I am very pleased to introduce the 2017 youth strategy, youTHRIVE. In 2015 we commenced this series of annual strategies to provide timely responses to current issues and to develop longer-term goals through ongoing engagement with the youth sector and with young people.

Each strategy has built upon the last. In 2015, It Starts with YOUth identified youth engagement, youth homelessness and youth transitions as key issues. In 2016, Connected to YOUth deepened our engagement with the issue of youth homelessness, expanded the important Successful Transitions program and developed new opportunities such as the Be a Job Maker and MoneySmart Rookie Grants programs.

This year, youTHRIVE will continue to address these priorities and to demonstrate our commitment to ongoing collaboration with our sector partners and with young people.

Recognising the connection between youth homelessness and relationship, family and sexual violence, we will bring key players together – including young people – to co-design a Youth Safety Strategy that will harness our collective skills, efforts and resources to make a real impact in this crucial area.

In collaboration with the University of South Australia, Uniting Communities and the Service to Youth Council, we will pilot a youth homelessness program in Mount Gambier aimed at preventing at-risk young people from becoming homeless.

We will expand the employment focus of our Successful Transitions program through a collaborative partnership with the Department of State Development.

Our Be a Job Maker program, introducing young people to the world of entrepreneurship, will offer exciting new opportunities in 2017, connecting businesses and young people in Northern Adelaide to create innovative ideas that support our South Australian economy.

Recognising the enormous diversity of experience, aspirations, circumstances, skills, interests and cultural backgrounds of South Australia’s young people, we will explore new responses to the identified issues of diverse groups, such as the dynamics of media and multiculturalism and strengthening networks for LGBTIQ young people. This year we also showcase some of the tremendous work happening across the sector to support and empower young people with diverse needs.

In 2016, our Premier, Hon Jay Weatherill signed the Stronger Together commitment, through which government and the community services and health sectors commit to working together to achieve real results for South Australians.

We recognise that for young South Australians to thrive, they must be connected and actively participating, healthy and resilient, and earning, learning and confident in their own futures and the future of our state.

Young people play a pivotal role in the thriving of our state, both now and into the future. I look forward to the contributions youTHRIVE will make to achieving this aim.

Hon Zoe Bettison
Minister for Youth
What do young people need to thrive?

The Government has a vision for a thriving South Australia, where all people can actively contribute to building the social and economic wellbeing of their communities.

youTHRIVE is underpinned by this vision. It recognises the importance of providing young people with the opportunities and supports they need to build the foundations for a thriving life. It is framed around the results outlined in the Stronger Together commitment, that government and the community services and health sectors are working together to achieve.

The strategy outlines youTHRIVE actions that contribute to these outcomes in 2017 and also recognises the sector’s contribution and work across Government.

Young people are earning, learning and confident in their future
- Live above poverty line
- Enjoy a flourishing economy
- Access education and training
- Have a positive outlook.

Young people are connected and actively participating
- Feel safe and welcome
- Have a sense of belonging
- Inform and make decisions
- Are recognised and respected.

Young people are healthy and resilient
- Live a healthy lifestyle
- Recover from adversity
- Have resources and support
- Adapt to challenges
- Access help when needed.
Young South Australians

More than 268,000 young people in South Australia contribute to the vibrancy and growth of the state. Who are they and where do they live?

- Over 30,000 are of diverse sexual orientation, sex or gender
- 8,000 identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- Over 30,300 are carers
- Over 36,000 born outside of Australia
- Over 170,000 15-24 year olds work and/or study
- Over 56,000 are volunteers

Of the 24,000 15-24 year olds in SA living with disability, over 7,000 are living with a profound or severely limiting disability.
### Regions:

- **64,700 Northern Adelaide**
- **37,800 Eastern Adelaide**
- **35,200 Western Adelaide**
- **57,000 Southern Adelaide**
- **12,000 Adelaide Hills**

Source: Census 2011; Carers SA, 2016; ABS - Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2015; Volunteers in SA Survey 2016; Young People Participating in South Australia (October 2016); Australian Human Rights Commission and Safe Schools Coalition Australia 2016. Statistics are approximate. Definitive figures are not currently available for many youth demographic profiles.
Young people are earning, learning and confident in their future

We want to support young people to earn an adequate income, to benefit from living in a strong and flourishing community, to have a positive outlook for the future and to define and achieve their own success.

What’s happening
There are many initiatives across the state contributing to these aims. While impossible to summarise all the good work that is happening across the sector and Government, below are a few highlights.

The State Government is partnering with Good Shepherd Microfinance to trial a Microenterprise Development Program in Northern Adelaide that will provide small loans for new small enterprises or contribute to existing ones. Program participants will also develop their entrepreneurial skills through ongoing mentoring and business coaching.

In 2017, Renew Adelaide will give entrepreneurs aged under 25 the opportunity to access one of five rent-free spaces that suit their start-up business idea. Participants in the Own It program can access funds to fit out their space and connect with a support program or mentor. They will also receive support from the Renew Adelaide team. For more information check out renewadelaide.com.au.

Gaining a driver’s license is an important part of living independently and crucial for accessing training and employment, particularly in rural areas. In Peterborough in 2016, the State Government supported young people to get their learner’s permit and provisional licence by supporting access to supervising drivers. In 2017, the Government will continue to partner with the community to explore innovative ways to support young people to achieve these outcomes.
Taylor, 21
Taylor slept on a couch at her aunt’s house and relied on other people to support her. She had left school early, had no bank account and had a history of substance abuse. Taylor’s goals were to find her own place and pursue a career in a trade. With the support of Successful Transitions and an employment provider, Taylor is now enrolled in a TAFE SA engineering course and thoroughly enjoying it. She now has a stable income, a bank account, accommodation and is on the way to obtaining a learner’s permit.

Jay, 18
Jay arrived in Australia as a refugee, living with extended family and caring full-time for his cousins. He had left home, did not attend school, had no income and was sleeping rough when he was referred to Successful Transitions. After working with his case manager, Jay is now working part-time in retail and is keen to start his own business selling cleaning products. His housing and income are secure. He is enrolled in foundation studies at university and wants to progress to an Engineering or Business degree.
1. Expand the success of Successful Transitions

What we know
Launched in April 2015, the Successful Transitions program supports young people aged 17-24 to set personal goals and take the leap into further education, training or secure employment, creating opportunities and the best chance for their lives to thrive.

The program is delivered across selected metropolitan and regional locations. Specialist providers connect young people to a range of services and offer tailored support to help them work towards engaging in meaningful employment and education within their local area.

To find out more about the program visit officeforyouth.sa.gov.au.

In the first year of the program, participants said the top barriers to further education, training or employment were:
- unstable housing
- experience of abuse or domestic violence
- alcohol or drug use.

For participants in the first year of the program:
- 62% reported minimising barriers
- 49% commenced in education or training
- 28% commenced employment.

What we will do
In 2017, DCSI will partner with the Department of State Development to deliver Successful Transitions, with a strengthened focus on innovative approaches to improving employment, education and training outcomes for participating young people.
Matthew, 19

After an early diagnosis of diabetes at age 15, Matthew experienced challenges administering his treatment and saw the opportunity to turn his personal struggle into opportunity, creating a product idea to improve the lives of diabetics worldwide.

Through his involvement in Be a Job Maker, he gained the confidence to realise his skills and progress his business, Wise Youth. He is now undertaking work experience, developing his brand and refining his business model. He is working closely with a fellow participant to collaborate on building prototypes. In the long term, he wants to create a team that builds an ongoing portfolio of new products.
Be a Job Maker

‘Be a Job Maker has completely changed the way that I think about myself and public speaking and the importance of this skill in the business/entrepreneurial space to build my business. The opportunity was a transformative experience and I feel greatly empowered to influence people and industry in ways I never thought possible.’

2. Expand the success of Be a Job Maker

What we know

It is vital that young South Australians are equipped with the entrepreneurial skills to thrive as the business leaders of tomorrow.

Be a Job Maker focuses on building these skills for young South Australians aged 16-22 transitioning from education to work or further education. The program harnesses the benefits of emerging technologies, and the directions of the changing job market, to help young people develop their own start-up microbusinesses or confidently pursue further education, training or work.

Delivered by program partners Flinders New Venture Institute, Career BluePrint and the Sammy D Foundation, the inaugural 2016 program, delivered in Tonsley, Southern Adelaide, was a great success.

What we will do

In 2017, Be a Job Maker will extend its reach to bring local businesses and young people together in Northern Adelaide, with a focus on turning innovative ideas into results that strengthen the South Australian economy.
Young people are connected and actively participating

We want all young South Australians to feel a sense of belonging, welcome and safety in their communities, to contribute to the social and economic life of our state, and to influence the decisions that affect them. We want all young people to feel confident that their culture and diversity are recognised and respected.

**What’s happening**

There are many initiatives across the sector and Government contributing to this aim. While impossible to summarise all the good work that is happening, below are a few highlights.

Many young South Australians actively contribute to their communities through **volunteering**, which in turn connects them to new opportunities and has been shown to improve their sense of wellbeing. What better way to promote the many benefits of volunteering to young South Australians, than through the school curriculum? In 2017, as part of the Volunteering Strategy for South Australia, DCSI will work with our partners to promote take up of the Australian Volunteering Curriculum in South Australian high schools.

Volunteering is also a proven pathway to employment. Volunteering SA&NT’s **WeDo app** gives young people easy access to volunteering opportunities and provides potential employers with a record of their volunteering hours and contributions. Visit [volunteeringsa.org.au](http://volunteeringsa.org.au) or download the free app.

A collaborative approach is vital to creating **positive alternatives for young people who are at risk of involvement with the justice system**. DCSI is coordinating an initiative in Northern Adelaide that brings together many partners including government agencies, service providers, community and Aboriginal leaders to coordinate local efforts and build positive connections and outcomes for these young people and their families.
Some groups of young people face particular barriers to connecting and participating. youTHRIVE will focus on specific projects for multicultural and LGBTIQ young people, in response to the identified needs of these groups.

1. Media and Multiculturalism – Starting with Young People

What we know
The Multicultural Action Plan for South Australia 2017-2018 outlines a commitment to helping multicultural communities work with the media to promote accurate and positive stories. We know this has particular significance for young people, especially those who are newly arrived in South Australia, who might be vulnerable to misunderstanding and isolation.

What we will do
DCSI will work with multicultural communities and young people to consider the scope of this project, including how to use social media and artistic works to convey stories and how young people can positively represent their communities.

2. Connecting LGBTIQ Young People

What we know
Thousands of young people across Australia are at risk of experiencing homophobic and transphobic behaviour, discrimination and isolation. These experiences can have serious consequences for the health and wellbeing of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) young people. In South Australia, a small number of groups, often led by young people, provide safe places for young people to connect, share stories and express their views.

What we will do
In 2017, DCSI will engage with these groups to better understand their needs and to improve their connection to government and non-government organisations.
Young people are healthy and resilient

We want all young South Australians to access the services and resources they need for emotional and physical wellbeing. We want them to live in an environment that facilitates positive wellbeing, builds their resilience and strengthens their ability to adapt to new circumstances and challenges.

What’s happening

There are many initiatives across the sector and Government contributing to these aims. While impossible to summarise all the good work that is happening, below are a few highlights.

Young South Australian carers face the challenge of balancing their caring responsibilities with education, work and social lives. In 2017, Carers SA will develop and trial a new service model in three centres in metropolitan and regional South Australia that supports the long-term wellbeing of young carers by following their caring, academic and personal development.

From 1 January 2017, South Australian young people between 15 and 17 years of age will begin to enter the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). NDIS is a new way of providing support designed to help people with disability achieve personal goals, including greater independence, community involvement, employment and improved wellbeing.

Positive education is a fresh approach to helping school communities thrive, combining positive psychology with the best approaches to teaching and learning. DCSI’s Northern Connections supports schools and community organisations to implement positive education initiatives and delivers training to hundreds of educators in Northern Adelaide. Northern Connections will continue to build on its successes and partnerships in 2017.

Multicultural Youth SA (MYSA) provides a range of supports for multicultural young people and young families in South Australia. The Brave Hearts program, developed in partnership with the University of South Australia, is aimed at reducing domestic violence against young women and families from multicultural backgrounds. It will use a train-the-trainer model, informed by young women who have experienced intimate partner violence. In 2017, a series of workshops will be delivered to schools, community groups and other service providers.

For more information visit ndis.gov.au.
youTHRIVE will further develop the focus on youth homelessness and its causes, using the foundations of research and engagement from our Strategy actions over the past two years.

1. Develop a Youth Safety Strategy

What we know

- There is a recognised connection between youth homelessness and young people’s disproportionate vulnerability to relationship, family and sexual violence*.
- Women aged 18-25 are twice as likely to experience physical or sexual violence than older women. This is estimated to increase fourfold for those aged 14–19¹.
- Young men aged 16-24 are at greatest risk of perpetration².

Governments, along with the community and business sectors, have made significant policy and service improvements and continue to raise community awareness to keep women and children safe from violence. But there is a need to recognise and respond to the unique needs of young people experiencing and /or engaging in such forms of violence³.

An across government and sector steering group was established in 2016 to explore this issue with representatives from Housing SA, Office for Women, SA Health, Uniting Communities and Multicultural Youth SA (MYSA). A number of workshops were also held with further representatives from government and the community sector to inform a response to this issue.

What we will do

In 2017, we will bring government, the community sector and young people together to co-design a Youth Safety Strategy to keep young people safe from relationship, family and sexual violence. The strategy will shine a light on required policy and service responses and will engage with young people, particularly those with lived experience, to ensure the most effective and informed responses.

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*This includes any act of gender-based violence that causes or could cause fear, physical, sexual or psychological harm. It is also acknowledged that family violence is the preferred term to describe Aboriginal people’s experience of domestic/relationship violence.

¹ Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies, Violence against Young Women in Australia: Snapshot, 2013.


2. Pilot an early intervention program for young people at risk of homelessness

What we know
- 1 in 4 people who are experiencing homelessness in South Australia are aged 12-24. 40% of them are of school age.
- The leading causes of youth homelessness include domestic and family violence, housing crisis and family conflict.

Early identification and support is crucial to preventing at-risk young people from moving into unstable and unpredictable living situations.

What we will do
In 2017, the University of South Australia, in partnership with Uniting Communities and the Service to Youth Council, will pilot an innovative, place-based approach in Mount Gambier. The two-year Community of Schools and Youth Services Early Intervention Pilot will operate across local high schools, using a survey to identify those at risk and offering a range of supports to prevent disengagement and homelessness.

4 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Estimating Homelessness, 2011. The real number of homeless young people is likely higher due to staying with friends or couch surfing.
Deliverables under the 2017 youTHRIVE strategy

Young people are earning, learning and confident in their future:
• Continue to deliver and strengthen the Successful Transitions program
• Broaden the reach of the Be a Job Maker program.

Young people are connected and actively participating:
• Engage with young people and the sector to promote positive and accurate representations of multicultural stories and communities in the media
• Engage with LGBTIQ groups and networks to build connections and capacity.

Young people are healthy and resilient:
• Develop a Youth Safety Strategy
• Implement a Community of Schools and Youth Services Intervention Pilot.
Acknowledging the many ways young South Australians are supported

Many government and non-government agencies deliver youth specific services across metropolitan and regional South Australia. These services support young people to access safe transport and stable housing, develop skills such as cooking and budgeting, look after their health and wellbeing, engage in learning, become work-ready and feel connected to their friends, family and community. Information about government services can be found at sa.gov.au

It is also important that young people are able to have their say about issues that affect them. Better Together: A practical guide to effective engagement with young people has many suggestions for how best to engage with young people and which organisations work closely with young people. Check out the guide at officeforyouth.sa.gov.au

The guide was developed in partnership with the Department for the Premier and Cabinet and the Youth Affairs Council of South Australia (YACSA). YACSA is the peak body representing young people aged 12-25 and organisations and networks throughout the non-government youth sector. Visit yacsa.com.au for more information about membership and their experience in youth participation and youth sector knowledge.
Feedback
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