

Young people call for urgent reform in landmark Your Voice report

Canberra will hear directly from young Australians today as yourtown launches its *Your Voice Report 2025*, bringing together the views of more than 4,000 young people aged 12–25 and highlighting urgent reform needed across safety, mental health, education, and the rising cost of living.

yourtown CEO Tracy Adams said the findings are a wake-up call for government, service providers, and the community alike.

"This report is more than research, it's the raw voice of young people across Australia calling for change," Ms Adams said.

"They want safer communities, fairer opportunities, and services that meet them where they are. It's time to stop talking about young people and start listening to them."

"While we are starting with Canberra, this is just the beginning. We invite all governments— federal, state, and local— to read the report and engage with us to better understand what young people are saying and how we can act together."

Youth advocates will join **yourtown** in presenting the report to federal government representatives. They will share their lived experiences directly with decision-makers to ensure young people's concerns are heard at the highest levels.

The Your Voice project unfolded in three stages:

- Survey: 4,212 young people aged 12–25 shared their views on the biggest issues facing their generation.
- Online forums: 86 participants delved into the survey findings across five themes – mental and physical health, education and employment, cost of living, safety and inclusion, and youth voice.
- Youth Summits: In July 2025, 42 young people aged 18–25 from across the country gathered at the Bupa campus in Melbourne for an in-person summit, while 20 young people aged 12–17 contributed through an online summit.

One young participant urged leaders to act, "Please listen to the youth. We are scared and angry about the world we are growing up in."

The survey revealed overwhelming concern about domestic, family and sexual violence, with 82% rating it as the most urgent issue facing young Australians. Many described feeling unsafe, unheard, and unsupported by current systems and in their homes, schools, and communities.

Mental health also emerged as a clear priority, with 70% identifying it as the top area for government reform. Young people said they were dissatisfied with the affordability and accessibility of services and called for a shift away from crisis-driven care towards early intervention, stigma reduction, and youth-led support.

"As a young person, it can be daunting trying to access services. Having to re-tell the story can become exhausting and disheartening," one participant explained.

The cost-of-living crisis was rated as critical by three in four respondents (75%), who pointed to housing stress, income support, and education costs as major barriers to

their wellbeing. Many called for reform of Youth Allowance and more affordable housing options, while others suggested a “Youth Card” to ease education and transport expenses.

Education and employment were also front of mind, with 65% calling for a system that is more practical, inclusive, and better aligned to real-world opportunities. Yet confidence in government decision-making remains low, with only 16% of young people expressing high confidence that leaders are listening to them and understanding their needs.

As another participant shared, “These are serious issues that many young children and teens face daily. There is little to no support for these topics and that is not acceptable. Young people deserve a voice and a better future — this is our future and our life, and we deserve a say in how it goes.”

The Your Voice Report 2025 sets out eight key recommendations for reform, including the creation of specialist youth guides in government services, early intervention hubs, equitable pay for young workers, and safer, more supportive school environments.

Fast facts

- 4,212 young people aged 12–25 completed the national survey
- 86 joined online forums exploring the five key themes
- 42 young people aged 18–25 took part in an in-person Youth Summit (Melbourne, July 2025)
- 20 young people aged 12–17 contributed through an online summit
- 82% said domestic, family and sexual violence is the most urgent issue
- 70% identified mental health as the top priority for government reform
- 75% highlighted cost-of-living as a major barrier to wellbeing and opportunity
- 65% called for reform in education and employment
- Only 16% expressed high confidence in government decision-making
- Eight key recommendations include specialist youth guides, early intervention hubs, equitable pay, affordable housing, and safer school environments

The Your Voice Report is available on the **yourtown** website, at www.yourtown.com.au/your-voice

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Media Contact

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