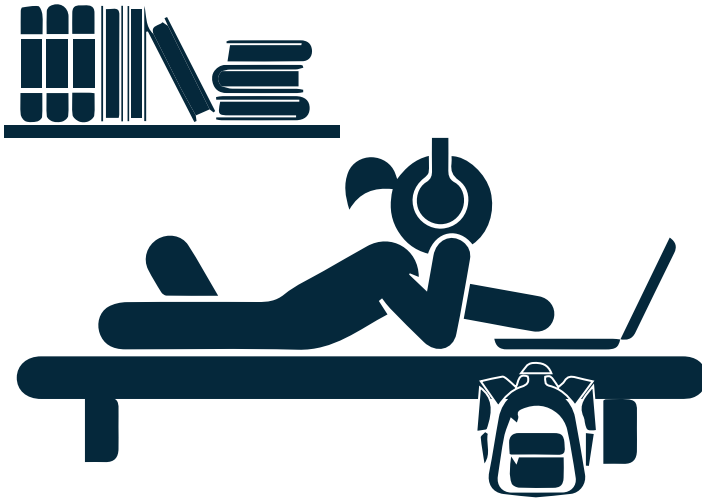




Young people



Issues and challenges

Adolescence is a dynamic period of development, marked by major psychosocial and physical change, and presenting a unique set of health and wellbeing issues. This life stage presents an important opportunity for health services to intervene early in health issues and to be accessible and responsive to the needs of young people.

(continued on next page)

In SESLHD

Young people, aged between 12 and 25 years, are a sizeable proportion (18%) of the District's population.¹

This rate remains mostly stable throughout the LHD, with slightly higher populations of young people in the Randwick LGA (21%), Georges River LGA (19%) and City of Sydney LGA (19%).

Population profile

SESLHD's youth population is culturally and linguistically diverse, with 31% of young people aged 12-25 years born overseas. Sixty three percent (63%) of this group arrived in Australia between 2006-2015 and 15% arrived very recently, between 1 Jan 2016- 9 August 2016.¹

In SESLHD, 1.4 % of young people are Aboriginal. Randwick LGA has a slightly larger population of Aboriginal young people (2%), as does Botany Bay LGA (2.5%).¹ With 1% of SESLHD's whole population being Aboriginal, SESLHD reflects national data that indicates the Aboriginal population is younger than Australia's broader population.¹

Nationally and in SESLHD, education remains an important aspect of life for young people. Ninety nine percent (99%) of all young people between 12 and 16 years of age in SESLHD are studying either part time or full time.¹ Eighty one percent (81%) of young people aged 17-21 years are students as are 50.4% of young people aged 22-25 years.¹

Four percent (4%) of young people in SESLHD aged 12-25 years provide unpaid care to a person with a disability.¹

SESLHD has a relatively small but significant population (1%) of young parents aged 12-25 years.¹



Issues and challenges

Young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds face the challenges associated with growing up between two cultures which may involve very different behavioural and social expectations. They may experience language barriers that affect their access to health care and health literacy, and many have experienced racism and discrimination, which can have a significant effect on the mental health and wellbeing of young people.²

The changes of adolescence can be particularly challenging for some Aboriginal young people.

These young people may have specific health issues and needs, and their culture may affect their health and health service usage. The disparities in health status between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians are significant and it is essential that health services support the unique needs of Aboriginal young people by being accessible and culturally respectful.³

Young carers are often a hidden group in the community, not acknowledged for their caring contribution. Their work as carers can be associated with some significant barriers to education, employment, social inclusion and health care and many experience both physical and mental health problems associated with their role.⁴

Young parents face the challenge of meeting not only their own developmental needs at a time of significant growth, but also the needs of their children. Parenting at a young age has been associated with social isolation and stigma as well as barriers to accessing education, employment and health care.^{5,6}

Additionally, post-natal depression is common among young mothers.⁷

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2016.
2. NSW Kids and Families (2014). Youth Health Resource Kit: An Essential Guide for Workers, 123-128
3. NSW Kids and Families (2014). Youth Health Resource Kit: An Essential Guide for Workers, 131-135
4. Cass, B., Brennan, D., Thomson, C., Hill, T., Purcal, C., Hamilton, M., and Adamson, E. (2011) Young carers: Social policy impacts of the caring responsibilities of children and young adults, Report prepared for ARC Linkage Partners, October 2011.
5. Fergusson, D. M., & Woodward, L. J. (2000). Teenage pregnancy and female educational underachievement: A prospective study of a New Zealand birth cohort. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62(1), 147-161.
6. McDermott, E., & Graham, H. (2005). Resilient young mothering: Social inequalities, late modernity and the "problem" of "teenage" motherhood. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 8(1), 59-79.
7. Hudson, D. B., Elek, S. M., & Campbell-Grossman, C. (2000). Depression, self-esteem, loneliness, and social support among adolescent mothers participating in the new parents project. *Adolescence*, 35(139), 444-453