



**PORT STEPHENS**  
COUNCIL

The mental health and wellbeing of young in Port Stephens matters so, *“lets keep the conversation going”*

Port Stephens Youth Advisory Panel

15 September, 2015



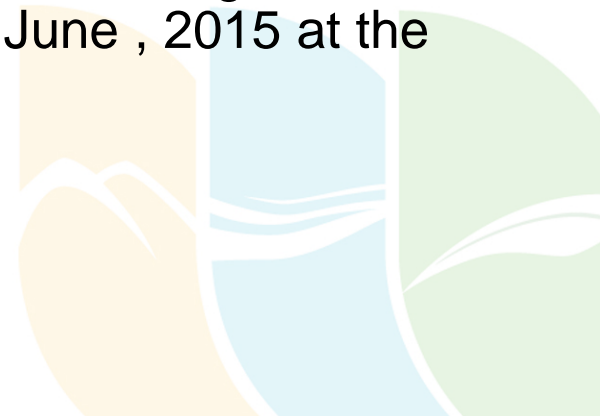
# Port Stephens Youth Advisory Panel

*The champions*

Introducing members of the Port Stephens Council Youth Advisory Panel here today, who stand as advocates and champions of the cause on behalf of their peers.

A special acknowledgment to those panel members who been more heavily involved in the work on mental health and wellbeing to date; Adrian, Natasha, Raja, Tabatha, Ryan, and Alannah.

As part of the panels advocacy work on mental health and wellbeing the young people hosted the *Imagine This* youth forum on 19 June , 2015 at the Medowie Community Centre.





# Why we hosted the forum

## *Words into action*

- Panel members were all in agreement that the issue of mental health and wellbeing amongst their peers was a priority issue.
- Conversations with the wider community only confirmed this opinion.
- Advocating on the issue and hosting a forum to assist this work is well aligned to the 2015-2018 Youth Strategy
- **Objective 5:** Improve opportunities for young people to make a meaningful contribution to public life and decision making processes
- **Action 5.1:** Support the Youth Advisory Panel to advocate and lobby on issues that are important to them



# The community of Port Stephens

## *The key statistics*

One in four young people (15-24 years) in the Port Stephens region are experiencing a mental health condition (approximately 1900 young people).

That equates to the total population of both Hunter River High, Irrawang High and a few more!

Of these students, only one in four will have received professional care (approximately 475 young people).

Only 50% of those with severe mental health issues are receiving professional help. Lack of accessibility, costs, not knowing they can get help and believing they can manage on their own, are contributing factors.

***These key statistics are from the ABS Data 2011***



# Imagine This

*Conversation in action*





# Participation of young people and community

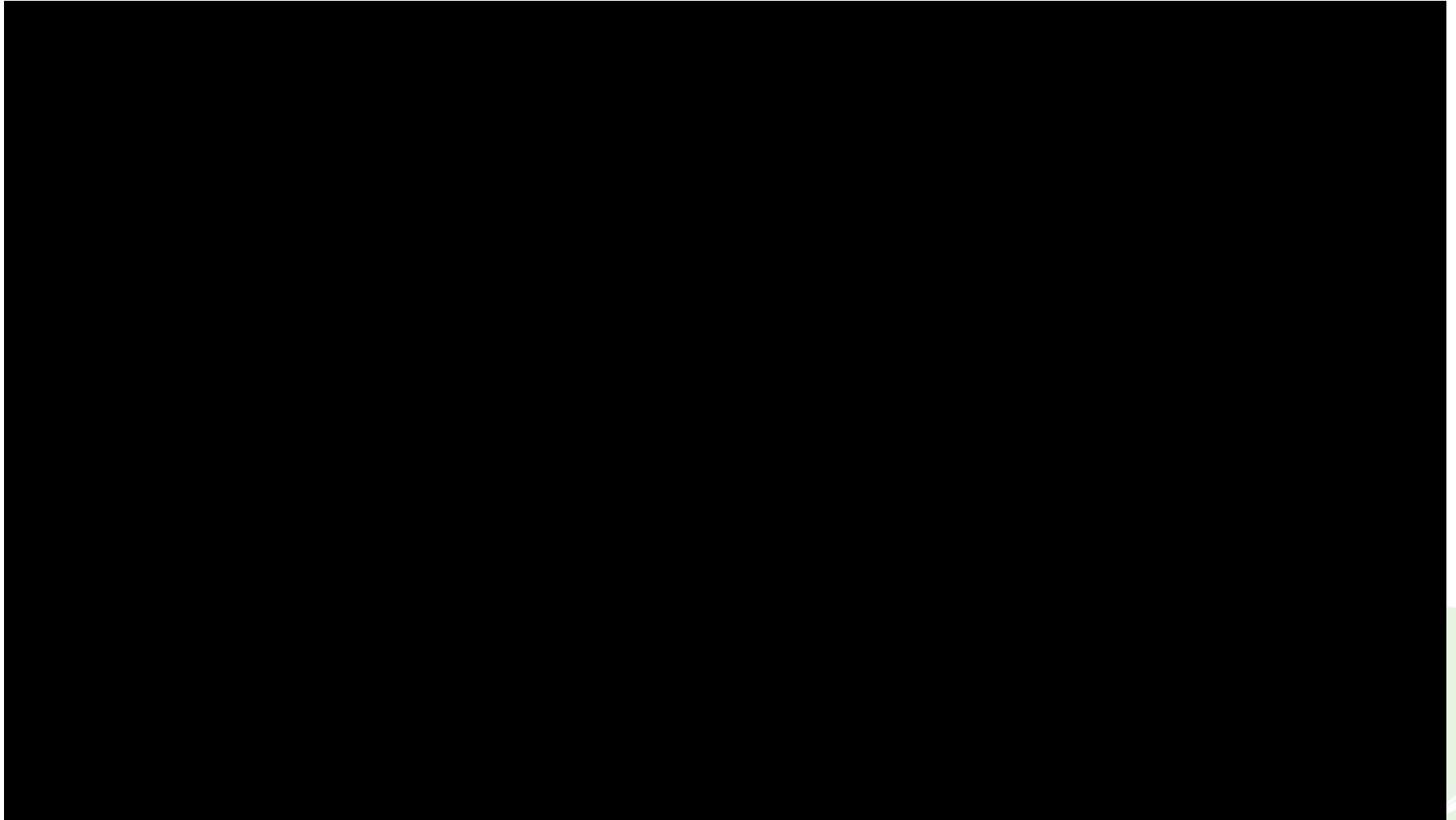
## *A real partnership*

- Students from Hunter River High, Irrawang High, St Phillips and WEA Alesco schools participated in a range of workshops and creative activities.
- Community partners with whom we have shared ongoing discussion on the issues, some of whom also participated at *Imagine This* forum:

Headspace (Newcastle); *Youth Mental Health Project (HNEH)*; Hunter Institute of Mental Health; *Benevolent Society*; Autism Spectrum Australia; *Up & Up*; Hunter Arts Collective; *Deb's Art @ Bay*; Medowie Lions Club; *COPSY*; Port Stephens Suicide Prevention Network; *Youth Health Team (Hunter New England Health)*



IMAGINE THIS – a short video of the event





# Other outcomes and general feedback

*Little bit's of gold!*

- Towards The Forum Report
- World Café data
- Stronger local network of organisations
- As a result of the forum Newcastle Headspace, Up & Up and Autism Spectrum Australia have formed a partnership and received cultural project funding to continue the forums 'creative conversation' in local high schools in Term 4 2015
- The more we promote positive mental health the more young people will engage with it
- Young people will be talking about this event which in itself helps with promotion of the message
- It's starting the conversation



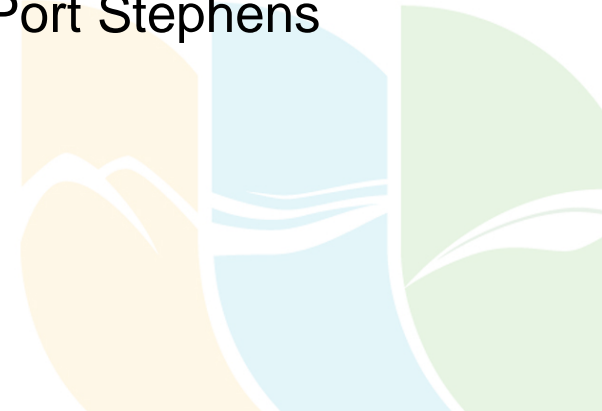




# Recommendations

*Let's keep the conversation going!*

- That the youth advisory panel continue to advocate and show leadership on the issue by presenting their work at future community forums (eg forums specific to mental health / wellbeing; local service clubs meeting eg Lions Clubs, Rotary Clubs)
- That members of the youth advisory panel work with community partners to 'keep the conversation alive' in local high schools
- That the youth advisory panel support future research endeavours into mental health and the wellbeing of young people in Port Stephens





Questions?