>• LEARN ABOUT TAFE COURSES</li></ul>	

**CONTACT DETAILS: MOREEINFO@JUSTREINVEST.ORG.AU**

**IMAGE;** Youth Forum Program flyer. The program structure was repeated over the two days.

Each morning young people engaged in a strengths-based session led by Youth Action, to talk about what they want to see for their community. This was followed by leadership and advocacy workshops led by Sydney Policy Lab and Youth Action, where students learnt how to put their ideas into action and create the change they want to see.

**Young people then got to listen to Gomeri rapper, Kobie Dee, share his inspirational story on becoming a successful rapper finding his voice in music and advocacy, and ask him questions on how he got to where he is today.**

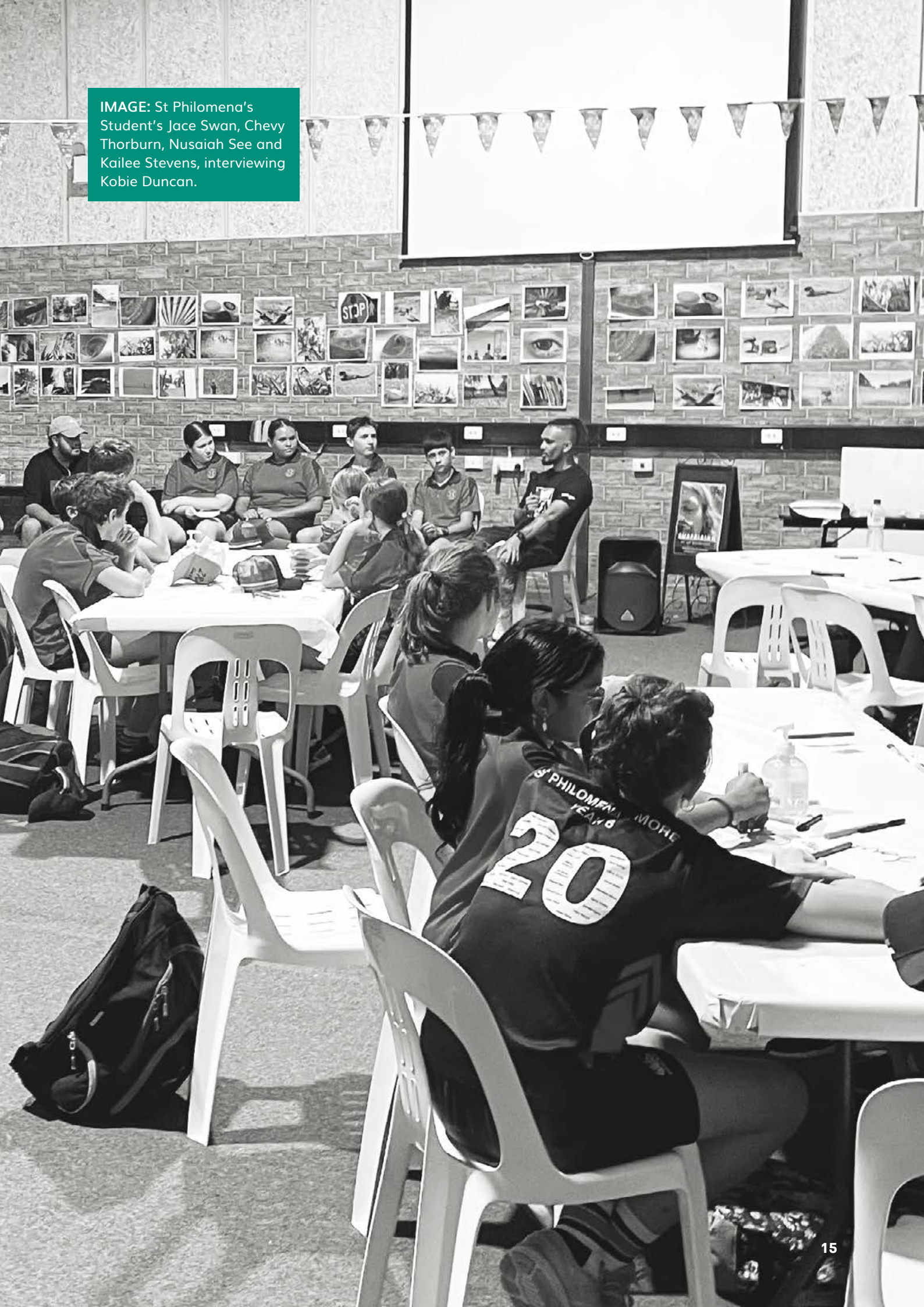
This session was led and designed by Brenda Towney from Moree Secondary College. Kobie has been a JRNSW ambassador since 2012 and is deeply passionate about supporting young people in the Moree community.



**IMAGE:** MSC student Brenda Towney practicing interviewing Kobie Duncan.

The afternoon was spent engaging in men's and women's business, where young people had the opportunity to yarn about health and wellbeing in a safe environment with local Aboriginal community members. The last session ended with storytelling and cultural dancing, which was a highlight of the day for many of the students.

IMAGE: St Philomena's Student's Jace Swan, Chevy Thorburn, Nusaiah See and Kailee Stevens, interviewing Kobie Duncan.



# What we learnt from young people

Young people attended the following four sessions over the two days.

- What's happening for young people in Moree
- What can we do? – Advocacy 101
- Leadership and strength together
- Men's and women's sessions

Young people attending had a variety of life experiences, and their feedback during the sessions reflect these experiences and point to a wide range of 'wants' for young people in Moree.

## With Youth Action

- ▶ Kate Munro (CEO)
- ▶ Freya Conomos (Youth Sector Development Manager)

## What's happening for young people in Moree?

Youth Action ran a session around what's happening for young people in Moree. The session covered what's working and not working so well and what would make Moree a better place for young people. Allira Moore sketched what young people said during this session.



**IMAGE:** Young people participating in the Moree Youth Forum.



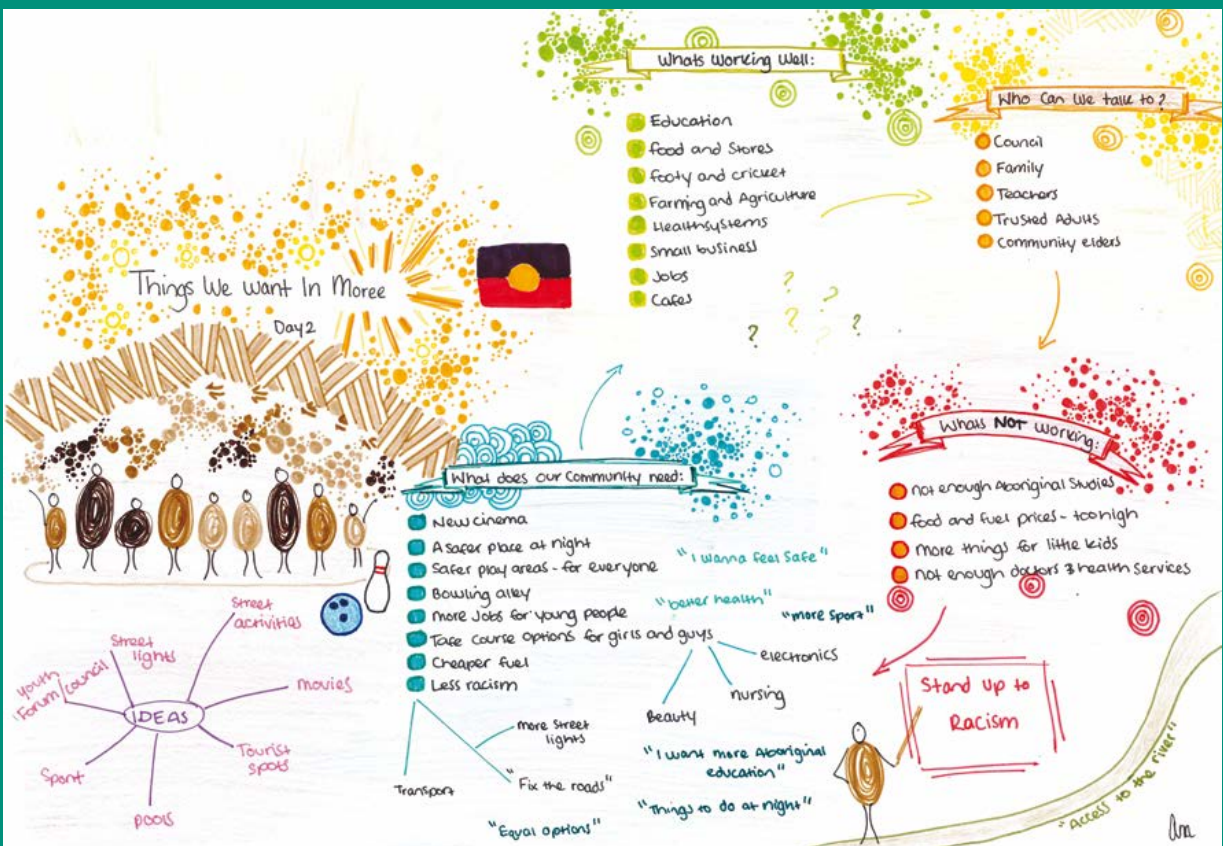
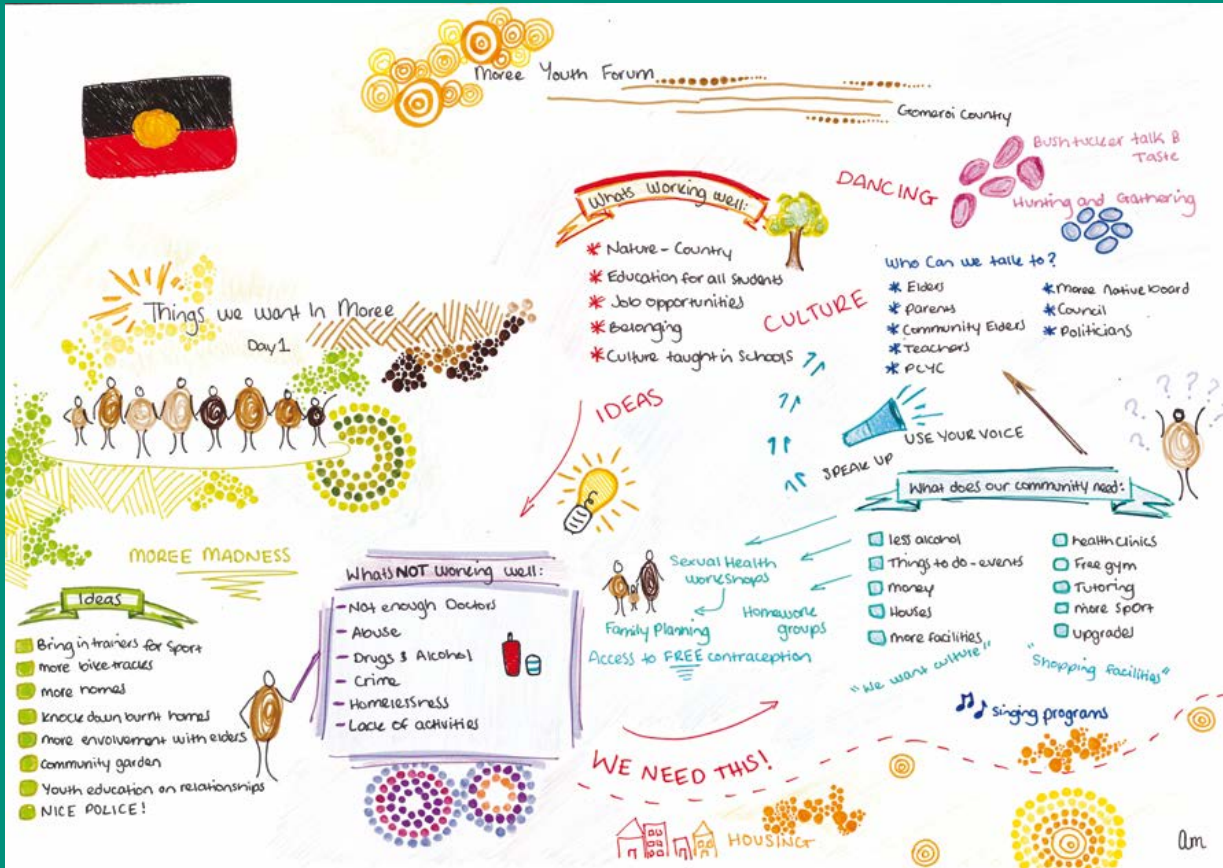


IMAGE: Sketches by Allira Moore

## What's working well for young people in your community?\*

Young people have a great love of their community, family and friends. They love their local area and appreciate both its natural and built assets such as the hot springs, pool and skate park. Young people love sports. Some young people also thought school was working well.

### Culture and community

- ▶ Community (6)
- ▶ Family (5)
- ▶ Friends (3)
- ▶ Culture (family and friends) (3)
  - ▶ Culture (food and dance)
- ▶ People
- ▶ Youth groups
- ▶ Multicultural
- ▶ Friends that stand up for you
- ▶ Belonging/homey
- ▶ Blackfullas
- ▶ Connections with people
- ▶ There is a lot of help and support
- ▶ People

### Natural assets in Moree

- ▶ River (4)
- ▶ Parks (3)
- ▶ Hot pools
- ▶ Rope swing/river/creeks
- ▶ Copeton Dam
- ▶ Nature and country
- ▶ Environment
- ▶ Local places

### Infrastructure

- ▶ Pool (9)
- ▶ Skatepark (5)
- ▶ Fast food (4)
  - ▶ KFC (2)
  - ▶ Dominos
- ▶ Good food (5)
- ▶ Gym (3)
- ▶ Ski park (2)
- ▶ Ovals (2)
- ▶ Shops (3)
  - ▶ Wayne's World
  - ▶ Kmart
- ▶ Hotels/motels
- ▶ Art gallery
- ▶ Walking paths
- ▶ Housing
- ▶ Library
- ▶ Motorbike tracks
- ▶ Small businesses
- ▶ Hardman's
- ▶ Café
- ▶ Puma fuel station
- ▶ Traffic conditions
- ▶ Public transport

\*Numbers next to a response indicate how many times a group came up with this response.

## Services

- ▶ Schools/education (13)
- ▶ Support from our schools
- ▶ Educational opportunity
- ▶ Scholarships
- ▶ Education to all students in Moree
- ▶ Clontarf (4)
- ▶ After school programs/activities (3)
- ▶ PCYC (3)
- ▶ SHAE Academy (2)
- ▶ TAFE (2)
- ▶ Recreational opportunities (2)
- ▶ Programs (2)
- ▶ Good mental health support (2)
- ▶ Counselling
- ▶ Playgroups
- ▶ Services
- ▶ Salvos
- ▶ Services to support disability
- ▶ Miyay Birray
- ▶ Health facilities
- ▶ Good medical assistance
- ▶ Kids helpline
- ▶ Girl guides
- ▶ L's (learners)
- ▶ Activities
- ▶ Art programs

## Sport

- ▶ Sport (16)
  - ▶ Sporting opportunities
  - ▶ Lots of different sports
- ▶ Fishing (3)
- ▶ Football (3)
- ▶ Basketball (2)
- ▶ Netball
- ▶ Pig chasing
- ▶ Shooting
- ▶ Motorbike riding
- ▶ Cricket

## Events

- ▶ Moree show (3)
- ▶ Markets (3)
- ▶ Park run
- ▶ Events
- ▶ Bingo
- ▶ Christmas carols
- ▶ ANZAC ceremony
- ▶ Clean up day
- ▶ Creative art opportunities  
e.g. school spectacular

## Employment

- ▶ Jobs (opportunities) (6)
- ▶ Agriculture/farming (5)
- ▶ Work (3)
- ▶ Stock routes
- ▶ Learning skills for the future

## Other

- ▶ Technology
- ▶ Wifi
- ▶ Staying home
- ▶ Parties
- ▶ Driving around
- ▶ Bacon and egg rolls RC
- ▶ Support from fundraising

## What's not working for young people in your community?\*

A lot of things in Moree are not working for young people. Young people identified that there is a lack of things for young people to do, they moved into identifying solutions to this saying there was needed to be more: youth centres, movies, more shops, and more safe, fun places for young people to go. They continued this work responding to the next part of the session.

They talked about the issues with infrastructure that already exists such as the quality and upkeep of infrastructure, the pool and affordability of the pool, and other activities. Young people identified that crime and drugs are issues for them and community disconnection. School, health and mental health also came up a lot for what is not working well for young people.

### Lack of things to do for young people

- ▶ Not enough activities for young people after school (8)
- ▶ Lack of entertainment (4)
- ▶ No fun (nothing to do) (3)
- ▶ More youth centres (3)
- ▶ More places for young people to go (2)
- ▶ No drop-in centre
- ▶ More social activities
- ▶ More activities during school holidays and weekends
- ▶ More after school groups
- ▶ Physical activity
- ▶ Internet
- ▶ More resources
- ▶ Have to leave Moree for a bigger variety of things

### Systems

- ▶ Justice system
- ▶ More training for Police
- ▶ Police
- ▶ Fines

### Infrastructure

- ▶ Pool (12)
  - ▶ Free/Affordable pool passes (3)
  - ▶ Big pool (4)
  - ▶ Pool slides
- ▶ Movies (8)
- ▶ Shops (7)
- ▶ Houses (3)
- ▶ Lack of public transport (3)
- ▶ Road conditions (2)
- ▶ BMX track (2)
- ▶ Trampoline park (2)
- ▶ No walking tracks
- ▶ Gym age limit
- ▶ Lighting
- ▶ Wheelchair access
- ▶ Art galleries/museums
- ▶ Bowling
- ▶ Arcade
- ▶ Theme park
- ▶ Bigger skate park
- ▶ Terrible netball courts
- ▶ Proper hockey courts
- ▶ Crappy sewerage system
- ▶ Better buildings

\*Numbers next to a response indicate how many times a group came up with this response.

## Community Disconnection

- ▶ Starting fights (4)
- ▶ Pollution and littering (4)
- ▶ Disrespect/lack of respect (3)
- ▶ Swearing (3)
- ▶ Bullying (2)
- ▶ Destructive children (2)
- ▶ People
- ▶ Coaching – lack of volunteers
- ▶ Distrusting families
- ▶ The town
- ▶ Isolated from others
- ▶ Lack of future planning
- ▶ People who are homeless and starving
- ▶ Irresponsible parents/kids
- ▶ Teen moms
- ▶ Broken home/family
- ▶ Abuse
- ▶ Assault
- ▶ Physical harm
- ▶ Glass breaking
- ▶ More child friendly

## Crime

- ▶ Crime (8)
- ▶ Arson (houses) (5)
- ▶ Theft (3)
- ▶ Youth crime
- ▶ Vandalism
- ▶ Guns
- ▶ Knives
- ▶ Fires
- ▶ Gang (127)
- ▶ Driving in other people's vehicles

## Drugs

- ▶ Drugs (5)
- ▶ Smoking/vaping (4)
- ▶ Drinks (2)
- ▶ Junkies

## Education

- ▶ Education/schools (3)
- ▶ Teachers need to improve teaching
- ▶ Lack of education in LGBTQIA+
- ▶ Suspensions
- ▶ Confronting school classes
- ▶ Schools not getting along
- ▶ Schools are a bit sexist
- ▶ Education rights – to choose your own subjects
- ▶ More Aboriginal studies
- ▶ More maths

## Services/support

- ▶ Hospital (4)
- ▶ Mental health (3)
- ▶ Doctors (2)
- ▶ Health care (2)
- ▶ Lack of medical facilities
- ▶ PCYC
- ▶ Town hall

## Employment

- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Flexible job hours

## Food

- ▶ Food prices (2)
- ▶ Slushie machine at Shell not always working
- ▶ Maccas frappe machine not always working
- ▶ Drive thru wait lines
- ▶ Maccas ice cream machine
- ▶ Energy drinks
- ▶ Food shops

## Other

- ▶ Fuel prices (4)
- ▶ Drought (2)
- ▶ Motorbikes in town (2)
- ▶ Climate change (2)
- ▶ Bugs and mice
- ▶ Covid
- ▶ Storms
- ▶ Different rules for boys and girls
- ▶ Construction takes forever
- ▶ Markets
- ▶ Small town



## What are the most important things your community needs to make it a good place for young people?\*

Young people have lots of ideas on how to make their community better. They want to have pride in Moree. They love their community, but the systems, infrastructure and support aren't always there for them to feel safe, secure and have the same opportunities as other young people.

It is clear young people in Moree want more safety, security and opportunities for families and community to connect. They want a caring and supportive community that celebrates its young people, including with more community events.

Crime is a big concern for young people. Young people have ideas on how to address the crime in Moree and want to be part of the solution. Young people in Moree want more activities and places to go where they can have fun and be young people. They want more community infrastructure to be able to do this, particularly affordable access to the pool, more shops, and spaces for young people such as youth centres and a cinema. They also want more opportunities around education and employment.

### Youth activities & support

- ▶ More activities/things to do for youth (6)
  - ▶ More activities for kids like bigger skatepark and rocket park better and a bigger swimming pool
- ▶ More sport opportunities (6)
- ▶ Youth Centres (6)
  - ▶ Drop in centre
- ▶ More entertainment (4)
- ▶ More programs (2)
- ▶ Mental health support (4)
  - ▶ More counselling
  - ▶ More support for young kids – counselling, places to go in tough times, place to stay if your home life is tough
  - ▶ Better places for Mental Health
- ▶ Doctors (2)
- ▶ Leadership and self-confidence days
- ▶ Nature walks and camps
- ▶ Life skills to be independent
- ▶ Bird watching
- ▶ Cooking classes (2)
  - ▶ Cooking classes (to reduce drive thru times)
- ▶ Leadership and self-confidence days
- ▶ Meetings/discussions/youth involvement
- ▶ Activities to spread awareness
- ▶ More activities for families and friends
- ▶ More places to explore
- ▶ Youth workers
- ▶ Organisations that support young Aboriginal people to succeed through school and university
- ▶ Rehab
- ▶ Let kids do what they want

\*Numbers next to a response indicate how many times a group came up with this response.

## Better Infrastructure

- ▶ More shops (11)
  - ▶ Big W
  - ▶ Culture Kings
  - ▶ More clothing variety
  - ▶ Mountain Biking store
  - ▶ Bunnings
- ▶ Big shopping centre/mall (9)
- ▶ Cinema (8)
- ▶ Better/more skateparks (6)
  - ▶ Beginner/advanced skate area
  - ▶ Two skateparks
- ▶ More food options (6)
  - ▶ Taco Bell (2)
  - ▶ Hungry jacks
  - ▶ More variety in restaurants
- ▶ Pool (5)
  - ▶ Fix it
  - ▶ Olympic Pool
- ▶ Bowling (4)
- ▶ BMX track (4)
- ▶ Public Transport (3)
- ▶ Bigger gyms (2)
- ▶ Arcade (2)
- ▶ Better streetlights (2)
  - ▶ Streetlights – so they don't get scared
- ▶ Safer playgrounds for kids
- ▶ Better basketball courts
- ▶ Bigger carpark
- ▶ Drive-in Cinema
- ▶ Go kart track
- ▶ Trampoline Park
- ▶ More homes
- ▶ Better homes
- ▶ Longer opening hours at the gym

- ▶ More parks
- ▶ More outside tables
- ▶ Fix roads
- ▶ Fix town hall
- ▶ Aqua park
- ▶ Bunnings
- ▶ Fish farm
- ▶ Sporting facilities
- ▶ Upgrade stuff we have
- ▶ Community spaces
- ▶ More pharmacies
- ▶ Health care system
- ▶ Facilities
- ▶ Bug bombing

## More affordable living

- ▶ Cheaper pool prices (2)
- ▶ Cheaper fuel (2)
- ▶ More free activities e.g. improve parks (2)
- ▶ Discounts for youth
- ▶ Free gym
- ▶ Cheaper products

## Technology

- ▶ Computers
- ▶ Internet
- ▶ Better mics

## Events

- ▶ More sporting events
- ▶ Music festivals for locals
- ▶ Native cooking classes, art classes, learning culture and language, native grains
- ▶ Live music
- ▶ Clean up Australia day
- ▶ Fundraising
- ▶ More social gatherings – street festivals
- ▶ More rides at Moree show



### A safe and caring community:

- ▶ Safer environment (4)
  - ▶ Walking around safely at night on your own
  - ▶ Parts are safer for people to walk around
- ▶ Connecting with others
- ▶ Sharing money to the homeless and sick
- ▶ Less kids
- ▶ No little kids walking around at night
- ▶ Less alcohol
- ▶ More kindness
- ▶ Less racism
- ▶ More nice friends
- ▶ Trained coaches

### Other

- ▶ More police and firemen (3)
- ▶ Advertisement (2)
- ▶ Communication
- ▶ Resources
- ▶ Growth
- ▶ Jump Line
- ▶ Security
- ▶ Police arresting kids

### Employment and Education

- ▶ Jobs for young people (5)
  - ▶ Jobs to keep young people occupied
  - ▶ Jobs for young people/ same pay as adults
  - ▶ More availability for younger ages to get jobs
- ▶ Work opportunities (2)
- ▶ School
  - ▶ Tutors out of school
  - ▶ More schools
  - ▶ TAFE courses
    - ▶ TAFE course suitable for girls – hospitality, beauty, nursing, cooking
  - ▶ Better public school
  - ▶ Get rid of yondr pouches (phone pouches for schools)
- ▶ No school uniform
- ▶ Agriculture



## With Youth Action

- ▶ Kate Munro (CEO)
- ▶ Freya Conomos (Youth Sector Development Manager)

# What can we do? Advocacy 101

## Young people's strengths and gifts in Moree

Young people in Moree already have a lot of skills, strengths and gifts. This was evident in planning and creating the Youth Forum and Block Party and in young peoples' responses in this session. In this session young people were asked to think about what gifts they already had to be able to make Moree a better place and to advocate with.

This activity showed that young people have a lot of passions, strengths and skills and are open to sharing them to be able to create change. Young people in Moree can be encouraged to grow these skills, explore the things they care about deeply and share their strengths with other young people and the community.

Young people talked about four types of gifts:

- ▶ **The Head**  
Things that you know about
- ▶ **The Heart**  
Things that you care about and are passionate about
- ▶ **The Hand**  
Things or skills that you know how to do and would like to share with others
- ▶ **The Heel**  
Things that you do to ground yourself

It was clear from the activity that young people know and care deeply about their friends, family, culture, community and connection. They know about and do a lot of sport, music, learning and creative things. They also brought up gaming, motorbike riding and TV in each category. They are proud of their jobs and the knowledge they have of them. Young people felt grounded and healed by all these things, especially with family, friends, culture and community.

## Community, friends, culture

- ▶ Family (8)
- ▶ Culture (4)
- ▶ Yourself (3)
- ▶ Friends (2)
- ▶ Our community/ community (2)
- ▶ Cultural
- ▶ Discussing culture
- ▶ Country
- ▶ Mates
- ▶ People
- ▶ Babies
- ▶ I know things about Moree

## Work

- ▶ My job
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Mechanical
- ▶ K-hub work
- ▶ Work
- ▶ Farming

## TV

- ▶ TV show (3)
- ▶ Spiderman (2)
- ▶ Watching TV
- ▶ Reality tv
- ▶ Tom Holland
- ▶ Marvel
- ▶ Superstore
- ▶ Batman

## Creative

- ▶ Art (4)
- ▶ Drawing (2)
- ▶ Painting

## Sport

- ▶ Sport (7)
- ▶ Football/Footy (4)
- ▶ Rugby (4)
- ▶ Dance (3)
- ▶ Netball (3)
- ▶ Hockey
- ▶ Tennis
- ▶ Skiing
- ▶ Boxing
- ▶ Soccer
- ▶ Basketball
- ▶ Badminton

## Learning

- ▶ School (4)
- ▶ Maths (2)
- ▶ Something that you learnt at school
- ▶ Education
- ▶ English
- ▶ Knowledge
- ▶ Media
- ▶ Language
- ▶ Reading
- ▶ Think

## Music

- ▶ Music (5)
- ▶ Violin (2)
- ▶ Ukelele (2)
- ▶ Guitar (2)
- ▶ Drums
- ▶ Piano
- ▶ Music – listening and playing
- ▶ How to play an instrument

## Animals

- ▶ Animals
- ▶ Dogs
- ▶ Loves her pets
- ▶ Horses

## Other

- ▶ Gaming (3)
- ▶ Cooking (2)
- ▶ Putting up the flag (2)
- ▶ Religion (2)
- ▶ Pigging (2)
- ▶ Food
- ▶ Social media
- ▶ Conflict
- ▶ Problems
- ▶ Emo
- ▶ Weather
- ▶ Cars
- ▶ Motorbikes
- ▶ Sleeping
- ▶ Fishing
- ▶ Mtb
- ▶ Farming
- ▶ KFC's best
- ▶ Pubs
- ▶ Dinosaurs
- ▶ Fashion
- ▶ Hats
- ▶ People think I'm better than what I think I am
- ▶ Thoughts and feelings

\*Numbers next to a response indicate how many times a group came up with this response.



### Friends, community, culture and caring

- ▶ Family (15)
- ▶ Extend family
- ▶ Friends (15)
- ▶ Culture (4)
- ▶ Community (2)
- ▶ Peers
- ▶ Connection to the land
- ▶ Belonging
- ▶ Hunting and gathering
- ▶ Dreamtime
- ▶ Stories
- ▶ Moree madness
- ▶ Elderly
- ▶ My heritage
- ▶ Home
- ▶ Health
- ▶ Girls
- ▶ Bravas
- ▶ Da boys
- ▶ Yourself
- ▶ Love
- ▶ Loving
- ▶ Emotions
- ▶ Passion of love
- ▶ Support
- ▶ Girlfriend
- ▶ World view
- ▶ Religion
- ▶ Living in the country

### Employment

- ▶ Farming (3)
- ▶ Our jobs
- ▶ Work life

### Social justice

- ▶ Feminism
- ▶ LGBTQIA+
- ▶ BLM
- ▶ Environment

### Learning

- ▶ Education (4)
- ▶ Learning
- ▶ Math
- ▶ Certain subjects

### Hobbies

- ▶ Motorbikes (4)
- ▶ Gaming
- ▶ Horse riding
- ▶ Art
- ▶ Music
- ▶ Guitar
- ▶ Sport
- ▶ Netball
- ▶ Soccer

### Things

- ▶ House (2)
- ▶ My car
- ▶ Shoes
- ▶ Hats
- ▶ Tractors
- ▶ Farm
- ▶ Batman

### Times of year

- ▶ Free time
- ▶ Birthday
- ▶ Christmas/Easter holidays
- ▶ Holidays

### Eating

- ▶ Food (2)
- ▶ Eating meals
- ▶ Gum

### Animals

- ▶ Pet/animals (6)
- ▶ Dog (3)
- ▶ Insects
- ▶ Daddy long legs
- ▶ Cat

\*Numbers next to a response indicate how many times a group came up with this response.



**Creative**

- ▶ Art (4)
- ▶ Drawing (4)
- ▶ Painting (3)
- ▶ Knitting (2)
- ▶ Colouring in
- ▶ Painting/art

**Sport**

- ▶ Sport (9)
- ▶ Punching (4)
- ▶ Netball (3)
- ▶ Dancing (3)
- ▶ Boxing (2)
- ▶ Footy
- ▶ Tennis
- ▶ Shoot a ball/pass a ball
- ▶ Gym
- ▶ Kick
- ▶ Pass
- ▶ Fight
- ▶ Box
- ▶ Rugby
- ▶ Work out
- ▶ Catch
- ▶ Basketball
- ▶ Wake boarding

**Recreation**

- ▶ Game (4)
- ▶ Driving (3)
- ▶ Ride a bike (2)
- ▶ Riding motorbikes (2)
- ▶ Eating (2)
- ▶ Gardening (2)
- ▶ Pat animals
- ▶ Juggle
- ▶ Fishing
- ▶ Playing Angry Birds
- ▶ Partying

**Personal skills**

- ▶ Writing (3)
- ▶ Caring for people
- ▶ Cleaning
- ▶ Organising
- ▶ Encouragement
- ▶ Communication
- ▶ Mental help
- ▶ Showing love
- ▶ Doing hair
- ▶ Make up
- ▶ Shave legs or body parts
- ▶ Eating breathing
- ▶ Eating
- ▶ Sense of humour
- ▶ Learning
- ▶ How to write
- ▶ Writing/speaking
- ▶ Texting

**Jobs**

- ▶ Metal work
- ▶ Woodwork
- ▶ Mechanics (2)
- ▶ Using computers
- ▶ Working
- ▶ Journalism
- ▶ Cooking (6)
- ▶ Bake bread (baking)
- ▶ Bake

**Music**

- ▶ Music (4)
- ▶ Drums (2)
- ▶ Play bass
- ▶ Guitar
- ▶ Piano
- ▶ Making music
- ▶ Song writing
- ▶ Play instruments
- ▶ Clap
- ▶ Rap

**Others**

- ▶ Making mess
- ▶ Being clumsy
- ▶ Annoying plus arguing with parents

\*Numbers next to a response indicate how many times a group came up with this response.



### Friends, Family, Connection

- ▶ Seeing/Talking to a friend/mates (4)
- ▶ Talking to family (2)
- ▶ Friends and family (2)
- ▶ Friends (2)
- ▶ Family (surrounded by them)
- ▶ Connection
- ▶ Inner journeys
- ▶ Mentors
- ▶ Going on to culture lands
- ▶ Speaking to Elders
- ▶ Community

### Self-Care

- ▶ Sleep (2)
- ▶ Mediation (2)
- ▶ Breathe (2)
- ▶ Deep breathing
- ▶ Cry
- ▶ Soul
- ▶ Relax
- ▶ Wellbeing
- ▶ Laughing
- ▶ Being weird
- ▶ Crystals

### Technology

- ▶ The Game (3)
- ▶ Watching Tik Tok (2)
- ▶ Watch movies (2)
- ▶ Watch TV
- ▶ Batman

### Movement

- ▶ Punching bag (3)
- ▶ Walking/Walks (3)
- ▶ Sport (2)
- ▶ Yoga
- ▶ Play golf
- ▶ Going to gym
- ▶ Exercise

### Music

- ▶ Music (5)
- ▶ Listen to music
- ▶ Play music
- ▶ Music country
- ▶ Listen to sad music

### Food and drink

- ▶ Eating (2)
- ▶ Have a can of diet coke
- ▶ Coffee
- ▶ Drinks

### Other

- ▶ Driving (3)
- ▶ Fish (2)
- ▶ Motorbike riding (2)
- ▶ Art (2)
- ▶ Knitting
- ▶ Water
- ▶ Go outside
- ▶ Being at school
- ▶ Teachers
- ▶ After school activities
- ▶ Quad
- ▶ Pigging
- ▶ Farming
- ▶ Pets
- ▶ Pat dog

\*Numbers next to a response indicate how many times a group came up with this response.



Young people were asked at the end of the session if there was anything they would want to tell the Minister for Regional Youth about and what would it be.

- ▶ Make Moree better
- ▶ More activities
- ▶ Please upgrade our centres
- ▶ That we don't have as many opportunities as other people
- ▶ More places to go
- ▶ To have more gardens and entertainment
- ▶ People to present awards shows or music
- ▶ Celebrate what is happening in Moree
- ▶ More entertainment
- ▶ Celebrate
- ▶ Better to recognise the good things which young people do in Moree and celebrate it all



## With Sydney Policy Lab

- ▶ Leah Emmanuel (Community Partnerships and Training Manager)
- ▶ Katie Moore (Project Manager, Real Deal)

## Leadership and strength together

Young people started the session by reflecting on qualities of a good leader from examples of leadership in their community.

### What is a leader?

Someone who:

- ▶ leads by example
- ▶ encourages others
- ▶ is strong & courageous
- ▶ has strong 'mental will'
- ▶ will support you
- ▶ has experienced it & can help people through it
- ▶ is open to suggestions
- ▶ makes good choices
- ▶ helps out
- ▶ is respectful
- ▶ puts others before themselves
- ▶ works hard
- ▶ does it themselves
- ▶ will fight for you
- ▶ is trustworthy
- ▶ never gives up
- ▶ leads by example
- ▶ gives good advice
- ▶ keeps promises
- ▶ makes good choices
- ▶ wouldn't ask someone to do something they wouldn't do themselves
- ▶ doesn't discriminate
- ▶ is not mean
- ▶ looks after those who can't look after themselves
- ▶ represents what they stand for
- ▶ pushes out of their comfort zone
- ▶ treats others as equals
- ▶ leads by example
- ▶ is tough, but open to show their emotions
- ▶ doesn't give up
- ▶ tries not to let others down
- ▶ inspires or encourages others

### Who are leaders?

- ▶ Parents
- ▶ Grandparents
- ▶ Family
- ▶ Mums
- ▶ Martin Luther King
- ▶ Rosa Parks
- ▶ Batman
- ▶ Steph Curry
- ▶ Max N (Breaking barriers)
- ▶ Sports stars
- ▶ Dads
- ▶ Marnus Labuschagne
- ▶ Pat Cummins
- ▶ Scomo
- ▶ Boss
- ▶ Mayor
- ▶ Coaches
- ▶ Teachers



IMAGE: St Philomena's students engaging the Leadership and Strength Together session.



## Realising your Power – Your power is each other

Young people were encouraged to look around and see how many other young people agreed with them on issues that mattered to them, and to see the collective strength they have.

Young people then explored the idea of leadership as a collective. Young people stood in a long line and read out statements discussed earlier in the day about how to make Moree better for young people. Young people stepped forward if they agreed with the statement. Some examples were:

- ▶ There should be more recreational activities/ entertainment in Moree (majority agreed)
- ▶ The pool needs to be cheaper/more accessible (majority agreed)
- ▶ There needs to be better mental health support for young people (majority agreed)
- ▶ There needs to be more shops in Moree (majority agreed)
- ▶ There needs to be more transport options to access services and activities (majority agreed)



**IMAGE:** Moree Secondary College Students doing an activity to help them realise their collective power.

Young people were encouraged to look around and see how many other young people agreed with them on issues that mattered to them, and to see the collective strength they have. Through this exercise they realised there are common issues they can support each other on and got a sense of how many people would back them if they wanted to advocate around these issues.

**IMAGE:** Moree Secondary College Students doing an activity to help them realise their collective power.

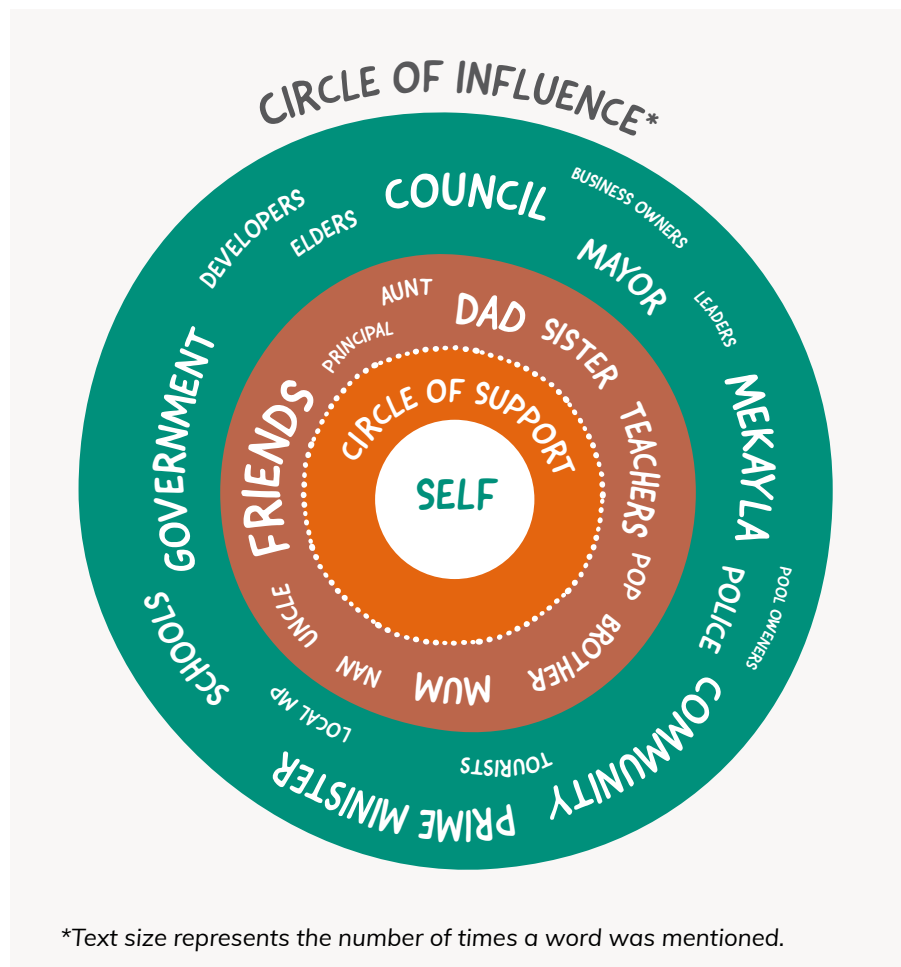


## Circles of support and influence

Young people chose one of the issues that had come up that day and started to think about how to make change. They were encouraged to think about their superpower, which is each other. Young people then explored their circles of support and influence.

**Circles of Support** – these are the people in your life that you know have your back. Young people wrote down the names of people in their circle of support (see right). Many young people placed family members in their circle of support as well as friends and teachers.

**Circles of Influence** – these are people you know have the power to make change, decision makers, people with resources or people connected to them. Young people wrote down the names of people or institutions in their circle of influence (see below). Young people were able to identify decision makers and considered their community members, youth services, Council and school teachers as a key part of being able to affect change.



\*Text size represents the number of times a word was mentioned.

Young people were encouraged to make links between their circles of support and circles of influence, to find allies and know that young people are not alone in wanting change.

### Key take-aways

Leadership is not about one person standing at the front, doing everything.

- ▶ It's about working together in teams and bringing other people along to join in and support you to make change happen.
- ▶ Young people learnt one advocacy tool – circle of support and influence - that they can start using to help plan how to make a difference. They don't need to have all the answers right away and young people can build strength with the people around them.



**IMAGE:** Students proudly hold up the Aboriginal flag. Photograph by Patrick Marshall.



## Women and men's sessions

### Men's Session

With Paul Spearim, Ian Brown, Jamie Sampson and Thomas Duncan

### Women's Session

With Tameeka Tighe, Natasha Piddock, Lorilie Haines and Jaydee Picker

Young people in Moree specifically asked for the opportunity to have a space where young men and women were separated. The sessions were facilitated by local Aboriginal leaders from Moree and provided a safe place for young people to talk about health and wellbeing. The sessions ended with the young women and men coming together to learn more about culture and cultural dancing. Many young people indicated these were their favourite sessions of the day. Whilst lots of students enjoyed engaging in the dancing sessions, many students also enjoyed the opportunity to simply observe the dancing and asked for more opportunities in Moree to do this.

## Women's business

This session focused on culture, healthy relationships and where to seek support.

During this session, young women were asked if they knew what services were available in Moree and where they could go for support and help. They were able to list some local services where they could go for support and what hotlines they could call. They didn't know about homelessness services or that they could book their own doctors' appointments. Some young women mentioned that they were aware of some services, but that they don't feel comfortable accessing them and that there is stigma around using services.

By the end of the session, most young women had learnt about a service or support they didn't know of before the session.

### Young women want:

- ▶ More age appropriate access to programs and services.
- ▶ More living skills through education. They need preparation for outside of school life.
- ▶ More things to do for young women.

## Healthy Relationships

Young women were asked what healthy relationships look like and do not look like. Their responses are below.



Young people said they wanted more opportunities to connect with their families.

## Men's business

This session focused on culture, mental health, mentors and leadership.

### Role models, leaders and mentors

During this session young men discussed leaders, role models and mentors in their community. While some young men gave examples of existing leadership and role models in their community or in the home, many could not think of examples. Some young men expressed that there is a lack of family connection, and young men want that connection in line with their culture.

### Mental Health

We know through the JR work that mental health and wellbeing is a big issue in Moree. Throughout the sessions the facilitators were open about their own mental health journeys, their fears and coming from a place of unconditional love. They wanted to show that there is an important sensitive side to being a man and that once you start opening up you realise everyone goes through it and a lot of people care. There was limited understanding by young men about the supports available for mental health. There is still a lot of shame and lack of confidence for some young men around accessing support.

#### What young men said:

- ▶ There is a lot of shame in Moree.
- ▶ There is shame in getting support.
- ▶ They don't know what's available.
- ▶ More services need to be culturally appropriate and tailored.
- ▶ Young people want more to do in Moree.



## Young women and men coming together to learn about culture

Young women and men ended the day by coming back together to learn about culture. Paul Spearim, one of the facilitators of the session, made all the young people feel welcome and safe in the space when discussing culture. He explained that culture isn't just for Aboriginal people, it needs to be taught to everyone. Young people enthusiastically learnt language – with “Yawu” (meaning ‘yes’ in Gamilaroi language) ringing out across the space confidently and proudly. Young people learnt the Broлга and Dhinawan dances.



**IMAGE:** Moree Secondary College Students learning dances from Paul Spearim

## Lunch and Afternoon Activities

At the end of each day and during breaks, young people had the opportunity to return to The SHAE Academy to engage with stalls and interactive spaces. Within this space there was:

- ▶ Help with resumes and cover letters with Aboriginal Employment Strategy
- ▶ Legal advice and help with fines with Aboriginal Legal Service / Revenue NSW / Legal Aid NSW
- ▶ Help with birth certificates from Births, Deaths and Marriages
- ▶ Professional photographs with Patrick Marshall
- ▶ Signing up to get their drivers licence with Bamara
- ▶ Creative spaces around what they want for their community
- ▶ Weaving with Mona Munro
- ▶ Creating music with Mad Proppa Deadly
- ▶ Dhiyyaaan Centre's exhibition 'The history of Moree'
- ▶ Native plants exhibition and damper making with Kerry Saunders and the Sydney University
- ▶ The Barwon photography exhibition



**IMAGE:** Maayu Mali catered the event and young people planned the menu for the day.



**IMAGES (Clockwise from top)**

- ▶ Services were available for young people to engage with.
- ▶ Kerry Saunders gave a display of native grains and using them in damper making.
- ▶ Jaydee Picker worked on large paintings to display at the Youth Forum and Block Party with young people.

# Insights and learnings

Seeing so many young people engaged and empowered at the youth forum was very meaningful. There are currently no safe spaces for young people to voice their opinions and the youth forum showed hope and the potential Moree can offer .

Mekayla Cochrane, Youth Lead, Just Reinvest Moree

## Key insights

- ▶ Young people in Moree want more of a voice.
- ▶ Young people have a deep understanding of their community, and they want to be involved in developing the solutions to issues facing their community. They have practical and positive solutions for change.
- ▶ Young people already have a lot of skills, talents, and strengths that they can contribute to change.
- ▶ Having young people involved in each stage of the process contributed to the success and impact of the Youth Forum and Block Party. It also helped to create buy-in from young people and key stakeholders for future youth leadership and development opportunities.
- ▶ Working across the community, universities, youth sector and with peak organisations was important to create a meaningful and impactful experience for young people through the Youth Forum and Block Party.
- ▶ There is an important piece of work to be done around sharing learnings and ways of working with the broader Moree community to ensure safe spaces exist for young people to speak up and be involved in, that youth advocacy and self-determination are supported and valued and that the solutions proposed by young people are backed and acted on.



## What young people want

Young people are proud of their community, but they want the same opportunities as young people in other places. Young people want:

- ▶ More activities and places just to be young people – e.g. drop in centres, movies, ways to have fun, affordable access to the pool, better infrastructure.
- ▶ More opportunities to connect with culture
- ▶ More opportunities for women and men's spaces.
- ▶ More opportunities to participate with their families, elders and communities to have fun and make positive change.
- ▶ Better mental health support.
- ▶ Better access to and more role models.



**IMAGE:** Mechanical Bull activity with the Salvos.

# Feedback

## Student feedback on the Youth Forum

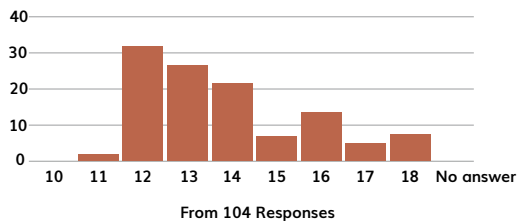
What school are you from?



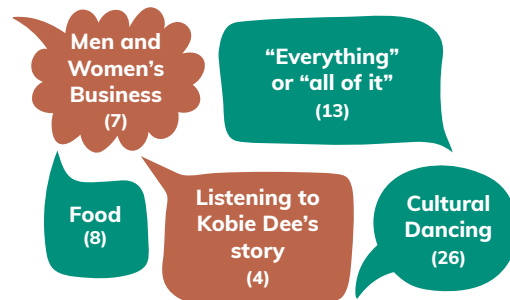
Why or why not would you like it to happen again?



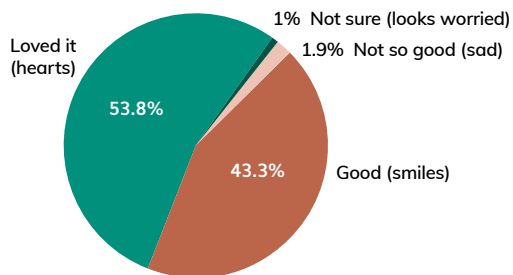
How old are you?



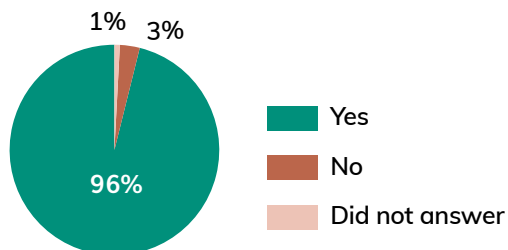
Students' favourite parts of the youth forum



How did you feel about the forum?



Would you like the youth forum to happen again?



What would make living in Moree Plains easier?



Top answers from 104 responses\*

## Other feedback

Young people are already asking when you are going to start planning the next one. They want to be involved and loved being part of the last one.

### Worker from St Philomena's

*I was happy with how good young people were at listening in sessions. Separating the genders made young people open up and feel more comfortable with the conversation. The facilitators we had were great. They were the right people for the job. It was needed in this community, thankful to be a part of it.*

### Workshop Facilitator

*It has been an absolute honour and privilege to be a part of it and honestly one of the highlights of my time at the Lab. Really keen to be kept in the loop about what happens next and be there if you want to bounce off ideas and see if there are any ways I can support the work you all are doing at Just Reinvest, especially with the young people.*

### External Workshop Facilitator

*The Youth Forum created a space for young people to learn about Aboriginal culture outside of the mainstream education system. It allowed a safe space for Aboriginal young people to talk openly about the struggles they face, just for being Aboriginal, whereas some non-Aboriginal young people may not have been exposed to the differences between them.*

### Youth Forum organiser

## Next steps

- ▶ Share the Youth Forum Report with young people and get their feedback on next steps.
- ▶ Share the Youth Forum Report with people, organisations and government young people identify.
- ▶ Continue to grow momentum around young people's empowerment. This will include working with key government, service and community stakeholders to create safe spaces and opportunities for young people to engage in and create change.
- ▶ Young people have asked for the Youth Forum to be an annual event. We will work with young people who led the event this year and key stakeholders to start working on this and growing youth leadership and community participation around the Youth Forum.
- ▶ Continuing the Moree Youth Advisory Committee. Leading up to the Youth Forum, young people were meeting regularly to plan the events. Given that young people are calling out for a safe space to come together and make change, meetings of a Moree Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) will be held regularly, in conjunction with Miyay Birray, on a Tuesday afternoon from 3.30pm.
  - ▶ The YAC can play an important role in advising Moree on issues that are relevant to young people across their community and progressing the work that came out of the Youth Forum. Membership of the YAC is open to all young people between 12 and 25 years of age residing in Moree. The YAC will provide opportunities for young people to develop leadership skills and be part of the decision-making process. Further, the committee will provide the opportunity for young people to gain experience and knowledge of how to make change in their community. If you would like to be involved reach out to the JR team or contact Miyay Birray on 6752 6038. Transport and food will be provided.
- ▶ Supporting a range of young people with opportunities to grow their skills and advocacy impact – including young people in custody.



- ▶ Through the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) and engagement with other young people priorities issues and solutions identified in the Youth Forum will be progressed and advocated around.
- ▶ The YAC has already started to build on requests coming from the Youth Forum to have more role models, music workshops and cultural experiences. The YAC invited Kobie Dee, Nter and Mad Proppa Deadly back to Moree to engage with young people and hold music workshops throughout May and June. Members of the YAC also did a cultural tour with Kerry Saunders and had a trip to a cultural healing festival in Bourke.
- ▶ Meet with the Minister for Regional Youth: Young people will advocate for a meeting with the Minister for Regional Youth.







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