

Youth Action Plan

2025

Early Engagement Survey



WAIMAKARIRI
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Youth Action Plan 2025 Early Engagement Survey

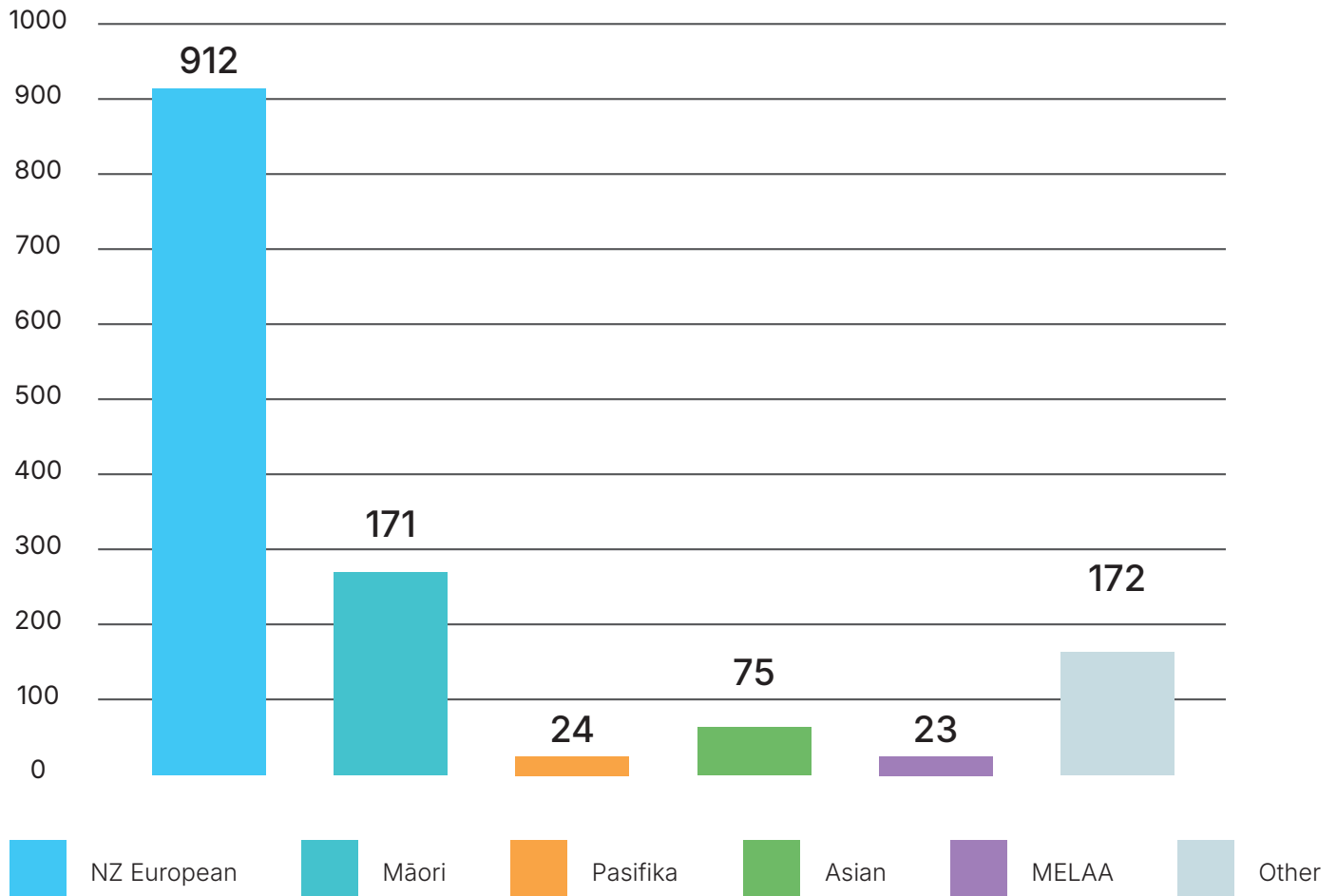
2025 Early Engagement Survey

Between 18 May and 13 July 2025, the Waimakariri District Council set out to engage with our local young people to better understand what challenges and issues are most significant to them at present. This engagement was incredibly successful with 1112 12-to-24-year-olds engaging with Council during this time, accounting for approximately 11.63 percent of the District's youth population.

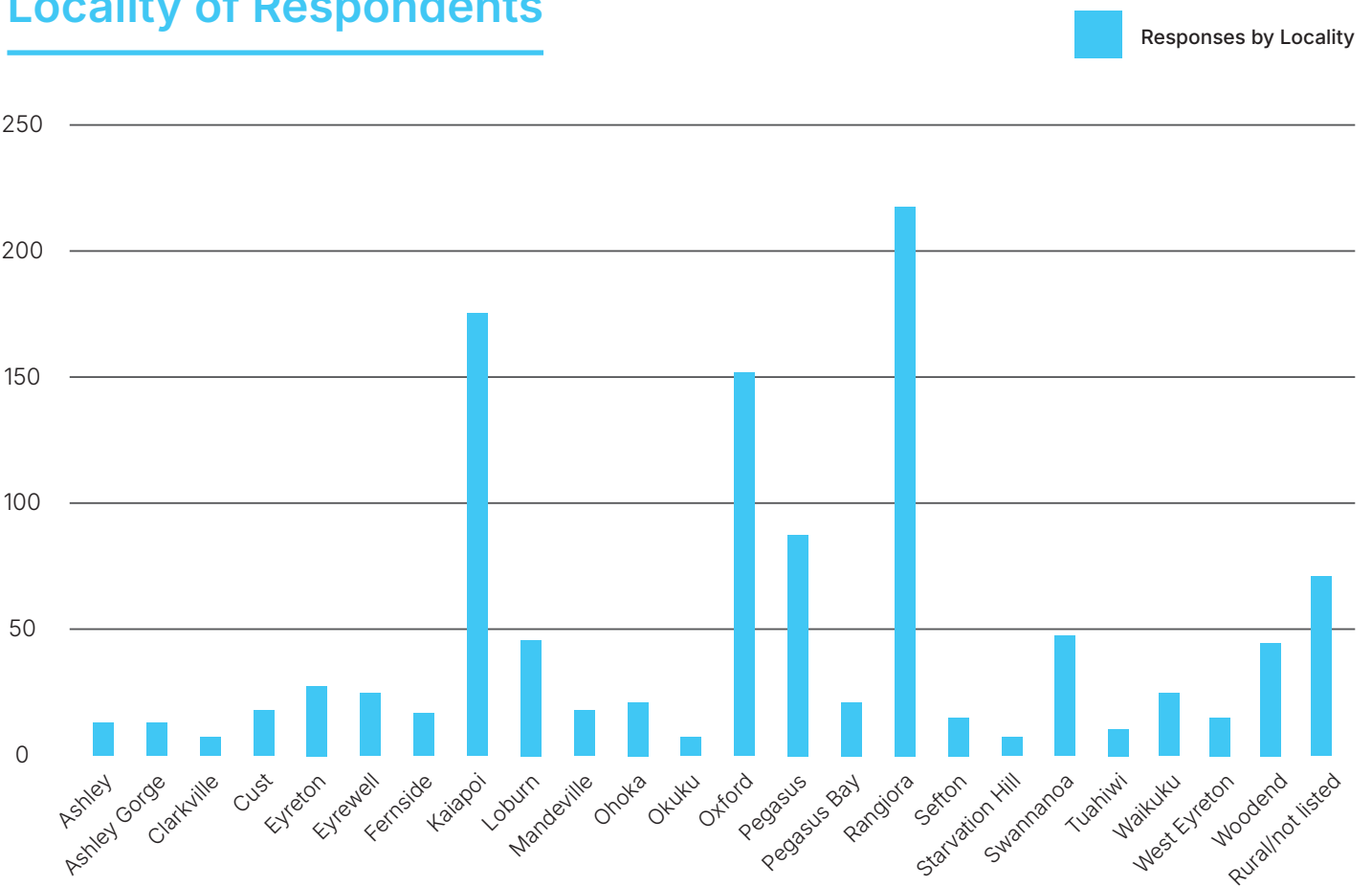
We heard from a diverse range of young people from right across the District during this early engagement. This was important because this information was gathered with the purpose of shaping the draft Youth Action Plan 2026-2029, which needs to be reflective of the needs and aspirations of our local young people.

Interested in what we heard? Have a look through this document which provides insight into what Waimakariri youth told us, in the form of infographics and direct quotes.

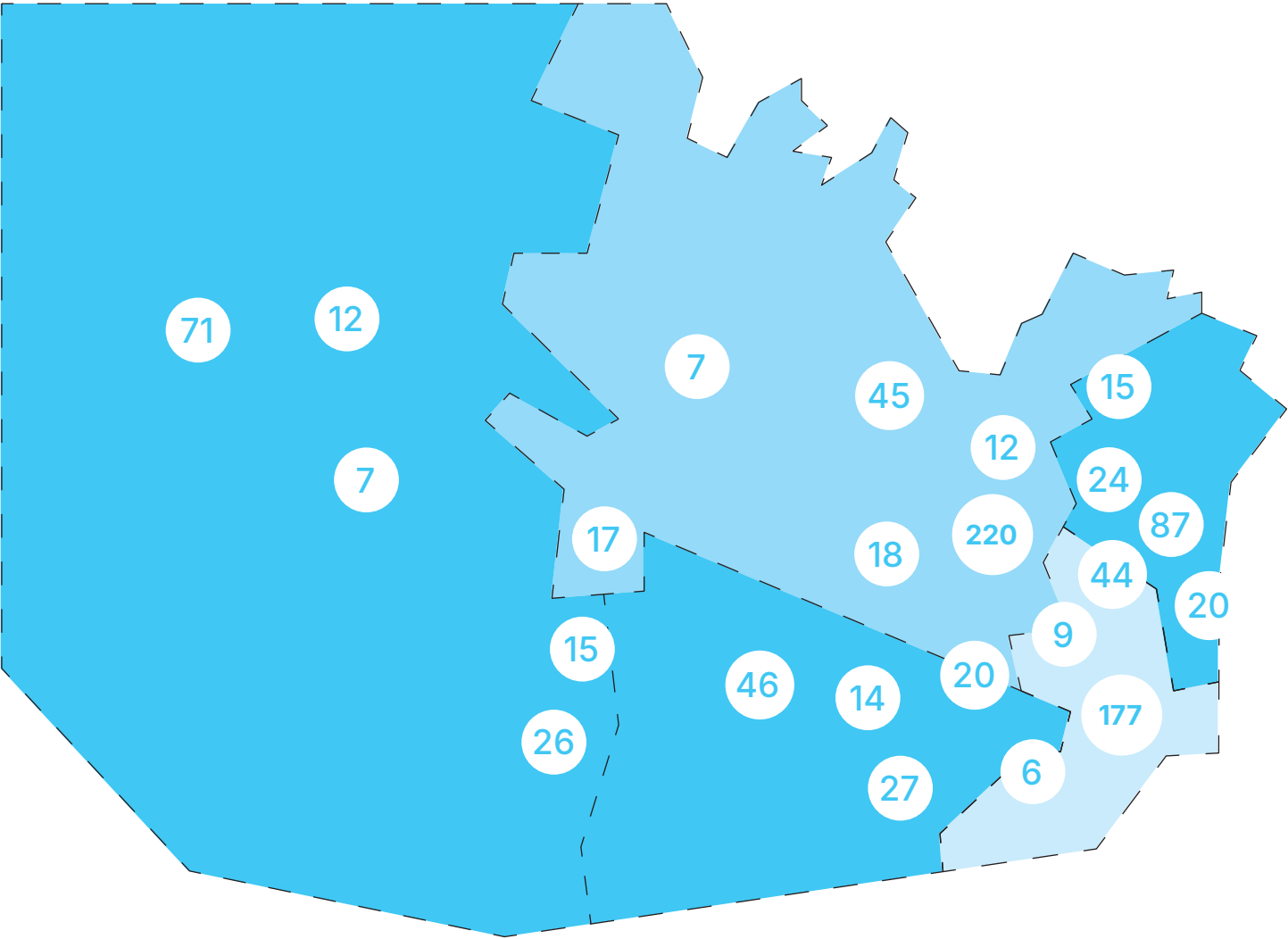
Ethnicity of Respondents



Locality of Respondents

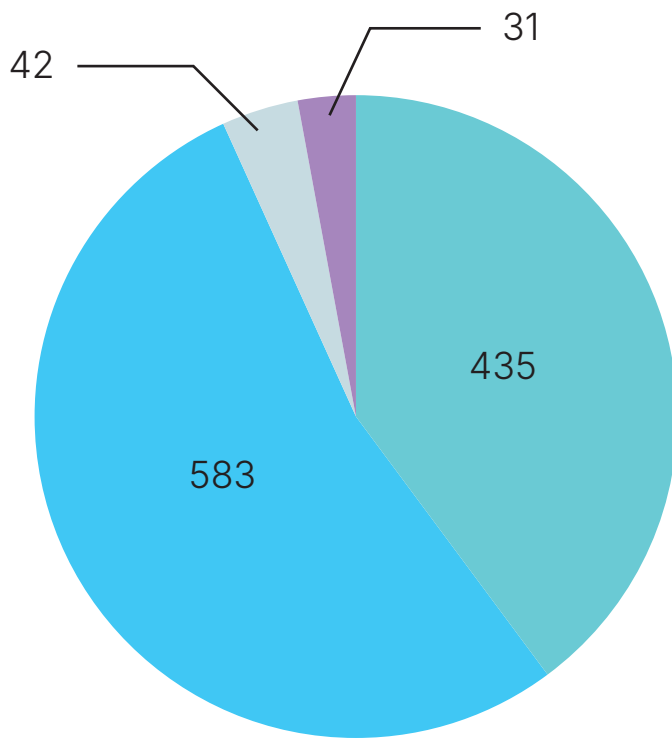


Who Shaped the Youth Action Plan?

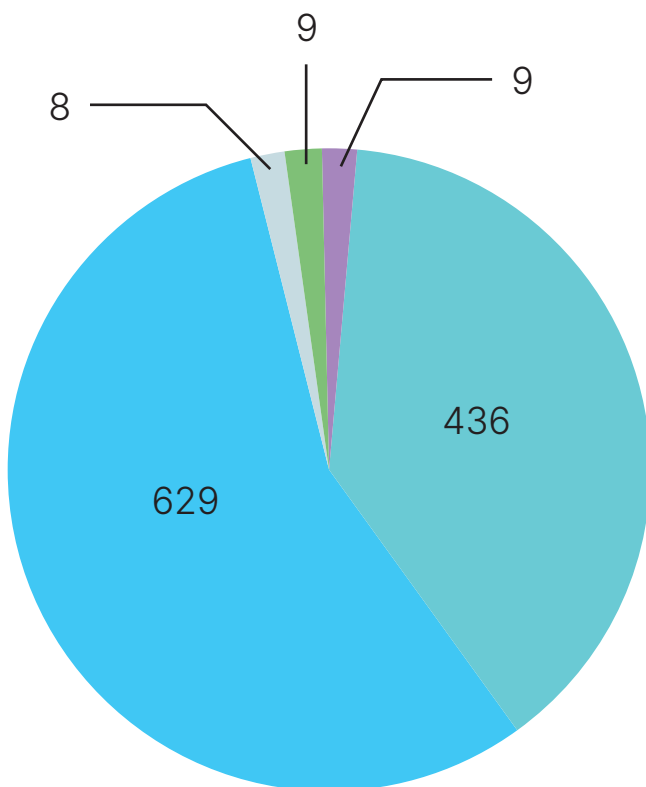
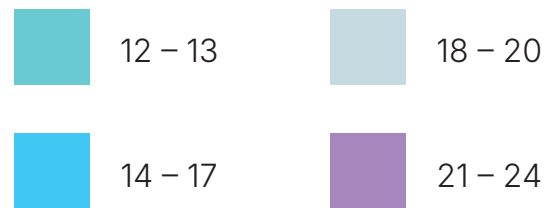


Number of Respondents		Location			
71	Rural	20	Pegasus Bay	45	Loburn
220	Rangiora	15	West Eyreton	12	Ashley
15	Sefton	44	Woodend	87	Pegasus
24	Waikuku	26	Eyrewell	7	Starvation Hill
12	Ashley Gorge	14	Mandeville	17	Cust
7	Okuku	6	Clarkville	18	Fernside
				9	Tuahiwi
				152	Oxford
				46	Swannanoa
				27	Eyreton
				20	Ohoka
				177	Kaiapoi

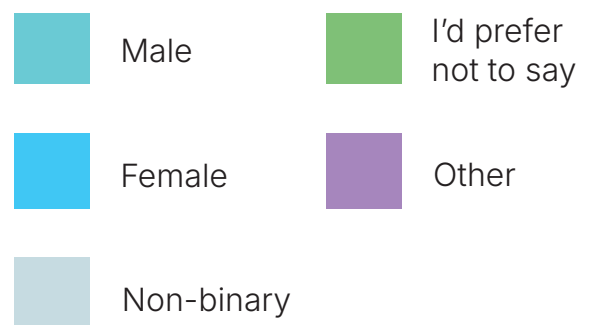
Who Did We Hear From?



Age Range of Respondents



Gender of Respondents



Sports & Physical Activity

How important are sports and physical activity to youth?

91.6%

Somewhat to very important

Preferred sports/physical activities amongst local youth:

Team Sports

63.4%



Walking

43.5%



Running

32%



45.63% face barriers when it comes to participation in sports/physical activity



Majority of respondents are only somewhat satisfied with Waimakariri's sport opportunities.



54.8%

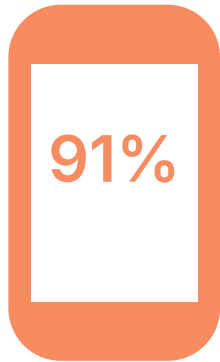
"Many buses don't travel to our area. With more public transport it would be much easier to participate in physical activities"

✓ Seen

"I think that there could be more support for all teams, even the lower-graded teams. There should be more experiences throughout different sports"

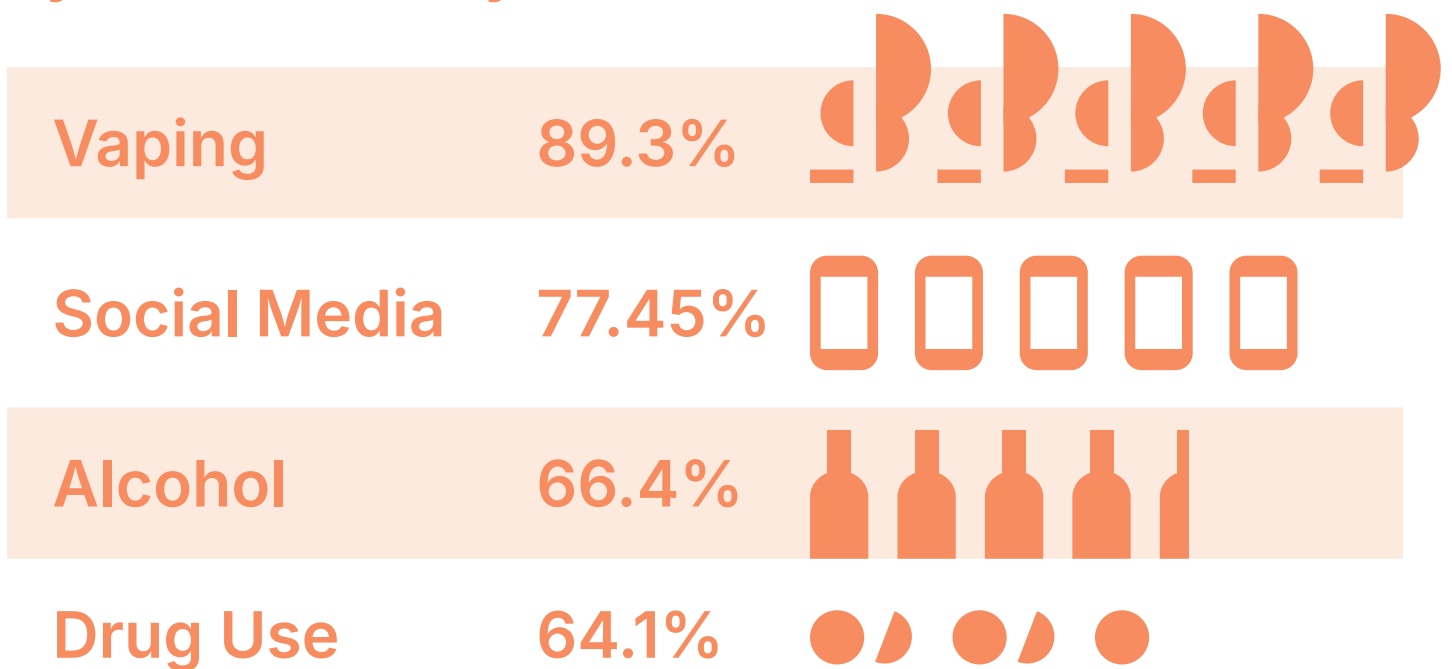
✓ Seen

Wellbeing



The majority of respondents believe addiction is an issue that is directly affecting Waimakariri youth.

Common addictions encountered by Waimakariri youth:



"I believe that technology is one of the greatest problems in this generation"

✓ Seen

Waimakariri youth on feeling included and accepted by their peers:

60%

Feel included and accepted



33.1%

Feel this way sometimes



6.9%

Do not feel this way/
prefer not to say



"Young people dealing with addiction can benefit from community support, education, and accessible services, including peer groups, counselling, and mental health programs."

✓ Seen

Hobbies & Recreational Activity

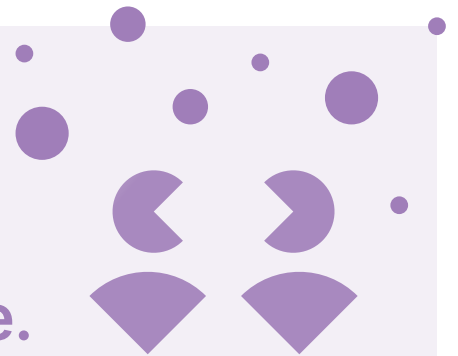


53.5% of respondents reported they can engage in activities they enjoy most within Waimakariri.



38.2% cannot due to reported barriers such as cost and access to transport.

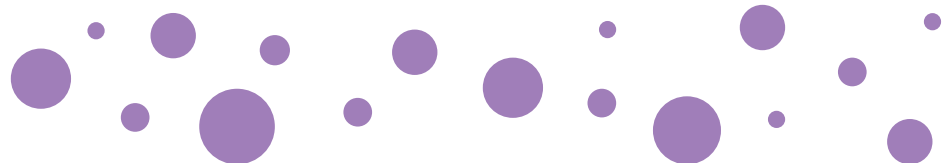
85.1% of respondents most enjoy hanging out with their friends during their spare time.



Common reasons why youth partake in their chosen hobbies and recreational activities:

Fun and enjoyment

90%



Socialising with others

71.5%



Young people also told us they enjoy activities which allow them to be...



Creative & expressive



Develop freedom
& independence



Partake in social
opportunities

"More and more teenagers are joining the gym because it is one of the few things we can do to keep busy"

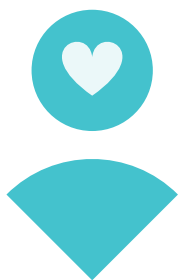
✓ Seen

"It would be better if there were more things for teenagers to do out here, so we don't have to travel into Christchurch"

✓ Seen

Mental Health

75.7% of respondents noted that mental health is something Waimakariri youth struggle with.



62.8% of respondents recognised mental health as very important to them.

Biggest barriers in regard to accessing the District's mental health services:

23.7%

Cost



20.3%

Long wait times



19.2%

Lack of awareness



Other barriers as reported by local youth:

- Privacy concerns
- Unfamiliarity with available services
- Logistical challenges
- Affordability

Do youth know how/where to seek help, should they struggle with mental health?



60.1% Yes



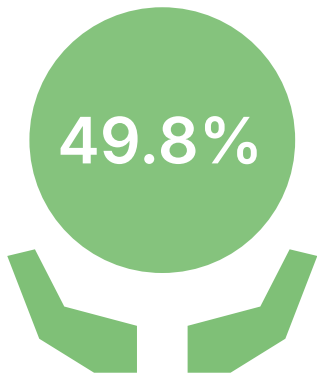
37.8% Unsure how or do not seek help at all

"I have experienced long wait times (6+ months) before being seen which was challenging. Having to see a GP to get the initial referral also creates somewhat of a barrier financially"

✓ Seen

Natural Environment

71.14% of respondents believe it is very important that local communities should protect the environment.



Almost half of respondents indicated they've participated in activities in Waimakariri that support the environment.

55% told us that environmental issues concern them.



The natural environment was noted as important to the majority of survey respondents at 63%

"I think that there should be more groups helping out with the environment who just want to help, not being paid, but volunteering"

✓ Seen

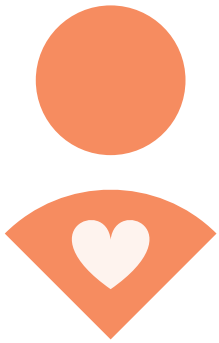
"I think it is important we live in a clean natural environment"

✓ Seen

"The natural environment is important... we need to preserve what we have so we can have better futures"

✓ Seen

Physical Health



69.92% of respondents told us physical health is very important to them.

Do youth know how/where to access health services in Waimakariri?



78.4% Yes



21.6% Unsure/do not know

"I'm worried about the cost and lack of support, and I don't want my family to worry if I'm sick or need care"

✓ Seen

Do youth with disabilities receive enough support in their community?

29.9%

Feel there is enough support provided



18.9%

Believe there is not



51.2%

Do not know



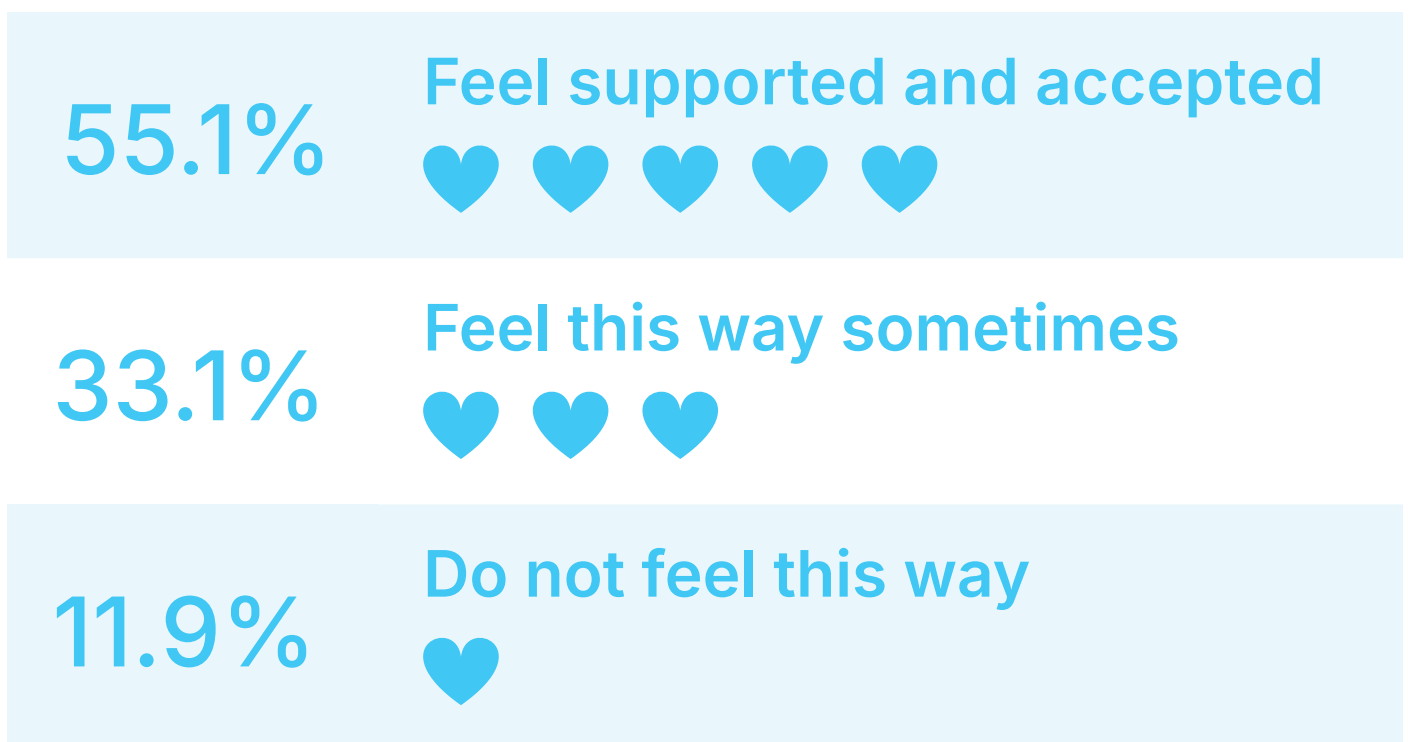
"It needs to be easier (for youth) to access doctors, therapists etc. I think that it is especially hard for young trans people. We do not get enough acceptance from the public and it is hard to access trans healthcare"

✓ Seen

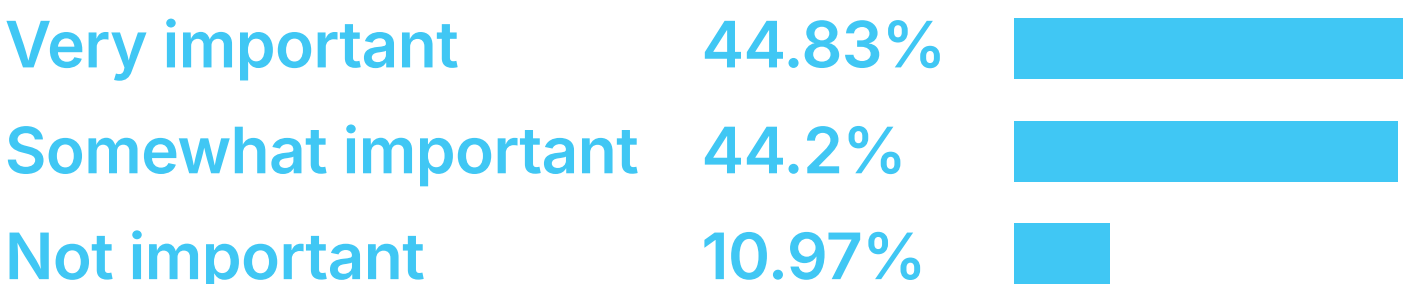
Culture

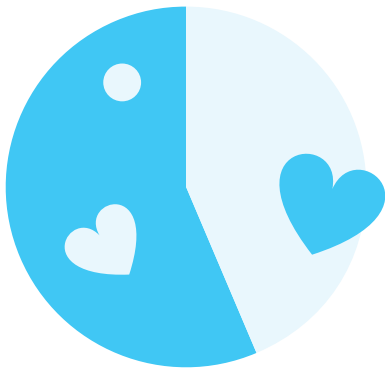
83% of respondents ranked culture as being somewhat to very important to who they are.

Do youth feel supported and accepted by their community?



Do Waimakariri youth believe it is important to live in a culturally diverse community?





43.8% of respondents believe the Waimakariri District could celebrate and promote cultural diversity more.

"I think there's a bit of a way to go with societal attitudes here when it comes to acceptance and inclusivity"

✓ Seen

"Celebrating and promoting cultural diversity is good. I don't think it comes from higher up, but (instead) from those in the community who accept and celebrate them and (in some cases) even defend them... People are culture"

✓ Seen

Public Spaces

Which types of public spaces do local youth enjoy the most?

77%

Parks and outdoor spaces



65.5%

Beaches



92.3% of respondents told us that public spaces in Waimakariri are either very important or somewhat important to them.



"Public parks are very appreciated.
 They are the perfect place for me
 and my friends to meet and hangout"

✓ Seen

What do young people need in public spaces?

83.1%

Places to hang out together



71.2%

Bathrooms



69.9%

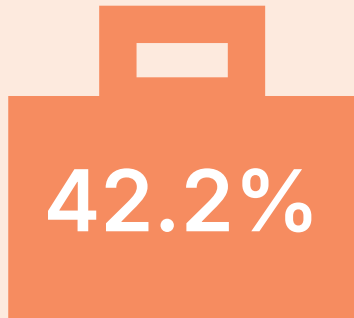
Wi-Fi



"We need more places for people to hang out inside. If it is cold after school, there are no places (indoors) to hang out with your friends, unless you are willing to spend money at a cafe or restaurant so you can stay in there"

✓ Seen

Employment



Reported they have actively searched for employment in Waimakariri.

What barriers do youth face when seeking work in Waimakariri?

57%

Lack of available jobs



47.1%

Insufficient work experience



"Students over 16 years are going for the same 5-6 jobs (as me)... it makes it incredibly difficult to get the job"

✓ Seen



Various respondents are concerned some employers have a bias against youth, which may impact their likelihood of employment.

48.5%



Service industry jobs were seen as most favourable to youth.

Respondents noted they would like to see this industry be more present in Waimakariri.

"I have applied to 100+ jobs and have only had two interviews; I was denied both times. It's hard for me"

✓ Seen

Transport

Local youth satisfaction with public transportation in their communities was low.



Most popular modes of transport amongst Waimakariri youth:

90.9%

Car



75.4%

Walk



50.4%

Bus



54.7% of youth feel safe using public transport and walking/cycling in Waimakariri.

What would get more Waimakariri youth using public transport?

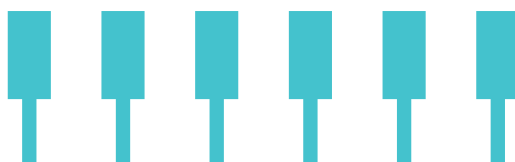
50.7%

Faster travel routes



45.9%

Better connections
between places



"I used to take busses everywhere, but now that I have my own car it seems impractical. It takes three times as long to get anywhere"

✓ Seen

"I wish I could take a train into Christchurch, we need more modes of public transport in the South Island"

✓ Seen

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