

30 June 2021

Mental Health Council of Tasmania Media Release
Holistic approach to wellbeing key to brighter future for Tasmanian children and young people

The Tasmania's Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy (the Strategy) Consultation Report "Your Voice, Your Views, Your Say", released today by Premier Gutwein, highlights the need for improved availability and access to mental health and wellbeing supports, at all levels, for young Tasmanians.

During 2020, the Mental Health Council of Tasmania (MHCT) partnered with the Youth Network of Tasmania (YNOT) to facilitate discussions with young people across all wellbeing domains and hosted additional targeted consultations with young people, community members and service providers with a specific focus on mental health.

Throughout these discussions, Tasmania's mental health service providers reported increasing demand for mental health support from young people over several years. While this is a concerning trend, MHCT CEO, Connie Digolis, said that it's important that the forthcoming Strategy focuses on the many factors that influence the mental health and wellbeing of young Tasmanians, rather than just increasing the capacity to respond to people's needs once they become unwell.

"This Report demonstrates that Tasmanians of all ages put great value on their mental wellbeing, and that we all want our children and young people to have the best possible opportunity to live healthy, happy lives. What it also shows is that mental health is only one part of wellbeing- there are a whole range of social, economic and environmental factors that have a huge influence on wellbeing, that we expect will be addressed as part of the Strategy," said Ms Digolis.

Ms Digolis added that it's imperative that the Strategy takes a holistic approach that provides all Tasmanian children, young people, families and communities with the supports and services needed to boost and maintain their mental health and wellbeing.

"The Report highlights the importance of a long term, 'whole-of-life' approach to wellbeing, backed by a strategy that supports all Tasmanians from a very young age to understand our own wellbeing, and empowers us to achieve the best possible outcome in terms of our health and happiness. The Strategy is an opportunity for Tasmania to build something great – to create a better, brighter future for our children and young people, and for generations to come."

The Consultation Report also highlights the importance of early intervention and prevention support services for young people and families, improving access to mental health services in regional and rural areas, and reducing stigma of mental health through focus on wellbeing practices.

MHCT's report, "COVID-19: A mental health response for young Tasmanians", is available via the [MHCT website](#).

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Media Enquiries: Nick Sullivan

Phone: 0405 672 004

Email: nsullivan@mhct.org

Please include the following crisis support services for any story regarding mental health or suicide:

Lifeline: 13 11 14 www.lifeline.org.au

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467 www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au

beyondblue: 1300 22 4636 www.beyondblue.org.au

More information on safely reporting on mental illness or suicide can be found at:

<https://mindframe.org.au/> and <https://www.tascharter.org/>